



# Disability Rights Movement Awareness Campaign

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# Importance of Our Movement

The disability rights movement is a global movement meant to secure equal opportunities and equal rights for people with disabilities. The movement aims to shape an accessible society by removing physical and environmental barriers. It's important to get rid of stigma attached to disabilities and know that we all have something to offer.



# Background of the Movement

In the 1800s, people with disabilities were marginalized and considered to be the weak people of society. This continued throughout World War I when veterans with disabilities returned from war hoping that the U.S. government would help them in their rehabilitation process. However, because this did not happen, war veterans continued to increase pressure on the government during World War II. Despite all of the efforts to aid people with disabilities, they still did not have access to public transportation, telephones, and bathrooms, among other things. Additionally, it was almost impossible for individuals with disabilities to have a job. But, it wasn't until the 1960s that the movement began to take shape. As the civil rights movement began to spread all over the nation, disability advocates saw this as the perfect opportunity to stand by and join forces with other marginalized groups to demand equality.

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# Important Laws and Policies pertaining to the Disability Rights movement:

# Architectural Barriers Act & The Fair Housing Act

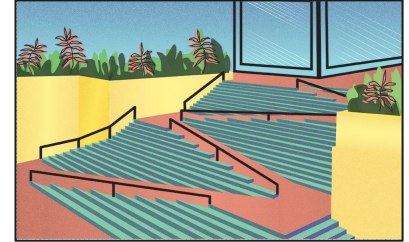
The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA) requires that buildings and facilities designed, built, or altered with federal funds or leased by a federal agency are physically accessible.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits housing discrimination because of an individual's disability. It also requires that landlords make reasonable exceptions in their policies to afford people with disabilities equal housing opportunities and that they allow tenants to make reasonable access related accommodations (though the landlord is not required to pay for the changes). The act also requires newly constructed multifamily housing with four or more units be designed and built to allow for access for people with disabilities.



# Impact of ABA and The Fair Housing Act

The Architectural Barriers Act helped spark progress to make buildings more accessible for people with disabilities. Before, standards were often inconsistent or ignored. A person with a disability may be able to use the post office in one town but not another. ABA finally alleviated physical barriers for people with disabilities. Schools, housing, offices, courts, hospitals, stadiums, post offices, and countless other facilities were finally accessible to all.



The Fair Housing Act's impact on people with disabilities was great. It forbid housing discrimination meaning it was easier for people with disabilities to find homes. Landlords could no longer refuse to rent to you because of a disability, charge more fees because of a disability, refuse to make reasonable accommodations, not allow an assistance animal, say that an apartment just rented even though there was still an "available unit" sign, and more. Multifamily houses were also now required to be wheelchair accessible.



# Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in the workplace and in federally funded programs. This includes all government agencies, federally-funded projects, K-12 schools, and postsecondary education, such as universities and colleges.

However, the Rehabilitation Act, although written, was never implemented. This was because in order for the law to go into effect, the government needed to issue regulations that said who qualifies as an individual with a disability and what constitutes as discrimination. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare put this on hold for four years because they couldn't decide over the terms. As a result, advocates organized protests all over the nation because they were worried that the delay would weaken the regulations. But it wasn't until April of 1977, when a sit-in that lasted 28 days at a federal building in San Francisco resulted in victory and in the signing of the regulations, unchanged.



# Impact of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

This section helped the American public realize that making accommodations for individuals with disabilities was a civil right and not a welfare benefit. The Rehabilitation Act was the first piece of legislation to use the term “discrimination” to refer to what people with disabilities were going through in the U.S. This legislation also led to other important victories in the disability rights movement in the 1970s and 1980s, such as guaranteeing a free public education for children with disabilities.







## Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

This law ensures access to a free public education including appropriate support services for students with disabilities

### Key provisions

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP )** A legal document that states all the accommodations/modifications a student is to receive .

**Least restrictive environment** Schools should make every effort to educate students with disabilities along non-disabled peers .



# Impact of IDEA



Since its passage in 1975, IDEA has dramatically increased educational opportunities for children with disabilities (age 3-21). IDEA has made more opportunity available to children because comprehensive assessments identify specific needs. These can range from testing accommodations to transportation all aimed at access to a free and appropriate public education.

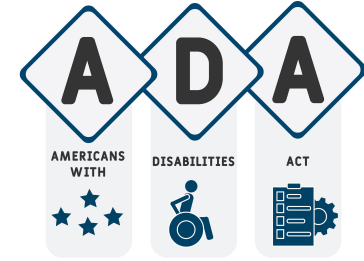
IDEA significantly impacts the role of a child's parent/ guardian. They are their child's advocate and they can participate in the decision making process for their child. A parent has the right to participate in meetings and file grievances on behalf of their child.

IDEA has also improved outcomes for children with disabilities. Through the supports they receive in school, they are more likely to go to college or hold a job than those who were educated under IDEA.



# The ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a law that prohibits against people with disabilities. It was also created to provide people with disabilities the same opportunity as everyone else to participate in mainstream American life. It was created to guarantee people with disabilities the ability to enjoy employment opportunities, participate in state and local government programs and services, and to purchase goods and services. The Act also states it applies to the U.S Congress as well. It was modeled after the Civil Rights Act of 1964.





## Impact of the ADA



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**Americans with Disabilities Act**

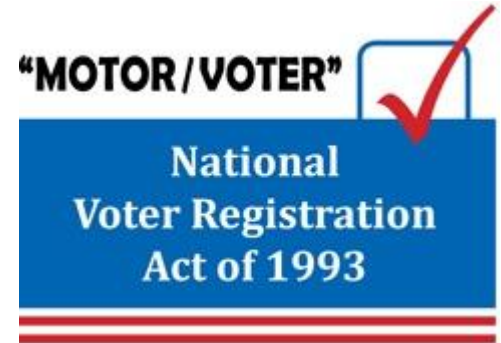
To this day the ADA is still being used to reach settlements in cases. It is being consistently used to bring justice to unjust situations that violate the act. For example, just two Fridays ago the ADA was used to expose Toledo school districts unjust treatment of Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents. The school district was not fully interpreting the school code and information to LEP parents and the ADA came into use when confronting this issue. There are many examples (new ones almost every other day) of the ADA coming into use to create a more fair and just society for people with disabilities.



# National Voter Registration Act

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) was passed by congress in attempts to enhance voting opportunities for Americans. The NVRA made registration process for voting easier and encouraged the FEC to develop a national mail voter registration form.

Section 7 of the National voter Registration Act enforces states to offer registration opportunities at all offices that provide public assistance and state-funded programs engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities. This also ensures that people with disabilities are provided with assistance when completing the form.





## Impact of the NVRA

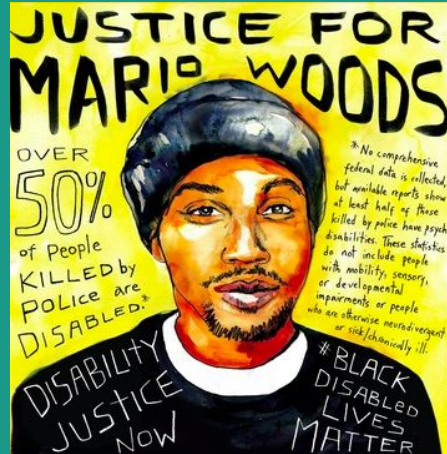
One of the main purposes of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 was to increase the low registration rates within the minorities and persons with disabilities within the US. This act allowed voting registration to be accessible for people with disabilities and ensured that they have assistance when completing forms, transmit completed forms to appropriate states officials. Lastly, the act requires all offices of State-funded programs that are engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities to provide all program applicants with voter registration forms. This allows US citizens with disabilities to execute their right to vote.



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# A Call to ACTION

## What can YOU do to support the movement?





# Call to Action

Things You can do:

- Encourage your school to provide more awareness and information regarding disability rights in the educational curriculum
- Ask your school administrators to create an awareness campaign alongside with heritage months and other programs like mental health awareness
- Spread awareness about the biased assumptions and stereotypes that are made towards people with disabilities through social media and traditional means such as flyers or school presentations
- Educate yourself on the struggle for disabled rights in America, learn about the various important laws regarding disability rights
- Find a faculty ally and start a student organization at your school if there is not one





# Disability Justice Organizations

- Disability Rights, Education, Activism, and Mentoring (DREAM)
- Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)
- National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)



First Peoples  
Disability Network  
Australia



Women with  
Disabilities ACT

**BLACK, DISABLED,  
AND PROUD:  
COLLEGE STUDENTS  
WITH DISABILITIES**



# Citations

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3. <https://www.justice.gov/crt/about-national-voter-registration-act>
4. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/2020/07/americans-disabilities-act-transformed-united-states/#close>
5. <https://www.nps.gov/articles/disabilityhistoryrightsmovement.htm>
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