

RESPONSES TO DISABILITY:

Greater understanding of disability from a social perspective; listen to people with disabilities; make accommodations in the community.

INVOLVEMENT BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:

Advocates and activists; leaders and organizers; participants.



"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never had and it never will."

– Frederick Douglass

One of the most important pieces of legislation during the 1970s was the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 of this act made it illegal for any federal agency, public university, defense or other federal contractor, or any other institution that received federal funding to discriminate against anyone solely on the basis of disability. The language of Section 504 was the same as that of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



ADAPT (formerly American Disabled for Accessible Public Transit, now American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today) represents the militant side of the Disability Rights movement. They protest and educate about the inhumane conditions people with disabilities – and the elderly – receive in nursing homes. ADAPT members have shown that it is less expensive and much healthier for people to live in the community rather than in nursing homes or other institutions.

DISABILITY IS NO LONGER LIMITED TO MORAL OR MEDICAL DEFINITIONS; IT IS NOW VIEWED BY MANY AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT.

During the March 1988 revolt at Gallaudet University, students demanded that their new college president be Deaf.

Dr. I. King Jordan was eventually named the new president.

"Together we must remove the physical barriers we have created and the social barriers we have accepted."
– President George Bush, on signing the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Modeled after the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the ADA created broad civil rights protection for people with disabilities. It is the first comprehensive federal law to address the discrimination against an estimated 54 million Americans with disabilities in the areas of employment, public service and accommodations, and telecommunications.

"The Americans with Disabilities Act is the world's first declaration of equality for people with disabilities by any nation. It will proclaim to America and to the world that people with disabilities are fully human; that paternalistic, discriminatory, segregationist attitudes are no longer acceptable and that henceforth people with disabilities must be accorded the same personal respect and the same social and economic opportunities as other people."
— Justin Darr



THE MINORITY GROUP MODEL (or the Social Model):

In the 1990s, people with disabilities openly rejected the medical and moral models of disability and instead asserted a "minority group" model, which views disability as a socially constructed role and identity, the result of the interaction between the individual with a disability and society. Under this model, prejudice and discrimination are primary factors in the experience of disability. This change in consciousness is marked by a shift from passive patient to assertive citizen, from hiding or overcoming disability to expressing pride and celebrating culture.



Accommodations, like the TTY machine, are making communities accessible for all citizens.

1960
The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) is formed in Raleigh, NC by a group of Shaw University students.

The Greensboro Sit-Ins begin in February, protesting segregated seating in a Woolworth's diner. In two months the sit-in movement spreads to 54 cities in 9 states.

Thurgood Marshall, national counsel for the NAACP, warns against accepting "token integration."

1963
The march on Washington is the largest civil rights demonstration to date. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivers a speech entitled "I Have a Dream."

1967
National Theatre of the Deaf is founded.

1968
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated on April 4.

1969
Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children sues their state over poor conditions.

1970
Ed Roberts and his peers at Cowell (UC Berkeley Health Center) form a group called the Rolling Quads.

The Rolling Quads form the Disabled Students' Program on the U.C. Berkeley campus.

Wyatt vs. Stickney court case in Alabama paves the way for deinstitutionalization across the country.

1971
The United Nations adopts the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons.

1972
Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania rules that exclusionary provisions in Pennsylvania's compulsory school attendance laws are unconstitutional.

Geraldo Rivera's TV report on the Willowbrook State School and Letchworth Village is aired to millions of viewers.