Disability Survival Guide

10 helpful topics to guide someone with a disability

4 people who have been there, done that

16 tips for friends & family to support a loved one

10 helpful topics to guide someone with a disability

DSG is a publication of ABILITY360
Becoming disabled completely changed my life. In the beginning, I struggled and my family struggled. Ability360 opened doors and allowed me to see my life was not over and that I had options.

George Lopez
with his daughter, Jennifer
You can thrive

If you or someone you love is new to disability, then this survival guide is just for you.

This guide provides the kinds of information and resources you or they will need to become more empowered and more independent.

Disability is not a tragedy. It’s just something that happens to some of us. Living with a disability is never easy, but it doesn’t have to be impossible or a drudgery either. It usually involves making some adjustments and doing things a little differently, but the end results can often be the same.

With the right information and support, the journey to greater independence is more possible than ever before. Be assured, the journey has been traveled by millions of people just like you. So think of this as your toolbox to greater independence and a better quality of life!

Never forget, this is your life. Take control of it starting today. Choose what is best for you and begin living again. By doing so, I think you’ll enjoy the journey and appreciate the many wonderful experiences and relationships that await you. Good luck in your journey!

Phil Pangrazio
Ability360 President & CEO

Phil became a person with quadriplegia in 1979 as the result of an automobile accident.
Meet people just like you...people who have experienced a disability. These four individuals learned how to adapt to a new disability and have proven that life does go on, and is filled with the same challenges, opportunities and successes that shape the basic human experience.

Adapting to a disability, living independently, and exploring transportation or housing options affect many people with a disability. Don’t forget employment, relationships and intimacy, and parenting. Explore a frank discussion of these and more important topics that affect all of us.

The love and support of family and friends is crucial in the healing process after a new disability. Read these tips that will help you support the one you love, as well as yourself.

10 HELPFUL TOPICS TO GUIDE SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY

BEEN THERE... ...DONE THAT

FAMILY & FRIENDS TIPS FOR SUPPORTING A LOVED ONE
Meet Mike Benge

Mike is an exceptional athlete who competes in numerous endurance races and challenges each year. He spends a great deal of time exploring the outdoors and traveling with friends. In addition, Mike is an entrepreneur who runs a successful medical supply company. Meet others who have adapted to a disability on page 14.
About Ability360

Ability360 is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and the largest Center for Independent Living in Arizona. Since 1981, Ability360 has offered a wide variety of empowering programs, including: Individual & Systems Advocacy; Information & Referral; Independent Living Skills; Peer Support; In-Home Caregiving Services; Work Incentives Consulting; Employment; Home Modification; Early Intervention; Reintegration; and Sports, Fitness and Recreation.

Ability360’s Mission

Ability360 offers and promotes programs designed to empower people with disabilities to take personal responsibility so that they may achieve or continue independent lifestyles within the community.

Ability360 Center

Ability360 owns and operates both the Ability360 Center, where it is co-located with eleven other disability services organizations, and Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center, which it opened in 2011.

Ability360 Center is a 62,000-square-foot universally-designed, accessible and transit-oriented non-profit resources center which serves as a model for accessible design and collaborative programming. It is located in the heart of Phoenix at 50th St. and Washington.

Ability360 Center is a hub for uniting those with common goals to improve the lives of people with disabilities. Ability360 Center is home to numerous events each year, such as the health & wellness fair held every spring.

Partners

Arizona Autism United
Ability360
Arizona Center for Disability Law
Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association
Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona
Joni & Friends
NAMI Arizona
Multiple Sclerosis Society, AZ Chapter
Raising Special Kids
Statewide Independent Living Council
Symbius Medical
Valley Center of the Deaf
Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center

The 45,000-square-foot facility provides adaptive sports, fitness, health and recreation programs for people with disabilities of all ages and their families. The Sports & Fitness Center hosts numerous national adaptive sporting events.

The facility is open 6 days per week and offers:

- Sport Courts
- Indoor Track
- Rock Climbing Wall
- Aquatic Center
- Group Fitness Center
- Adaptive Fitness Equipment
- Accessible Locker Rooms, Showers
- Daily, Monthly & Annual Memberships

www.ability360sports.org
(602) 386-4566
ADAPTATION TO A DISABILITY

Adaptation is a process; it’s not something that happens overnight. There are many components to the adaptation process, including physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects. Overcoming a disability is not easy. There will be plenty of tough days ahead of you. But with strength and determination you can overcome and resume your life. Here are the basics...

Emotional

The emotional adaptation often involves stages of the “grieving process”. We experience not only a grief response to our disability, but also to changes in our lifestyle, environment and the reactions we may encounter in others. Common emotional stages include denial, anger, bargaining, depression and fear. Not everyone will experience all of these emotions, but it’s important to understand that they are natural coping strategies and part of the adaptation process.

Spiritual

Many people find that adapting to a disability is also a spiritual process. Whether or not you consider yourself religious or spiritual, you may find yourself searching for answers to questions such as “why me?”. Your search for answers may take you places you have never gone before, but the journey might also be helpful in the healing process.

Mental

Your mental adaptation includes your attitudes, beliefs and knowledge. Abe Lincoln famously said “We are as happy as we make our minds to be.” While this might not always be easy, deciding to take charge of your life, to self-advocate, will be extremely helpful in many ways. Knowledge is power; learn everything you can about resources, community support and your civil rights. A new disability forces us to learn new skill sets, adaptive technologies and the inner strengths we possess; become an expert in all of these areas!

Physical

You will likely have to learn to adapt to physical changes. Whether it’s mastering the use of a mobility device such as a wheelchair or scooter, or the need to learn new skills such as transferring or reading braille, these adaptations will take time. Stay as active as you can, eat healthy foods and learn about secondary conditions to which you might be susceptible.

LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

A disability can mean you need assistance with certain activities. This is especially true in the beginning. A personal care assistant is someone who can help you with daily tasks, such as: transferring; dressing; toileting; cooking; eating; laundry; housekeeping;
shopping; range of motion exercises; answering mail; reminding you to take medication; etc.

Often, a caregiver can be a family member or friend. In other cases you may need to hire someone. Finding one or more caregivers to meet your needs will be important to your health and wellbeing. Most communities have options for in-home assistance. Ability360 Home Care Services, other Centers for Independent Living, your health insurer, and other community organizations can help you with this process.

**HOUSING**

Concern about where you will live is one of the first things you might consider after experiencing a new disability.

Often, an existing house, condo or apartment can be modified or adapted. Depending on the city in which you reside, Ability360 or another organization or company can provide you with consultation that will give you some guidance. In many cases, grants exist to assist in the remodeling.

Should you need to consider relocating, there are realtors who specialize in accessible housing. The Fair Housing Act protects you from landlord or real estate discrimination.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Surviving a disability means you will eventually need to get around your community. As you progress, you can resume exploring new places both near and far.

Many people with disabilities are able to drive. The vehicle modifications will vary according to personal preference and physical needs. Training is available for driving with adaptive equipment, and there are numerous vendors who sell modified vehicles or will adapt your vehicle.

If you are unable to drive, or do not have a vehicle, public transportation is often available. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that where public transportation exists, it must be accessible. Public transportation includes lift-equipped buses, Dial-A-Ride paratransit for those unable to use the buses, as well as light rail.

**Ability360’s Transitional Home**

Ability360 operates Mast House, an accessible home that is used as a temporary, (8-week maximum) transitional residence for persons with a disability. www.ability360.org
RELATIONSHIPS, INTIMACY & SEXUALITY

All human beings need closeness and intimacy. People often confuse intimacy with sex. Intimacy is being able to be yourself with another person. Sharing your thoughts and feelings can be difficult, especially during times of crisis. Giving and receiving are both important components of intimacy. Intimacy can be expressed in a hug, holding a hand, or a massage. Physical closeness is important, especially when we are experiencing pain.

Sexual expression has come to be accepted as an important right of all people. Sexuality is a component of personality and is not lost as a result of illness or injury. However, the general public, and in some instances even the professionals who work with people with disabilities, are uncomfortable or not knowledgeable about sexual issues as they relate to disability. Consequently, information is often difficult to get. Education about human sexuality can break the cycle of ignorance, and prevent loss of self-esteem and disruption to intimate relationships. If your physician is not helpful, you may need to turn to a family life educator or a peer who seems to have a satisfying intimate relationship. If you are wondering if you will be able to have a sexual relationship, the answer is yes! If we, as people with disabilities, regard ourselves as sexual beings, others will as well. Hygiene and grooming are as important for those of us with disabilities as for anyone else. By staying socially active in the things we enjoy, relationships just naturally develop.
MENTORING, SKILLS CLINICS & NETWORKING
You won't be the first person to think, “No one knows what it’s like for me. I feel all alone!” The feeling is natural and real. But for most people, the best way to overcome this period of your life is to begin interacting with others in a similar situation.

The hallmark of Independent Living Philosophy is that people with disabilities know best what it takes to survive a disability and resume the life and lifestyle they chose for themselves. When you are ready, you will find that many programs exist for you to begin interacting with people who have similar experiences.

SELF-ADVOCACY
One of the first steps to moving beyond a new disability is learning self-advocacy. Whether it is dealing with your doctor, the lack of accessibility at your favorite shopping center, or supervising your caregiver, you will need to develop and become proficient in your self-advocacy skills.

Ability360 and other organizations can assist you in developing these skills. Centers for Independent Living also work for you to advocate improvement to public policy and community integration.

PARENTING
Often it is young adults who experience life-altering disabilities. Whether you have children or want to have them in the future, the question of parenting with a disability is bound to be on your mind.

Parenting with a disability can challenge you to new heights of creativity! Although you may need to do some things in a non-traditional way, there are still plenty of ways to express love and demonstrate caring to your children. Support from other parents with disabilities can make a big difference.
Often, a disability will require a person to develop skills and find employment that is less physically demanding and requires more education. Most community colleges and universities have disability resource centers that assist people with disabilities. Many times, people with disabilities can qualify for grants and student loans that make it easier to develop new skills and qualifications.

**EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION**

You may have questions about your ability to work. “Will I be able to return to the job I had before my disability?” “Will I be able to get my first job now that I have a disability?” Most of the time the answer is “yes” to both of these questions.

Many larger employers have “return to work” programs, which will help you return to your previous job or get another position with the same company, as long as you are qualified to perform the duties of that job.

There are government and community organizations that can help you understand how work affects public programs and benefits, find employment, and gain or improve job skills. These programs include: Ability360’s Benefits 2 Work Arizona work incentives consulting program and Employment Services; other Employment Networks; Arizona Workforce Connection; and DES Rehabilitation Services Administration (Vocational Rehabilitation).
LEISURE & RECREATION

Adaptive sports, fitness and recreation have come a long way in the last three decades. For people of all levels of disability, there are opportunities to participate in everything from computer games to competitive sports. Ability360, along with numerous other organizations in Arizona, promote and provide opportunities for people to experience new activities. Whether you are interested in theatre, hunting, basketball, swimming or even motor sports, you will find others who have the same interests, and you can learn how to adapt an activity to your ability level.

Arizona is home to numerous teams that play adaptive amateur sports. This includes basketball, wheelchair rugby and power soccer. Additionally, you can find numerous organizations that train athletes in Paralympic sports such as track & field, swimming, archery, rowing, biking, fencing and weight lifting.

One thing you will discover along the way is that there are all sorts of adaptive equipment that can allow you to continue enjoying many of the activities that you participate in with friends and family.
Angelica Pedroza

Angelica grew up in Buckeye, Arizona, with six brothers. She was very athletic and played basketball, volleyball, softball, and enjoyed being a cheerleader. In the summer she worked on the family farm. During her sophomore year, she was in an auto accident that resulted in paralysis.

The accident didn’t stop her. After graduating from high school, she met and began dating one of her brother’s friends. They were soon married and began a family. Angelica is the proud mother of three boys. In spite of her injury, she learned how to adapt and be a proud mother.

Her boys are now older. They are graduating high school and pursuing college and careers. She, too, has returned to school and is working.

"Everything is a challenge in life. Everything. Ours is just a little harder but doable and definitely worth it."

Michael Somsan

Michael Somsan felt like he’d lost everything. The retired Army First Lieutenant and Persian Gulf veteran became completely visually impaired from a gunshot blast.

Once discharged, Michael adopted the motto “never be defeated”. Michael graduated with his Masters in Public Administration and received a doctorate degree in Law. Michael passed the Arizona Bar in 2002 and is a practicing attorney. He has worked for the State’s Assistant Attorney General, an Assistant United States Attorney, and as a Senior Staff Attorney with Community Legal Services. Striving to do even more, he recently started his own law firm, engaged in providing both criminal and civil litigation services to his clients. Michael also sits as an active Judge Pro Temp in the Justice Courts in Maricopa County.

In his spare time, Michael is a board member for local non-profit organizations and greatly enjoys coaching his daughter in various sports activities and school-related events. Finally, Michael remains physically active, competing in distance races and triathlon events.
Nick Springer was playing sports from the very beginning. In the summer prior to his freshman year in high school, he went on a three-day hike along the Appalachian Trail. Upon returning to camp, Springer began to complain of flu-like symptoms. By the following afternoon, he was unable to stand on his own and was rushed to the hospital. Doctors diagnosed him with a rare blood disease known as meningococcal meningitis. He lapsed into a two-month coma. The damage was traumatic - Nick had his arms and legs amputated.

As Nick says, "Sports saved me." Nick found that wheelchair rugby was his sport. In 2005, he was selected to the US Paralympic Wheelchair Rugby developmental team. Luck was on his side as a spot opened on the US national team. The team ended up winning two gold medals in the world championships ('06, '10), a gold medal in the '08 Paralympics in Beijing, China, and a bronze medal in the '12 Paralympics in London. Nick is currently preparing for 2016 in Rio de Janeiro.

Nick also travels the world presenting speeches and discussing meningococcal meningitis.

Kristi Grimm is a writer, her husband is an illustrator, and together they create children's books. As a teenager, she experienced a spinal cord injury while riding a horse. She completed high school and college despite having to use a wheelchair and having ADD and dyslexia.

Kristi has always enjoyed writing, and with a family that includes 4 children, she began looking for a way to raise her child and be successful in a career. "Being an author has been such a perfect fit for me," says Kristi, "I am able to work with my very talented husband, do as much writing as I want, and I am able to be there for my son as he grows up."

"If you are open to see it, you will always find someone that has things worse than you do. The difference is only in how we choose to handle it. A diamond can only become beautiful AFTER it has been chipped away at. So go let the world see you shine."
Visit [www.ability360.org](http://www.ability360.org) to explore all of our programs and services that help consumers achieve independence and self-sufficiency, including:

**Independent Living Skills Instruction**
One-to-one and group IL skills instruction

**Information and Referral (I&R)**
Information about and referrals to a wide range of community resources and programs

**Peer Support**
Peer Mentor volunteers work with individuals to help them achieve their goals

**Advocacy**
Assistance with self-advocacy skills as well as community/systems change and political advocacy

**Home Modification**
Modifications to the residence that will improve accessibility and safety

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Technical Assistance**
Training and technical assistance to individuals and businesses on the requirements and options of the ADA

**Living Well with a Disability**
A health promotion and wellness course designed specifically for adults with physical disabilities

**This is My Life (TIML)**
Teaches self-determination and self-advocacy skills to adults with developmental disabilities

**Outreach to Rehabilitation Centers for Newly-Disabled Individuals**
Provides peer support, resources and information to newly-disabled individuals and their families during their rehabilitation
Theatre360
Presents artistic works that heighten our community visibility beyond disability

Reintegration from Nursing Homes
Assists adults under age 65 to move out of nursing homes into less restrictive living situations

Ability360 Employment Services (AES)
Assistance and support to persons with disabilities seeking employment through the Ticket to Work program

Social Security Work Incentives Consulting
Assists those receiving Social Security Disability benefits to understand how earned income will affect their cash, medical and other benefits, and informs them of work incentives that can ease the transition to work

Empowering Youth in Transition
Assists high school students ages 14-22 to transition from high school into community life

Home Care Services (HCS)
Provides quality non-medical, in-home care to seniors and people with disabilities, through qualified contracts such as ALTCS, or private-pay services are available

Socialization through Recreation
Monthly social recreation activities, community outings and special events

Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center
An accessible facility that provides sports, fitness, recreation and aquatic programs to people with disabilities and their families
www.ability360sports.org

Subscribe to LivAbility magazine!
www.ability360.org/LivAbility
FAMILY & FRIENDS

Tips for supporting a loved one

The love and support of family and friends are crucial in the healing process. Here are a few tips for family members and friends of someone in rehabilitation after a new disability:

1. There are no magic words for you to say. Understand that your loved one is responsible for his/her physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual healing, but he/she needs your support in order to do this.

2. Start a resource file. You’ll be handed many brochures, business cards, books, manuals and flyers while in the hospital. Keep an organized folder so you can refer to this information in the future, as needed. Ask questions when you can and write them down as they come to you.

3. There is an old song entitled “You Always Hurt the One You Love.” Keep in mind that since you are closest to the person with the injury, you are the most likely to be on the receiving end of emotional, sometimes angry, outbursts.

4. Everybody involved hopes and wishes for the best outcome (i.e. complete and full recovery). Always hope for the best but plan for other contingencies, just in case. Never take hope away from any person.

5. You are not alone. With any accident/injury, the whole family grieves. Your grief is your own and is your right. Grieving is a natural part of the healing process. If and when you are ready to talk to others, reach out to community resources for peer support.

6. Laughter is ok. Laughter is therapeutic. Don’t be afraid to laugh together when the time is right.

7. If you are a spouse who is considering being the primary caregiver for your loved one, be sure to look at all options. Becoming a caregiver can alter the husband/wife dynamic. This is especially true in the early stages. Ask for help.
8. You are a great asset. Never underestimate how important your visits are, even if they don’t always go perfectly. By spending time with someone, you are showing that person that he or she is of value to you. Don’t be hurt if your loved one falls asleep when you come to visit him/her—Rehab is tiring! Fatigue, medications and uneven sleeping patterns can zap even the strongest person’s energy. Think about how your visit can include more than just chatting. Consider bringing a game or something that allows your loved one to escape the pressure of recovery.

9. Make sure that your loved one is always involved in making decisions about his/her treatment. Keep a journal of medications, therapies and medical procedures. This information may be invaluable after the rehab hospital.

10. Keep the lines of communication open between friends and family and the injury survivor. Tell them how you are feeling and what you are thinking in a sensitive manner. Acknowledge your feelings (sadness, anger, anxiety) by sharing them with a counselor, a support group, or by writing them down in a journal.

11. Pet therapy can be very beneficial. Ask your rehab staff if you can bring the family pet in for a visit. If not, see if you can arrange a reunion with the pet outside the hospital doors.

12. Your loved one will spend a great deal of time in his or her hospital room. Brighten it up with pictures, items and photos. Be sure objects are placed in easy view of the hospital bed. Be aware that some subjects may be emotionally sensitive. Ask your loved one what items he or she might like to have brought in from home.

13. Everyone grieves and heals in their own way. Allow your loved one to adapt on his or her own timeline. Pushing someone before he or she is ready may produce undesired results. Set simple goals and develop a daily routine.

14. Everyone deals with a disability in stages that will vary significantly. Celebrate the little victories as you learn from the setbacks.

15. Be sure to take care of yourself. You can’t be of assistance to your loved one if you are ill, tired or unhealthy. Eat properly, get enough sleep and find ways to de-stress so you can remain healthy. Pursue the professional help of a psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, social worker or other mental health provider if your feelings of sadness, anxiety and/or anger persist.

16. Adaptive technologies may be available to help your loved one better control his/her environment (e.g. voice-activated systems for controlling lights and the television for someone with limited arm function) and to communicate with friends and family (e.g. wifi, email, video calls, apps, etc.).
Most people dealing with a major setback will appreciate you treating them just as you did previously. Remember, despite any physical changes, your loved one is still the person you knew before the injury.
Some of the best tools and activities for adapting to a disability can be learned by reading about and discovering what other people are doing and then getting involved in those activities. There are numerous books, websites and magazines that can expose you to the dynamic people, products, ideas and lifestyles that are changing the world in which we live.

Below we have listed just a few of these exciting publications, including LivAbility, Ability360’s quarterly magazine.
Navigating the vast amount of community resources related to disability and independent living can be overwhelming, especially when you are just learning how to deal with a new disability. Right now, you may not even know what you will need in the future. That’s ok. You will undoubtedly receive a multitude of brochures, flyers and other information in the hospital or rehab center, and making sense of them all may seem daunting. Take a deep breath and realize that you don’t have to figure it all out at once. Health care professionals, family and friends, and community advocates can help you navigate these resources.

This resource guide will assist you in finding programs, services, equipment and more. You will also find numerous organizations, including Centers for Independent Living, which can help you make sense of and access a variety of community resources and programs. Whether you need to find accessible housing, personal care services, a support group or accessible transportation, or if you are ready to find employment or learn how to drive, this guide is for you!
Advocacy

**Advocacy Organizations**

American with Disabilities Act (ADA)
(800) 514-0301
www.ada.gov

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)
(202) 457-0046
www.aapd.com

Arizona Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
(602) 542-3323
www.acdh.org

Arizona DES Division of Developmental Disabilities
(602) 542-0419
www.azdes.gov/developmentaldisabilities

Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
(602) 542-8970
www.azdes.gov/ADDPC/Home/

Arizona Disability Advocacy Coalition (AzDAC)
www.azdac.org

Arizona Housing Alliance
(480) 788-4180
www.azhousingalliance.org

Arizona State Legislature
(602) 542-4221
www.azleg.gov

Arizona Technology Access Program (AZTAP)
(602) 728-9534
www.aztap.org

National Alliance on Mental Illness of Arizona (NAMI)
(602) 244-8166
www.namiaz.org

U.S. Congress
(202) 224-3121
www.house.gov

U.S. Senate
(202) 224-3121
www.senate.gov

Civil Rights

Ability360
(602) 256-2245
www.ability360.org

AZ State Attorney General’s Office
(602) 542-5025
www.azag.gov

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
(602) 640-5000
www.eeoc.gov

Pacific Disability Business & Tech Assist Ctr.

(PDBTAC)
(800) 949-4232
www.adapacific.org

Other Organizations

Alzheimer's Association
(602) 528-0545
www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers

American Cancer Society
(602) 224-0524
www.cancer.org

American Diabetes Association
(602) 861-4731
www.diabetes.org

American Lung Association
(602) 258-7505
www.lung.org

Arizona Autism United
(602) 773-5773
www.azaunited.org

Arizona Kidney Foundation
(602) 840-1644
www.azkidney.org

Arizona Relay Service
TTY (800) 347-1695
www.azrelay.org

Arizona Speech-Language-Hearing Assoc.
(602) 354-8062
www.arsha.org

Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association
(602) 507-4209
www.azspinal.org

Arthritis Foundation
(602) 264-7679
www.arthritis.org

Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona
(602) 508-8024
www.biaaz.org

Cystic Fibrosis
(602) 224-0068
www.cff.org

Epilepsy Foundation of Arizona
(602) 406-3581
http://www.epilepsyaz.org/

Family Involvement Center
(602) 288-0155
www.familyinvolvementcenter.org

Foundation for Blind Children (includes Adults)
(602) 331-1470
www.seeitourway.org

Friendly House
(602) 257-1870
www.friendlyhouse.org
Joni & Friends  
(602) 275-2568  
www.joniandfriends.org

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
(602) 567-7600  
www.lls.org

Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation  
(602) 954-1723  
www.LS-HF.org

Muscular Dystrophy Association  
(480) 496-4530  
www.mdausa.org

National Center for Learning Disabilities  
(888) 575-7373  
www.ncld.org

National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (NCADD)  
(602) 264-6214

National Multiple Sclerosis Society, AZ Chapter  
(480) 968-2488  
http://aza.nationalmssociety.org

National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD)  
(203) 744-0100  
www.rarediseases.org

National Parkinson's Foundation  
(800) 473-4636  
www.parkinson.org

Southwest Autism Research & Resource Ctr. (SARRC)  
(602) 340-8717  
www.autismcenter.org

Spina Bifida Association of Arizona  
(602) 274-3323  
www.sbaaz.org

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)  
(602) 271-4100  
www.silc.org

Statewide Interpreting Service  
(602) 973-8072

United Cerebral Palsy of Central Arizona  
(602) 943-5472  
http://ucpofcentralaz.org/

Valley Center of the Deaf (VCD)  
(602) 267-1921  
www.vcdaz.org

Caregiving

Ability360’s Caregiving Services  
Home Care Services (HCS)  
(602) 256-2245  
www.ability360.org

Community Resources  
Caregiver Resource Line  
(888) 737-7494  
www.azcaregiver.org

Communications

Assistive Technology  
Arizona Technology Access Program (AZTAP)  
(602) 728-9534  
www2.nau.edu/aztap-

Phoenix Library Special Needs Center  
(602) 261-8690

Safelink Wireless  
(Free Cell Phone & Minutes Program)  
(800) 723-3546  
www.safelinkwireless.com

Data Bases & Resource Websites

Online/Phone/Bulletins  
211 Arizona  
211  
www.211arizona.org

Ability360  
(602) 256-2245  
www.ability360.org

Arizona Self Help  
www.arizonaselfhelp.org

AZ Links  
www.azlinks.org

Disability Benefits 101  
www.az.db101.org

Find Help Phoenix  
www.FindHelpPhx.org

Independent Living Research Utilization  
(713) 520-0232  
www.ilru.org

Southwest Network / Handbook  
(602) 266-8402  
www.southwestnetwork.org/nt19rg/default.htm

Education

College/ Disability Resource Ctrs.  
ASU Tempe Campus (Disability Resource Center)  
(480) 965-1234  
www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc

Maricopa Community Colleges  
(480) 831-8000  
https://my.maricopa.edu/student-services/disability-resources-services

FAFSA/Financial Aid/Scholarships  
FAFSA (Free Application for Fed Student Aid)  
(800) 433-3243  
www.fafsa.com
Literacy/Learn to Read Programs
Literacy Volunteers of Maricopa County
(602) 274-3430
www.literacyvolunteers-maricopa.org

Retraining/ Recareer
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
(602) 266-6752
www.azdes.gov/rsa/vr

Emergency Support

911 Emergency Calls
Call 911

24-Hour Crisis Hotline
Crisis Response Network (Mental Health Emerg)
(602) 222-9444
www.crisisnetwork.org
EMPACT Suicide Hotline
(480) 784-1500
http://www.empact-spc.com
EMPACT Sexual Assault Hotline
(480) 736-4949
http://www.empact-spc.com
Psychiatric Urgent Care Center
(602) 344-1945

24-Hour Emergency Hotlines
Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence
(602) 279-2900
www.azcadv.org
Arizona Poison & Drug Information Center Hotline
(800) 362-0101
National 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline
(800) 799SAFE (7233)

Abuse Hotlines
Adult Protective Services
(888) 767-2385
www.azdps.gov
Child Protective Services/ Child Abuse Hotline
(888) 767-2445
Center for Prevention of Abuse and Violence (CASA)
(602) 254-6400
Elder Abuse and Disabled (Area Agency on Aging)
(602) 264-2255
www.aaaphx.org
Child Crisis Center
(480) 969-2308
www.childcrisis.org

Behavioral Health Services
Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care Health Services
(800) 564-5465 Intake & Referral
http://www.mercymaricopa.org/

Employment

Advocacy / Discrimination Information
Ability360
(602) 256-2245

Employment Assistance
Ability360 Employment Services (AES)
(602) 443-0701
www.ability360.org
AWEE (Arizona Women’s Education & Employment)
(602) 223-4333
www.awee.org
Arizona Disability Benefits 101
www.az.db101.org
Benefits to Work/Social Security
Work Incentive Benefits Assistance
(602) 443-0720
www.benefits2work.org
Arizona Workforce Connection
(602) 542-2460
www.maricopaworkforceconnection.com
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
(800) 669-4000 Phoenix office
www.eeoc.gov
Family Service Agency
(602) 264-9891
www.fsaphoenix.org/
Goodwill Industries of AZ
(602) 254-2222
www.goodwill.org
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Help Line
(602) 542-7878
www.azdes.gov/rsa/vr

Events

Ability360 Events
(602) 256-2245
www.ability360.org

Sports & Fitness Center
(602) 386-4566
www.ability360.org/sports

Family Support

Advocacy and Respite
Family Involvement Center
(602) 288-0155
Area Agency on Aging, Family Caregiver Program
(602) 264-4357
www.aaaphx.org
Caregiver Resource Line (Respite Program)
(888) 737-7494
DUET  
(602) 274-5022  
www.duetaz.org  
PSA (Behavioral Health Recipients & Families)  
(602) 995-1767  
NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Health)  
(602) 759-8177  
www.nami.org

Financial Assistance

Community Action Programs
Glendale Community Action Program (CAP)  
(623) 930-2460  
Guadalupe Community Action Program (CAP)  
(480) 730-3093  
Mesa Community Action Network (CAN)  
(480) 833-9200  
Scottsdale Community Action Program (CAP)  
(480) 312-2323  
Tempe Community Action Program (CAP)  
(480) 350-5880

General Assistance
Dept. of Economic Security (DES)  
(602) 542-9935  
www.azdes.gov

Phoenix Family Service Centers
John F. Long  
(602) 262-6510  
Phoenix Senior Services Intake Line  
(602) 262-6631  
Sunnyslope  
(602) 495-5229  
Travis L. Williams  
(602) 534-4732

Veterans Assistance
Veterans Affairs Office  
(800) 827-1000  
www.ebenefits.va.gov

Food Assistance

Food and Food Banks/Meals
Salvation Army Family Services  
(602) 267-4122  
www.salvationarmyfamilyservices.com  
Arizona Association of Food Banks  
(602) 528-3434  
www.azfoodbanks.org  
St. Mary's Food Bank  
(602) 242-FOOD (3663)  
www.firstfoodbank.org  
St. Vincent de Paul  
(602) 266-4673  
www.stvincentdepaull.net

Health Insurance

Medicaid / Medicare
AHCCCS (Arizona Medicaid Program)  
(602) 417-4000  
www.azahcccs.gov  
AHCCCS Freedom to Work – Expansion Program for Workers with Disabilities  
(602) 417-6677  
www.azahcccs.gov/applicants/categories/workingdisabled.aspx  
AHCCCS Medicare Cost Sharing Packages  
(602) 417-6700  
Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS)  
(602) 417-6600  
www.azahcccs.gov/applicants/application/ALTCS.aspx

Partnership for Prescription Assistance  
(888) 477-2669  
www.pparx.org

State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) - (Medicare)  
(800) 432-4040  
www.azdes.gov/daas/medicare

Social Security Administration  
(800) 772-1213  
www.ssa.gov

Dental
Dental on Central  
(602) 266-1776  
www.dentaloncentral.com

Home Modification

Ability360 Home Modification  
(602) 256-2245

Home Repair

Home Repair and Safety
Angels on Call  
(480) 668-0566 x24  
www.angelsoncall.org  
Duet  
(602) 274-5022  
www.duetaz.org  
Foundation for Senior Living (FSL)  
(602) 532-2976  
www.fsl.org  
Rebuilding Together Valley of the Sun  
(480) 774-0237  
www.rebuildingtogetherphx.org
Homeless Shelters

Community Shelters
Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS)
(602) 256-6945
www.cassaz.org
CONTACT Shelter Hotline
(602) 263-8900
Salvation Army Family Services
(602) 267-4130 (shelter)
www.salvationarmyfamilyservices.com

Domestic Violence
Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC) De Colores
(602) 269-1515
Chrysalis
(602) 955-9059
www.noabuse.org
New Life Center
(623) 932-4404
www.newlifecenter.org
Sojourner Center
(602) 244-0089
www.sojournercenter.org
UMOM (United Methodist Outreach Ministries)
(602) 275-7852
www.umom.org

Housing Assistance

Subsidized/ Low Income
Ability360 - Resources
(602) 256-2245
Apartment Finders
(602) 957-7000
www.aptfind.com/
Housing & Urban Development (HUD)
(602) 744-4500
www.maricopahousing.org

Housing Authorities

Arizona Department of Housing
Arizona Department of Housing
(602) 771-1000
www.azhousing.gov

Housing Authorities By City
Chandler Housing Authority
(480) 782-3200
http://affordablehousing.chandleraz.gov/
Chandler/Home.asp
Glendale Housing Authority
(623) 930-2180
Mesa Housing Authority
(480) 644-3544
Peoria Housing Authority
(623) 486-4375
Phoenix Housing Authority
(602) 534-2141
Scottsdale Housing Authority
(480) 312-7717
Tempe Housing Authority
(480) 350-8950

Housing Resources

Alternative Housing
Step by Step Transitional Living / My 2nd Chance Rental
(602) 393-4400

Assisted Living
Senior Directory
(800) 955-8510
www.seniordirectory.com

Behavioral Health
ABC Housing (Arizona Behavioral Corporation)
(602) 712-9200

Discrimination Assistance
Arizona Fair Housing Center
(602) 548-1599
www.azfairhousing.net

Eviction Assistance
211 Arizona
211
www.211arizona.com

Foreclosure Assistance
AZ Dept. of Housing Mortgage/ Foreclosure Hotline
(877) 448-1211

Licensure/ Licensing Services
Arizona Dept. of Health / Division of Licensing Services
(602) 364-2536
www.azdhs.gov/als/index.htm

Senior Independent Living
Foundation for Senior Living
(Persons 18+ with Disabilities)
(602) 285-1800
www.fsl.org

Independent Living

Independent Living Information
American Association of People with Disabilities
(800) 840-8844
www.aapd.com
Area Agency On Aging
(602) 264-2255
www.aaaphx.org
Ability360
(602) 256-2245
www.ability360.org
Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
(602) 542-0419
www.azdes.gov/ddd
Independent Living Rehabilitation Services
(602) 470-1802
www.azdes.gov/rsa/ILRS
Independent Living Research Utilization
(713) 520-0232
www.ilru.org
Senior Adult Independent Living (SAIL)
(602) 264-4357
www.aapix.org/INDEPENDENT+LIVING

Legal

Information & Services
Arizona State University Legal Clinic
(480) 965-6968
Arizona Attorney General’s Office
(602) 542-5025
http://www.azag.gov/
Arizona Center For Disability Law
(V/TTY) (602) 274-6287
www.azdisabilitylaw.org
Arizona Community Legal Services
(602) 258-3434
www.clsaz.org
Arizona Summit Law School
(formerly Phoenix School of Law)
(888) 749-5291
http://www.azsummitlaw.edu/student-
resources/student-success-programs/
experiential-learning
Lawyer Referral Service
(602) 257-4434 (Fee)
State Bar of Arizona
(602) 252-4804
www.azbar.org

Special Needs Planning
PLAN of AZ
(602) 759-8176
www.planofaz.org

Medical Equipment

Assistive Technology
AZ Technology Access Program (AZTAP)
(602) 728-9534
www.aztap.org
Medical Equipment Resources
AZ AT and DME Reuse COALITION
(602) 776-4699
www.azmedequeireuse.org
East Valley Adult Resources (Mesa and 50+ only)
(480) 962-5612 x 116
www.evadultresources.org

Granite Reef Senior Center
(480) 312-1700 (Scottsdale)
www.scottsdaleaz.gov/seniors
Medical Equipment Specialties
(602) 956-3000
Southwest Lending Closet
(623) 876-5331
www.southwestlendingcloset.org
Symbius Medical
(602) 507-4212
www.symbiusmedical.com

Mental Health

Services and Support
Arizona Division of Behavioral Health Services
(602) 364-4558
http://www.azdhs.gov/bhs/
Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona
(602) 323-9165
www.biaaz.org
Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance
(800) 826 3632
www.dbsalliance.org
Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care Health Services
(800) 564-5465
http://www.mercymaricopa.org/
NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Health)
(800) 950-NAMI (6264)
www.nami.org
NAMI Valley of the Sun
(602) 244-8166
www.namivalleyofthesun.org
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
(866) 615-6464
www.nimh.nih.gov
Recovery Innovations
(602) 650-1212
www.recoveryinnovations.org
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
(877) SAMHSA 7
www.samhsa.gov

Parenting

Classes & Advocacy
Raising Special Kids
(602) 242-4366
www.raisingspecialkids.org
Family Involvement Center
(602) 288-0155
www.familyinvolvementcenter.org
Peer Support
Support Groups & Information
Ability360 - Any disability
(602) 256-2245
www.ability360.org
The ARC of Arizona (Developmental Disabilities)
(602) 234-2721
www.arcarizona.org
Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association
(602) 507-4209
www.azspinal.org
ASSIST! to Independence -
All disabilities on Navajo Reservation
(928) 283-6261
BNI / Barrow Connection
(602) 406-6280
www.thebarrow.org
CHEEERS (mental illness support)
(602) 246-7607
www.cheeers.org
DIRECT - All disabilities - Southern AZ
(520) 624-6452
http://directilc.org
Epilepsy Society of AZ
(602) 406-3581
www.epilepsyfoundation.org/local/arizona
Gamblers Anonymous
(602) 266-9784
http://www.gamblersanonymous.org/
LGBTQ - GLBT National Hotline
(888) 843-4564
www.glnh.org
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
(602) 759-8177
New Horizons - All disabilities (Northern AZ)
(928) 772-1266
www.newhorizonsilc.org
Recovery Innovations (mental illness support)
(602) 650-1212
www.recoveryinnovations.org
SMILE - All disabilities (Yuma)
(928) 329-6681
www.smile-az.org
Southwest Autism Research &
Resource Center (SARRC)
(602) 340-8717
www.autismcenter.org
VOICE (self-advocate group in the west valley)
(602) 814-9717
www.voice-az.com

Personal Assistance Services
Home Care
Ability360 Home Care Services
Maricopa - (602) 256-2245
Pinal/Gila - (520) 316-4300
Pima - (520) 449-8375
www.ability360.org
ALTCS (Arizona Long Term Care)
Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS)
(602) 417-6600 Phoenix
http://www.azahcccs.gov

Community Resources
Area Agency on Aging (SAIL Program)
(602) 264-2357
http://www.aaaphx.org/INDEPENDENT+LIVING
Arizona Caregiver Resource Line
(888) 737-7494
www.azcaregiver.org
DUET
(602) 274-5022
www.duetaz.org

Recreation & Sports
Fitness, Wellness & Activities
Ability360
(602) 256-2245
www.ability360.org
Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center
(602) 386-4566
www.ability360.org/sports

Service Animals
Service Dogs
Eye Dog Foundation For The Blind, Inc
(800) 393-3641
http://www.eyedogfoundation.org/index.php
Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind
(800) 548-4337
http://www.guidedog.org

Therapy Pet & Pet Care
Pet Food Pantry
(888) 679-1109

Social Security
Application Assistance
Disability Help Center
(602) 888-0602
www.ssdHelpCenter.org
Social Security Information
Social Security Administration
(800) 772-1213
www.socialsecurity.gov
Substance Abuse
Community Resources
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
(602) 264-1341
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD)
(602) 264-6214
Narcotics Anonymous (NA)
(480) 897-4636

Transportation
ADA Certification
Valley Metro - Mobility Center
(602) 716-2100
www.valleymetro.org

Adaptive Driving-Instruction
Banner Good Samaritan Rehabilitation Institute
(602) 839-2317
www.bannerhealth.com
Driving to Independence
(480) 449-3331
www.drivingtoindependence.com

Cab Companies and Services
Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association
(602) 703-2199
Duet
(602) 274-5022
www.duetaz.org
Valley Metro ADA Certification
(602) 716-2100

Valley Metro Dial-A-Ride
(602) 253-4000
www.valleymetro.org
Super Shuttle
(602) 244-9000
www.supershuttle.com/Locations/PHXAirportShuttlePhoenix.aspx

Van Rental
Wheelchair Getaways
(602) 494-8257

Vehicle Modifications
Ability Center
(866) 405-6806
www.abilitycenter.com
Dignified Motors
(877) 344-6686
www.drivvendesign.com
Leeden Wheelchair Lift & Sport
(480) 966-2372
www.leedenwheelchairliftingsport.com
VMI Mobility Center
(602) 385-5999
www.vmimobilitycenter.com

Youth Advocacy
Services and Information
Ability360’s Empowering Youth in Transition Program
(602) 256-2245
Raising Special Kids (Services for Parents)
(602) 242-4366
www.raisingspecialkids.org
OFFICE LOCATIONS

1. **GLENDALE OFFICE**
   - 6829 N. 57th Ave.
   - Glendale, AZ 85301
   - (602) 424-4100 Office
   - (602) 424-4118 Fax

2. **CENTRAL OFFICE**
   - 1229 E. Washington St.
   - Phoenix, AZ 85034
   - (602) 296-0551 Office
   - (602) 256-0184 Fax

3. **MAIN OFFICE**
   - 5025 E. Washington St., Suite 200
   - Phoenix, AZ 85034
   - (602) 256-2245 Office
   - (602) 254-6407 Fax

4. **MESA OFFICE**
   - 2150 S. Country Club Dr., Suite 10
   - Mesa, AZ 85210
   - (480) 655-9750 Office
   - (480) 655-9751 Fax

5. **PINAL-GILA COUNTY OFFICE**
   - 1419 N. Arizona Blvd.
   - Coolidge, AZ 85128
   - (520) 316-4300 Office
   - (520) 723-7767 Fax

6. **PIMA COUNTY OFFICE**
   - 1001 N. Alvernon Way
   - Tucson, AZ 85711
   - (520) 449-8375 Office
   - (520) 232-3682 Fax

---

**TOLL FREE**  (800) 280-2245
**AZ RELAY**  7-1-1
info@ability360.org

ABILITY360.ORG
What are Centers for Independent Living?

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are consumer controlled, community based, cross disability, non-profit agencies, established by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1978. They are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provide an array of independent living services.

Each CIL has different services, based on what people with disabilities need in their community. However, every CIL is mandated to provide the following five core services: Information & Referral; Independent Living Skills Instruction; Individual and Systems Advocacy; Peer Support; and Transition.

**ASSIST! To Independence**
(888) 848-1449

**New Horizons**
Disability Empowerment Center
(800) 406-2377  www.newhorizonsilc.org

**Ability360**
(800) 280-2245  www.ability360.org

**SMILE**
(866) 239-7645  www.smile-az.org

**DIRECT Center for Independence**
(800) 342-1853  www.directilc.org

National Centers are located online at www.ilru.org through Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU).