

June 9, 2000

## FACT SHEET

### Persons with Disabilities

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

- 49 million Americans have a disability and 24.1 million have a severe disability (unable to perform one or more activities or roles), according to the U.S. Census Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP, 1991-1992).

Overall Disability Rate = 19.4%	Children Under 18	Persons 18-44	Persons 45-64	Persons 65
Disability Rate	5.8%	13.6%	29.2%	53.9%

- Among persons of all ages, the rate was 18.7% for males and 20.2% for females. The longer life expectancy of women means that women make up a relatively large share older persons with a disability (64.2% of persons 65 years old and over with a severe disability are women.)
- Among persons ages 6 and older, 1.8 million used a wheelchair, 1.6 million were unable to see and 1 million were unable to hear.
- About 9 million people of all ages have disabilities so severe that they require personal assistance to carry out everyday activities. About 80% of the people who take on the role of primary helper are relatives, and nearly half of these primary helpers live with the person with a disability.
- In a 1994 Harris Poll of Americans with Disabilities, 63% of respondents said that the quality of life had improved for people with disabilities during the previous four years.
- Arizona Bridge to Independent Living clientele demographics — 1,287 persons with disabilities who applied for and received Independent Living Services:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Disability Identified</u>
2% (0-17)	57% Female	69% White	71% Physical
3% (18-22)	43% Male	13% Hispanic	14% Multiple Dis.
47% (55 and over)		9% Black	9% Cognitive
48% (23-55)		6% Asian/PI	3% Mental/Emotional
		3% American Indian	1% Hearing

#### RACIAL & ETHNIC COMPOSITION

- Within the age category of 15 to 64 years, the prevalence of a disability was low for Asians and Pacific Islanders (9.6%) and high for American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts (26.9%). The rate was 17.7% among Whites, 20.8% among Blacks, and 16.9% amongst persons of Hispanic origins.

## **DISABILITY AND INCOME**

- The presence of a disability is associated with lower levels of income and an increased likelihood of being in poverty.
- A large portion of persons receiving public assistance have disabilities. Among the 8.8 million persons receiving cash assistance, the proportion with a disability was 64.4%, 48.2% among food stamp recipients and 30.7% among those living in public or subsidized housing. (U.S. Census, SIPP)
- Among men 21 to 64 years of age, median monthly earnings were \$2,190 among those with no disability, \$1,857 among those with a nonsevere disability and \$1,262 among those with a severe disability. Comparable figures for women were \$1,470, \$1,200, and \$1,000. (U.S. Census, SIPP)

## **WORK AND DISABILITY**

- Three out of four people with disabilities do not work. But two-thirds of those not working wish they could without jeopardizing their disability benefits. (Harris Poll)
- For every 500 people now on disability benefits, only one finds his or her way to a job (Susan Daniels, Social Security Administration, deputy commissioner, AZ Republic - March 31, 2000).
- Approximately 77,000 disabled Arizonans currently draw Social Security disability benefits. The average beneficiary in Arizona receives \$760 a month.
- It is estimated that for every 1 percent of disabled people nationwide who work, taxpayers save \$3 billion over time.
- The Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act was passed by Congress in November of 1999. Provisions of this act extend health care coverage, provides a state option for Medicaid Buy-In and the “ticket” to employment assistance from private as well as public employment providers.
- In the prime employable years of 21 to 54, 82% of Americans without a disability had a job or business compared with 77% of those with a nonsevere disability and 26% of those with a severe disability. This latter figure represents a gain since 1991 when the employment rate of people with a severe disability was 23%.
- Employment rate among people disabilities ranging from age 21 to 64:
  - ✓ 64% of the Hearing Impaired
  - ✓ 44% of those with trouble seeing
  - ✓ 41% with a mental disability
  - ✓ 34% of those who had trouble walking
  - ✓ 26% who used a wheel chair or were long-term users of a cane, crutches or a walker
- Four fifths (81%) of employers responding to a 1995 Harris Poll said that they made accommodations for workers with disabilities, up from 51% in 1986. However, national surveys still do not conclusively show increased levels of employments as a result of greater efforts to provide job opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Labor force participation rate for people aged 18-64 limited in activity due to a chronic health conditions or impairments has stayed constant at about 52% between 1990 and 1994 (National Health Interview Survey - NHIS, 1983-1994)
- Part-time employment is more common among persons with a lot of functional limitation than among those with a little or no functional limitation (Analysis of the 1996 California Work and Health Survey).
- Persons with a little limitation in physical functioning are more likely to be employed in the

skilled trade occupations than those with no limitation or those with a lot of functional limitation.

**INSURANCE COVERAGE/GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE**

- The presence of a disability is associated with an increased likelihood of health insurance coverage from the Federal government and a reduced likelihood of private coverage.
- Data on insurance coverage from the SIPP indicates:

	Private Coverage	Government Coverage	No Coverage
Without Disability	80.5%	5.2%	14.8%
With Nonsevere Disability	74.1%	7.2%	18.7%
With Severe Disability	48.1%	36.2%	15.7%

**ACCESS AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

- One-quarter (24%) of the respondents to the 1994 Harris Poll said that access to public buildings was a problem for them.
- Among persons living in community rather than in institutions, those with disabilities are twice as likely to live alone as those without disabilities (19.6 vs. 8.4 percent) (NHIS).
- Half of the respondents to the Harris Poll reported that lack of a full social life was a problem for them.
- Levels of participation in specific social, cultural, and commercial activities according to the 1994 Harris Poll<sup>1</sup>:

Activity	With Disability	Without Disability
Socialize with close friends, relatives, or neighbors less often than once a week	30%	14%
Had not gone to see a movie in the previous year	58%	29%
Had not attended a live music performance	76%	51%
Had not attended a sporting event	71%	43%
Go out to eat less often than once a week	65%	45%
Attend Church at least once a month	49%	59%
Go food shopping at least once a week	56%	85%

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<sup>1</sup>Comparison with a similar 1986 poll shows no statistically significant change in levels of participation in these activities.

## TECHNOLOGY USAGE<sup>2</sup>

- People with disabilities are less than half as likely as their non-disabled counterparts to have access to a computer at home (23.9 vs. 51.7 percent).
- Almost three times as many people without disabilities have the ability to connect to the Internet at home as those with disabilities (31.1 vs. 11.4 percent).
- Only one-tenth (9.9%) of people with disabilities connect to the Internet, compared to almost four-tenths (38.1%) of those without disabilities.
- When people with disabilities do connect to the Internet, it is likely to be done at home (7.2%), compared to 25.9% of those without disabilities.
- Only 3.9% of those with disabilities use the Internet outside of home, compared to 20.6% of their non-disabled counterparts.
- Of the 20.9 million Americans aged 15 and over with disabilities:
  - ✓ 5 million have computers at home
  - ✓ 2.4 million have access to the Internet via their home computer

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<sup>2</sup> Statistics compiled from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, U.S. Department of Education, *Computer and Internet Use Among People with Disabilities*, H. Stephen Kaye, Ph.D., March 2000.