Glossary of Inclusion Terminology

Accessible

A general term used to describe something that can be easily accessed or used by people with disabilities.

Alternate Formats

Alternate formats enable access by a person who experiences communication barriers. Common alternate formats include: electronic, large print; MP3; Braille; CD/DVD; descriptive video; signed video; on-screen text / e-text: and clear language. A tactile diagram or pictograms may also be a component of an accessible format.

Assistive Technology (AT)

Assistive technology is also known as assistive devices, or in the case of computer-related software and devices, it is known as adaptive technology. Assistive technology makes environments more accessible by decreasing barriers. Assistive technology includes a range of devices, equipment and software such as mobility devices like wheelchairs, magnifying devices, visual alarms, hearing aids and speech software.

American Sign Language (ASL)

American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual language with unique vocabulary, grammar, syntax and social rules of use. Meaning is conveyed through signs that are composed of specific hand shapes, palm orientation, movement and location of the hands and signals on the face and body.

Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) or Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT)

Used by persons who are hard of hearing, this technology works by having the speaker wear a microphone that wirelessly transmits their voice to a receiver, worn by the listener which then sends the audio directly to the individuals hearing aid or headset.

Barrier

A barrier is anything that prevents people with disabilities from participating on an equal basis as others. There are many kinds of barriers and these can be physical, attitudinal, systemic or technological.

Braille

Braille is a series of raised dots that can be read by touch, usually fingertips and used by persons who are blind or have partial vision.

Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART)

CART is the instant translation of the spoken word into text using a stenotype machine, notebook computer and real-time software. The text appears on a computer monitor or other display and is primarily used by people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or have cochlear implants.

Clear or Plain Language

Clear Language refers to a set of principles that focuses on the needs of the reader. It presents information in a logical order using familiar, everyday words and expressions. It avoids jargon and uses a minimum of technical language. Clear language principles cover sentence length, sentence structure and the use of headings, fonts and white space. Choosing words that are of common usage and familiar to the culture of the reader will make information more accessible.

Clear Print

Clear print is a design approach that considers the needs of people who have partial vision or people with cognitive disabilities or low literacy. Basic design elements, such as font style, type size, contrast, page navigation, words, graphics and white space follow simple structures. Clear print should be considered in all forms of written communication including flyers, notices, newsletters, pamphlets, application forms and web site pages.

Consumer

Consumers are people who self-identify as having a disability.

Described Video

Described video enables individuals who are blind or have partial vision to hear what is being portrayed visually by a voice over audio description of what is seen on the screen/monitor.

Decision-making Supporter

A person (or persons) who support an adult in communicating his/her will and intent to inform decisions. The supporter must know the adult well; and have a relationship of trust that would bring an understanding to the adult's unique way of communicating and understanding. The supporter does not make decisions for the adult and is not a substitute decision maker. The supporter may assist the adult throughout the decision making process or for a specific purpose.

Disability-related Accommodation/ Supports

Any technical aid or device, personal support or disability-related support or other accommodation a person may require to participate in society. This can include, but is not limited to: accessible meeting rooms; accessible formats of information such as Braille and clear language; mobility supports to enable a person to attend a meeting; and decision making supporters that enable a person's intention and will to be communicated.

Disability

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities does not define disability but rather describes it as "…an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and active participation in society on an equal basis with others." The Convention describes people with disabilities as including people with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Induction Loop

Neck loop plugs into a receiver's earphone jack to provide a magnetic signal that can be picked up by a hearing aid equipped with a telecoil (t-switch).

Inclusion

Inclusion is meaningful participation in all aspects of society with access to services and opportunities for persons with disabilities equal to that of people without disabilities; this requires active removal of barriers and provision of disability-related supports.

Infra-red System

This consists of an infra-red emitter about the size of a small book. It is used with an infra-red receiver with a silhouette or neck loop and T-switch hearing aid. It can also be used with a lightweight headset instead of a hearing aid; or a direct audio input cord. Infra-red systems are more secure as they do not use radio bands like FM systems.

Sign Language Interpreters

Interpreters facilitate communication between people who use sign language (for example: ASL and people who use spoken languages (English or French).

Intervener

An intervener provides a professional service, paid or voluntary, to facilitate the interaction of a person who is Deaf-blind with other people and the environment.

Oral Interpreters

Oral Interpreters facilitate communication in group situations where Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing individuals rely on speech reading. The oral interpreter mouths the words of the speaker, changing them when necessary to synonyms that are more visible on the lips.

Plain or Clear Language Interpreter

A person chosen and directed by an individual with an intellectual disability to explain information in plain language.

Screen Enlargers

Screen enlargers are software that is used to make text and images larger.

Screen Readers

Screen Readers are software programs that read out loud what is on the computer monitor. JAWS is a popular screen reader software used primarily by people who are blind and Kurzweil is a popular software for people with learning disabilities.

Tele-typewriter (TTY)

A TTY is a an electronic device with a keyboard and a small screen that used by people who are Deaf, and some people who are deafened or hard of hearing to communicate via telephone using a text-based system.

Universal Design (UD)

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation or specialized design. Universal design principles can be applied to any product, environment or communications, including built environment, web pages and education curricula.

USB (or Memory Stick)

Data storage device integrated with a USB (universal serial bus) port on a computer

Video Relay Services (VRS)

Video Relay Services (VRS) is a basic telecommunications service that enables people with hearing or speech disabilities who use sign language to communicate with voice telephone users and vice versa. An operator facilitates the conversation between the two parties by relaying the conversation between sign language and spoken language.

Voice Recognition Systems

Voice Recognition Systems are computer software programs that enable people to control their environment or input in to a computer by voice instead of a mouse or keyboard.

Way-Finding

Way-finding is the process of using spatial and environmental information to find one's way in the built environment. Way-finding is used by persons who are blind or who have partial vision.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0

WCAG version 2.0 are internationally recognized standards that define how to make Web content accessible to people with disabilities, including making web sites accessible for people who use screen reader software. These guidelines improve usability for all users.

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)

Develops internationally recognized Web standards. The Web Accessibility initiative is part of W3C and follows the W3C Process for developing Web standards.