

Disabilities Awareness



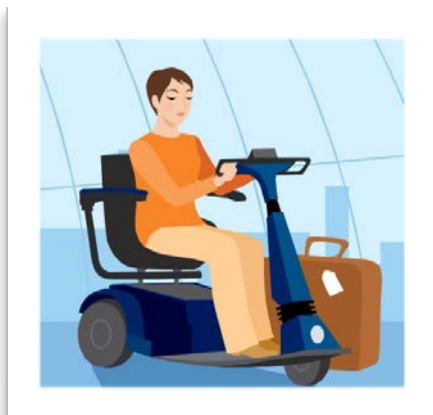
Presentation Developed by
Mayors Office for People with Disabilities
2018

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

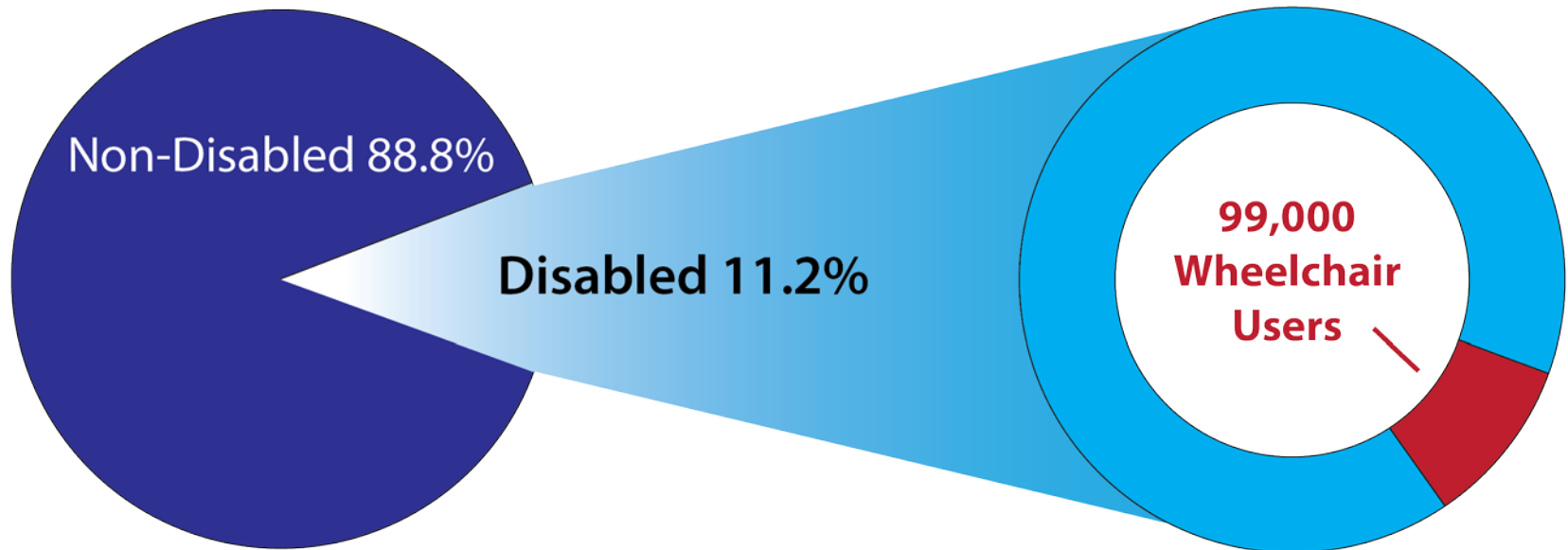
- We work hand-in-hand with other City agencies to ensure that the voice of the disabled community is represented and that City programs and policies address the needs of people with disabilities
- We are an information and referral service for people with disabilities looking for or having trouble with city services
- We work with businesses and community groups to ensure access to their goods and services

Goals of the Presentation

- Provide general information regarding people with disabilities
- Discuss how to effectively communicate with people with disabilities
- Discuss how best to assist people with disabilities



Numbers



NYC Population 8.5 million people

948,208 people with disabilities

Definition of Disability

- NYC Human Rights Law defines disability as – any physical, medical, mental or psychological impairment, or a history or record of such impairment
- This definition is more stringent than the ADA's definition

Language Tips

PUT THE PERSON FIRST

- Say “Person with a disability” rather than “disabled person”
- Say “People with disabilities” rather than “the disabled”
- For specific disabilities, say “Person who uses a wheelchair” or “Person who has Cerebral Palsy”
- If you are not sure what words to use, JUST ASK

Avoid Outdated Terms

Never Use:

- handicapped
- crippled
- retarded
- physically challenged
- differently-abled
- crazy
- wheelchair bound
- victim
- sufferer
- special needs

The Basics

- Ask before you help
- Do not assume everyone with a disability needs assistance
- If you do assist someone, ask how you should assist before acting
- Think about access in all your programs and services

Think Before You Speak

- Always speak directly to the person with a disability, not to their companion or interpreter
- Do not ask personal questions
- People with disabilities are the best judge of what they can or cannot do
- Do not make decisions for them

Be Sensitive About Physical Contact

- Some people with disabilities depend on their arms for balance, grabbing them could knock them off balance
- People with disabilities consider their mobility aids as part of their personal space

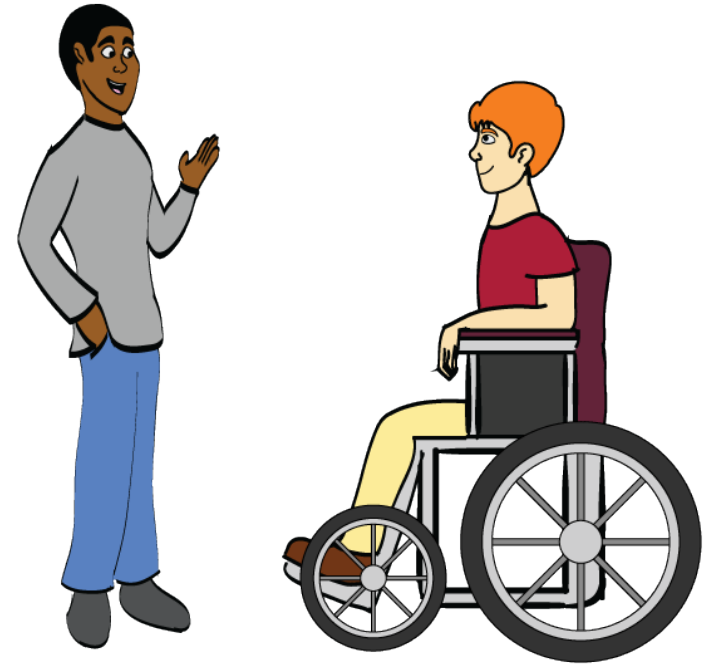
People Who Use Wheelchairs or other Mobility Devices



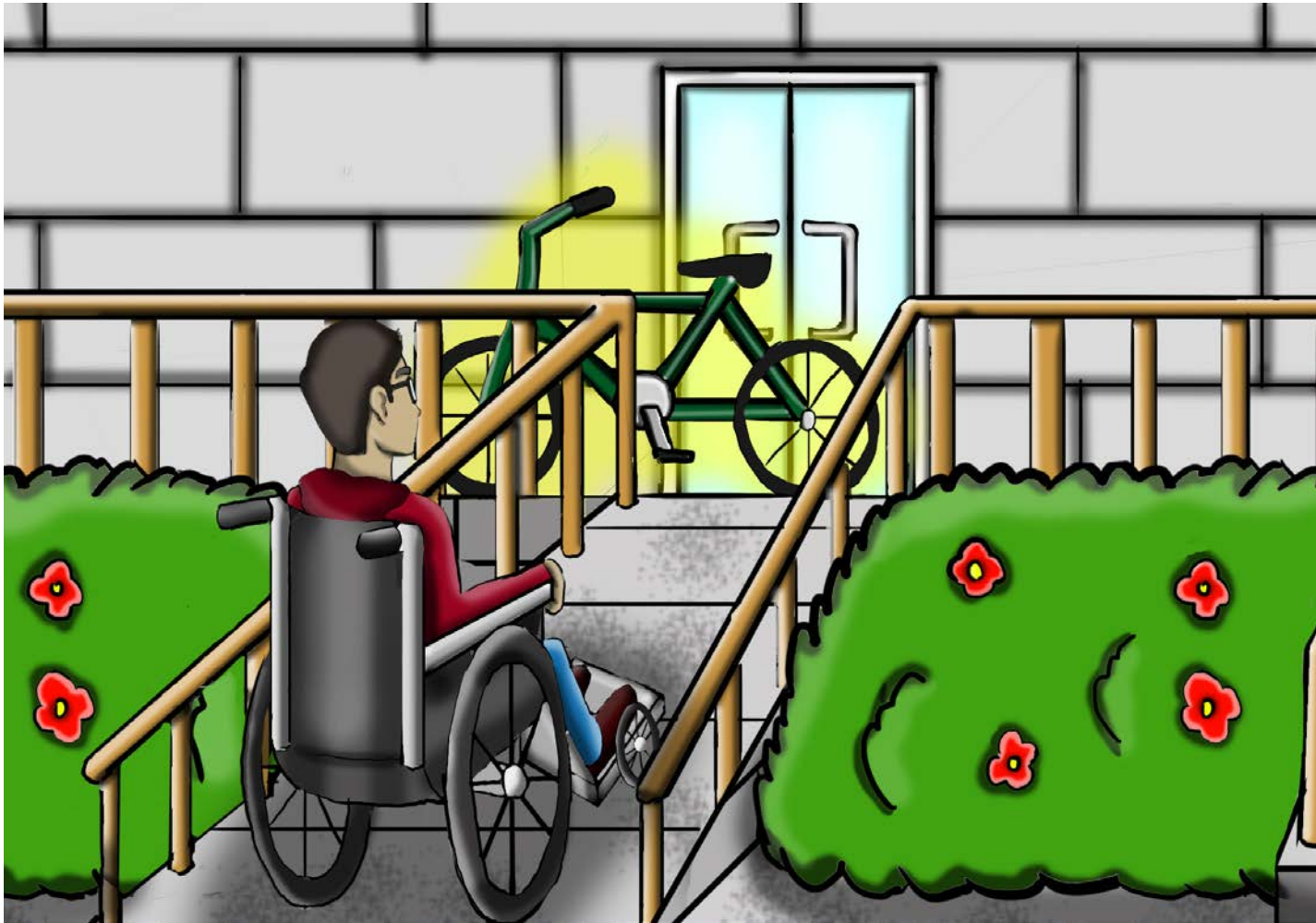
Be aware of reach limits -
place items within their grasp



Do not push or touch a person's wheelchair,
it is part of their personal space



When talking to someone who uses a wheelchair, sit or stand at a slight distance



Keep ramps and accessible doors to your facility open and unblocked

People Who Are Blind Or Have Low Vision



Cataracts

Create Haziness Over Entire Field of Vision



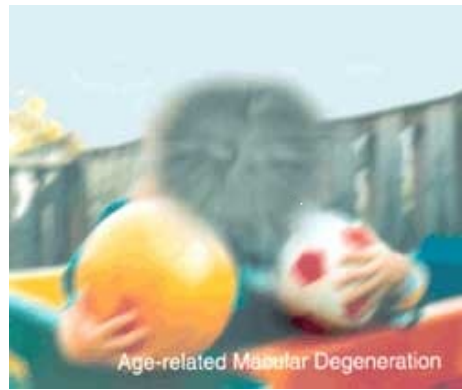
Retinitis Pigmentosa

Loss of Half of the Field of Vision



Macular Degeneration

Degenerative disease that causes a progressive loss of central vision



People Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision

- Many people who are blind travel unassisted or may use a cane or guide dog (walk on the side opposite)
- Identify yourself before you make contact with a person who is blind
- Offer your arm if they need to be guided
- Offer to read written information
- Have materials available in large print (18 point font or larger) for people with low vision

People Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision

- As you walk, describe the setting, noting any obstacles, such as stairs, the width of a gap between pavers, low overhead or protruding objects
- Give specific directions
- Do not use visual information (Turn right at the end of the street NOT Turn right at the convenience store)
- If you leave someone who is blind, let them know



People Who are Deaf

- Follow the person's cues to find out if they prefer sign language, gesturing, writing or speaking
- When using an interpreter, look directly at the person who is Deaf and maintain eye contact



People Who are Deaf

- Before speaking to a person who is Deaf, make sure you get their attention
- When talking, face the person
- Speak clearly
- There is no need to shout
- For simple interactions writing back and forth may be acceptable

People Who are Hard of Hearing

- Follow the person's cues to find out how they wish to communicate
- Before speaking to a person who is hard of hearing, make sure you get their attention
- When talking, face the person
- Speak clearly
- There is no need to shout

People With Speech Disabilities

- Give the person your full attention
- Do not interrupt them or try to finish their sentences
- If you don't understand, tell them and ask if they can repeat themselves
- If after repeating you still don't understand, ask if they can write it down

Mental Health Disabilities

- People with mental health disabilities (depression, bipolar disorder, PTSD) may have difficulty coping with the stresses of daily life
- Stress can affect the person's ability to function
- People with psychiatric disabilities have different ways of handling their disability
- In a crisis, stay calm and supportive

Learning Disabilities

- Learning Disabilities are life-long disorders that interfere with a person's ability to receive, express or process information
- One example, people with dyslexia have trouble reading written information as well as writing
- Allow extra time for reading and writing
- Ask how you can best relay information
- Not every learning disability is visible
- Every person with a learning disability is different

Developmental Disabilities

- People with developmental disabilities learn slowly
- Speak to the person in clear, simple sentences
- Do not speak down to the person or use baby talk
- Ask specific questions in order to elicit accurate responses
- Repeat questions in a different way to verify responses
- Every person with a developmental disability is different

Autism – Neuro Diverse

- Like all of us, people on the spectrum have strengths and weaknesses, but their profiles are likely to be more extreme in variability than the average person
- Most people with autism spectrum disorders do not have “savant” abilities enabling them to instantaneously make complex calculations, play a musical piece after hearing it once, or tell you what day your birthday will fall on in any given year
- If you meet one person with autism you have met ONE person with autism

Autism – Neuro Diverse

Common traits

Excellent rote memory

Ability to wholly absorb facts

Extremely focused

Propensity for innovation

Rules and routine oriented

Excellent attention to detail and accuracy

Kind-hearted

Loyal

Honest

Difficulty with social cues

Can find it difficult to sustain eye contact

Difficulty with irony and sarcasm

Autism – Neuro Diverse

Suggestions

Don't wait for the person to start a conversation

Keep your questions polite

Listen to them

Be direct when you need to finish a conversation

Questions



Thank you

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

Martha Jackson

majackson@cityhall.nyc.gov

Jonathan Novick

jnovick@cityhall.nyc.gov