

Library Accessibility

student worker training, 2023

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Slides available: <https://link.mnsu.edu/9qq>

Purpose of this training

- To share general information about accessibility relevant to providing great library services.

Content of this training

- Why does accessibility matter?
- Who is accessibility for?
 - What is a disability?
 - What is ableism?
- What are your responsibilities?
- How do you get help if you're unsure what to do?

Why does accessibility matter?

- A thing or place being accessible means that people can easily use or enter it.
- Most public spaces are designed for people of average height and size, average ways of moving and sensing and communicating with the world. But just focusing on the average leaves a lot of people out!
- As a publicly funded educational institution, we are required to comply with disability laws including
 - ADA Title I, focuses on employment
 - ADA Title II, focuses on non-discriminatory access to public spaces
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, requires federally funded universities to provide accessible programs

Who is accessibility for?

- Broadly speaking, accessibility is for everyone.
- In this session, the focus is on accessibility for people with disabilities, whether they identify themselves to you as disabled or not.
 - You don't have to personally identify as disabled to be covered under anti-discrimination laws.
 - Some Deaf and neurodivergent people do not identify as disabled, for example, but still experience ableism and are still part of accessibility movements.
 - Depending on who you talk to, neurodivergent can be a non-medicalized way of referring (narrowly) to autistic people and sometimes people with ADHD, or (broadly) to anyone whose brain does not operate in a normative fashion (including people with autism, ADHD, tic disorders, epilepsy, personality disorders, Down syndrome, anxiety disorders, dyslexia, and more)

What is a disability?

- Disability is defined differently under different laws.
- According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a person with disability is
 - "a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity...."
- Conditions that may meet this criteria include a very long list, such as:

Amputation	Cancer	Depression	Long COVID	Paraplegia
Auditory Processing Disorder	Cerebral Palsy	Epilepsy	Low vision	PTSD
Bladder impairment	Colorblindness	Fibromyalgia	Migraines	Schizophrenia

What is ableism?

- Ableism is a set of stereotypes and practices that devalue and discriminate against people with disabilities. It assumes that the bodies and minds of non-disabled people are the 'default,' placing value on them based on society's perceptions of what's considered 'normal.' - [DPF](#)
- It can look like:
 - Segregated services
 - Inaccessible buildings
 - Inaccessible websites
 - Lack of accommodations
 - Jokes that punch down on people with disabilities
 - Eugenics movements, restricted care, and mass death

What are your responsibilities?

- Circ workers: Read through the [Accessibility Fact Sheet](#) and know where to find it again if you need it.
- Know where the First Aid kits are located.
- Know where accessibility features are located so you can refer people to them as needed.
 - quiet study areas, height-adjustable computer workstations, MavPod alternatives, water fountains, vending machines, bathrooms
 - headsets to check out, disposable earplugs
- Move stuff out of the way if it's blocking walkways or exits.
- Let your supervisor know if you have questions or concerns about accessibility.

How do you get help if you're unsure?

- Start by contacting your supervisor.
 - If you have questions or notice accessibility concerns, please report them! It helps us all do a better job!
- Your supervisor may need to reach out to the Library Administration Office, campus Accessibility Resources office, or others for more help.
 - This means that sometimes getting an answer will take a while. The sooner we hear about a problem, the sooner we can start to address it!