

Introduction to Developmental Disabilities

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The Arc of the United States

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About The Arc

- Largest disability rights organization in the country
- 600+ state and local chapters
- Advocate with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD)
- Long history of advocacy in policy and legal arenas



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Do people with
intellectual and
developmental disabilities
have sex?

Intersectionality



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Defining Disability

- Limits of labels
- Models of disability:
 - Medical model
 - Social model



Medical Model of Disability

- Focus is on the impairment
 - Limitations, rather than strengths
 - Also known as the functional limitation model

*Actual or perceived
impairment*

Substantial limitation(s)

Major life activity



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Social Model of Disability

- Human diversity
- Societal barriers
- People-first language*
 - “person with a disability” instead of “disabled person”



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Respectful Language

- Describe the person, not the disability
- Offensive language:
 - Cripple, suffering, wheelchair-bound, handicapped
 - The “R” word
- Learn from self-advocates about respectful language

**When in doubt, ask the community!*

Developmental Disabilities

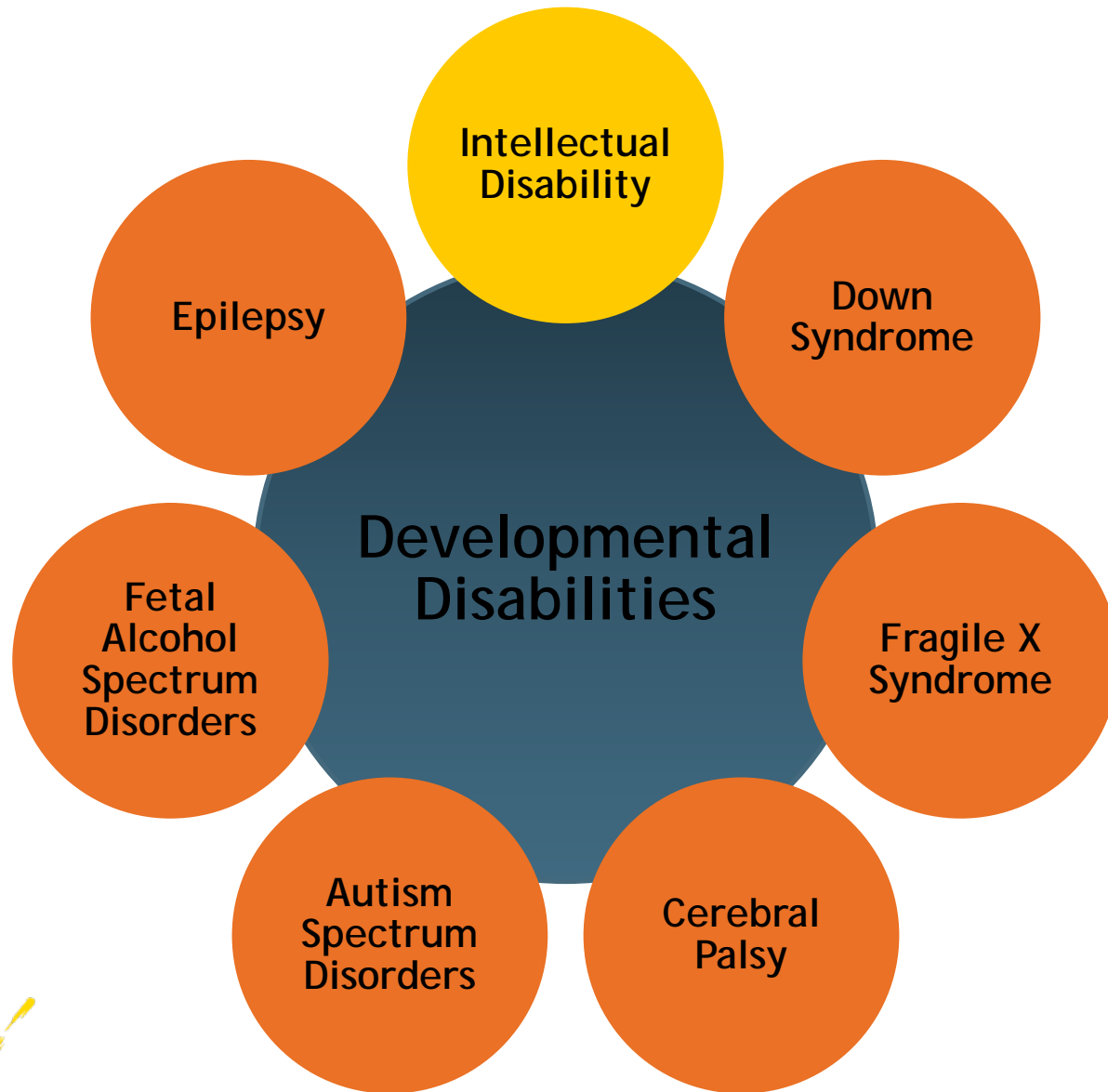
- Physical and/or mental impairments with onset before age 22
 - Substantial functional limitations in at least 3 of these:
 - Self-care
 - Learning
 - Walking/moving around
 - Self-direction
 - Independent living
 - Economic self-sufficiency
 - Language



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Intellectual Disability

Limitations:

- Intellectual functioning
- Adaptive behavior (conceptual, social, practical skills)
- Onset before 18

About 85 percent of people with intellectual disability fall into the lower support needs category.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- Difficulty with social interaction and cues
- Verbal or nonverbal communication
- Repetitive behaviors
- Sensory processing difficulties

A survey of individuals with ASD and their families indicated that 35% of individuals with autism had been victims of a crime.



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Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

FASD can lead to a high-risk of criminal justice involvement, because the disability is very difficult to identify; people often have IQs in the average range.

- Occurs when mother drinks while pregnant
- Difficulty with abstract concepts, judgment, and impulsivity, yet good expressive language skills

Functional Needs, Not Diagnosis

- **Access and Functional Needs**
 - Used in emergency situations/disaster response to address functional needs
 - Focus on the need first, then on how to assist

General Identification

Overview:

- Communication
- Behavior
- Interactions with Others

Communication

Look for:

- Limited vocabulary or speech impairment
- Difficulty understanding
- Short attention span
- Mimicking or repetitive speech
- Nonsensical speech
- Bluffing greater understanding



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Behaviors

Look for:

- Indications that person is easily influenced and/or eager to please
- Indications person is easily frustrated
- Difficulty with everyday tasks, such as telling time
- Uses or requests to use assistive devices
- Repetitive motions or motor impairment



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Interaction with Others

Look for:

- Inappropriate interactions with peers
- Over-compliance with authority figures
- Misunderstanding of social cues and body language
- Under or over-engagement with others



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Disability Rights Laws

- Rehabilitation Act
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Developmental Disabilities Act (DD Act)



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Americans with Disabilities Act

<i>Title</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Who's affected?</i>
Title I	Employment	Private employers with 15+ employees; all public employers
Title II	Public Programs and Activities	State and local governments
Title III	Public Accommodations	Hotels, restaurants, merchants, doctor's offices, private schools, day care centers, health clubs, sports stadiums, movie theaters, etc.
Title IV	Telecommunications (closed captioning)	Telephone and internet companies
Title V	Miscellaneous Provisions	Various entities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Title II of the ADA
 - State and local governments
- 2 basic rights:
 - Effective communication
 - Access to programs and services
- Anti-discrimination and reasonable accommodations



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Helpful Resources

- www.talkaboutsexualviolence.org
- State and local chapters of The Arc
 - <https://www.thearc.org/Page.aspx?&pid=309>
- Disability Rights Maryland
 - <https://disabilityrightsmd.org/>

Thank you!

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