Creating Access: 
How to *Invite Everyone* and Establish a Culture of *Accessibility*

Alexia Kemerling, Disability Rights Ohio
Brittanie Maddox, The Ability Center
Maria Matzik, Access Center for Independent Living
See the person, not the disability.

Person First Language
What are you really saying?

Handicapped

Special Needs

Differently Abled
Disabled isn’t a bad word.
Identity First Language
The Medical Model vs. the Social Model
CHAIRS
The World is not Designed for Disability

- Restrooms: Not expecting to be able to use the restroom – means more than just physically being able to get into the restroom.

  Male/Female - Different Sex/Gender Couples/Caregivers

  The height of the toilet - ADA Standard

  Size and Space

- Physical Barriers
  - Automatic Doors
  - Electricity
What is independence?

- We are sold a false sense of independence
- No one is truly independent
- Disability is viewed as dependent on others and often ‘a burden’
- Inherent ableism that consistently perpetuates a power dynamic that able bodied individuals are above disabled bodies
- Shift our focus from ‘independence’ to interdependence
Care is **NOT** a 4 Letter Word

- Perception of care – what does that look like?
  - Medical Model - Systems Requirements
- ADLs vs. Social Activity
  - Fitting Into a Box for Services
Care Cont.

- Perception of Independence: Independence does not mean being able to physically do everything for yourself. It means being in charge of how things are done.

- To be healthy, all individuals with or without disabilities must have opportunities to take part in meaningful daily activities that add to their growth, development, fulfillment, and community contribution.
What does equal access look like?
Equal Understanding

- Having access to all of the same information that nondisabled participants do.
  - ASL interpretation
  - Accurate live captioning
  - Access to a recording that can be reviewed later for further understanding
  - Access to copies of the handouts and slides at least 24 hours prior to meeting
  - Large print
  - Visual and audio descriptions,
  - Plain language
Trust

Being able to join any public meeting, presentation, or event on the same day, just as a nondisabled person would (i.e. accommodation requests that must be submitted any time period before the event, typically 3 days, creates an access barrier and could exclude participants).

Being able to trust and expect that we will be able to participate, rather than put in extra time, work, and worry over whether a meeting will be accessible.
Clarity and Ease

- The meeting time is accessible to disabled people.
  - Afternoon and evening times are often better for people who rely on caregiver support to get ready in the mornings.

- While standard accommodations should automatically be in place, there should also be a clear process for how to request any additional accommodations.
  - This information should be included in every notice and promotion of the event and should be immediately visible, not hidden.
When you design for disability, everyone benefits.
How many of you have ever . . .

- Sent a text message
- Pushed a stroller or cart up a curb cut
- Used kitchen utensils with rubber handles
- Used subtitles when you couldn’t watch a video with sound
- Used a touch screen
- Taken the elevator
Where to Start

How to Work Towards Accessibility

Meetings and Events
Workplace Culture
Service Systems
Planning an Accessible Meeting

Before Promoting Meeting
After Promoting Meeting
During Meeting
Post Meeting
Before the Meeting Announcement

1. Coordinate who will oversee accommodation requests.
2. Consult with disability organizations to make sure you have what is needed
3. Schedule ASL and CART or C-Print Services
   a. What is CART and C-Print?
   b. Are captions a substitute for ASL?
Creating the Flyer

1. Include what accommodations will be provided
2. Include instructions for how to request additional accommodations

Example:

ASL and CART will be provided and a copy of the recording and transcript is available after the meeting. If you need an additional accommodations, please contact Joe Schmo, joe@email.com, 419-777-9898, by October 25.
ASL and CART will be provided and a copy of the recording and transcript is available after the meeting. If you need an additional accommodations, please contact Joe Schmo, joe@email.com, 419-777-9898, by October 25.

Communicate what accommodations are already going to be provided.

Give a contact for requesting additional accommodations. Include email AND phone.

Give a deadline for any requests.
Preparation Continued

Ensure meeting materials, registration flyers, etc. are accessible via screen reading software.

Use Zoom for virtual meetings due to accessibility features. Other platforms are not as accessible as Zoom.

If in-person, consider physical accessibility, sensory needs.
After Meeting Announcement

1. Post meeting 2-weeks prior to start and allow for accommodation requests up to 1-3 days prior to the meeting
2. Ensure that all requests are responded to in a timely manner
3. Email PowerPoints, handouts, and other meeting materials to registrants 1-3 days prior to the meeting
During the Meeting

1. Make sure the meeting is being recorded and the auto-generate transcript option is turned on
2. Spotlight ASL Interpreter and that C-Print is visible with enlarged font
3. Give an overview of accommodations
   a. Today we have ASL interpretation and C-Print available. To see the interpreter... To see C-print ... If you have questions, you can raise your hand by ... or send a chat...
During the Meeting Cont.

1. Speaker’s video is on for those who read lips
2. All oral communication should be spoken clearly and not rushed
3. Designate a staff member to monitor any access issues during the meeting
4. Describe contents of PowerPoint slides
After the Meeting

- Email the recording and transcript to all attendees (or people who requested this)

- Assess what went well and what could be improved
Tips for **Workplace Accessibility**

- Ensure there is a clear process for employees to request an accommodation.
- Once requested, make sure the accommodation is consistently implemented across the organization and that all employees follow the correct procedures.
- Consult with employees about what they need for new situations.
What **NOT** to do

- Expect another person with a disability to speak for someone else’s accommodation
- Put the burden of figuring out the logistics of the accommodation on the employee
- Decide what someone can or cannot do without consulting them
- Plan events first, and then think about accommodations.
  - Accessibility should come **FIRST** and be a thought throughout
Remember, not all disabilities are visible.
Tips for Accessibility when Providing Services

- Access to Communication
- Receive an appropriate and thorough examination with appropriate equipment for screening, preventive, and diagnostic appointments
- Spend sufficient time with individual – thorough Explanation
What can we do?

Physicians Service Delivery
Training and Inclusion
Physicians

- Provide a broad range of modifications and adjustments (reasonable accommodation) to facilitate access to health care services
- Change the physical layout of clinic to provide access for people with mobility aids
- Offer accommodations for communicating health information – i.e. materials in braille and large print
Physicians cont.

- Offer interpreter services
- Offer in-home accommodations for x-ray, ultrasounds, labs – for individuals who cannot physically access equipment in medical offices
- Promote community-based rehabilitation (CBR) to facilitate access for people with disability to existing services
- Empower people with disability to maximize their health by providing information, training, and peer support
Human Resources and Education

- Integrate disability education into undergraduate and continuing education for all health-care professionals
- Train community workers so that they can play a role in preventive health care services
- Provide evidence-based guidelines for assessment and treatment
- Continue to evaluate programs and services to ensure they are accessible
Research and Planning

- Identify groups that require alternative service delivery models, for example, targeted services or care coordination to improve access to health care
- Include people with disability in health care surveillance
- Conduct more research on the needs, barriers, and health outcomes for people with disability
What about the cost?
How to Get Creative

The expense is not an excuse to do nothing.

- Cannot afford CART?
  - Provide scripts
  - Use free resources like Otter.ai, Ava, Google Live Transcript

- Assess what resources you DO have

- Work with the individual to prepare
Tax Credits/Exemptions

● Disabled Access Credit
  ○ Available to help businesses comply with the ADA
  ○ Total revenues of $1 million or less in the previous tax year or 30 or fewer full-time employees

● Barrier Removal Tax Deduction
  ○ Encourages businesses of any size to remove architectural and transportation barriers
  ○ Deduction up to $15,000 a year
Tax Credits Cont.

- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
  - Available to employers for hiring individuals who have faced significant barriers to employment (i.e., people with disabilities and veterans)
  - Maximum tax credit for employees who worked 400+ hours:
    - $2,400 or up to 40% of up to $6,000 of first year wages
    - $9,600 or up to 40% of up to $24,000 of first year wages for certain veterans
    - 25% rate for those who work at least 120 hours but less than the 400 hours
The cost of NOT accommodating.

- Violating the Americans with Disabilities Act
  - The ADA
- Missing out on Disabled
  - Creativity
  - Brilliance
  - Empathy
  - Passion
  - Insight

When somewhere is inaccessible,

It’s not just Disabled people missing out.

It’s everyone.

Without us, you miss:

- Disabled creativity
- Disabled brilliance
- Disabled empathy
- Disabled passion
- Disabled insight

and so much more.

To include is to thrive.
Nothing About Us, Without Us.
Reach Out!

Contact Information

Maria Matzik, maria.matzik@acils.com

Brittanie Maddox, bmaddox@abilitycenter.org

Alexia Kemerling, akemerling@disabilityrightsohio.org