

Glossary of Disability Terms*

Please note that the Tennessee Department of Education has their own definitions for disabilities that qualify a child for special education services. To view these definitions please go to <http://tennessee.gov/education/speced/assessment.shtml>

Accessible- In the case of a facility, readily usable by a particular individual; in the case of a program or activity, presented or provided in such a way that a particular individual can participate, with or without auxiliary aid(s); in the case of electronic resources, accessible with or without adaptive computer technology.

Access barriers- Any obstruction that prevents people with disabilities from using standard facilities, equipment and resources.

Accessible Web design- Creating World Wide Web pages according to universal design principles to eliminate or reduce barriers, including those that affect people with disabilities.

Accommodation- An adjustment to make a program, facility, or resource accessible to a person with a disability.

Adaptive technology- Hardware or software products that provide access to a computer that is otherwise inaccessible to an individual with a disability.

Adult Care Home- (Also called *board and care home* or *group home*.) Residence which offers housing and personal care services for 3 to 16 residents. Services (such as meals, supervision, and transportation) are usually provided by the owner or manager. May be single family home. (Licensed as *adult family home* or *adult group home*.)

Adult Day Care- daytime community-based program for functionally impaired adults that provides a variety of health, social, and related support services in a protective setting.

Advocacy- the act of speaking or interceding for and on behalf of a person, cause, idea, or policy.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)- A 1967 federal law that prohibits employers with 20 or more employees from discriminating on the basis of age in hiring, job retention, compensation, and benefits. ADEA also sets requirements for the duration of employer-provided disability benefits.

Ambulatory Care- All types of health services which are provided on an outpatient basis, in contrast to services provided in the home or to persons who are inpatients. While many inpatients may be ambulatory, the term ambulatory care usually implies that the patient must travel to a location to receive services which do not require an overnight stay.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)- A comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, public services, public accommodations and services operated by private entities, and telecommunications .

Assisted Living- Residences that provide a "home with services" and that emphasize residents' privacy and choice. Residents typically have private locking rooms (only shared by choice) and bathrooms. Personal care services are available on a 24-hour-a-day basis.

Assistive technology- Technology used to assist a person with a disability, e.g., wheelchair, hand splints, computer-based equipment.

Barrier -obstacle preventing a person with a disability from living independently, working, traveling and/or having access to buildings, services, forms and information.

Behavior Disorders / Emotional Disturbance- Many terms are used interchangeably to classify children who exhibit extreme or unacceptable chronic behavior problems. These children lag behind their peers in social development and are often isolated from others either because they withdraw from social contact or because they behave in an aggressive, hostile manner. Behavior disorders result from persistent negative social interactions between the child and the environment. Behavior disorders generally consist of four clusters of traits, including conduct disorders, anxiety-withdrawal, immaturity, and socialized aggression.

Behavior Modification- The application of conditioning techniques (rewards or punishments) to reduce or eliminate problematic behavior, or to teach people new responses.

Braille- System of embossed characters formed by using a Braille cell, a combination of six dots consisting of two vertical columns of three dots each. Each simple Braille character is formed by one or more of these dots and occupies a full cell or space. Some Braille may use eight dots.

Captioning- Text that is included with video presentations or broadcasts that enables people with hearing impairments to have access to the audio portion of the material.

Care Plan- (Also called *service plan* or *treatment plan*.) Written document which outlines the types and frequency of the long-term care services that a consumer receives. It may include treatment goals for him or her for a specified time period.

Case Management- Offers a single point of entry to the aging services network. Care/case management assesses clients' needs, create service plans, and coordinate and monitor services; they may operate privately or may be employed by social service agencies or public programs. Typically case managers are nurses or social workers.

Chronic Care- Care and treatment given to individuals whose health problems are of a long-term and continuing nature. Rehabilitation facilities, nursing homes, and mental hospitals may be considered chronic care facilities

Closed Circuit TV Magnifier (CCTV)- Camera used to magnify books or other materials to a monitor or television.

Communication device- Hardware that allows a person who has difficulty using their voice clearly to use words or symbols for communication. May range in complexity from a simple picture board to complex electronic devices that allow personalized, unique construction of ideas.

Community-Based Services- services designed to help older people remain independent and in their own homes; can include senior centers, transportation, delivered meals or congregate meals site, visiting nurses or home health aides, adult day care, and homemaker services.

Compensatory tools- Adaptive computing systems that allow people with disabilities to use computers to complete tasks that they would have difficulty doing without a computer, e.g., reading, writing, communicating, accessing information.

Conservatorship- Legal right given by the court to a person to manage the property, financial affairs, and medical well being of a person deemed incapable of doing that for her/himself.

- **Limited Conservatorship-** Legal right given to a person to manage only specific affairs of an individual with a disability, allowing the individual to maintain as much control as possible over his/her own life.

Continuum of Care- The entire spectrum of specialized health, rehabilitative, and residential services available to the frail and chronically ill. The services focus on the social, residential, rehabilitative and supportive needs of individuals as well as needs that are essentially medical in nature.

Deinstitutionalization- Policy which calls for the provision of supportive care and treatment for medically and socially dependent individuals in the community rather than in an institutional setting.

Delusions- Gross misrepresentations of reality which are a common symptom of schizophrenia and other psychoses. Typical delusions include those of persecution, romance, grandeur, and control.

Dementia- a term used to describe a decline in intellectual function beyond the normal effects of aging. Memory, problem solving and language comprehension are generally the most affected areas and signs of the disease include forgetfulness, language problems, getting lost, loss of motivation, mood swings and personality changes.

Developmental Delay - the slowed or impaired development of a child who is under 5 years old and who is at risk of having a developmental disability because of the presence of one or more of the following: Chromosomal conditions, congenital syndromes, metabolic disorders, and prenatal infections and significant medical problems, low birth weight, postnatal-acquired problems. OR: A child less than 5 years old who is delayed in development by 1.5 standard deviations or more in one or more of the following areas: communication, self-help, social-emotional, motor skills, sensory development or cognition.

Developmental Disability (DD) - A severe, chronic disability that begins any time from birth through age 21 and is expected to last for a lifetime. Developmental disabilities may be cognitive, physical, or a combination of both. DD can result in serious limitations in every day activities of life, including self-care, communication, learning, mobility, or being able to work or live independently. <http://www.nacdd.org>

Developmental Disorders- Serious delays in the development of one or more areas of functioning.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)- A tool used by the medical and psychological communities to identify and classify behavioral, cognitive, and emotional problems according to a standard numerical coding system of mental disorders.

Disability- Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) - (Also called *home medical equipment*.) Equipment such as hospital beds, wheelchairs, and prosthetics used at home. May be covered by Medicaid and in part by Medicare or private insurance.

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment

Program (EPSDT) - A program mandated by law as part of the Medicaid program. The law requires that all states have in effect a program for eligible children under age 21 to ascertain their physical or mental defects and to provide such health care treatments and other measures to correct or ameliorate defects and chronic conditions discovered. In Tennessee, this is the TENNder Care program.

Hallucinations- Abnormal auditory (hearing), olfactory (smelling), visual (seeing), gustatory (tasting), or kinesthetic (feeling) perceptions which are common symptoms of schizophrenia; most common are the hallucinations which involve hearing voices or seeing objects that do not actually exist.

Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) - Managed care organization that offers a range of health services to its members for a set rate, but which requires its members to use health care professionals who are part of its network of providers.

Home and Community-Based Waivers- Section 2176 of the Omnibus Reconciliation Act permits states to offer, under a waiver, a wide array of home and community-based services that an individual may need to avoid institutionalization. Regulations to implement the act list the following services as community and home-based services which may be offered under the waiver program: case management, homemaker, home health aide, personal care, adult day health care, habilitation, respite care and other services.

Hyperactivity- Behavior marked by high levels of activity and restlessness. Such behavior is usually recognized as a problem once the child is expected to sit and attend for a significant period of time, as in a classroom environment. See also attention-deficit disorders.

Inclusion- a special education approach that stresses education students with disabilities, regardless of the type of severity of that disability, in the regular classrooms of their neighborhood schools.

Independent Living Facility- Rental units in which services are not included as part of the rent, although services may be available on site and may be purchased by residents for an additional fee.

Indigent Care- Health services provided to the poor or those unable to pay. Since many indigent patients are not eligible for federal or state programs, the costs which are covered by Medicaid are generally recorded separately from indigent care costs.

Intellectual disability- the preferred term to Mental Retardation; significant limitations in intellectual functioning and in social and adaptive behavior, in such areas as communication, daily living or movement skills. ID begins before the age of 18 and can occur with or without any other physical or mental condition.

Intelligence Quotient (IQ) - A measure of intelligence (or intellectual potential) derived from norms provided by standardized intelligence tests.

Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) - A nursing home, recognized under the Medicaid program, which provides health-related care and services to individuals who do not require acute or skilled nursing care, but who, because of their mental or physical condition, require care and services above the level of room and board available only through facility placement. Specific requirements for ICF's vary by state.

(ICF/MR)Intermediate Care Facility for the Mentally Retarded
An Intermediate Care Facility which cares specifically for the mentally retarded.

Interpreter- Professional person who assists a deaf person in communicating with hearing people.

Learning Disability- a chronic condition of presumed neurological origin which selectively interferes with the development, integration, and/or demonstration of verbal and/or nonverbal abilities. The condition varies in its manifestations and in degree of severity.

Long-Term Care (LTC) - Range of medical and/or social services designed to help people who have disabilities or chronic care needs. Services may be short or long-term and may be provided in a person's home, in the community, or in residential facilities (e.g., nursing homes or assisted living facilities).

Long-Term Care Ombudsman- An individual designated by a state or a substate unit responsible for investigating and resolving complaints made by or for older people in long-term care facilities. Also responsible for monitoring federal and state policies that relate to long-term care facilities, for providing information to the public about the problems of older people in facilities, and for training volunteers to help in the ombudsman program. The long-term care ombudsman program is authorized by Title III of the Older Americans Act. (see Healthcare Resources under the community Resources link)

Major life activities- Functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, and participating in community activities (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990).

Medicaid- a federal program (Title XIX of the Social Security Act) that pays for health services for certain categories of people who are poor, elderly, blind, disabled, or who are enrolled in certain programs, including Medicaid Waivers. Medicaid also covers children whose families receive assistance.

Medicare- a federally funded program (Title XX of the Social Security Act) which pays for health care for the elderly and for adults who are disabled.

Medicare Supplement Insurance (MedSupp)- (Also called *Medigap*.) Insurance supplement to Medicare that is designed to fill in the "gaps" left by Medicare (such as co-payments). May pay for some limited long-term care expenses, depending on the benefits package purchased.

Mental Illness/Impairment- A deficiency in the ability to think, perceive, reason, or remember, resulting in loss of the ability to take care of one's daily living needs.

Mental Retardation- due to its negative connotation, this is now referred to as an Intellectual disability; significant limitations in intellectual functioning and in social and adaptive behavior, in such areas as communication, daily living or movement skills. ID begins before the age of 18 and can occur with or without any other physical or mental condition.

Mobility impairment- Disability that affects movement ranging from gross motor skills such as walking to fine motor movement involving manipulation of objects by hand.

Occupational Therapy (OT) - Designed to help patients improve their independence with activities of daily living through rehabilitation, exercises, and the use of assistive devices. May be covered in part by Medicare.

Ombudsman- A representative of a public agency or a private nonprofit organization who investigates and resolves complaints made by or on behalf of older individuals who are residents of long-term care facilities.

Physical Therapy (PT) - Designed to restore/improve movement and strength in people whose mobility has been impaired by injury and disease. May include exercise, massage, water therapy, and assistive devices. May be covered in part by Medicare.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) - An anxiety disorder in which symptoms develop following a psychologically distressing event that is outside the normal range of human experiences (military combat, sexual assault, natural disasters, severe auto accidents). The essential features of PTSD include increased arousal, re-experiencing of a traumatic event, and avoidance of stimuli associated with the traumatic event. The symptoms include continued flashbacks, nightmares, and intense distress when exposed to an object or situation that is related to the traumatic event.

Provider- Individual or organization that provides health care or long-term care services (e.g., doctors, hospital, physical therapists, home health aides, and more).

Qualified individual with a disability- An individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by a public entity (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990).

Rehabilitation- The combined and coordinated use of medical, social, educational, and vocational measures for training or retaining individuals disabled by disease or injury to the highest possible level of functional ability. Several different types of rehabilitation are distinguished: vocational, social, psychological, medical, and educational.

Repetitive Stress Injury (RSI) - This disability may be chronic or acute and usually is described as pain caused by overuse of extremities, usually hands and wrists.

Representative Payee- a person appointed to manage Social Security or other benefit payments to an individual who needs assist in managing finance.

Residential Care- The provision of room, board and personal care. Residential care falls between the nursing care delivered in skilled and intermediate care facilities and the assistance provided through social services. It can be broadly defined as the provision of 24-hour supervision of individuals who, because of old age or impairments, necessarily need assistance with the activities of daily living.

Respite Care- Service in which trained professionals or volunteers come into the home to provide short-term care (from a few hours to a few days to allow caregivers some time away from their care giving role.

Screening- The use of quick procedures to differentiate apparently well persons who have a disease or a high risk of disease from those who probably do not have the disease.

Screen reader- Software used to echo text on a computer screen to audio output, often used by people who are blind, with visual impairments, or with learning disabilities.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act- Legislation that requires Federal Agencies to develop, procure, and use accessible electronic and information technology.

Sensory impairment- A disability that affects touch, sight and/or hearing.

Service Plan- (Also called *care plan* or *treatment plan*.) Written document which outlines the types and frequency of the long-term care services that a consumer receives. It may include treatment goals for him or her for a specified time period.

Sign language- Manual communication commonly used by deaf. The gestures or symbols in sign language are organized in a linguistic way. Each individual gesture is called a sign. Each sign has three distinct parts; the handshape, the position of the hands, and the movement of the hands. American Sign Language (ASL) is the most commonly used sign language in the United States. Different countries speak different sign languages.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)- A system of federally provided payments to eligible workers (and, in some cases, their families) when they are unable to continue working because of a disability. Benefits begin with the sixth full month of disability and continue until the individual is capable of substantial gainful activity.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) - A program of support for low-income aged, blind and disabled persons, established by Title XVI of the Social Security Act.

Special Needs Trust- legal plan for placing funds and other assets in the control of a trustee for the benefit of an individual with a disability without making him or her financially ineligible for SSI and other benefit programs.

Speech input or speech recognition- A method of controlling a computer and creating text by dictation. Speech input software is combined with a microphone.

Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) or Teletypewriter (TTY)- A device which enables someone who has a speech or hearing impairment to use a telephone when communicating with someone else who has a TDD/TTY. TDD/TTYs can be used with any telephone, and one needs only a basic typing ability to use them.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)- Open and closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, including cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma.

Universal design- Designing programs, services, tools, and facilities so that they are useable, without modification, by the widest range of users possible, taking into account a variety of abilities and disabilities.

Universal design of instruction- The design of instructional materials and activities that make learning achievable by students with a wide variety of abilities and disabilities.

Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973- Act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability which applies to any program that receives federal financial support. Section 504 of the Act is aimed at making educational programs and facilities accessible to all students. Section 508 of the Act requires that electronic office equipment purchased through federal procurement meets disability access guidelines.

***Terms and definitions were obtained
from the following sources:**

The University of Washington

<http://www.washington.edu/doit/Brochures/Programs/glossary.html>

Find Counseling.com

<http://www.findcounseling.com/glossary/>

United States Department of Health and Human Services

<http://aspe.hhs.gov/daltcp/diction.shtml#>