Engaging Adults with Disabilities in Evidence-Based Programs

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May 25, 2017
Integrating People with Disabilities in Health Programs

Presenter: Karl D. Cooper, Esq.

NCOA State Grantee Meeting
May 25, 2017
AAHD Mission: To promote health and wellness for people with disabilities

- Reduce Health Disparities
- Advocate for Community Inclusion
- Promote Full Accessibility
- Integrate Disability into Public Health Agenda
## Health Disparities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social</th>
<th>People without Disabilities</th>
<th>People with Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim of violent crime</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiovascular disease (18-44 year olds)</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current smoker</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in no leisure-time physical activity</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health and Health Risk Behaviors</th>
<th>People without Disabilities</th>
<th>People with Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women current with mammogram</td>
<td></td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not receiving needed medical care (due to cost)</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tip Sheets

• Tip Sheet: Engaging People with Disabilities in Evidence-Based Programs

• Tip Sheet: Developing Partnerships with the Disability Community
  https://www.ncoa.org/resources/developing-partnerships-disability-community/
Including People with Disabilities in Your Programs

Presentations

• April 2015 Presentation: Including Adults with Disabilities in CDSME and Falls Prevention Programs

• May 2016 Presentation: Outreach to Adults with Disabilities
National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability

http://www.nchpad.org/
NCHPAD

Goals

Develop, Implement, Evaluate and Disseminate activities aimed at:

• Raising knowledge and awareness (awareness first – knowledge second) of the health needs of people with disabilities;

• Developing and disseminating models, strategies, tools, and materials;

• Training and educating health care professionals and others that provide support and/or services to people with disabilities;

• Promoting the adoption of healthy behaviors aimed at reducing health disparities for people with disabilities.
NCHPAD

iCHIP

Inclusive Community Health Implementation Package
What Does Inclusion Mean?

All community members:

1. Are presumed competent
2. Are recruited and welcome as valued members of their community
3. Fully participate and learn with their peers
4. Experience reciprocal social relationships
Gathering a Community Snapshot

**Assets/Strengths**

**Gaps/Areas for Improvement**

Completing a community assessment - CHII
NCHPAD

**GRAIDs**

- Guidelines,
- Recommendations,
- Adaptations,
- Including
- Disability
Evidenced-Based Programs for Adaptation

Physical Activity
1. SPARK
2. CATCH Kids Club
3. Go4Life
4. Arthritis Foundation Aquatics/Exercise Program
5. Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program
Evidenced-Based Programs for Adaptation

Healthy Weight
6. Diabetes Prevention Program
7. BMI
8. Girls on the Run

Nutrition
9. SNAP-Ed
10. Weight-Wise
NCHPAD

Initiatives

COMMIT TO INCLUSION
COMMITTOINCLUSION.ORG

HOW I WALK
A Campaign to Rebrand Walking
Commit to Inclusion - Inclusive Health Bill of Rights

1. All people have the right to barrier free access to health promotion programs and services offered within their communities.
2. All people have the right to navigate barrier-free within fitness facilities, utilize inclusive equipment, and participate fully in group fitness settings.
3. All people have the right to accessible green space within their communities including parks and playgrounds.
4. All people have the right to access opportunities within their communities that promote both indoor and outdoor active leisure and recreational activities.
5. All children have the right to full involvement in daily physical education activities and afterschool sports participation.
6. All people have the right to improve infrastructure that supports active commuting opportunities.
7. All people have the right to accessible signage in order to navigate and interact effectively within their communities.
8. All people have the right to increased access to public transportation.
9. All people have the right to access and purchase healthy and low-cost food and beverages in public service venues including schools and worksites.
10. All people have the right to education and access to healthy and low-cost food options within their communities.
How I Walk

SYSTEMS DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF EVERYONE

#HOWIWKALK
www.nchpad.org/howiwalk
Special Olympics

Healthy Communities

The vision of the Special Olympics Health program, made possible by the Gansano Foundation, is to create a future world where people with intellectual disabilities have the same opportunities to be as healthy as people without intellectual disabilities and, in doing so, Special Olympics athletes can perform to their best on and off the playing field. Over the next 5 years, Special Olympics is working to create 100 Healthy Communities around the world – working toward increasing access to health care and improving health status of people with intellectual disabilities.

Interested in learning more? Contact Kristin Hughes Sroor, Director of Special Olympics Global Health Programs, at khughes@specialolympics.org

http://resources.specialolympics.org/Taxonomy/Health/_Catalog_of_Healthy_Communities.aspx
Special Olympics

Healthy Athletes

The Healthy Athletes program is dedicated to providing health services and education to Special Olympics athletes, and changing the way health systems interact with people with intellectual disabilities.

Healthy Athletes’ influence is evident with more than 116,000 healthcare professionals trained, free health examinations provided to more than 1.6 million athletes, and 100,000 free pairs of eyeglasses given to athletes. Healthy Athletes continues to grow each year with help from a global network of volunteers, in-kind donations and other financial support. Healthy Athletes is part of Special Olympics’ global health program.

For more information, contact Karl Hejlik, khejlik@specialolympics.org, Director of Internal Communications.

Disciplines And Resources

- Pit Punt
- PUNTminus
- Health Promotion
- Healthy Hearing
- HeadFirst
- Opening Eyes
- Special Smiles
- Healthy Athletes Software
- Healthy Athletes Software – SONA PROGRAMS ONLY

http://resources.specialolympics.org/Topics/Healthy_Athletes/Healthy_Athletes_Resources.aspx
Three Components

1. Develop on-line Breast Health Resource Portal

2. Perform on-site facility visit and technical assistance (No Cost)

3. Develop innovative and engaging interactive on-line training modules to increase mammography staff awareness
AAHD (American Association on Health and Disability)
www.aahd.us

Project Accessibility USA
project-accessibility-usa.org/Home.htm

National Disability Navigator Resource Collaborative
www.nationaldisabilitynavigator.org/
Be Vision Aware: Serving Older Persons with Vision Loss

AFB American Foundation for the Blind
Expanding possibilities for people with vision loss
by Pris Rogers, Ph.D.
Acting Web Programs Manager
Objectives

• Participants will be able to identify concerns and issues related to serving older persons with vision loss
• Participants will learn about some existing models
• Participants will learn about simple modifications and techniques
• Participants will learn about resources and locating services
Demographics

• According to the American Community Survey, about 1 in 50 Americans experiences “serious trouble seeing, even when wearing glasses or contacts.”
• For Americans over age 55, the rate of vision difficulty is 1 in 20, and for those over age 85, the rate approaches 1 in 5.
  (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015)
• 2% of seniors with vision Loss receive rehab services.
Demographics--#2

- No. of Americans with vision Impairment and blindness to double to 8M+ by 2050.
- Women, particularly older women, bear greatest burden for all eye diseases (cataract, glaucoma, hyperopia, myopia, vision impairment) except diabetic retinopathy (men).
Demographics --#3

- Greatest burden: 80+ due to age-related macular degeneration and cataract.
- Non-Hispanic white women are largest proportion of people affected. Need for screening for all populations.
Aging and Vision Loss

Concerns

• Losing vision affects every aspect of everyday life and often requires the help of trained professionals to cope with the loss of independence and depression that can come with vision loss.

• Older persons with vision loss experience isolation and loneliness

• Additional Issues:
  ▶ Accessibility and inclusion of older persons with vision loss in programs
  ▶ Transportation and mobility issues
  ▶ High risk for falls

© 2013 American Foundation for the Blind
Challenges

• Most are not connected to services that can help them adjust to vision loss and learn basic information

• Services are vastly underfunded and understaffed resulting in long waiting lists in many states; services vary across the country.

• Older people are often unaware of services. Doctors may not refer for services despite efforts to educate them.
Challenges Continued

- Service providers may not be aware of services or may not be able to access them.
- Older persons with vision loss often refuse help due to lack of understanding and motivation.
Be Part of the Solution

Consider these important questions:

1. How are you currently handling referrals to vision rehabilitation services for older persons with vision problems?
2. What concerns do you have about serving older persons with vision problems who request your services?
3. How do you assess types of services needed to maximize the independence and safety of the older person with vision loss?
4. What steps do you currently take to integrate older persons with vision loss into settings such as senior centers, activities such as fall prevention programs?
What You Can Do

- Increase the capacity and motivation of programs serving seniors to deliver quality, accessible programming for seniors with vision loss.
- Increase vision loss knowledge and skills among managers and staff in programs serving seniors; learn how to adapt programs.
- Motivate programs serving seniors to actively reach out to, engage and support seniors with vision loss.
What You Can Do
Continued

• Learn about resources.
• Connect with agencies providing rehab services to older persons with vision loss and involve them and consumers with vision loss in advisory groups.
Examples of Programs for Seniors with Vision Loss

- NYC-VISIONS NYC-- fall prevention and other evidence-based programs such as SAIL, ALED, and Walk with Ease
- Massachusetts—fall prevention, technology, support groups
- Dallas - Balance Intervention
- Senior Center Without Walls: full inclusion of older persons with vision loss in programming
- Minnesota--Aging Eye Initiative—empowering allied health and aging network staff
VISIONS NYC: Examples of Adapting Programs

- VISIONS has adapted five evidenced based programs for older persons who are blind or visually impaired.
- The most popular is Walk with Ease.
- They obtained grant funding to do this.
- All of the evidence programs require volunteers in the sessions along with trained staff, adapted hand outs (large print, braille, flash drive downloads) and verbal instructions that they created for all physical movement classes.
VISIONS is a member of the NYC Falls Prevention Coalition led by the NYC Department for the Aging and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Health.

• With VISIONS input they developed a screening tool that is specific to NYC to be used by any professional or home care worker to determine falls risk in the home.

• Having an eye exam is part of the protocol that is included in the fall screening program

NYC Prevent Falls Draft Checklist

How to Prevent Falls: A Home Safety Checklist

Falls can cause serious injury. Fortunately, most falls can be prevented. Use this checklist to find and fix fall hazards in your home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEDROOM</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>If Yes, How to Fix</th>
<th>Who Will Fix the Hazard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is it dark by your bed at night?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Place a lamp, night light, touch light or flashlight close to the bed, where it is easy to reach.</td>
<td>(for example: family member, neighbor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dallas-- Balance Improvement Project

• Dr. Pam Beach, SUNY College Rockport--researching interventions to improve balance in seniors with vision loss.

• Pre-testing was conducted at the AFB Center on Vision Loss, Dallas with 10 seniors over the age of 55 with varying levels of vision loss

• Testing will be done again after 8 weeks of exercising to determine if their balance or perception of balance has changed.

• Each participant got an audio text file with ways to exercise, an audio recording of a described Barre class from “Blind Alive” and an audio recording of Blind Yoga.
Dallas Continued

- Participants received a choice of exercise aids to use at home: balance mat, a vestibular disk, a yoga mat for people with visual loss, stretch bands and/or the Simply Fit board from Shark Tank.
The Massachusetts Commission for the Blind and the Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging are collaborating in three areas:

- Provision of technology for older persons with loss vision in 3 senior centers
- Low vision support groups in senior centers
- "A Matter of Balance" training for older seniors with vision loss. Mass Commission for the Blind staff were trained to provide.
## Senior Center Without Walls

- Innovative outreach program for seniors which offers activities, education, classes, support groups, and presentations all done over the phone or computer.
- Each week, seniors can access over 70 groups or classes by phone or online from the comfort of home and it is FREE!
- Currently over 1/3 of the participants are blind or visually impaired
Minnesota Aging Eye Initiative

- Minnesota State Services for the Blind has trained over 600 individual providers
- Provided assessment tool and kits with low vision supplies
- Provided referral information for additional services
- Provide on-going training, certificates, and CE’s.
Impact of MN Program

Project Director’s assessment of impact:
Loss of vision is one of the most feared medical issues. For older adults new to vision loss, “our program settles the freak out factor” of losing vision.

www.visionaware.org/info/emotionalsupport/personal-stories/eye-conditions/personal-stories/deanne-jackson

Deanne Jackson –from despair to hope
Is Your Program or Facility “Vision Friendly”?

- Does it have good lighting?
- Are there window treatments to prevent glare?
- Does the furniture contrast with the flooring?
- Is it easy to recognize doorways? Do the door frames contrast with the wall treatments?
Is Your Program Vision Friendly Continued

• Do you provide large print /other accessible formats. What about bold line pens or signature guides and is the signage clear—in large, legible print with contrasting colors?

• Do you know how to assist or guide an older person with vision loss who needs assistance?
Resources You Can Use
Roadmap for Living with Vision Loss

- VisionAware offers a roadmap to help people on their way to independence. Visionaware.org/roadmap.
- It can get people started on the path feeling more confident.
"Getting Started" Kit for People New to Vision Loss

Our tip sheets can help you get started.

Over 20 million Americans report trouble seeing, and that number is on the rise. Coping with vision loss can feel overwhelming and stressful, but when armed with the right information, you can face the future with confidence. With that in mind, the VisionAware™ “Getting Started” kit was created to provide hope and help to handle the challenges of vision loss, and to connect you and your family members with specialized services and products available to assist with everyday life with vision loss.

These tip sheets are just a small sample of the wealth of information you will find on VisionAware.org, including newsletters and blogs with the latest news on vision loss, and in-depth articles on eye conditions and on living with vision loss as well as vision rehabilitation professionals who can help you cope with vision loss. We also encourage you to download and share these free tip sheets from VisionAware, available in both English and Spanish. Right-click on any of the links below and choose “Save Target As…” to download them to your own computer.

To receive a print copy, register for VisionAware.

- Five Questions to Ask Your Eye Care Professional
- Kitchen Safety Tips and Products
- Bathroom Safety Tips and Products
- Tips for Making Print More Readable
- Living with Vision Loss: Your Home Office
- Technology Tips and Products
- Meeting a Person with Vision Loss
- Meeting a Person with Hearing and Vision Loss
- Having Fun
- Keeping Fit
AFB’s “Be VisionAware”
Training Guide

Components of Guide

• Environmental Modifications for the Aging Eye: Is Your Community Eye-Friendly?
• Age-Related Eye Conditions
• Reading and Writing
• Adaptive Aids
• Entertainment and Leisure
• (available upon request)
How to Walk with a Guide

Often, people who are blind or visually impaired need some assistance with walking safely outside familiar environments. Perhaps a friend or family member may try to help by holding your hand or having you rest your hand on his or her shoulder.

While well-intended, these methods are not safe and can lead to accidents. The following skills are designed to help you and your guide maximize safety and efficiency when walking together.

How can I walk more comfortably and effectively with a guide?

There may be times when you find that it is faster and easier to get somewhere by walking with another person who will act as a "guide." The following tips can be helpful if you use a guide to help you walk to your mailbox, visit a neighbor, or shop in a mall or grocery store.

Hold the guide’s arm just above the elbow, similar to the way you hold a glass of water or a soda can (credit: Dona Sauerbruger)

1. Take the guide’s arm and hold it gently but firmly just above the elbow; with the same grasp you would use to hold a glass of water (thumb on the outside of the guide’s arm, and fingers on the other side, nearer the guide’s body). This grip will allow you to receive the greatest amount of feedback from the guide’s movements.
2. The grip should be firm enough so that you don’t lose contact with the guide, but not so firm that the guide is uncomfortable.
3. If you use a cane, take the guide’s arm with your free hand.
4. Tell the guide if his or her pace is too fast for you. It’s important that you walk at a pace that is comfortable for both of you.
The correct position: half a step behind the guide (credit: Dona Sauerburger)

5. **Follow the guide’s movements and stay half a step behind the guide when you walk together.** A good way to do this is to keep your elbow close to your body.

6. If you walk in this position, instead of side-by-side, you will have time to react to hazards or obstacles in your path.

7. Instruct your guide to approach curbs and steps head-on, rather than at an oblique angle, so that you know where to expect the edge of the curb or step in relation to your guide’s, and your own, body.

8. Remember that it usually requires training and practice to follow the movement of your guide. To anticipate steps and stairs, especially if you have some useful vision.

9. Ask your guide to always leave you in contact with a landmark, such as a chair, table, or wall, and not leave you alone in an “open” space.

10. If you are approaching a narrow space, your guide should signal the change by moving his or her hand behind the back. You then move to a position directly behind your guide and slide your hand down to the guide’s wrist.

11. When approaching a drop off, your guide should stop with his or her toes close to the drop off and announce: “Curb up,” or “Stairs going down.” Then, the guide should step forward and allow you to find the stair or curb with your toes. If there is a handrail, your guide should always position you on the side of the handrail and let you know where it is so you may use it.

12. When going through a door, you will need to know two things from your guide: 1) Does the door open to the right or to the left? and 2) Does the door open out or in? If the door opens on the right, you should be on the guide’s right side. If the door opens on the left, you should be on the guide’s left side. This may require a change of sides.

13. An orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist can teach you additional techniques and signals that you and your guide can use to go through doorways and walk single file through narrow spaces.

14. Try to use **visualization** in combination with this guiding technique in order to receive maximum feedback from your surroundings. For more information, see Learn To Use Your Other Senses.
Preventing Falls

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than one-third of adults ages 65 and older fall each year in the United States. People with vision loss are almost twice as likely to experience multiple falls as those with normal vision.

To prevent falling, use contrasting hand rails that go beyond the steps for a safer grasp and easier walk down the stairs.

There are a number of things you can do to prevent falls in your home:

* Don’t store the things you need in high places that would require the use of a step stool to reach.
* Arrange your furniture so that there is a clear path for walking, and keep clutter out of walkways. Avoid using furniture on wheels.
* Clap-on/clap-off lights in the living room and in your bedroom will keep you from having to get up from your chair to adjust the lighting.
* See Household Organization for more suggestions to keep your home environment safe.


Our video series Preventing Falls by Adapting Your Home, created with the help of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center Community Occupational Services Program, offers simple suggestions for each area of the home to prevent falls, increase mobility, and make a home a safer environment.

* Next: Video: Preventing Falls by Adapting Your Home

Looking for Help?

Find Services Near You:
Select a state/province
Browse All Services

Featured Items

Low Vision and the White Cane: A Tool for Fall Prevention
Importance of Cane to Safety and Fall Prevention

Low Vision and the White Cane: A Tool for Fall Prevention

By Mary D'Apice
Orientation and Mobility Specialist

The Long White Cane: A Useful Tool
Fear of falling: It's a serious concern many older adults share. Seniors who have low vision are understandably more anxious about tripping over objects or missing curbs. Regrettably, many older people simply stop venturing out because they are afraid that a fall may lead to serious injury.

But most people do not realize that the white cane, also known as the long cane, is a wonderful tool that is available to those who have some remaining vision and are not totally blind. If a traveler has some sight but doesn't always trust his or her vision, a white cane can help by detecting obstacles or elevation changes. The white cane will also alert others to the fact that the traveler does not see well.

An orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist can fit an individual for the cane and provide specialized training in how to travel safely, efficiently, and confidently in one's own neighborhood and beyond. I'd like to share a few scenarios in which the use of the white cane can contribute to peace of mind and help people who have visual impairments maintain their quality of life.

Using the Cane to Detect Obstacles and Elevation Changes

Meet Mrs. Momoto, Who has Glaucoma
A vibrant, upbeat woman in her 60s, Mrs. Momoto has glaucoma. As a result of her shrinking field of vision, she sees the world as if she is looking through a cardboard tube. Mrs. Momoto still has a lot of usable vision in her central field of view. On a walk around the neighborhood, she can read street signs, admire the neighbor’s garden, and recognize a friend riding by on her bicycle. Because she has “tunnel vision,” however, she can easily miss recycling bins at her feet or may scrape up against low hedges.

Mrs. Momoto used to enjoy a brisk walk every morning, but now she walks very slowly and cautiously. Her back hurts from being bent over as she nervously checks the area just in front of her feet. Sometimes, she is so focused on the ground that she misses a tree branch at head height. What’s more, her attention is so concentrated on the sidewalk that she forgets to look up and enjoy the view.

Mrs. Momoto always thought that a white cane was reserved for people with no vision at all so she was very surprised when her ophthalmologist said she would be an excellent candidate for training with the cane. She went to a local center for the visually impaired and began working with an O&M Specialist. In time, Mrs. Momoto found that she could trust the cane to do the work of detecting obstacles and drop-offs in her path so she could focus her vision elsewhere.
Skills You Need for Everyday Living

Vision loss that occurs in adulthood can present special challenges. After relying on your sense of sight for most of your life, you'll likely discover that blindness, visual impairment, or low vision can require adaptations in the way you manage your everyday life and activities.

Losing your vision, however, does not mean that you'll have to give up your independence or any of the activities you currently enjoy.

In this section about living independently at home with vision loss, we provide tips, techniques, and information about helpful products that can help you accomplish a wide range of everyday tasks:

- Home modifications
- Kitchen adaptations
- Household organization
- Orientation and mobility skills
- Recreation and leisure activities
- Making home repairs

Please Take Our 2017 Survey

Announcements

- EZ Test Battery: A Great Gift Idea
- Apple Curates a New Collection of VoiceOver-Friendly Apps

Questions and Answers

- How can I tell my pill bottles apart?
- What should I tell my pharmacist about identifying my eye drops and medication containers?
- How can I help my family and friends adjust to my vision
Managing Medication

Products and Devices to Help You Identify Your Medications

The U.S. Access Board has developed a best practice list of delivery methods for providing accessible prescription drug containers. Some of these methods include using electronic devices, smart phone apps, and stand-alone talking devices to identify medication.

Now solutions are coming out every day. To learn about several options that are currently available, listen as Neva Fairchild, National Independent Living Associate, describes the pros and cons of several products, organizational systems, and labeling techniques.

Find a few of these and other helpful consumer products in our Product Database.

AccessaMed
Digit-Eyes
i.d. mate Quest
ScripTalk
Take-n-Slide
Talking RX Personal Talking Prescription Device
Walgreens Talking Pill Reminder
Target Prescription Bottle
Tel-Rx
Timey 2
Using a high-contrast tray

AccessaMed

Audio description of AccessaMed

Transcript

Neva: AccessaMed is a device that can be attached to prescriptions, whether they’re in a bottle or a box. It
Helpful Products and Technology for Living with Vision Loss

Several guides can help you locate the best products to help you adjust to vision loss:

- **American Foundation for the Blind Product Search.** This is a comprehensive listing of assistive technology products used by people who are blind or visually impaired. It is the place to go to search for a product or manufacturer, find out what products are out there, and decide which product is best for you, a family member, or one of your clients. You can browse by task, product category, or manufacturer.

- You can link to product reviews published in AccessWorld®, AFB’s online technology magazine. Be sure to read AccessWorld’s article on Selecting Products for Seniors with Vision Loss.

- **Specialty Products Sources.** Many products are available in the marketplace to help you live more independently with vision loss. AFB has compiled a comprehensive list of specialty resources to help you find what you need. If you know of a resource that we do not have in our list, please let us know at visionaware@afb.net.

- **AbleData.** This site provides objective information about assistive technology products and rehabilitation equipment available from domestic and international sources. AbleData does not sell these products, but can help you locate the companies that do.

Please Take Our 2017 Survey
Organizing and Modifying Your Home

Your home is "your castle" and you want to continue feeling safe, comfortable, and in control of your personal living environment. In the early stages of vision loss, you may begin to feel the need to make changes in your home that will allow you to remain independent, safe, and more "in control" when you're preparing meals, bathing, doing laundry, and managing your correspondence.

In this section, we provide information and resources to help you make home modifications—such as lighting and glare, color and contrast—that you can use to make room-by-room changes throughout your home and maintain control of your personal living environment.

Evaluating and modifying your home does not have to be expensive or difficult. Many useful adaptations are as simple as installing a brighter light bulb, replacing sheer curtains with mini-blinds to cut down on glare, or marking the edges of steps with brightly colored tape or paint to make them easier to see. These simple modifications can also help you to prevent falls in your home.

New to vision loss? Our Getting Started Kit can help.

Please Take Our 2017 Survey

Related Links

Learn To Use Your Other Senses To Help You Cope with Blindness and Vision Loss
Organizing and Labeling Clothing When You Are Blind or Have Low Vision
Housecleaning Tips
Household Organization

Announcements

Taking Control of Your Appliances with Custom Overlay Labels
EZ Test Battery: A Great Gift Idea
COMPUTERS for $50 - $70 for persons on SSDI and/or SSI due to Blindness and to Parents of Children with Visual Impairments

View All Announcements
Recreation and Leisure for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

There are many recreation and leisure activities that can be adapted for people who are blind or have low vision, or for seniors who are losing their sight.

You may want to return to an activity you've always enjoyed, or you may want to try something new, challenging, and altogether different, such as Scrabble, running, or tandem biking.

There is a wide range of recreational, social, and craft activities for you to consider, including crafting, card and board games, cultural activities, gardening, swimming, bowling, and tandem biking.

Please Take Our 2017 Survey

Related Links


Cell Phones, Tablets, and Other Mobile Technology for Users with Visual Impairments

Using Social Media with a Visual Impairment or Blindness: Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn


Announcements

New AFB eLearning Webinar: Exercise and Fitness Strategies for Older Adults

Featured International Agency of the Month: Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria

View All Announcements

Personal Stories

Tuesday Night Tandem: An Opportunity for Fun and Fitness
Retirement Living

Visionaware.org/forseniors

Retirement Living and Vision Loss

The time to retire has arrived. Perhaps you’ve looked forward to this time for years and planned to enjoy vacations or your favorite activities, such as fishing, bowling, genealogy, bridge, bingo, or reading. On the other hand, you may be concerned about retirement and the “big changes” that not working may mean in your life.

Another big change you may be encountering is that your vision is not quite what it used to be. What now? Should you think about staying at home? Moving to a retirement community or senior living facility?

Where To Live?

Trying to decide where to live in retirement is often a difficult decision to make – and perhaps your family members may be pressing you to move in with them. You know that having a good support system is critical as you get older, but you also don’t want to be a “burden.”

When you add coping with vision loss to the mix, making the “right” decision for you becomes that much harder. What should you look for if you decide to make a move? Do you want to live in sunny Florida or in a location with four seasons? Do you want to live near your children, grandchildren, and other family members? And not all retirement and senior living facilities are the same.

Regardless of where you choose to live, there are many things you can do to make your residence and your community safer, more enjoyable, and easier to navigate. At VisionAware, you can find information about:

- Assessing your living situation
- Organizing and modifying your home
- Home safety
- Preventing falls
- Things to look for if you decide to relocate
- Continuing to travel

Back to: For Seniors

Looking for Help?

Find Services Near You:
Select a state/province
Browse All Services

Featured Items

Free Webinar on Retirement Homes

Join Our Mission

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Finding Services
afb.org/directory
National Services for Senior Citizens

Overview

People age 55 and over with combined vision and hearing loss comprise the largest group of people who are deaf-blind in the United States. Yet, many of them remain unserved or underserved. Often, these adults don’t think of themselves as “deaf-blind.”

The most common causes of vision loss in older adults are:

- Cataracts
- Glaucoma
- Age-related macular degeneration
- Diabetes/diabetic retinopathy

For people who have been sighted all of their lives, the impact of this loss can be profound. If a person also develops any degree of hearing loss, the results can be overwhelming.
This slide shows a medical professional showing the VisionConnect app on a tablet. The app is available in iOS and Android formats. More information: VisionAware.org/visionconnect
Explore resources and tips for living independently with visual impairment such as:

- Information on products and technology
- Personal stories about living with vision loss
- Advice on maintaining employment
- Ideas for managing medication
Search the AFB Directory of Services by age group of individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

- Fully accessible
- Lists services/training in the U.S., Canada
- National and local services included

FREE! www.afb.org/apps
Create and save your lists for quick referral, or e-mail them to yourself, family members, or consumers.

- List of services by category and locations
- Customize to consumer’s needs
Summary of Resources You Can Use to Help Older Persons with Vision Loss

- VisionAware.org—information for living with vision loss
- VisionAware.org/gettingstarted—free, downloadable tips
- AFB AccessWorld—up to date info about technology
- VisionConnect™—an iOS and Android App—directory of services and resources (visionaware.org/visionconnect)
- AFB Directory (afb.org/directory)—directory of services
- National Library Service Talking Book Program—free audio books and machine (https://www.loc.gov/nls/)
- Hadley Institute School for the Blind and Visually Impaired—free courses on living with vision loss (www.Hadley.edu)
- Transportation Guide: http://lowvision.preventblindness.org/transportation/
Disabilities and Chronic Disease Self Management in North Carolina: The continuing journey

Jeanne Dairaghi, Chronic Disease Self Management Project Manager, 2015 ACL CDSME Grant Recipient
The interplay between disabilities and chronic disease

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 22% of adults in the United States have some type of disability, with rates of disability increasing with age.
- While people with disabilities represent a diverse group, they are more likely to be obese, smoke, have high blood pressure, be inactive and not have completed high school.
- This results in adults with disabilities being 3 times more likely to have heart disease, stroke, diabetes or cancer.
Strategies

• “Inclusion Toolkit” resource development
• Training for master trainers and lay leaders
• Connections and awareness
Toolkit

www.healthyagingnc.com

Chronic Disease Self Management Education:
Toolkit for Including Participants with Disabilities

Photo credit: Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina
Training
www.healthyagingnc.com
Contact Information

www.healthyagingnc.com
www.facebook.com/HealthyAgingNC/

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