Tools for Life
Georgia's Assistive Technology Act Program

Exploring Disability Awareness: Working Towards Building Bridges for an Inclusive Community

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Tools for Life at Georgia Tech

www.gatfl.gatech.edu

Agenda

- Presenters will share a brief history of disability culture and explain the difference between the "medical model" and "social model".

- Discussion will center on how each of these models can be applied to communication, work, community living, and research for and about people with disabilities as well as when and what language should be used in appropriate settings and environments.

- Presenters will focus on the importance of people first language, disability neutral versus disability negative terminology, understanding the relationship between words, attitudes, actions, and etiquette. Examples of value laden language and how it applies to basic awareness principles will also be explored.

- This session is intended to provide a platform where professionals can learn about and discuss communication focused on and about people with disabilities and provide helpful tips and strategies while engaging in important conversations.
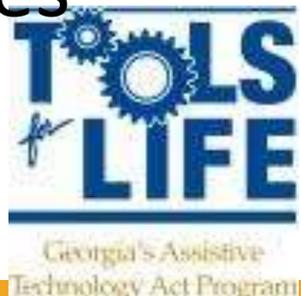
Tools for Life

We're here to help Georgians with disabilities gain access to and acquisition of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services so they can live, learn, work, and play independently in the communities of their choice.
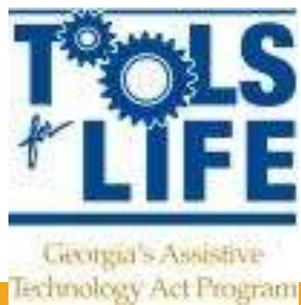
AMAC Accessibility

AMAC creates practical solutions that work, with a focus on utility, ease of use, and high quality.

- **Accessibility Consulting** focuses on organizational accessibility needs with evaluation, technical assistance, customer support, and website accessibility solutions.

- **Braille Services** produces customized projects from both print materials and electronic text including partial books and chapters or graphics only using cutting-edge technology.

- **Captioning Services** makes classrooms, meetings, labs and other audio environments fully accessible for deaf or hard-of-hearing.

- **Professional E-Text Producers** provide high-quality e-text in many formats such as PDF, DOC, DAISY, and HTML.

- **Certified Assistive Technology team** provides on-site and remote assessments, demonstrations, training and technical assistance for education, work, and daily living environments.

For more information, please visit our website at www.amacusg.org

# Tools for Life
Georgia's Federal AT Act Program

- Tools for Life is a program of AMAC Accessibility Services, Georgia Tech
- We serve individuals of all ages & disabilities in Georgia
  - Over 50,000 thru various activities throughout the year
- TFL Network
  - Assistive Technology Resource Centers/Outreach Sites
  - Lending Libraries
  - Training and Demonstrations
  - AT Reuse
  - AT Funding Education/Assistance and Resources
- Online Resources
  - www.gatfl.org

Ask It Basket!

What are your questions?
Here is your opportunity!

TFL Solution Site

Why Assistive Technology?

For a person without a disability, technology makes life easier.

For a person with a disability, technology makes life possible.

Considering Assistive Technology:

What Works for the Individual

Defining Assistive Technology

- Assistive technology – "Any item, piece of equipment, product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities."

- Assistive technology service – "Any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device."

Public Law 108-364

Examples of Assistive Technology

- Vehicles and Vehicle Modifications
  - Digi-Drive
  - Hand Controls

- Home Modification
  - Ramps, Roll-in showers
  - Environmental Controls

- Computers and Adaptive Software

- Communication

- Learning / Cognitive – Smartphones

- Mobility Aids
  - Wheelchairs
  - Walkers
  - Crutches

- Hearing Aids
  - FM Systems

- Vision Equipment
  - Video Magnifiers
  - Screen Magnification
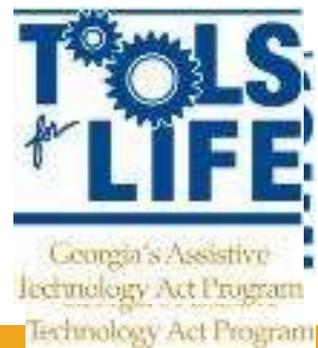
TFL AppFinder

Search by:

- App Name
- Categories
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  - Education
  - Environmental Adaptations
  - Hearing
  - Cognition, Learning, Developmental
  - Navigation
  - Personal Care and Safety
  - Productivity
  - Communication
 - Therapeutic Aids
  - Vision

1. <u>The Person with the disAbility</u>

✓ Circle of Support – Family of Choice

✓ Case Managers

✓ Technologist

✓ Occupational Therapist

✓ Speech & Language Pathologist

✓ Physical Therapist

✓ Engineer

ADA.gov

United States Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division

Information and Technical Assistance
on the Americans with Disabilities Act

Search ADA.gov

More Search Options

Law / Regulations   **Design Standards**   **Technical Assistance Materials**   **Enforcement**
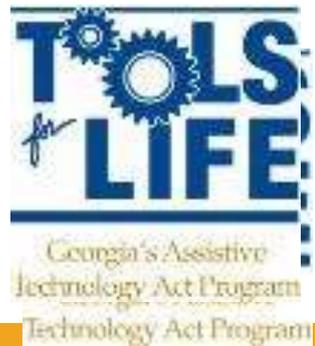
New on ADA.gov

SANPRM Comment Period Extended
Closes October 7, 2016

Beyond the Cases: 26 Years of the ADA | PDF
The Lives, Faces, and Stories Behind the ADA (posted 7/28/16)

YMCA of the Triangle
Settlement Agreement (posted 7/28/16)

Twenty Six Years of the Americans with Disabilities Act: The Lives, Faces and Stories Behind the ADA
Justice Blog Post (posted 7/26/16)

Byesville, Ohio
Settlement Agreement (posted 7/18/16)

Omaha Performing Arts Society
Settlement Agreement (posted 7/14/16)

The Natural Epicurean Academy of Culinary Arts
Settlement Agreement (posted 7/5/16)

ADA Checklist for Polling Places | PDF
Updated Technical Assistance Publication (posted 6/30/16)

Ruffing Montessori School
U.S. Motion to Intervene (posted 6/28/16)

Robinson v. Farley | PDF
Statement of Interest (posted 6/27/16)

Nevada Department of Corrections

**U.S. v. Greyhound Lines, Inc.
Settlement Agreement**

Claims Process
Available Here

INTRODUCTION TO THE
ADA

Publications and videos that answer these questions and more: What is the ADA? Who is a person with a disability? Who must comply with the ADA? Where can you call to ask questions about the ADA?

Featured Topics

ADA.gov/AIDS

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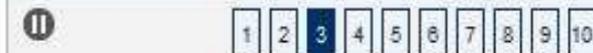
File a Complaint

Instructions for filing a complaint with the Department of Justice and for requesting accommodations for the filing process

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Public Law 101-336 [42 USC 12101]

- The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications.
  - Title I addresses employment, saying that any employer who has 15 or more employees must offer "equal opportunity" to employment-related activities.
  - Title II applies to state and local governments, and insists that people with disabilities be given equal access to public education, employment, transportation, recreation, health care, and other areas under their control.
  - Title III addresses public accommodations that may be provided by private companies, including private schools, restaurants, stores, hotels, doctors' offices, etc.
  - Title IV addresses assistive technology specifically, as it requires that telephone companies provide the necessary services to allow people who are deaf or hearing impaired to use telecommunications devices.

Disability is often a consequence of the environment

So, Change the Environment to be Inclusive & Accessible!

Defining Medical Model

- Under the medical model, impairments or differences should be 'fixed' or changed by medical and other treatments, even when the impairment or difference does not cause pain or illness.

- People with disabilities are to be adapted to fit into the world as it is.

Medical Model of Disability

- The emphasis is on dependence.

- Focus is on the impairment, rather than the needs of the person.

- Often, institution is the norm where basic needs can be met.

Defining Social Model

- Disability is caused by the way society is organized, rather than by a person's impairment or difference.

- Views that the position of disabled people and the discrimination against us are socially created and has little to do with our impairments.

- When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives.

Social Model: Solutions

- Traditional medical model did not explain their personal experience of disability or help to develop more inclusive ways of living.

- Encourages people with disabilities to redefine what "disability" means to them.

- Perpetuates confidence and self-esteem.

Common Ways People with Disabilities are viewed and treated:

- Unfortunately, and inaccurately, people with disabilities are often viewed as:
  - victims, or objects of pity
  - horrible or grotesque
  - burdens, either on society or on their families and carers
  - evil, or some threat to the comfort and safety of others
  - unable, or assumed to be unable, to do things
  - having multiple disabilities (such as assuming that a person who uses a wheelchair also has an intellectual disability)
  - childlike
  - "special"
- Such misconceptions are based on insufficient or inaccurate information about people with disabilities and can perpetuate inappropriate interactions.
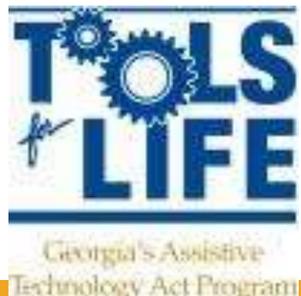
Types of Attitudinal Barriers

- **Inferiority** - Because a person may be impaired in one of life's major functions, some people believe that individual is a "second-class citizen." However, most people with disabilities have skills that make the impairment moot in the workplace.

- **Pity** - People feel sorry for the person with a disability, which tends to lead to patronizing attitudes. People with disabilities generally don't want pity and charity, just equal opportunity to earn their own way and live independently.

- <u>**Hero worship** - People consider someone with a disability who lives independently or pursues a profession to be brave or "special" for overcoming a disability.</u>

- **Ignorance** - People with disabilities are often dismissed as incapable of accomplishing a task without the opportunity to display their skills.

- **The Spread Effect** - People assume that an individual's disability negatively affects other senses, abilities or personality traits, or that the total person is impaired.

Even More Types of Attitudinal Barriers
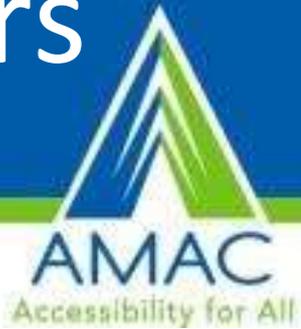
- **Stereotypes** - The other side of the spread effect is the positive and negative generalizations people form about disabilities..

- **Backlas**h - Many people believe individuals with disabilities are given unfair advantages, such as easier work requirements. Employers need to hold people with disabilities to the same job standards as co-workers, though the means of accomplishing the tasks may differ from person to person.

- **Denial** - Many disabilities are "hidden," such as learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, epilepsy, cancer, arthritis and heart conditions. People tend to believe these are not bona fide disabilities needing accommodation.

- **Fear** - Many people are afraid that they will "do or say the wrong thing" around someone with a disability.

Tips for Breaking Down Barriers

Power of Language

Value Laden Language

Disability negative vs Disability neutral Language

Tips for Interacting with People with Disabilities

Understanding and Using Assistive Technology

The Power of Language

- **Language is continually evolving**, and that includes language related to people with disabilities.

- Staying current is important, not to show that you are "politically correct" but to communicate effectively and with respect.

What is Value-Laden Language?
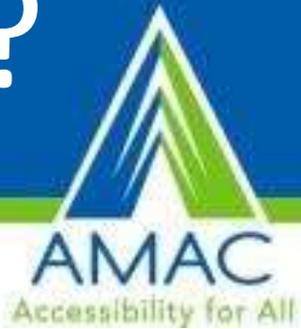
- What you say and write may enhance the dignity of people with disabilities or inadvertently reflect stereotypes and negative attitudes.

- Some words and phrases don't recognize the broad range of capabilities of people with disabilities.

- People with disabilities don't need or want to be pitied, nor should they be deemed "courageous" or "special" as they accomplish daily activities or work.

Value-Laden Language

Promotes
- Distance
- Stereotypes
- Pigeon-holes

Reduces sense of:
- Self-worth
- Power
- Self-direction

Value-Laden Language: Creates Categories

- We vs. They
- Good vs. Bad
- Strong vs. Weak
- High vs. Low (expectation)
- Sick vs. Well
- Superior vs. Inferior

Person First Language

- Designed to stress personhood
- "person with _____" or "person who _____"
- More common approach, frequently preferred by most schools, parents, and relatively neutral organizations and groups

Identity First Language

- Disability is part of a person's identity
- Modeled after how we talk about other traits of people
- Frequently preferred by people actively involved in disability culture, pride and advocacy.

"The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug."

Mark Twain

Language Do's

- If a person says they prefer a certain type of language, use that when talking to or about them, regardless of your own preference

- Speak directly to the person to whom you are referring, never their parent, friend, caretaker, interpreter or other person they are with

Language Don'ts

- Using derogatory slurs and terms, even as a "joke"

- Using language which is negative or stresses pity or tragedy

- Using language which is patronizing or condescending

Communication Tips

- Don't be afraid to make a mistake.

- Always BE RESPECTFUL.

- Don't make assumptions about what a person can or cannot do. Ask before giving assistance. If you offer help and the person says "no," don't insist. If the answer is "yes," ask how you can best help, and follow directions.

- If someone with a disability is accompanied by another individual, address the person with a disability directly rather than speaking through the other person.

- Treat adults as adults.

- Expect diversity of preferences and opinions.
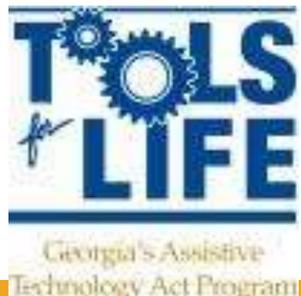
Communication Tips: Physical Disabilities

- Do not make assumptions about what a person can and cannot do.
- Respect the individual's personal space: personal space includes a person's wheelchair, crutches, or other mobility aid. Never move someone's crutches, walker, cane, or other mobility aid without permission
- Do not push a person's wheelchair or grab the arm of someone walking with difficulty without first asking if you can help.
- When speaking for more than a few minutes to a person using a wheelchair, try to find a seat for yourself so that the two of you are at eye level.

Communication Tips: Deaf/Hard of Hearing

- Ask the person how he or she prefers to communicate.

- Before you start to speak, make sure you have the person's attention. A wave, a light touch on the shoulder, or other visual or tactile signals are appropriate ways to get their attention.

- Speak in a clear, expressive manner. Do not over enunciate or exaggerate words.

- Unless asked, do not raise your voice. Speak in a normal tone.

- Talk directly to the person who is Deaf or hard of hearing, not to the interpreter.

- If you are speaking through an interpreter, remember that the interpreter may lag a few words behind. Pause occasionally.

Communication Tips: Cognitive Disabilities

- Treat adults with cognitive disabilities as adults.

- When speaking to someone who has a cognitive disability, try to be alert to his or her responses so that you can adjust your method of communication if necessary.

- For example, some people may benefit from simple, direct sentences or from supplementary visual forms of communication, such gestures, diagrams, or demonstrations.

- Use language that is concrete rather than abstract.

- People with brain injuries may have short-term memory deficits and may repeat themselves or require information to be repeated.

Tips: Cognitive Disabilities

- People with auditory perceptual problems may need to have direction repeated and may take notes to help them remember direction or the sequence of tasks. They may benefit from watching a task demonstrated.

- People with perceptual or "sensory overload" problems may become disoriented or confused if there is too much to absorb at once. Provide information gradually and clearly. Reduce background noise if possible.

- Don't pretend to understand if you do not. Ask the person to repeat what was said.

- In conversation, people with cognitive disabilities may respond slowly, so give them time.
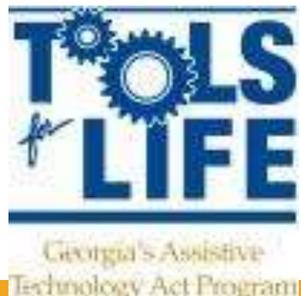
Communication Tips: Visual Disabilities

- It is appropriate to touch the person's arm lightly when you speak so that he or she knows you are speaking to him or her.

- Speak directly to the person, not through a companion or third party.

- Identify yourself when you approach a person who is blind. If a new person approaches, introduce him or her. Not everyone recognizes voices or remembers them.

- Identify yourself when entering a room and let the blind person know when you are leaving. Don't leave a blind person talking to an empty room, or standing alone in empty space.

Tips: Visual Disabilities

- Don't assume that help is needed. Always ask before providing assistance.
- Never push, pull, or grab a blind person. This can be frightening and it's often embarrassing
- If you are offering direction, be as specific as possible, and point out obstacles in the path of travel.
- Alert people to posted information.
- Never pet, talk to or otherwise distract a service dog unless the owner has given you permission.

- If you are having trouble understanding what is being said, **ask the person to repeat** rather than pretend you understand. The former is respectful and leads to accurate communication; the latter is belittling and leads to embarrassment.

- In conversation, people may respond slowly, so give them time.

- Don't try to finish sentences or guess what the person is saying.

More Communication Tips

- Shake hands or hand over business cards. If the person cannot shake your hand or grasp your card, they will tell you. Do not be ashamed of your attempt, however.

- It is okay to feel nervous or uncomfortable around people with disabilities, and it's okay to admit that. It is human to feel that way at first. When you encounter these situations, think "person" first instead of disability; you will eventually relax.

Let's Talk!

- What was your first experience with people with disabilities?
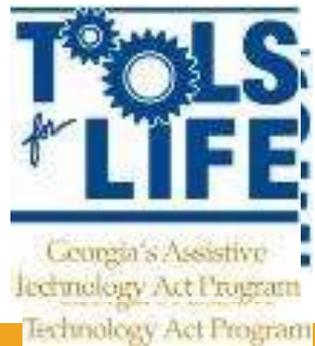
1. Use disAbility Positive Language

- Lead by Example
  - Insist that others do so too
  - Change Language
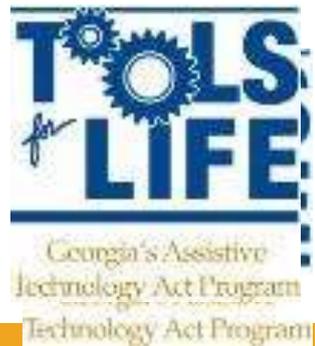
2. Be the Positive Change Maker

- Actively Stop Cycles of Oppression
  - Use disAbility Positive Language
  - Insist that other do also

  - Confront Myths with Facts
  - Talk with your Media about the images they portray and the language they use

  - Ask employers how many folks with disAbilities they have employed – in real jobs, making real wages
  - If employers see that you Believe that people with disAbilities can work, they will too.
 - Be Contagious!
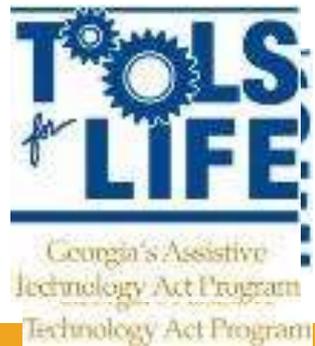
3. Break Barriers – Build Solutions

- What are the barriers you see?
  - Physical, Attitudinal

- Can all members of your community eat in Every restaurant, participate in every community activity, navigate your city safely, live independently, get a education and a job with opportunities for promotion?

- Money Talks – What is Yours Saying?
 - Support Accessible businesses by giving them Your Money.
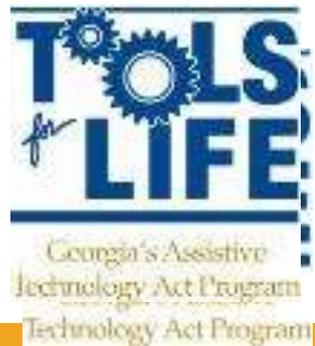
4. Educate and Advocate

- ## People are Listening
  - What are You saying?
- ## People are Watching
  - What are You doing?
- ## Practice What You Preach
  - Carry information with you everywhere.
  - Know your resources
 - Learn & share info about Assistive Technology
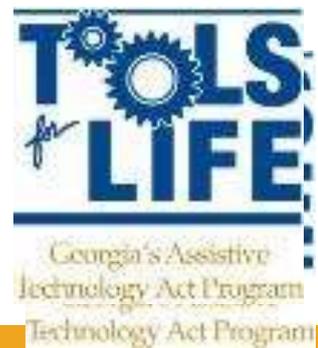
5. Change Our Community

- Change Someone's World and you will Change the World!
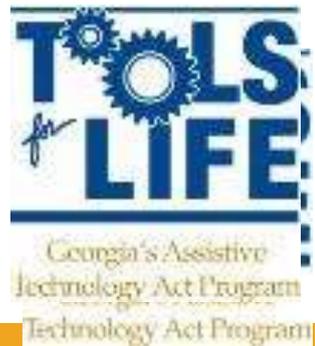
Ask It Basket!

What are your questions?
Here is your opportunity!

Our Question to You:
What have You Learned today?

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