

**Vermont Center for Independent Living**  
**Ericka Reil, CIRS**



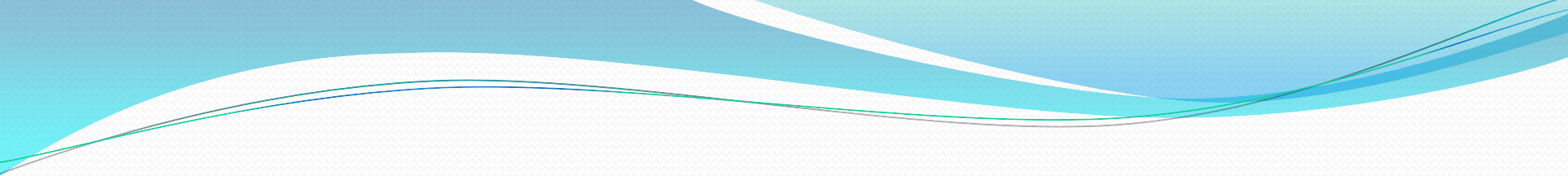
# Agenda

People with Disabilities Introduction

History of the Independent Living  
Movement (overview)

Disability Laws (overview)

Best Practices in the Workplace



“It is not our disability that is the problem,  
but rather it is the way our disabilities are  
viewed by others.”

Drexel Deal  
(President of the Persons with Disabilities  
Organization 2009-2011)

# LARGEST MINORITY

Disability does not care about your religion, sexual orientation, race, creed, gender, where you were born, money that you have or don't have, age..... It is an equal opportunity condition.

# What is a DISABILITY?

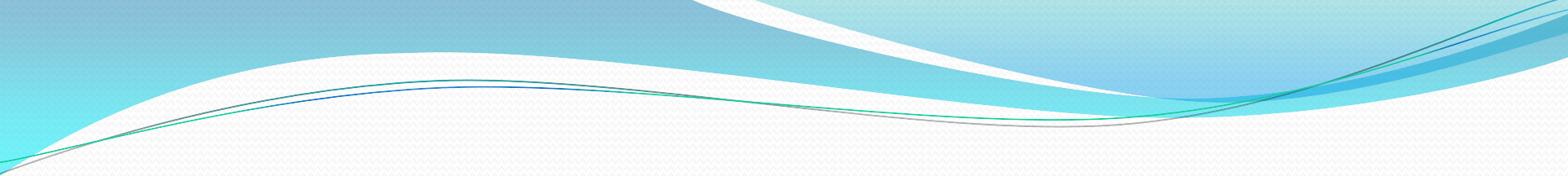
A **Disability** is a condition caused by an accident, trauma, genetics or disease which may limit a person's mobility, hearing, vision, speech or mental function



**1 in 5**

**One in five people have a disability**

**That means you know someone with a  
disability**



The civil rights movement didn't begin in Montgomery and it didn't end in the 1960s. It continues on to this very minute."

Julian Bond (American social activist 1940-present)

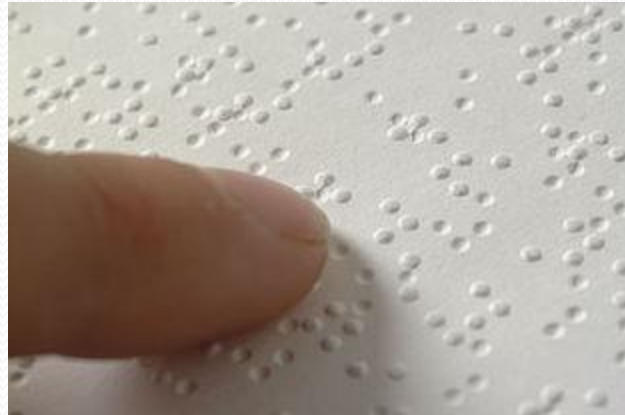
# BC

3500 BC The Rig-Veda, an ancient sacred poem of India, is said to be the first written record of prosthesis. Written in Sanskrit between 3500 and 1800 B.C., it recounts the story of a warrior, Queen Vishpla, who lost her leg in battle, was fitted with an iron prosthesis, and returned to battle.



# 1829

- Louis Braille invents the raised point alphabet that has come to be known as Braille.



# 1861

The American Civil War (1861 - 1865)- 30,000 amputations in the Union Army alone.

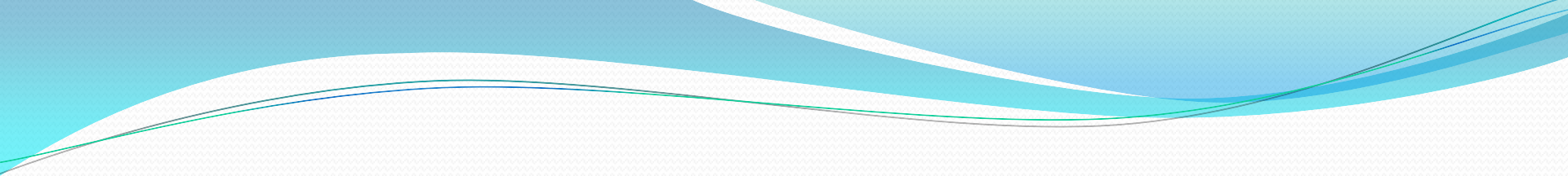


# 1939

Amid the outbreak of World War II Hitler orders widespread "mercy killing" of the sick and disabled. The Nazi euthanasia program was code-named Aktion T4 and was instituted to eliminate "life unworthy of life."

# 1971

Ed Roberts and his associates establish a Center for Independent Living (CIL) in Berkeley, CA for the community at large. The center was originally in a roach-infested two-bedroom apartment until the Rehabilitation Administration gave them a \$50,000 grant in 1972.



Being disabled should not mean being  
disqualified from having access to every  
aspect of life.

Emma Thompson  
(British Actress 1959 to present)

# LAWS



# Rehabilitation ACT 1973

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by Federal agencies, in programs receiving Federal financial assistance, in Federal employment, and in the employment practices of Federal contractors

# The Americans With Disabilities Act Signed July 26,1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) gives people with disabilities civil rights protection like that provided to individuals on the basis of race, sex, national origin and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities



# Other Laws.....

- Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 1975
- Fair Housing Act 1968
- Telecommunication Act 1988
- Voter Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped 1984
- National Voter Registration Act 1993
- Architectural Barriers Act 1968
- Civil Rights of Institutional Individuals Act 1997

“One who is sincerely interested in human communication and cooperation, in being genuinely helpful, will pay only so much attention to the disability as is necessary to give the other the help he needs and wants, will not call undue attention to it by extravagant gestures of sympathy and elaborate offers of undesired help, will give such help as is asked for or indicated in a matter- of course way, neither evading or emphasizing the fact of disability”

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962)

# Common False Assumptions

- Every disability is the same
- A disability affects everyone in the same way
- You can always see the disability
- Physical disability=Mental disability
- People who have a disability are on public assistance
- Accessible=Expensive
- Service Dogs always wear a vest and are registered

# A Few Do's

- **Do** offer assistance
- **Do** speak directly to the person with the disability not to the interpreter or people they are with
- **Do** understand that access includes not only wheelchair access, but also making forms accessible to people with visual or cognitive disabilities, and making alarms and signals accessible to people with hearing disabilities

# A Few Don'ts

- **Don't** touch the wheelchair
- **Don't** yell or speak loudly unless asked
- **Don't** grab the arm of a person who has a visual disability
- **Don't** pat the service/support animal

# Person First Language

ALWAYS REMEMBER PUT THE

**PERSON**

**First**

NOT THE DISABILTY

# WRONG!!!!!!!

- Handicapped
- Slow
- Psycho
- Wheelchair bound
- Dumb
- Blind
- Crazy
- Retarded
- Hearing impaired

# CORRECT!!!!

- Person who uses a wheel chair
- Person with an intellectual disability
- Person with a mental health diagnosis
- Person who is Deaf
- Person who has a visual disability
- Person who is Hard of Hearing



# When Talking to Someone with a Disability

- Use common sense
- Use active listening skills
- Ask a person to repeat if you don't understand what s/he is saying
- Paraphrase so that you fully understand what the person is saying

# Documents

## Make sure that all:

- Forms
- Applications
- Signs
- Important notices
- Practice polices

Are in Alternative Formats

# Best Practice Formats

- Use simple clear language
- Keep sentences short
- Use Verdana or another Sans-Serif font
- Use colored paper that is easy on the eyes
- AVOID Bright and Dark Colors
- Use 14 point or larger font

# Read or Watch More on Disability

- No Pity : People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement; Joseph P. Shapiro
- The Week the World Heard Gallaudet; Jack R. Gannon
- Emergence: Labeled autistic; Temple Grandin
- Moving violations: War zones, wheelchairs, and declarations of independence; John Hockenberry
- Radio
- The Waterdance
- The Other Sister
- Murderball
- Benny and Joone
- When Billy Broke His Head... And Other Tales of Wonder

# Resources

- <http://askjan.org/>
- <http://www.ilru.org/html/publications/directory/index.html>
- <http://newenglandada.org/>
- [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)