



Iowa Workforce Presentation

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Misconceptions



- Unfortunately, and inaccurately, people with disabilities are often viewed as:
 - Victims, or objects of pity
 - Burdens, either on society or on their family
 - Threat to comfort and safety of others
 - Assumed to be unable to do things
 - Having multiple disabilities
 - Special, Child-like, or Hero



Overcoming Fear

- Openness and willingness to understand
- Education, information, and training
- Exposure to individuals with disabilities
- Understand that learning can only come with interaction with individuals with disabilities



Statistics

- 450,000 individuals with disabilities in Iowa
- 69,000 people are visually impaired, and of that number 10,000 are blind
- 69,000 = Iowa City
- 10,000 = Pella



What is Vision Loss

- **Legal (Statutory) Blindness:** central vision acuity of 20/200 or less in better eye with correction or visual field of 20 degrees or less.
 - With 20/200 visual acuity, a person can see at 20 feet, what a person with 20/20 vision sees at 200 feet.
- **Visually Impaired:** Reduction in vision that cannot be corrected with standard glasses or contact lenses.
 - Reduces an individual's ability to function at certain or all tasks.
- **Functional Blindness:** has barriers in environments and uses many alternative techniques.
 - Examples include reading a newspaper while listening to it.



Vision Loss

- About 80% of individuals who are blind have some remaining vision.
- It may be difficult to understand how an individual with a certain eye condition can see some things while not seeing others.
- Ask the person to describe their vision loss, barriers, and provide examples.



Myths of Vision Loss

- **Individuals who are blind only see only darkness**
 - Only 18% of visually impaired are classified as totally blind.
- **Persons have better hearing/taste/smell/etc. to compensate for their vision loss**
 - Many learn to listen more carefully, or remember without taking notes.
- **Most individuals are proficient in Braille and own a guide dog**
 - Braille is something that needs to be learned and guide dogs are only effective if person is proficient using a cane first.
- **Persons who are blind/ visually impaired cannot work or hold a job**
 - With proper training and accommodations, individuals can work competitively.
- **Accommodations on the job are too expensive for employers**
 - Most accommodations are under \$500 and are easy to implement.
- **People who are blind or visually impaired cannot access print or handwritten materials**
 - Technology has made nearly all print accessible. Computer software translates print into speech, magnify screen images, and enlarge text to readable sizes. Human readers take care of the rest.

(Information obtained from IDBOnline.org and afb.org)



Loss of Vision Can Impact

- Ability to read
- Ability to drive/get around
- Access to service providers and employment
- Access to job applications
- Accessibility of online applications
- Employer's perception of skills and abilities



Types of Vision Loss

- Macular Degeneration
- Glaucoma
- Cataracts
- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Retinitis Pigmentosa

Cataract



Clouding of the eye's lens.
Most cataracts are related to aging (very common in older adults).

Macular Degeneration



Blurs the sharp, central vision you need for “straight ahead” activities such as reading, sewing, and driving.

Diabetic Retinopathy



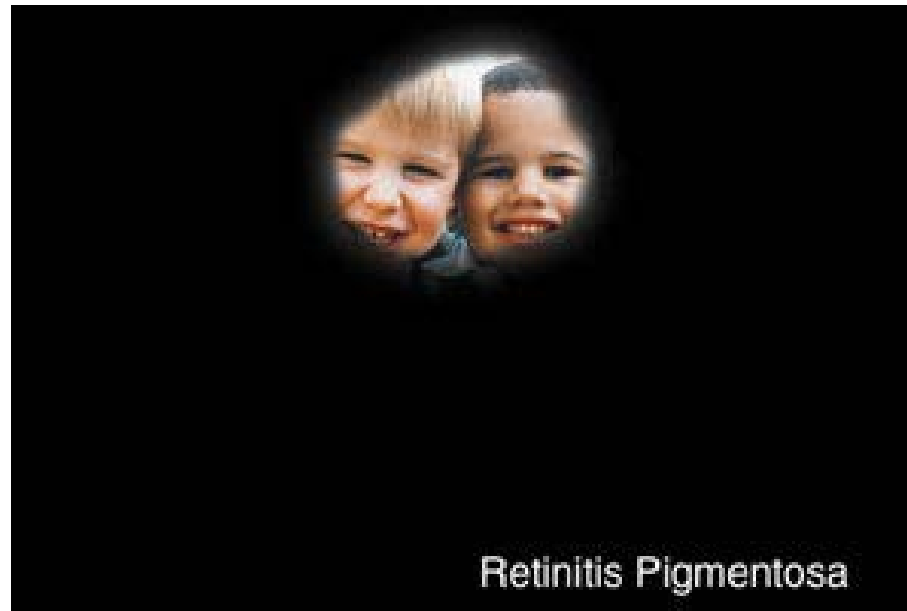
Leading cause of blindness in American adults.
Cause: Blood vessels swelling and leaking fluid. Or abnormal new blood vessels grow on the surface of the retina.

Glaucoma



Damages the eye's optic nerve.
If left untreated, vision can be reduced to a narrow area known as "tunnel vision" and then, total blindness.

Retinitis Pigmentosa



Rare, genetic disorder that involves a breakdown and loss of cells in the retina. Common symptoms include difficulty seeing at night and a loss of peripheral vision.



How to Interact with Someone with Vision Loss

- Interact with the person, not their disability.
- Introduce yourself by name, make eye contact, & use usual voice tone.
- When an individual who is blind/visually impaired enters the room, identify yourself.
- Also, let them you are done with conversation when walking away.
- “See”, “Look”, and “Watch” are common words that should be used in conversation.
- Be very specific when giving directions.
- Do not grab the arm of the person, offer yours instead.
- Do not interfere with an individual’s cane, and do not pet or feed their guide dog.
- When in doubt, just ask. Most likely the person will appreciate that you asked.

(Information obtained from [American Foundation for the Blind](#) web site)



Overview of IDB

- The Department's main office is in Des Moines, with field staff statewide in each of the regions.
- IDB is nationally recognized as a leading provider of services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
- Providing services since 1925.
- Primarily funded through state and federal tax dollars.
- Iowa ranks **3rd in the nation** in the percentage of individuals who are blind/visually impaired successfully placed, employed and remaining in jobs.
- As of September, 2014, the average hourly wage obtained after completing IDB's VR Program was **\$16.81**.
- People who are blind or visually impaired work in a broad variety of jobs and professions ...



Eligibility for VR Services

- Must have visual impairment
- Must create an impediment to employment
- Must benefit in terms of employment outcome
- No age limit
- If SSDI/SSI Eligible presumptively eligible
- Look at and identify barriers
- Plan will be remediation of barriers



Referrals

- Call and ask for our Intake Specialist: 515-281-1333
- Referral information can be found here:
<http://www.blind.state.ia.us/form/referral>
- How we receive referrals
 - Doctors
 - Family members, friends
 - Service Providers
 - Self



Iowa Department for the Blind Services

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Transition Program
- Independent Living
- Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped
- Business Enterprises Program
- Aids and Devices Store
- Orientation Center



Orientation Center

- Residential pre-vocational training program.
- Students spend on average 6-9 months in the Orientation Center.
- Provides in-depth, individualized blindness training to adults.
- Goal is for students to graduate with self-confidence, have a positive attitude about blindness, learn alternative techniques, and be self-sufficient in their environments.
- Classes covered in the Orientation Center are: Travel, Braille, Technology, Home Ec, Shop, Business of Blindness, and Jobs Class



Library Services

- Second largest alternative format library in the world!
- Materials in alternative formats for those unable to read print due to vision loss, physical disability, or dyslexia.
- Thousands of books are available in a variety of formats: Braille, Large Print, Digital, audio recordings, print/Braille, descriptive video, and electronic text mailed to homes FREE of charge.
- Registered readers may also download audio and Braille books and magazines online (BARD).
- The library's collection is home to 300,000 items!



Independent Living Services

- Getting along in home
 - Use washer/dryer
 - Cook meals
 - Use phone
 - Reading mail/paying bills
 - Using computer
 - Getting to and from appointments/work/travel



Accommodations & Alternative Techniques

- Reading- Large Print, Braille, Audio, Screen Readers, Magnification
- Writing- Wide Lined Paper, 20/20 Pen, slate & stylus, braille note taker
- Measuring- Talking Scale/Thermometer/Calculator/Watch/Ruler
- Independent Living- Adhesion dots, tactile items such as puff paint
- Mobility- Cane Travel and using other senses
- Braille/Transportation- hiring a driver, public transportation, carpooling
- Computer- screen enlargement, screen reader
- Hiring a driver/public transportation



Service IDB-VR Offers

- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Transition services to youth
- Assessment to determine vocational strengths, interests, goals
- Training for those who need a career change
- Tools and licenses
- Medical assistance
- Job development and placement
- Rehabilitation technology
- Follow-along services to employers



Assistive Technology

- Screen Magnifiers- ZoomText
- Screen Readers- JAWS, NVDA
- Refreshable Braille Displays
- Closed Circuit TV(CCTV) & Video Magnifiers
- Smartphones- Voice Over and Apps
 - TapTapSee, knfb Reader, Money Reader

Braille



a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j

k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t

u	v	w	x	y	z

BRaille CELL

1	●	●	4
2	●	●	5
3	●	●	6



Individuals with Vision Loss Work At:

HY VEE	ELECTROLUX	KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY
COLLEGE		
WELLS FARGO	HOME DEPOT	PAPA JOHN'S PIZZA
HARRAH'S CASINO	WALMART	BICKELS BICYCLE REPAIR
RED CROSS	YWCA	IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS
PIZZA HUT	MARRIOTT	SKIFF HOSPITAL
TABOR MANOR	DMACC	PDI
ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL	ACT	REGIS SALON
MEDIACOM	APAC	A PLUS LAWN AND
LANDSCAPE		
RUFFALO CODY	EDS	QWEST
DELTA AIRLINES	NATIONWIDE	OSCO DRUG
PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL	JOHN DEERE	DOWLING HIGH SCHOOL
PIZZA RANCH	IVRS	SIoux CITY
SCHOOL		
EASTER SEALS	SODEXHO	DEPARTMENT FOR THE BLIND
IOWA STATE	MCDONALDS	DIAMOND JO CASINO
SEED SAVERS	UPPER IOWA	FAREWAY
VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL	KRAFT FOODS	ROCKWELL COLLINS



And Do the Following Jobs:

ACCOUNTANT
PROFESSOR
FILE CLERK
COUNSELOR
LAWYER
ENGINEER
RECEPTIONIST

PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

IT SPECIALIST

RESTAURANT MANAGER

VET TECH

PROOFREADER

ATTORNEY

WORKER

AUTOCAD OPERATOR

INSURANCE AGENT

CHEF

WELLNESS COORDINATOR

CIVIL RIGHTS SPECIALIST

PASTOR

AEROBICS INSTRUCTOR

SPECIAL ED TEACHER

SUPERINTENDENT

ARCADE ATTENDANT

BICYCLE MECHANIC

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

GREETER

COLLECTIONS AGENT

CAR REPAIRMAN

ELECTRICIAN

BAKERY ASSISTANT

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

LEGAL SUPPORT WORKER

PARKING LOT ATTENDANT

WOODSMITH

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

RESTAURANT HOST

COLLEGE

JANITOR

NUN

BROADCAST

MISSIONARY WORKER

TECHNICAL ANALYST

SALES REP

CASHIER

CHILD CARE

COSMETOLOGIST

AUDITOR

DISHWASHER

CARPENTER

WRITER



Encouraging Statistics

- The rehabilitation professionals in Iowa working with persons with disabilities allow them to become tax payers. The Return on Investment in Iowa is approximately seven dollars being returned for every dollar being spent.
- Approximately 96% of successful VR job candidates remain in Iowa working paying taxes and contributing to their communities.
- Iowans with disabilities served by IVRS/IDB in FFY 2015 have an estimated income of \$47.1 million annually. This results in Iowans with disabilities earning \$11.3 million more than was spent on the entire VR program.



How Can I Learn More?

- Web: www.IDBonline.org
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/idbonline>
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/IowaDepartmentfortheBlind
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/idbonline
- Blogs: www.idbonline.org/newsroom/blogs
- Take a Tour/Request a Speaker: Contact Tiffany Bickell at (515) 281-1336 or, (800) 362-2587, ext 1-1336, or tiffany.bickell@blind.state.ia.us.
- Volunteer: <http://www.blind.state.ia.us/volunteers/becoming-volunteer>
- Support Groups across the State for those experiencing Vision Loss
<http://www.iowablindhistory.org/living/support-groups>
- Resources for parents of children with vision loss: <http://www.idbonline.org/resources-parents-blind-children>



Skits

The following are skits that are done for you to put everything we have talked about above. Please think of questions that you have as we will discuss these individually.

[Wintac Rough Cuts](#)



Thank You!

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