

# *Definitions of Disability*

**National Health Interview Survey, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC**  
**Individuals 18 years old and over were identified as having a disability if they met any of the following criteria:**

- Limitation of activity
  - Personal care needs
  - Routine needs
  - Can't work
  - Limited work
  - Walking
  - Remembering
  - Other physical, mental or emotional
- Use of special equipment
  - Cane
  - Wheelchair
  - Special bed
  - Special telephone

**Data Analysis System, Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education**

Students 6 to 21 years were identified as having a disability if they were served under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Each was diagnosed with at least one of the following conditions:

- Specific Learning Disabilities
- Speech or Language Impairments
- Mental Retardation
- Emotional Disturbance
- Multiple Disabilities
- Hearing Impairments
- Orthopedic Impairments
- Other Health Impairments
- Visual Impairments
- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Developmental Delay

**Survey of Income and Program Participation, US Census Bureau, Department of Commerce**

Individuals 15 years and older were identified as having a disability if they met any of the following criteria:

- Uses a wheelchair, a cane, crutches, or a walker
- Has difficulty performing one or more functional activities (seeing, hearing, speaking,

lifting/carrying, using stairs, walking, or grasping small objects)  
Has difficulty with one or more activities of daily living (getting around inside the home, getting in or out of bed or a chair, bathing, dressing, eating, and toileting)  
Has difficulty with one or more instrumental activities of daily living (going outside the home, keeping track of money and bills, preparing meals, doing light housework, taking prescription medicines in the right amount at the right time, and using the telephone)  
Has one or more specified conditions ( learning disability, mental retardation or another developmental disability, Alzheimer's disease, or some other type of mental or emotional condition)  
Has any other mental or emotional condition that seriously interferes with everyday activities(frequently depressed or anxious, trouble getting along with others, trouble concentrating, or trouble coping with day-to-day stress)  
Has a condition that limits their ability to work around the house  
If age 16 to 67, has a condition that makes it difficult to work at a job or business  
Receives federal benefits based on an inability to work.

**National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC**

**Individuals 20 years and older were identified as having a disability if they met any of the following criteria:**

**Unable to work at a job or business because of a physical, mental or emotional problem**

**Limited because of difficulty remembering or because of periods of confusion**

**Limited in any activity because of a physical, mental or emotional problem?**

**Uses special equipment, such as a cane, a wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone**

**Census 2000 Summary File 3, US Census Bureau, Department of Commerce**

**Individuals were classified as having a disability if any of the following three conditions was true: (1) they were five years old or older and reported a sensory, physical, mental or self-care disability; (2) they were 16 years old or older and reported a going outside the home disability; or (3) they were 16 to 64 years old and reported an employment disability.**

**Specific types of disability are defined as follows:**

**Sensory disability**

**blindness, deafness, or a severe vision or hearing impairment**

**Physical disability**

**condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying**

**Mental disability**

**difficulty learning, remembering, or concentrating**

**Self -care disability**

**difficulty dressing, bathing, or getting around inside the home**

**Going outside the home disability**

**difficulty going outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor's office**

**Employment disability**  
**difficulty working at a job or business**