

Communicating with Persons with Disabilities During Disaster

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Session Learning Objectives:

- Overview of effective communication
- Five point preparedness for effective communication

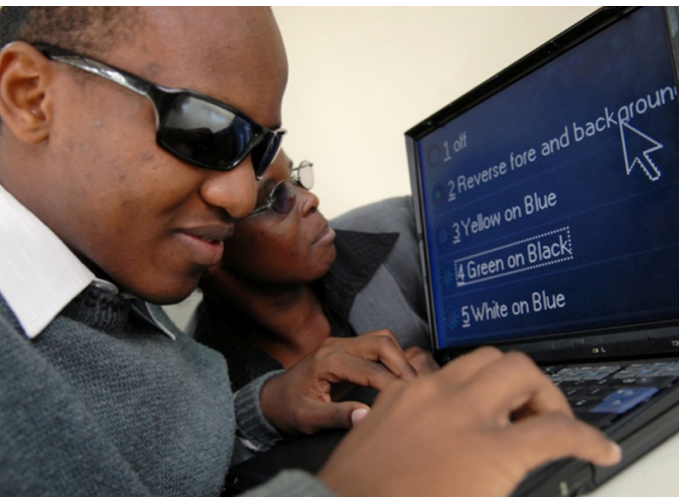


Why are you in this session?

What are the questions that you
want answered?



People Need Connection



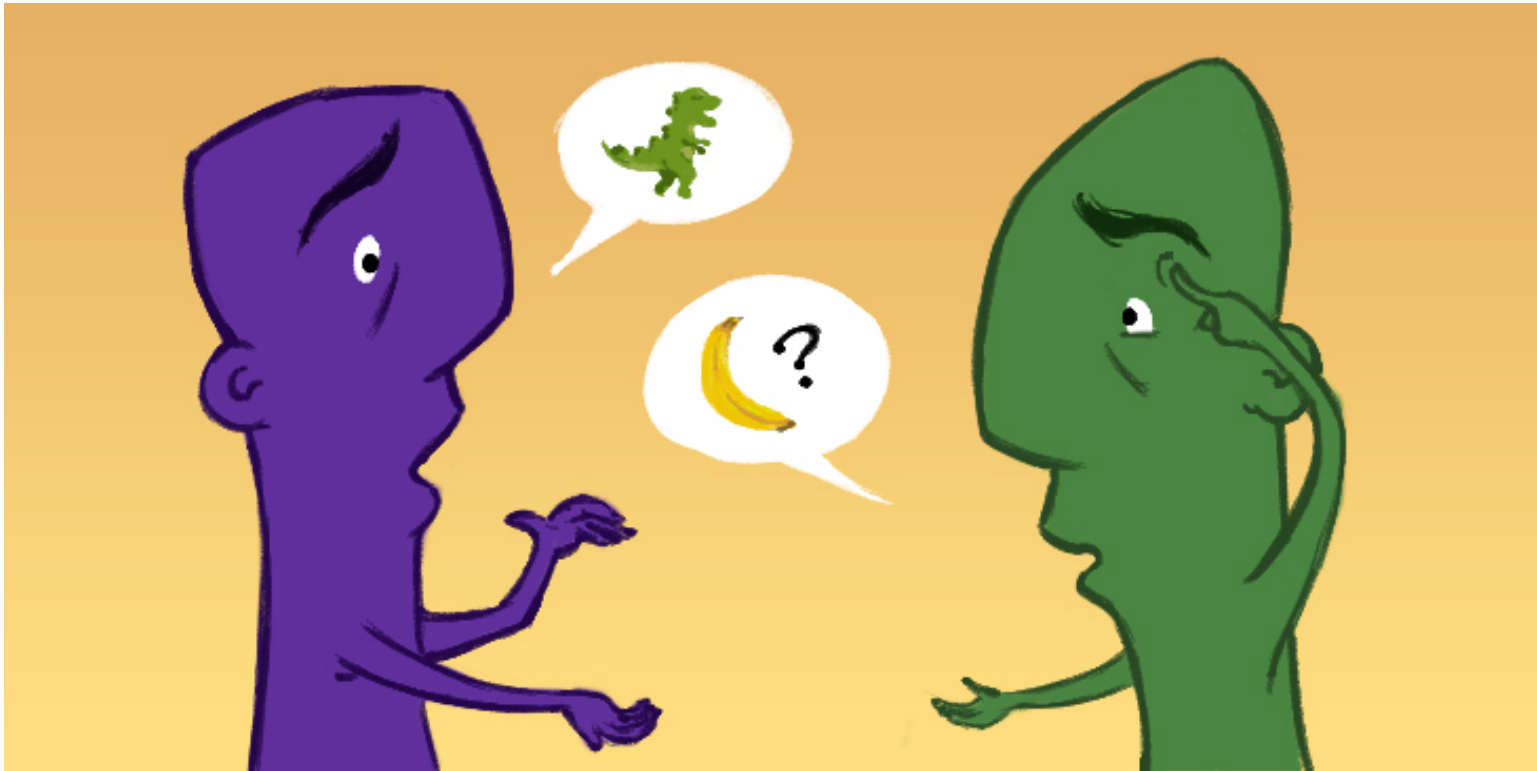
What does it mean to communicate?



Shared Thought Worlds



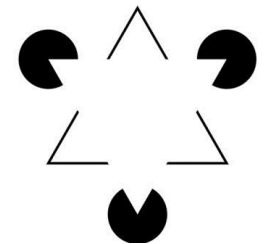
What if you use different codes??



Reality for People with LEP & AFN

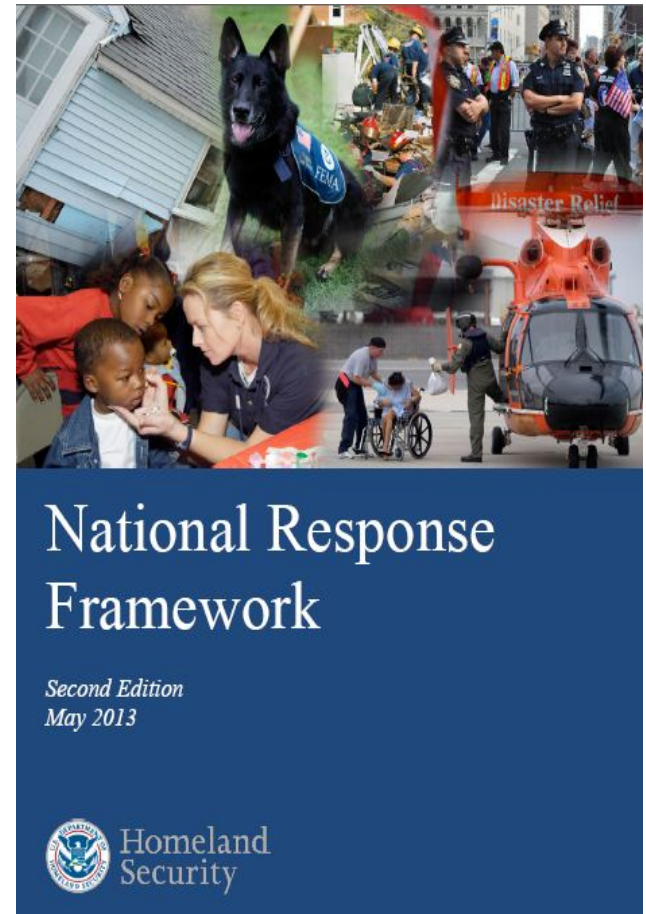
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Access & Functional Needs (AFN)

- Partial/Incomplete information
- Isolated or ignored
- Treated like a child or incompetent



Regulations & Guidance

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Vocation Rehabilitation Act
- Civil Rights Act
- The Stafford Act
- Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act
- National Response Framework



Effective Communication

Ensure that communications with people with disabilities are as effective as communications with others (Americans with Disabilities Act)

Take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities by LEP persons (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act)

Preparing for Communication



Written Plans & MOUs



Written Plans/Procedures

- Lay out your expectations for working with People with AFN
- Includes AFN expert in EOC

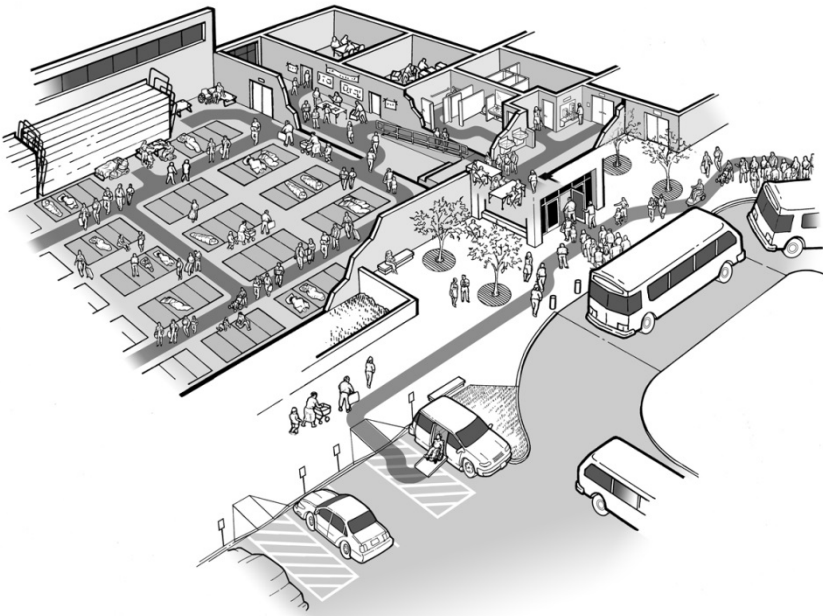


DOJ EOP Requirements

- Evacuation plans for people with disabilities to self-evacuate or be evacuated by others
- Procedures for effectively informing people of impending disaster, evacuation plans
- Input from People with Disabilities on plans



ADA Best Practices Toolkit for State & Local Government



Procedures Include Options for:

- Auto-dialed TTY messages
- Text messages
- E-mail
- Open-captions on local TV stations
- “Other innovative uses of technology”
- Dispatching qualified sign language interpreters to assist with emergency TV broadcasts

MOUs/Contracts for:

- Interpreters
 - Live interpreters
 - Video Remote Interpreters
- Technology (VRS, TTY)
- AFN Services (e.g.: FAST)
- Notification Systems
 - Agreements with other entities (eg: school districts)



Community Involvement



Benefits

- Puts a Face to the Disability
- Shared Information & Resources
- Greater Community Preparedness
- The community understands response & limitations



Effectively Engaging the Community

- Show up on their turf
- Invite to attend
- Ask – then Listen
- Interact



Who to Bring to the Table

- People with Disabilities & Organizations
- Community Stakeholders
- Emergency Managers/first Responders



- Community Benefit Organizations (CBO)
- Non-Government Organization (NGO)
- Government Organizations (GO)

Keys to Success

- Acknowledge this will take time
- Get the right people in the room
- Be flexible
- Promise only what you can deliver
- Maintain contact

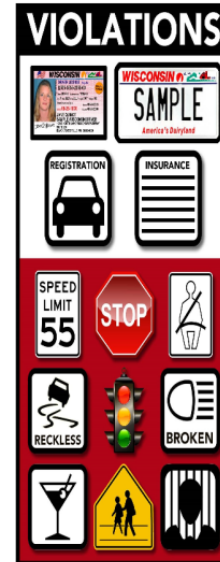


Resources & Tools



Prepare Resources

- Communication Toolkit
- Communication Cards
- Visual signs, note pads
- “I speak” cards for languages in your community
- ID bilingual volunteers



Tools For Communication

- Gesture/universal codes/sign language*
- Image boards/cards
- Pen/paper
 - Written text
 - Drawing
- Mobile phone - text and show, Image Apps

Practiced Response



Exercises

- After-Action
- Tabletop
- Functional



Integrated Exercises



It's common sense, yet...



What happens before the interpreter arrives?

General Communication Tips

- Use plain language
- Avoid:
 - Metaphors
 - figures of speech
 - jargon
- One instruction/direction at a time
- Allow extra time
- Ask to repeat back



Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Late Deafened

- Face person
- Speak directly to the person
- Lip-reading is not usually effective
 - Unless a person is trained...
- Speak in regular voice (unless asked)
- Be willing to write notes until interpreter arrives



Low Vision and Blindness

- Notify when entering and leaving
- Orient to environment
 - Doors, elements, people
 - When layout changes
- “Would you like me to guide you?”
 - Ask how, offer an elbow/shoulder



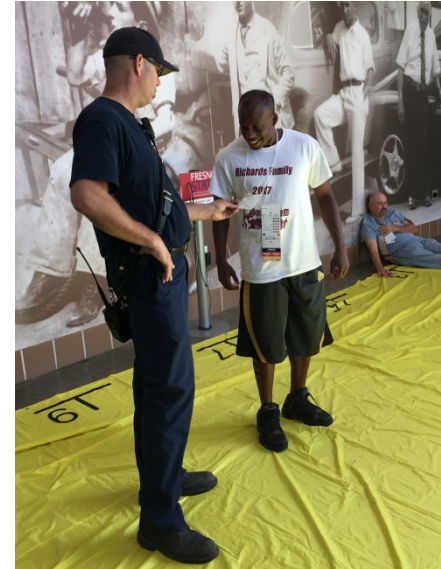
Cognitive/Intellectual Disabilities

*Including Down Syndrome,
Autism Spectrum Disorders,
Traumatic Brain Injuries*



- Age Appropriate
- Assume competence
- Hypo/hyper-sensitive
- Direct, literal speech
- Routines
- Self Soothing Behaviors

Mass Casualty Exercise

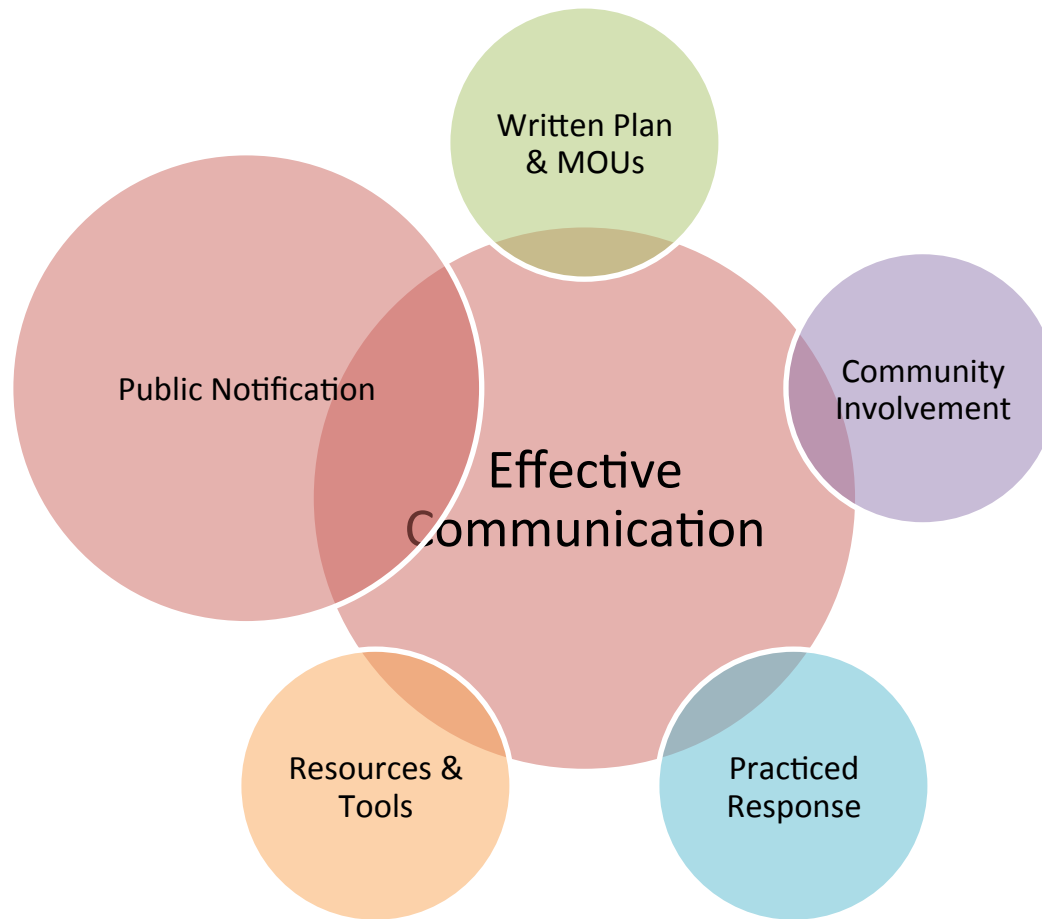


Something to Consider:

Responders & volunteers must be empowered to communicate



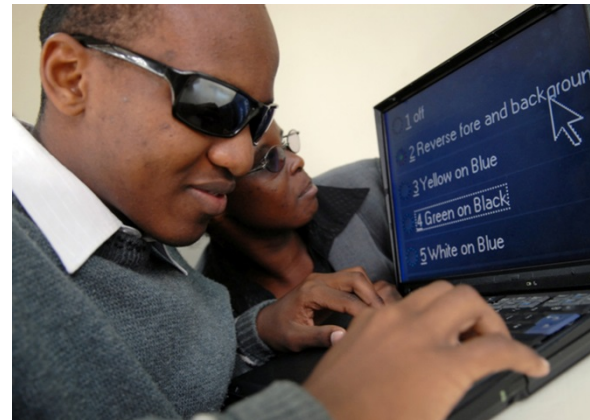
Public Notification



Notification Systems

Multi-modalities

- Text
- Email
- Phone
- Video
- Social Media



Interpreters

Provide Interpreters for press conferences



News Media Outlets

- Partner to ensure:
 - Interpreter is on screen
 - Information is captioned
 - Info graphics are simple

Addressing Captions Together

News Media Forum



Be Flexible - Be Creative

You will have to
do things differently.



Write It Down:



What one thing will you do this week to prepare for communication?

Communication is more about connection than language



More Resources

- [ADA Best Practices Toolkit for State & Local Government](#)
- [Tips & Tools for Reaching Limited English Proficient Communities in Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery](#) (2016)
- [CERT Annex for All Abilities](#) (2016)
- [Show Me Booklet & Application](#)
- Limited English Proficiency Federal Interagency Website
<https://www.lep.gov/>
- Shelter Toolkit – City of Seattle

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