Accessibility in Your Library

JJ Pionke
Unit Lead for Business and Social Sciences
Iowa State University

pionke@iastate.edu
What is disability?

Why I hate the puzzle piece as a symbol for autism.

I am not missing a piece.

I like the infinity symbol for neurodiversity.

It is inclusive and represents a broad spectrum of neurological differences.
The spectrum consists of many different 'traits', or ways in which the brain processes information.

Some traits create difficulties in everyday life. (hence being diagnosed)

Language
Motor skills
Sensory filters
Executive function
Perception

But also many traits are useful in everyday life.

Each person with autism will have a set of traits all in different areas of the spectrum. The areas where they don't have a trait will function no differently to a neurotypical brain, but may be affected by circumstances.

In example, I am good at making conversation (language). But I get sensory overload in loud and crowded spaces, which then makes conversation very hard for me.
Why might we need laws about disability rights?
American Disabilities Act of 1990

“Physical, sensory, mental, and emotional disabilities are all covered by the ADA. A mental impairment is defined by the ADA as: ‘any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.’ Thus, mental illness is recognized by the law as a disability, with the same protections as other disabilities such as paraplegia, blindness, or hearing impairment.”

Some Numbers

• 27% of people in the US have a disability, 2023, CDC
• 1 in 20 experienced a serious mental illness, about 5.6% of the US Population

• Annual prevalence among U.S. adults, by condition:
  • Major Depressive Episode: 8.4% (21 million people)
  • Schizophrenia: <1% (estimated 1.5 million people)
  • Bipolar Disorder: 2.8% (estimated 7 million people)
  • Anxiety Disorders: 19.1% (estimated 48 million people)
  • Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: 3.6% (estimated 9 million people)
  • Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: 1.2% (estimated 3 million people)
  • Borderline Personality Disorder: 1.4% (estimated 3.5 million people)
What is the average time between onset of a mental disorder and seeking assistance?

About 10 YEARS
Why do people wait so long?
A few words on language

• People first
• Handicap vs. Disabled vs. Functionally Diverse vs. Diversability
The Myth of Average: Todd Rose

https://youtu.be/4eBmyttcfU4?si=Sfdalz2ndpejE3C9
Ask Your Patrons

• Heat Mapping/Behavior Mapping
• Surveys
• Focus Groups
• Interviews
• Other Usability Studies
Heat Map/Behavior Map
Take Perspective

• TED Talk: Why Design Should Include Everyone
• https://www.ted.com/talks/sinead_burke_why_design_should_include_everyone?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare
Perspective Exercise
Works Cited - Statistics


- [https://www.nami.org/mhstats](https://www.nami.org/mhstats)

Thank you!

(Gratuitous Cat Pictures)

Questions?

Pionke@iastate.edu

Aiden (Wookie)

Savil (FluffMuffin)