

# Reframing the Disability Lens To Increase Economic Stability For Youth and Families Webinar # 4

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# Webinar Series

5 webinars: Topics include:

- Overview
- Work Incentives/Benefits Counseling
- Education/Family Engagement
- Customized Employment: Overcoming Barriers to Work and Work Based Learning

- Key elements: Webinars, Tools, Templates, Resources, Q/A for Guiding Discussion
- Recommended Approach: State or local teams comprised of representatives of human services agencies and disability agencies such as vocational rehabilitation, and workforce development such as Labor. Opportunity to integrated into other efforts such as 2 GEN, TANF State Plans and others
- Link to supporting materials: [www.mdtransitions.org](http://www.mdtransitions.org) link to APHSA



# Introduction

- PROMISE: Large scale national research grant with over 13,000 youth on SSI and their families recruited to improve educational and employment outcomes.
- California, Maryland, Arkansas, Wisconsin, ASPIRE (CO, AZ, SD, ND, MT, UT), and New York.
- Demographics included significantly high representation of minorities in each site—Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans
- Non-obvious disabilities comprised one of the largest populations in each location.

# Nonobvious Nomenclature

Nonobvious Disabilities  
Hidden Disabilities  
Invisible Disabilities

Words Matter

For this presentation we will be using “Nonobvious Disabilities” to refer to disabilities that are not readily apparent avoiding the connotations of intentionality in “Hidden Disabilities” and the implications that some disabilities are not “real” with the use of “Invisible Disabilities.”



# Nonobvious Disabilities Prevalence



About 10% of Americans have a medical condition which could be considered a *nonobvious disability*. Ninety –six percent (96%) of people with chronic medical conditions live with a condition that is *not obvious*.

These people do not use a cane or any assistive device and *may appear* as if they didn't have a *disabling* condition. About 25% of them have some type of activity limitation, ranging from mild to severe.“

<https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/invisible/>

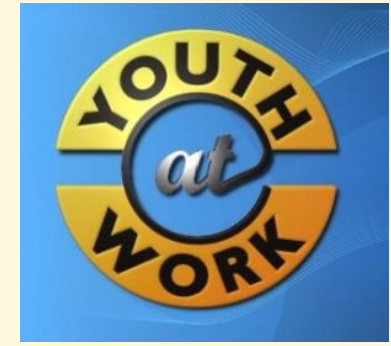
# Nonobvious Disabilities Include

- Learning disabilities—Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia
- Psychiatric—Depression, Anxiety, PTSD
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- ADD/ADHD
- Epilepsy
- Multiple Sclerosis/Fibromyalgia/ Migraines/Lupus/Diabetes
- Multiple Chemical Sensitivity/Allergies/Asthma
- Heart Disease/Cancer/Arthritis
- Hearing/vision loss
- Autism Spectrum

*\*List is not exhaustive*



# Youth and Families with Nonobvious Disabilities



- Not all are identified
- Stigma
- Multigenerational nature of some disabilities
- Age 18 Redetermination/Work Expectations
- Limitations of adult disability services/accessibility
- Perpetuation of multigenerational barriers to economic self sufficiency

# Why Does Disability Matter?

- For eligibility
- Depending on the disability, for postsecondary education and accommodations, given differences between K-12 Entitlement vs requesting/disclosing accommodations
- Accessing information/follow through i.e. completing, returning applications
- High drop out rates, in addressing recidivism and more
- In the work place
- Increased and often unreimbursed healthcare costs



# How to Effectively Serve Youth and Families With Nonobvious Disabilities

- Inclusive Design practices, reducing the need for disability specific services.  
<http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.XsPgYP9Kh0w>
- Strengths based vs deficit based with high expectations
- Knowledge is power: learning styles, what accommodations works best, any documentation such as copies of IEPs from school.

<https://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/?p=results>

# Nonobvious Disabilities In Higher Education

- Different laws. IDEA vs Sec 504/ADA
- Must contact Disability Support Services and provide documentation of disability. Only 35% who received special education in high school according to NLTS2.
- Not required to provide specialized services such as tutoring, or readers for personal use or study.
- Tendency to think they no longer need support.
- Accommodations are not retroactive.
- Disability costs can be added to costs for financial aid.

## Success Quotes

The only difference between  
success and failure is the ability  
to take action



Alexander Graham Bell

**Don't Wait  
Accommodations Are Not Retroactive**

# Job Training Provided Under Contract

- Ensure contracts with anyone providing training to the populations you serve requires they comply with federal and state laws and hold them to it.
- Proactively identify students who are struggling and get them tested.
- Ensure trainings embrace a wide array of learning styles.
- Create a culture of support for anyone who needs it, i.e. tutoring.

# Nonobvious Disabilities in the Workplace



**Maryland**  
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES

# Why Disclose?

- Additional resources/eligibility
- Accommodations/supports
- When you are having performance problems and think accommodations may help you improve performance
- Having a “diagnosis” does not mean an individual is automatically a qualified individual with a disability.

# Workplace Disclosure



If you choose to disclose, it may helpful to share:

- General information about your disability;
- Why you are disclosing your disability;
- How your disability affects your ability to perform key job tasks;
- Types of accommodations that have worked for you in the past; and/or
- Types of accommodations you anticipate needing

# Workplace Accommodations

- A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job or work environment that allows an individual with a disability to fully participate in all employment related activities. Title 1 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires businesses with 15 or more employees to provide reasonable accommodations that allow qualified employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their jobs.
- The employer pays for the accommodation unless it creates an undue hardship. Undue hardship means an action requiring significant difficulty or expense.
- When you are requesting a reasonable accommodation, it is important to engage in a conversation with your employer. Understand the essential functions, fundamental job duties of your position, and how the accommodations you are requesting will allow you to perform those duties. Present your employer with resources about reasonable accommodations and options of accommodations that will meet your needs. Resources that may be helpful for your employer include: <https://askjan.org/>



# Workplace Accommodations Requests

- An individual needs to inform their employer if an accommodation is needed
- They may need to provide documentation of disability, which could be provided by their doctor.
- When an individual is having performance problems and think accommodations may help improve performance
- An employer is only required to provide work-related accommodations if an individual asks for one.

# Workplace Accommodations

## Example #1

A cleaning company rotates its staff to different floors on a monthly basis. One staff has a psychiatric disability.

His mental illness does not affect his ability to perform the cleaning but it does make it difficult to adjust to alterations in his daily routine. The employee has had significant difficulty adjusting to the monthly changes in floor assignments. He proposes three options:

- staying on one floor permanently,
- staying on one floor for two months and then rotating, or
- allowing a transition period to adjust to a change in floor assignments.

# Workplace Accommodations



A family member, friend, health professional, or other representative may request a reasonable accommodation on behalf of an individual with a disability. Of course, the individual with a disability may refuse to accept an accommodation that is not needed.

- The ADA makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person based on that person's association with a person with a disability

# Disability History and Pride

1977

Sit-in by people with disabilities in San Francisco, Longest takeover of a federal building in US history, 28 days.

Disability pride/self advocacy <https://ncil.org/disability-pride-toolkit-and-resource-guide/>

Judy Heuman first posited that environments, at least as much as abilities, are responsible for someone being perceived as disabled and that at best anyone is only ever "temporarily abled bodied."

<https://www.shondaland.com/inspire/a31946513/judy-heumann-crip-camp-netflix/>

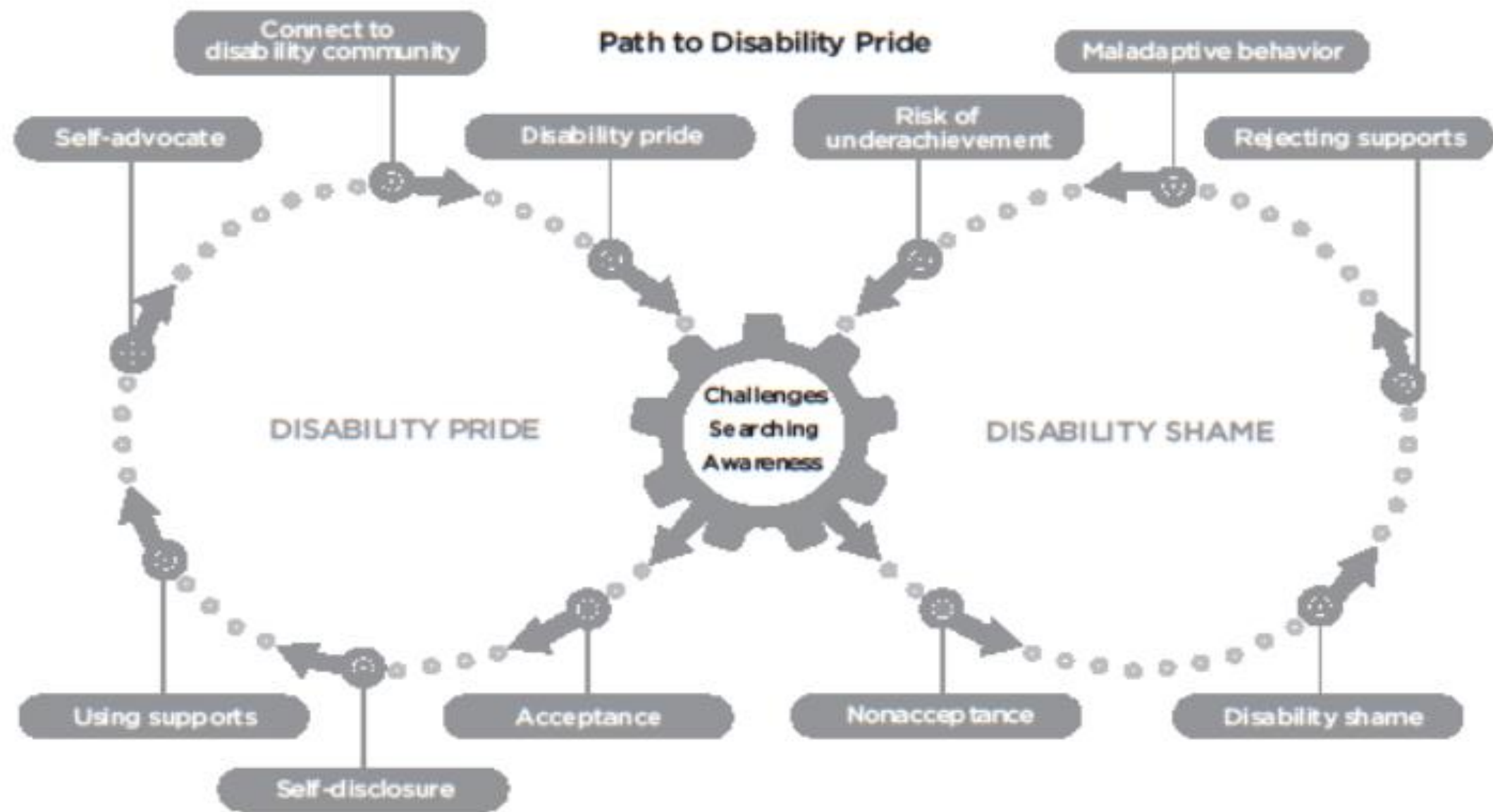


Figure 2.1. Disability Pride Framework.

# Disability Does Not Define Ability

**Non-obvious disabilities means we do not always see just how many truly successful individuals there are. Don't let Stigma define anyone with a disability. Encourage them to share and become a positive role model.**



# Unpacking the Toolkit

- Financial Aid Fact Sheet
- Disclosure Fact Sheet
- Resources including where to get more information and training
- Questions to Stimulate State and Local Discussions
- [www.mdtransitions.org](http://www.mdtransitions.org)



# Appreciation and Contact information



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