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Project Director

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Disability Awareness

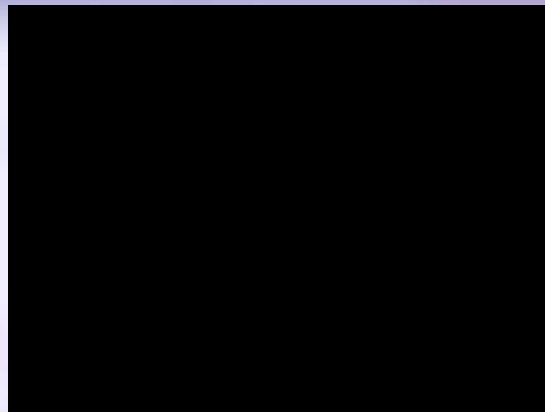
Disability awareness helps “to remove barriers so that responsible, self-sufficient people with disabilities can assume risks, make choices and contribute as they wish... this is a vision in which we all win.”

Source: Canadian Association of Independent Living Centers, www.caile.ca



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Not Acceptable



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In The Beginning

- Project Director started Disability Awareness Training in 2004
- Collaborated with Niagara University Criminal Justice Dept in 2007 for a mini-grant to train law enforcement
- Received the NYS DDPC First Responders Disability Awareness Training grant in 2010. Initially three years, two additional years added to execute to its fullest potential



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Intent of First Responders Disability Awareness (FR DAT) Training

- The obvious is to ensure proactive and proper response to Individuals with Disabilities (IWDs) through training that both sensitizes and educates
- Incidents are on-going across the four disciplines, with Law enforcement being the most challenged
- Lack of confidence and trust leads to uncertainty with every interaction, victimized a second time by the first responder, or simply NOT calling 911 when assistance is needed.



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How We Overcome the Doubt and Uncertainty

- Establish collaborative relationships within the first response and disability communities.
- Recognition by first responders of the value of an enhanced relationship
- Embraced by State offices and associations



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Why Law Enforcement Needs This Training

- 50-80% of an officer's encounters are with a person with a disability
- Officer's lack of awareness has led to department's being sued, bad public relations, and unwarranted arrest or even death of an individual
- The person with a disability is 7 times more likely to be the victim of a crime

Source: Department of Justice (DOJ)



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Robert Ethan Saylor



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Reluctance of IWDs to Report Crimes

- Concern of not being believed
- Appearing to lack credibility in the eyes of the law
- Unable to provide enough evidence
- Complaints defined as “less than criminal”
- Being referred to Adult Protective Services
- Unjustly placed in an institution
- Fear of losing custody of their children

Source: Sobsey & Doe, 1991; Sorenson, 2001. Saxton et al., 2001/2006.



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ADA Compliance

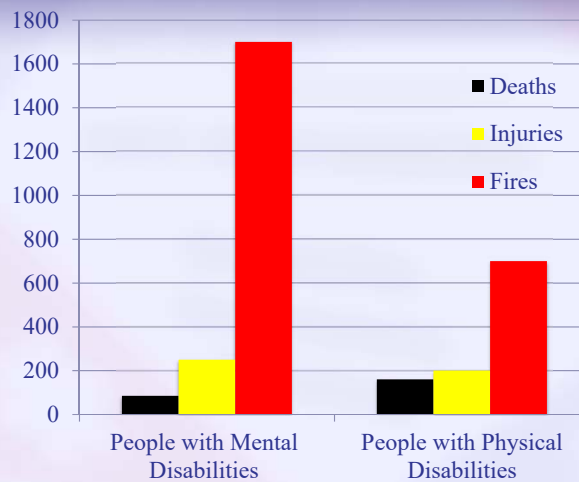
- Receiving citizen complaints
- Interrogating witnesses
- Arresting, booking, and holding suspects
- Operating 911 centers
- Providing emergency medical services
- Enforcing laws

“The ADA affects virtually everything that officers and deputies do.” – US DOJ



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Fire and Persons with Disabilities



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Why 911 Telecommunicators Need This Training

- Incidence of encounters with IWDs is more prevalent relative to emergency response
- Lack of recognition of individuals with speech impairments/challenges
- Educated dispatchers can initiate proper response from other first responders
- Lack of training in this field



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Disabilities covered

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Dementia
- Hard of Hearing/Deaf
- Intellectual Disability
- Low Vision/Blind
- Tourette Syndrome
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- ADHD
- Learning Disabilities
- Physical Disabilities
- Epilepsy/Seizure Disorder
- Speech disabilities
- Mental Illness *



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Topics Covered

- Victimization/Abuse
- Etiquette/Interaction Skills
- Person First Language
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Community Resources
- Outreach
- Assistive Technology
- Alternative and Augmentative Communication
- Durable Medical Equipment





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Dysarthria


A speech/motor disorder in which muscles of the mouth, face, and respiratory system may become weak, move slowly, or not move at all after a stroke or other brain injury. The type and severity of Dysarthria depends on which area of the nervous system is affected.




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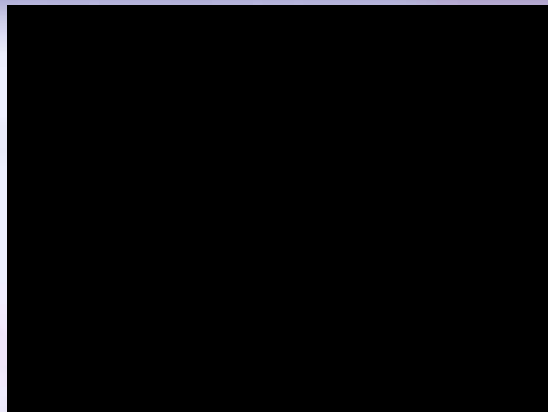
I have Cerebral Palsy



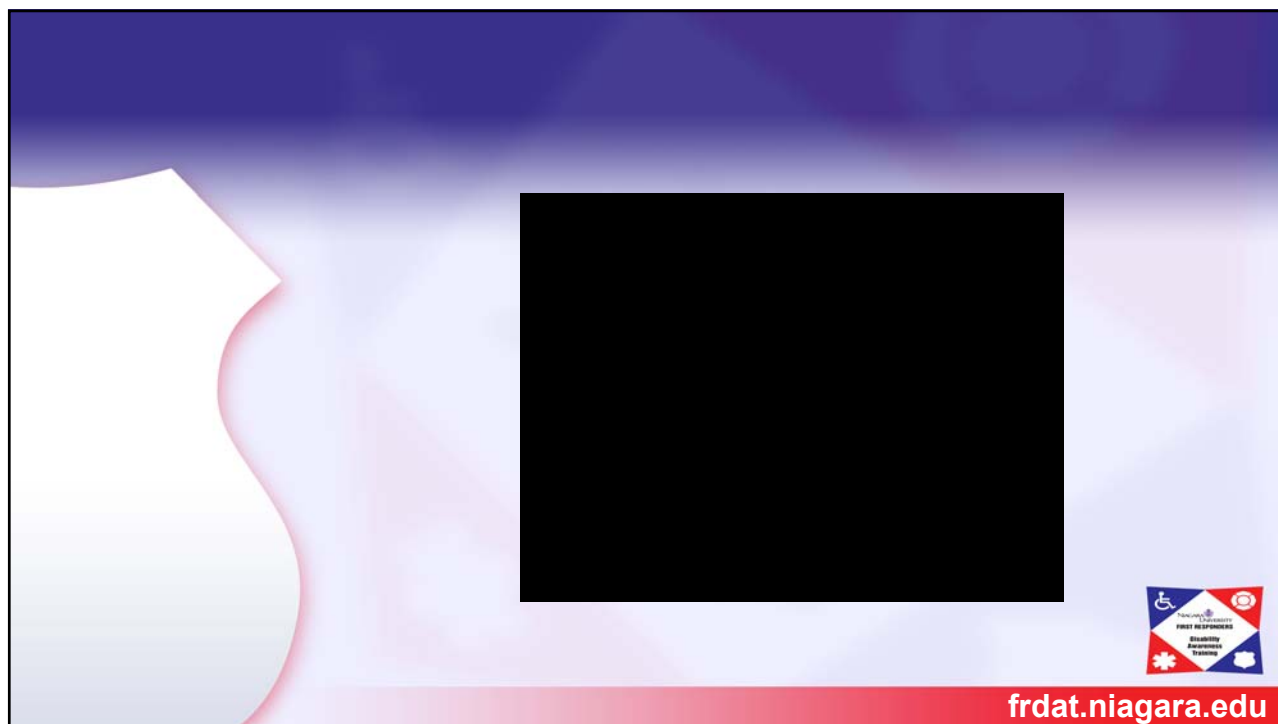
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Niagara University First Responder Disability Awareness Training

- Website: frdat.niagara.edu, links, community resources, training information, online training, podcasts
- Office phone: 716-286-7355
- One-stop disability information center
- Future planning: additional online training, apps, disability specific training



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