



Disability, Learning Challenge, and Medical Condition Resource Guide for NSHE Students Who Have Experienced Foster Care

PURPOSE OF GUIDE: This guide is designed to assist Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) students who have disabilities, learning challenges, and/or medical conditions with obtaining and maintaining academic success, career, and wellness support throughout their college journey. The guide contains information about resources/services that can support students with addressing needs related to one or more of those difficulties.

THE COMMONALITY OF DISABILITIES, LEARNING CHALLENGES, AND/OR MEDICAL CONDITIONS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SEEKING SUPPORT



Are you—or someone you know—a current or prospective college student navigating a disability, learning challenge, and/or medical condition? Do you need support in order to help you achieve your college/education goals? IF YOUR ANSWER TO THESE 2 QUESTIONS IS “YES,” YOU ARE CERTAINLY NOT ALONE! Disabilities, learning challenges, and medical conditions are incredibly common human conditions; and their level of impact widely varies.

The commonality of disabilities, learning challenges, and/or medical conditions is no different among college students; and college students who experience

these difficulties often face challenges with navigating postsecondary education (college) admissions and persistence processes/tasks—including accessing the academic success resources (such as tutoring), accommodations (such as alternative testing options), and wellness support (such as stress and anxiety management assistance) that they may need to feel successful, avoid heightened levels of stress, and persist to degree completion.

According to a June 2025 BestColleges article, [Students With Disabilities in Higher Education: Enrollment Data, Outcomes, and Inclusion](#), disabilities are incredibly common among college students—yet often go unrecognized and unaddressed. BestColleges shared data from the National Center for Education Statistics—the primary statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Education—which states that [“20.5% of undergraduates and 10.7% of graduate students reported having a disability in 2019-2020.”](#) While those percentages are already significant, we know that there are additional students with disabilities—who have either never been properly assessed and accurately determined to have a disability, or who do not feel comfortable with disclosing their disability—who are NOT counted in that data. [The article states that] *“in a longitudinal study between 2009 and 2016, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that [only 37% of students with a disability reported their disability to their college.](#)”*

Additionally, a July 2022 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) article, [Chronic Conditions Among Adults Aged 18–34 Years — United States, 2019](#), illustrates the commonality of chronic medical conditions among young people, stating that “in 2019, 53.8% of adults aged 18-34 years had at least one chronic condition, and 22.3% had more than one condition.” Moreover, a 2021 article, [Care of the College Student](#)—published in *American Family Physician*, which is a peer-reviewed, evidence-based clinical journal publication through the American Academy of Family Physicians—states that “Although [the approximately 19 million students who attend college in the United States] are generally healthy, about 20% of youth have special health care needs, including asthma, diabetes mellitus, and learning, mental health, and substance use disorders.”

Academic hardships faced by college students with disabilities, learning challenges, and/or medical conditions are sometimes overlooked and difficult to adequately address, but there are some key resources/services that can help students experiencing these issues to succeed.

These are the 3 major resource categories that this guide will outline, each of which are discussed in more detail in their own sections:

1. Campus-Based Support: [All 7 Nevada System of Higher Education \(NSHE\) college/universities](#) have resource centers designed to assess and support students navigating these difficulties, including providing tailored academic success accommodations to students who meet the eligibility criteria.
2. Community-Based Support: [Vocational Rehabilitation \(VR\) Nevada](#), other community-based organizations, and numerous employers who are committed to hiring and supporting people with disabilities, learning challenges, and/or medical conditions help to alleviate these difficulties.
3. Web- and App-based Support: Web- and app-based resources that address these challenges are becoming increasingly available to students.








CAMPUS-BASED SUPPORT FOR NSHE STUDENTS EXPERIENCING DISABILITIES, LEARNING CHALLENGES, AND/OR MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Every [NSHE college/university](#) has a resource center designed to assess and support students navigating various disabilities, learning challenges, and/or medical conditions (both short- and long-term) that impact their daily lives and schooling—including providing tailored academic success accommodations to students who meet the eligibility criteria. Although the campus-based resource centers focused on these difficulties vary slightly, they offer similar types of resources/services. The main support they provide is granting students formal accommodations to address a variety of academic challenges and needs. This could include, for example, providing alternative testing options (such as extra time on exams), advocacy surrounding accessibility on campus, and one-on-one staff support to help students succeed in higher education.

If you are experiencing difficulties that you feel are minor enough that they may not qualify for formal resources/services, it is still highly recommended that you reach out and get assessed. You may qualify for more than you think; and, even minor accommodations can make a major difference in your self-confidence, academic performance, and wellbeing.



You can find more detailed information about NSHE's campus-based resource centers designed to support students navigating disabilities, learning challenges, and/or medical conditions on their websites:

- [University of Nevada, Las Vegas \(UNLV\) Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) 
- [University of Nevada, Reno \(UNR\) Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) 
University of Nevada, Reno
- [Nevada State University \(NSU\) Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#)  **NEVADA STATE**
UNIVERSITY
- [College of Southern Nevada \(CSN\) Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) 
Investing in Our Future. Students First.
- [Great Basin College \(GBC\) Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) 
- [Truckee Meadows Community College \(TMCC\) Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) 
- [Western Nevada College \(WNC\) Disability Support Services \(DSS\)](#) 

The first steps to obtain support from these campus-based resource centers are below. Please note that each college/university may provide slightly different instructions for these steps:

1. Locate your school's Disability Resource Center/Disability Support Services center website above.
2. Register with your school's resource center/apply for their services through their designated process/application (each school has a unique process/application), as instructed on their website.
3. The center will then process your request. They may contact you for more information and/or pair you with a staff member. Either way, staff will be available to guide you through the formal assessment/accommodation determination process. You may also be asked to submit supporting documentation of your disability, learning challenge, and/or medical condition. Some examples of the supporting documentation that may be needed/requested include the following:
 - A high school 504 Plan and/or IEP (Individualized Educational Program) — If you are not sure if you had a 504 Plan and/or IEP during high school and/or you are having issues accessing your secondary education records, ask a trusted adult to help you contact your current/former high school and/or one of your current/former service providers—such as your most recent child welfare caseworker, Independent Living (IL) worker, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), or another member of your current/former foster care provider team—to help you clarify and/or access any relevant records.
 - A note from a diagnosing medical professional
 - A copy of the results from any educational challenges/needs assessments that you have previously undergone, at the high school or college level
 - A copy of paperwork showing accommodation that was previously approved for you, at another college/university you attended



CAMPUS-BASED WRAPAROUND SUPPORT RESOURCES/SERVICES FOR NSHE STUDENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED FOSTER CARE

The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) provides tailored wraparound support to students who have experienced foster care, and we encourage you to access those resources/services.



Through a holistic approach, the NSHE Fostering Success Initiative centers postsecondary education success and career preparation as it focuses on the PRESENT and the FUTURE with students who have experienced foster care.

Enthusiastic educators engage in 3 key activities that promote student success and wellbeing:

- 1) Individualized direct coaching that centers the young person as the expert in their own experiences and needs, builds trust, and fosters self-advocacy and independent living skills;
- 2) Tailored resource and/or support service provision, within campus- and community-based settings (including “sense of belonging” opportunities); and
- 3) Timely and appropriate advocacy that assists in removing barriers.

Adapted from: 1) Casey Family Programs. (2006). *It's My Life: Postsecondary Education and Training*. <https://www.casey.org> & 2) Fostering Success Coaching Institute. (2008). *Fostering Success Coaching: The Seven Life Domains*. <https://www.fosteringssuccesscoaching.com>

Check out the initiative's [Wraparound Support Flyer](#), for a comprehensive list of NSHE staff/faculty and campus-based support programs that are dedicated to serving students who have experienced foster care:

- These contact people/programs can provide you with one-on-one assistance, connect you to resources, and help you navigate any barriers that you may encounter throughout your college journey.
- They can also connect you with other college students who have experienced foster care!



CAMPUS-BASED ACADEMIC SUCCESS SUPPORT RESOURCES/SERVICES FOR NSHE STUDENTS

Below are links to campus-based academic success support resources/services that are open to either all NSHE students or NSHE students who meet certain eligibility criteria. Please note that each institution has a different combination of resources, and some institutions have more resources than others.



General Academic Success Support for ALL NSHE Students

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV): [Academic Success Center \(ASC\)](#); [ASC Tutoring](#)
- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR): [Tutoring Center](#); [Writing & Speaking Center](#); [Math Center](#)
- Nevada State University (NSU): [Academic Success Center \(ASC\)](#); [Writing Center](#)
- College of Southern Nevada (CSN): [Centers for Academic Success \(CAS\)](#)
- Great Basin College (GBC): [Academic Success Center \(ASC\)](#)
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC): [Tutoring and Learning Center \(TLC\)](#)
- Western Nevada College (WNC): [Library & Academic Coaching](#); [Academic Coaching Overview](#)

In addition to the academic success support offered at each NSHE institution, students can also access tutoring services, FOR FREE, through their local public Nevada libraries—many of which use [brainfuse](#), like some of the NSHE institutions.

Academic Success Resources for NSHE Students who are First-Generation, Low-Income, Have a Disability, and/or are Otherwise Underrepresented in Postsecondary Education

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV): [First-Generation Student Overview](#); [The Intersection](#); [TRIO Student Support Services](#)
- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR): [First-Generation Student Center](#); [First in the Pack](#); [McNair Scholars Program](#); [TRIO Scholars and TRIO STEM Scholars Programs](#)
- Nevada State University (NSU): [TRIO Student Support Services](#); [First and Fierce](#); [Nepantla Program](#)



- College of Southern Nevada (CSN): [TRIO Student Support Services](#)
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC): [TRIO Student Support Services](#); [Success First Program](#)
- Great Basin College (GBC) & Western Nevada College (WNC) are both smaller colleges that do NOT have consistent dedicated programming/resources for first-generation college students; BUT, they are both part of the **Nevada First-Gen Network (NFGN)**—which provides micro-grants to institutions, to help them fund resources for first-generation college students. Utilize the other resources outlined in this guide and/or ask the staff/faculty at your school who are designated to support students with foster care history (listed in the NSHE Fostering Success Initiative's [Wraparound Support Flyer](#)) for support with identifying additional campus- and community-based resources.
- National First-Generation College Student Resource: [First in the Family: Your College Years](#)



Academic Success Resources for First-Year NSHE Students

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV): [First-Year Experience](#); [Peer Mentoring Program](#)
- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR): [Office of New Student Initiatives](#)
- Nevada State University (NSU): [Scholars Programs \(for first-year students\)](#)
- College of Southern Nevada (CSN): [First Year Experience \(FYE\)](#)
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC): [Success First Program \(must be a first-generation college student\)](#)
- Western Nevada College (WNC): [First Year Experience \(FYE\)](#)
- Great Basin College (GBC) is a smaller college that does NOT have consistent dedicated programming/resources for first-year college students. Utilize the other resources outlined in this guide and/or ask the staff/faculty at your school who are designated to support students with foster care history (listed in the NSHE Fostering Success Initiative's [Wraparound Support Flyer](#)) for support with identifying additional campus- and community-based resources.



CAMPUS-BASED WELLNESS SUPPORT RESOURCES/SERVICES FOR NSHE STUDENTS

Below are links to campus-based wellness support resources/services that are open to all NSHE students. Please note that each institution has a different combination of resources, and some institutions have more resources than others.

Health and Fitness Resources for NSHE Students

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV): [Student Wellness Center \(physical & mental health resources\)](#); [Student Health Center](#); [Basic Needs \(food, housing, & basic needs insecurity support\)](#); [Student Recreation and Wellness Center](#)
- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR): [Student Health Center](#); [Student Health Center Virtual Health & Well-Being Resources \(physical & mental health\)](#); [Pack Provisions \(food pantry\)](#); [Fitness and Recreational Sports](#)
- Nevada State University (NSU): [Student Wellness Services](#); [Food Pantry](#); [Student Life \(including recreation activities\)](#)
- College of Southern Nevada (CSN): [Wellness \(physical & mental health resources\)](#); [Coyote Cupboard \(food pantry\)](#); [Student Life - Recreation](#)
- Great Basin College (GBC): [Elko Campus Fitness Center and Gym](#)
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC): [Health and Wellness](#); [Wizard's Warehouse \(food pantry\)](#); [Sports and Fitness Center](#)
- Western Nevada College (WNC): [Wildcat Wellness \(physical & mental health resources\)](#); [Wildcat Reserve \(food and hygiene supplies\)](#); [Student Life \(including Fitness Center\)](#)



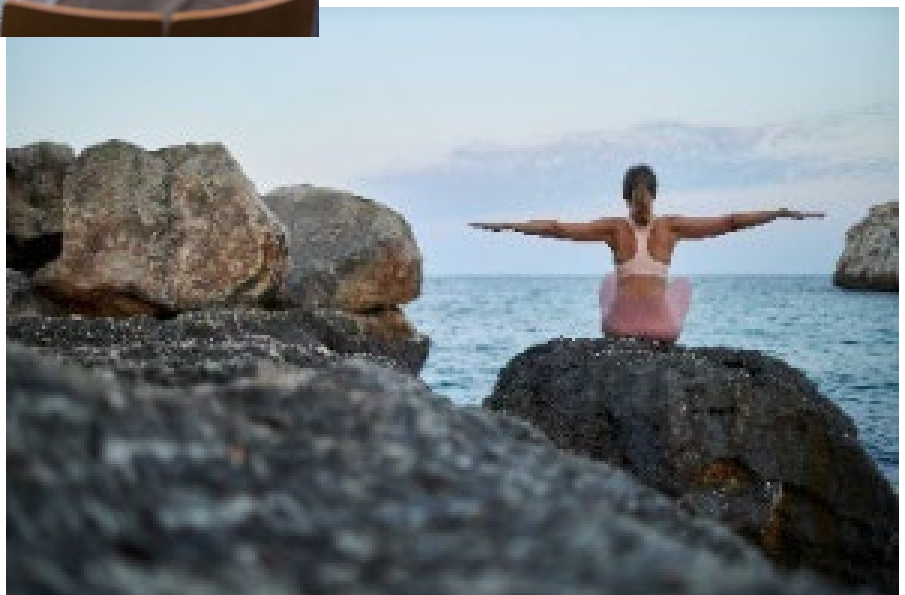
Mental Health Resources for NSHE Students

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV): [Student Wellness Center \(physical & mental health resources\)](#); [Student Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#); [Wellness Zone](#); [Support Team](#); [Crisis/Emergency Services](#); [The Care Center](#)



- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR): [Counseling Services](#); [Self-Help Center](#); [Virtual Relaxation Room](#); [Student Health Center Psychiatry Services](#); [Student Health Center Virtual Health & Well-Being Resources \(physical & mental health\)](#); [Crisis Services](#); [LiveWell \(physical & mental health resources\)](#)
- Nevada State University (NSU): [Student Wellness Services](#); [Counseling Services](#)
- College of Southern Nevada (CSN): [Wellness \(physical & mental health resources\)](#); [Counseling & Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- Great Basin College (GBC): [Mental Wellness Resources \(including BetterMynd teletherapy services\)](#)
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC): [Counseling Center](#)
- Western Nevada College (WNC): [Wildcat Wellness \(physical & mental health resources, including BetterMynd teletherapy services\)](#)

For additional mental health support resources—both on and off campus—check out our [Mental Health Resource Guide for NSHE Students Who Have Experienced Foster Care](#):

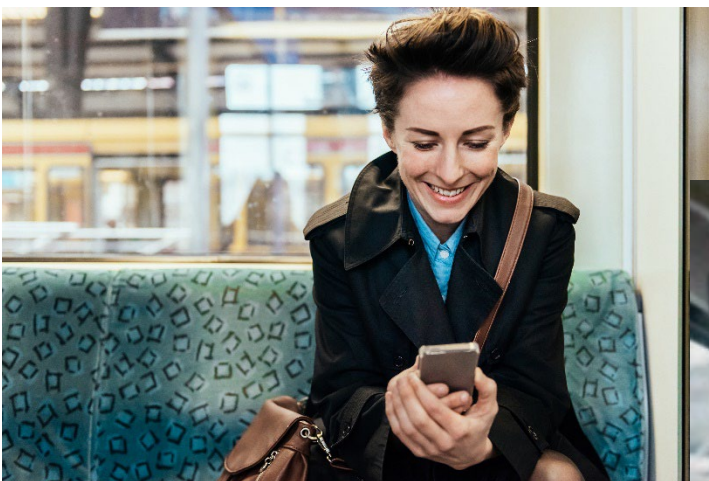


CAMPUS-BASED TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT RESOURCES/SERVICES FOR NSHE STUDENTS

Below are links to campus-based transportation support resources/services that are open to all NSHE students. Please note that each institution has a different combination of resources, and some institutions have more resources than others.

Transportation Resources for NSHE Students

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV): [RTC's discounted bus passes for CSN, NSU, & UNLV students](#); [Parking & Transportation Services](#); [Motorist Assistance Program](#); [Transportation Alternatives](#); [RTC's Club Ride Commuter Services](#); [U-Pass](#)
- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR): [RTC's FREE bus rides for UNR, TMCC, & WNC students](#); [Pack Rides](#); [Parking Services \(administration\)](#); [Parking and Transportation \(ADA access, visitor parking, & event parking\)](#); [PACKTransit Campus Shuttle](#); [Motorist Assistance Program](#); [Alternative and Eco-Friendly Transportation Options](#)
- Nevada State University (NSU): [RTC's discounted bus passes for CSN, NSU, & UNLV students](#); [Transportation \(including Scorpion Shuttle & RTC bus pass info\)](#); [Campus Commuter \(shuttle service between NSU & CSN - Henderson campuses\)](#)
- College of Southern Nevada (CSN): [RTC's discounted bus passes for CSN, NSU, & UNLV students](#); [Coyote Rideshare](#); [Campus Commuter \(shuttle service between NSU & CSN - Henderson campuses\)](#)
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC): [RTC's FREE bus rides for UNR, TMCC, & WNC students](#); [Parking Information](#)
- Western Nevada College (WNC): [RTC's FREE bus rides for UNR, TMCC, & WNC students](#); [Jump Around Carson \(JAC\) \(Carson City public transportation system—which offers fixed routes AND JAC Assist, a program that offers curb-to-curb transportation for eligible individuals with disabilities\)](#)



COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORT RESOURCES/SERVICES FOR NEVADANS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING DISABILITIES, LEARNING CHALLENGES, AND/OR MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Below are links to community-based support resources/services that are open to qualifying Nevadans who are experiencing disabilities, learning challenges, and/or medical conditions. Please note that each organization has a different combination of resources, and some organizations have more resources than others.

Nevada-Based Organizations Focused on Connecting People with Varying Types of Disabilities with a Range of Resources/Services

There are numerous community-based organizations that support people who have disabilities with accessing a wide variety of different types of resources/services that are necessary to help them thrive.



[Access Nevada](#)

Access Nevada is an online service offered through the Nevada Division of Social Services (DSS), to assist Nevada residents with applying for public benefits provided by the State of Nevada and managing their benefits accounts online. It is a one-stop portal where people can apply for all of the benefits offered, report changes in household circumstances, check the status of their case, receive online communications, and access other account management tools. There is a [Disability and Senior Services section](#), which covers “[p]rograms that assist older adults, people with disabilities, and their families or support networks by providing supportive services for daily living and resources for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.”

[Best Buddies in Nevada](#)

Best Buddies “is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, inclusive living, and family support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)...Best Buddies serves individuals with IDD and their families. The IDD community includes, but is not limited to, people with Down syndrome, autism, Fragile X, Williams syndrome, and other undiagnosed disabilities”

Best Buddies has a variety of [Local Programs](#) for Nevadans with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families.

“Young adults with IDD historically have been isolated at home or in work environments. The Best Buddies program is changing this by providing the opportunity for people with IDD to be involved in their local campus and community life.”

- Best Buddies partners with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), to foster one-to-one friendships between UNLV and UNR college students without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their peers on campus or in the community with IDD.

[Nevada 211](#)

“Nevada 211, a program of the Nevada Department of Human Services (DHS) and administered by Money Management International (MMI), is committed to helping Nevadans connect with the services they need. Whether by phone or internet, [their] goal is to present accurate, well-organized and easy-to-find information from state and local health and human services programs. Visit www.dbhs.nv.gov or www.MoneyManagement.org for more information on these organizations.” They have a convenient [Disability Services](#) directory that people can use to search for a variety of disability-focused resources, by subcategory.

[Nevada Care Connection](#)

“Nevada Care Connection works with older adults, people with disabilities, Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, and family caregivers to explore a variety of services, resources, and programs available to them. [Their] goal is to help individuals make informed decisions and connect to services as easily as possible.”

They have multiple [Resource Centers](#), as well as online [Resource Guides](#), for individuals with disabilities; they also have [Provider Resources](#) for community providers who are looking for training or other resources.



[Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities \(NCED\)](#)

“The Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities serves as Nevada's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD). The UCEDDs were established and funded by the Developmental Disabilities Rights Assistance and Rights Act (DD Act). UCEDDs work to accomplish a shared vision that foresees a nation in which all Americans, including Americans with disabilities, participate fully in their communities. Independence, productivity and community inclusion are key components of this vision. The DD Act funds 67 Centers at universities in every state and territory.”

The NCED has a variety of [projects](#) that “are focused on Advocacy and Family Support, Assistive Technology, Accessibility, Education of Children with Disabilities, Employment, Transition, Positive Behavioral Supports, Leadership Preparation and Disability Awareness.” These projects not only directly serve people with disabilities, but also their family members, state/local government agencies, and community providers.

[Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities \(NGCDD\)](#)

“The Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD) is a federally funded, self-governing organization within the State of Nevada. [Their] federal charge in the [Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act \(DD Act\)](#) is identifying the most pressing needs of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Nevada and developing innovative and cost-effective ways to advance advocacy through policy, capacity building and systems change activities to promote equal opportunity, self-determination, and community inclusion.”

While they do NOT focus on direct services/support, the NGCDD maintains an [Information/Resources webpage](#) that is designed to assist Nevadans with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their support people with understanding disability-specific legal protections and connecting with resources/services.

[Opportunity Village](#)

“Since 1954, Opportunity Village has been dedicated to helping people with disabilities find the very best version of themselves. Through workforce development, community employment, day services, inclusive housing, arts and social recreation, they are able to find new friends, realize future career paths, seek independence and community integration, and unleash creative passions.”

Opportunity Village’s [Programs and Services](#) include the following: Day Habilitation, Pre-Vocational Services, Employment Services, Youth & Student Services, Arts & Recreation, and Betty’s Village. They also offer [Business Services](#) to local organizations.

[State of Nevada Department of Human Services Aging and Disability Services Division \(ADSD\)](#)

The State of Nevada Department of Human Services Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) “represents Nevada's elders, children and adults with disabilities or special health care needs.” ADSD offers a variety of [programs](#) that serve Nevadans with disabilities.

[The Arc of Nevada](#)

The Arc of Nevada “work[s] with people with diverse disabilities and their families to self-advocate, create awareness of their needs, and support their full inclusion in the community...The Arc of Nevada was created to help ignite the passion and energy of people with disabilities and their families to self-advocate in an effort to promote the well-being and general welfare of people with developmental and related disabilities.”

The Arc of Nevada offers a variety of [programs](#) serving people with disabilities; and they have a [Resources webpage](#).

Local, National, & International Organizations Focused on Employment Support for People with Disabilities

Finding disability-friendly/accessible workplaces can be difficult, but there are resources to support job seekers with disabilities.

[Disability Resources](#)

Disability Resources is a Northern Nevada organization that serves the employment needs of people with disabilities. “Disability Resources is dedicated to fostering inclusivity and empowering people through comprehensive employment services...[They] help people with disabilities receive better training, education, and support so they can enjoy more job opportunities.”

Disability Resources directly provides services to [employees and job seekers](#), as well as providing specialized support to [employers](#).

[Lime Connect](#)

“Lime Connect is a global 501(c)(3) not for profit that's rebranding disability through achievement. [They] are focused on attracting, preparing, and connecting high-achieving professionals and university students - including veterans - who have all types of disabilities with rewarding professional opportunities. Individuals who join the Lime Network are eligible to apply for [scholarships](#), [leadership programs](#), internship, co-op and full-time positions with the world's leading corporations...Lime Connect offers programs and resources that are designed to support [their] members in building the skills, connections, and confidence to navigate the workplace as a person with a disability. While [they] provide various opportunities to engage with representatives of [their] partner companies for career opportunities, [they] do not provide job placement(s).”

Additionally, Lime Connect has a [Professional Development Resources webpage](#).



Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

“The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on job accommodations and disability employment issues. Serving customers across the United States and around the world for more than 40 years, JAN provides free one-on-one practical guidance and technical assistance on job accommodation solutions, Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related legislation, and self-employment and entrepreneurship options for people with disabilities. JAN provides individualized consultation to assist:



- *Employers and their representatives seeking guidance on practical ways to engage in the interactive process, provide job accommodation solutions, and comply with Title I of the ADA;*
- *Individuals with health conditions and disabilities seeking information about job accommodation solutions, employment rights under the ADA, and self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities; and*
- *Family members and rehabilitation, medical, educational, and other professionals in their effort to support successful employment outcomes for individuals with health conditions and disabilities.”*

JAN has a variety of online resources for [employers](#); [individuals \(employees and job seekers\)](#); and [other supporters \(rehabilitation & medical professionals, union representatives, and attorneys/legal representatives\)](#).

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Nevada

One of the most prominent community-based resources to address this need is the [Rehabilitation Division of The Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation](#), known as [Vocational Rehabilitation \(VR\) Nevada](#). *“Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Nevada supports adults and students with disabilities to prepare for, obtain, keep and advance in meaningful employment through a range of services based on their employment goals. [They] also [provide] FREE professional consultation services to connect employers with people with disabilities who can help drive business success.”*

VR Nevada counselors often work closely with K-12 and college personnel to support students with disabilities who need academic accommodations and/or employment support. College students with disabilities are strongly advised to connect with a VR Nevada counselor, at the beginning of college (but it is never too late to reach out!), and to stay consistently connected to them throughout their college career—for supplemental support regarding academic and employment needs. In terms of employment, they can assist with both pre- and post-graduation employment needs.

If you feel that you would benefit from VR Nevada’s resources/services, it is recommended that you first watch a VR Nevada orientation video before applying for their support. You can find English, Spanish, and American Sign Language versions of the VR Nevada orientation video—as well as English and Spanish versions of all 3 specialized applications—on their [application webpage](#). But, before you submit an application, you may want to reach out to a VR Nevada staff member with any questions that you have after watching the orientation video and reviewing the

application form. You may want to begin with the Statewide Transition Coordinator, who you can email at pre-ets@detr.nv.gov. You can also find the contact information for every VR Nevada location on their [Rehabilitation Office Locations webpage](#).

What can YOU do? – The Campaign for Disability Employment

“Funded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy, the [Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE)] is a collaborative effort among several disability and business organizations that promotes the hiring, retention and advancement of people with disabilities in America’s workforce.”

The campaign has an array of online resources for [employers](#); [job seekers and employees \(including high school & college students\)](#); and [state agencies](#).

Nevada-Based Organizations Focused on Independent Living Support for People with Disabilities

There are numerous community-based organizations that support people with disabilities with building independent living skills and accessing resources/services that are necessary to help them thrive.

Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living (NNCIL)

“The Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living (NNCIL) was founded more than 30 years ago as a 501C-3 by a small group of people with disabilities to help others with disabilities hone the skills they needed to achieve independent living.

Over the years, [they have] brought in experts, gained and shared knowledge, developed programs, embraced technology and expanded [their] resources exponentially, all in an effort to help Nevadans with disabilities live healthier, more active and more fulfilling lives...

Centers for independent living (CIL) are community-based, cross-disability, non-profit organizations designed and operated by people with disabilities. CILs are unique in that they operate according to a strict philosophy of consumer control, wherein people with all types of disabilities directly govern and staff the organization. Centers for independent living provide: peer support; information and referral; individual and systems advocacy; independent living skills training; [and] transition.”



In addition to the resources/services listed above, NNCIL also maintains a [General Resources webpage](#)—which lists a variety of resources, broken up into specialized categories.

[Southern Nevada Center for Independent Living \(SNCIL\)](#)

“Differing from many organizations that serve people with disabilities, SNCIL is founded on the belief that independent living is about consumer control. Guided by the [Independent Living and People First Philosophy](#), the majority of board, staff, and volunteers are people with disabilities...SNCIL is one of approximately 350 consumer-directed Centers located throughout the United States, Guam, Puerto Rico and American Samoa, funded by the [U.S.] Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Community Living...

[SNCIL is] committed to removing barriers preventing independent living by providing services designed to empower people with disabilities to: make individual choices; assume responsibility to direct their lives; manage their own affairs; fulfill social roles; [and] achieve independent lifestyles in the community.

[They] proudly serve people of all ages and disabilities throughout Clark County, Nevada, helping them navigate their journey toward greater independence...[SNCIL’s] core services include: peer support; information & referral; individual and systems advocacy; independent living skills training; [and] transition. [They] work one-on-one with individuals to help them achieve their independent living goals. And, as a non-profit, [they] provide most of [their] services to [the] community at little to no cost. [Their] services are completely free and made possible through grants from the Administration for Community Living.”

In addition to the resources/services listed above, SNCIL also maintains an online [Disability Resource Guide](#), which is a comprehensive directory of resources/services for Southern Nevada residents and visitors with disabilities.

Local and National Organizations Focused on Providing People Who Have Disabilities with Legal Services and/or Supporting Them with Obtaining Benefits

[Disability Help Center Nevada](#)

“Disability Help Center [Nevada] is a disability advocacy office made up of benefit specialists and volunteer disability advocates who can assist individuals that cannot afford to pay an expensive Social Security attorney office.”

Disability Help Center Nevada can assist qualifying individuals with accessing Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits—by supporting with benefits applications, appeals, and hearings, as well as helping benefits seekers with gathering medical records, creating a plan of action, and connecting to a variety of disability resources. This includes the support of licensed disability attorneys.



[Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada](#)

“Legal Aid Center is a nonprofit law firm dedicated to providing direct legal representation, counsel, advice, and community legal education to those who can't afford an attorney. [They] have a wide variety of programs to help victims of domestic violence and crime, victims of consumer fraud, and children in the foster care system.”

They have a [Guardianship Advocacy Project](#) that provides legal representation to seniors, adults with disabilities, and minors in the guardianship arena. They also have a [Social Security resource page](#), and they can assist clients with issues related to obtaining Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or Medicare benefits.

[Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center \(NDALC\)](#)

“The Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center (NDALC) is a private, statewide non-profit organization that serves as Nevada’s federally-mandated protection and advocacy system for human, legal, and service rights for individuals with disabilities...Services provided by NDALC include, but are not limited to: information and referral services, education, training, negotiation, mediation, investigation of reported or suspected abuse/neglect, legal counsel, technical assistance, and public policy work. NDALC has offices in Las Vegas and Reno with services provided statewide. All services are offered at no cost to eligible individuals in accordance with NDALC’s available resources and service priorities.”

[Nevada Legal Services](#)

“It is the Mission of Nevada Legal Services to strengthen the community by ensuring fairness and providing equal access to justice for low-income Nevadans.”

They have [Social Security Benefits](#) and [Medicare](#) resource pages, and they can assist clients with issues related to obtaining Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or Medicare benefits.

[Northern Nevada Legal Aid](#)

“Northern Nevada Legal Aid is a nonprofit legal aid organization serving qualified residents in Washoe County, and rural northern Nevada counties. Legal aid is free or low-cost advice, assistance, or representation in civil matters for those who could not otherwise afford an attorney. [They] provide legal aid with the goal to eliminate barriers to access the legal system for our society’s most vulnerable members, to protect their rights, keep them safe, and provide stability. Legal aid also provides legal system efficiencies by decreasing self-represented litigants.”

They have an [Adult Guardianship](#) legal practice area, and they can assist with issues pertaining to obtaining Social Security and Medicare benefits.

[Social Security Administration](#)

The Social Security Administration is a government agency that administers federal benefits, including [Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#) and [Social Security Disability Insurance \(SSDI\)](#) / “Disability” benefits.

You can find a local office by using their [Social Security Office Locator](#).



Nevada-Based Organizations that Support People Who Have Disabilities with Housing Stability

Nevada Housing Division

“The Nevada Housing Division (NHD) [leads] the way in creating affordable housing opportunities. Established by the Nevada Legislature in 1975, the NHD was created to solve a very real problem: a shortage of safe and decent housing for individuals and families of low and moderate income.”

Their [811 Project Rental Assistance \(PRA\) Program](#) serves low-income people with disabilities. The program “offer[s] project-based rental assistance for extremely low-income persons with disabilities who are 18 but less than 62 years old. HUD defines ‘extremely low-income’ families as those whose annual incomes do not exceed thirty percent (30%) of the median income for the area in which the project is located, adjusted for family size and as determined by HUD at lease annually.”

Nevada Rural Housing

Nevada Rural Housing has [Rental Assistance Programs](#)—including [Housing Choice Vouchers \(HVCs\)](#)—that prioritize people with disabilities; and they offer complementary wraparound support services. “[Their] resident service coordinator works to help low-income seniors and people with disabilities access a variety of services they may need. This includes everything from helping organize a resident’s Medicare information to lining up meal delivery services and in-home healthcare. [Their] tenant support specialist helps residents at Southgate Apartments in Carson City to assist with daily living. This federally-funded program helps residents maintain their independence. Sample services include: Transportation to medical appointments; Shopping excursions; Bill sorting; In-home nutrition services; House-cleaning; Mental health; [and] Navigation of federally funded benefit programs.”

Reno Housing Authority (RHA)

The Reno Housing Authority (RHA) “provide[s] fair, sustainable, quality housing in diverse neighborhoods throughout Reno, Sparks and Washoe County that offers a stable foundation for low-income families to pursue economic opportunities, become self-sufficient and improve their quality of life.”

They have a [Public Housing Program](#) that “consists of about 750 units owned by RHA. Rents are based on tenant income rather than current market rents. RHA owns and operates these housing units in eight (8) complexes in Washoe County.” They also provide [Rental Assistance](#), including through the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.

Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority (SNRHA)

The Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority (SNRHA) manages “[public housing](#) communities...[which] offer safe and affordable housing options for low-to-moderate-income families, individuals, seniors, and persons with disabilities.”

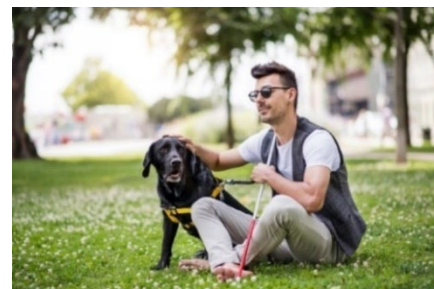
They also operate the [Housing Choice Voucher \(HCV\)](#) program. “The HCV program is a rental housing assistance solution that places choice in the hands of the individual or family to find rental housing in the private market. The program, also known as Section 8, was designed by the federal government to assist low-income families, elderly, and disabled individuals in affording decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses or apartments. Participants may choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and are not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects.”



Local and National Specialized/Intersectional Organizations that Serve People with Disabilities

Blind Center of Nevada

The Blind Center of Nevada “assist[s] people who are blind or visually impaired achieve their highest physical, social, intellectual, and economic potential.” They have three focus areas: 1) personal development, 2) social interaction, and 3) provident living. The Blind Center of Nevada offers a variety of [programs](#), and they have a [Resources webpage](#).



Claude I. Howard Speech and Hearing Center at the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine

“The Claude I. Howard Speech and Hearing Center at the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine (UNR Med), located within the Nell J. Redfield building, has a dual mission: to provide high-quality speech-language pathology and audiology services to the Northern Nevada community and to train graduate student clinicians for professional practice. Most services offered in [their] specialized clinics are delivered by graduate students under the supervision of certified speech-language pathologists and audiologists in the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology.”

The center’s specialized speech pathology and audiology clinics include the following:

- **University Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment (UCAN)** – *“The University Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment (UCAN) is a multi-disciplinary team of professionals dedicated to diagnosing autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders in children and adolescents.”*
- **Northern Nevada Cleft Palate Clinic** – *“The Northern Nevada Cleft Palate Clinic is a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to the care of children with cleft lip, palate and other craniofacial disorders.”*
- **Claude I. Howard Speech and Hearing Clinic** – *“The Claude I. Howard Speech and Hearing Clinic, operated by Renown Health, provides comprehensive assessments and therapy for individuals of all ages facing communication, swallowing, hearing and balancing challenges. [Their] experienced staff uses state-of-the-art equipment to ensure high-quality care in a supportive environment.”*
- **Aphasia Center of Nevada** – *“The Aphasia Center of Nevada welcomes individuals with aphasia and their partners. Aphasia is often caused by a stroke, but can also result from a traumatic brain injury or tumor, or as a result of a degenerative disease. Aphasia damages the portions of the brain that are responsible for language production or processing. While core intelligence remains intact, this language disruption impacts expressive language (speaking and writing) and receptive language (listening and reading), mathematical calculation and processing, and impairs an individuals’ ability to create and maintain relationships which are vital for human connection.*
The Aphasia Center is modeled on the Life Participation Approach to Aphasia (LPAA) which is a consumer-driven service delivery model that focuses on empowering individuals with aphasia to achieve their life goals and encouraging re-engagement by strengthening daily life participation in activities of choice. The Aphasia Center offers a variety of social communication based programs.”
- **Northern Nevada Voice and Swallowing Clinic** – *“The Northern Nevada Voice and Swallowing Clinic, operated by Renown Health, specializes in the evaluation and treatment of voice and swallowing disorders, offering a range of comprehensive services.”*
- **Gender Affirming and Communication Clinic** – *“The Gender Affirming and Communication Clinic is dedicated to serving the transgender community (FtM and MtF) in Northern Nevada. We are committed to supporting individuals on their journey to achieving their desired voice and communication style.”*
- **Best Buddies** – SEE ENTRY ON PAGE 9, for information on how UNLV and UNR partner with [Best Buddies in Nevada](#).

[National Black Deaf Advocates \(NBDA\)](#)

“National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA) is the official advocacy organization for thousands of Black Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans. For more than three decades, NBDA has been at the forefront of advocacy efforts for civil rights and equal access to education, employment, and social services on behalf of the Black Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the United States.”

NBDA is broken up into local chapters; [Nevada Black Deaf Advocates](#) is part of their Western Region.

NBDA offers [scholarships](#); they also have dedicated [college and youth programs](#) for youth and young adults.

[Nevada Department of Veterans Services \(NDVS\)](#)

The Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) has a [Disabled Veterans Outreach Program \(DVOP\)](#). *“The Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) and the U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) provide employment services designed to assist eligible veterans with a significant barrier to employment (SBE) or eligible spouses with employment services. [The] Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) exclusively serves [their] eligible veteran customers with SBE and eligible spouses requiring additional assistance. DVOP specialists provide individualized career services to veterans with an SBE, with the maximum emphasis directed toward serving veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged.”*



[Shoshone-Paiute Tribes Vocational Rehabilitation Project \(SPTVR\)](#)

“The Shoshone-Paiute Tribes Vocational Rehabilitation Project (SPTVR) assists American Indians with Disabilities who live in the SPTVR geographic service area of Idaho and Nevada. The objective of SPTVR is to provide vocational rehabilitation services to consumers through ‘informed choice’ where an individual’s strengths, priorities, concerns, and abilities are respected, and the outcome is gainful employment in a competitive market.”

[Speakeasy Therapy Services, LLC](#)

Speakeasy Therapy Services offers speech, occupational, and physical therapy services. They *“are dedicated to improving kids’ and adults’ speech, language, articulation and phonology, swallow, and social skills. [They] believe that identifying and treating any deficiency in these critical skills will greatly improve the quality of life for [their] clients, as well as their families. [They] assess each client to identify the speech and language, swallow, or social difficulties, and provide individual speech therapy goals and techniques.”* Some of the organization’s key services/areas of focus include the following: Articulation and phonology; Language disorders; Neurological disorders; Accent Modification; Social disorders; Occupational Therapy; and Physical Therapy. The organization is also [PROMPT Trained](#).

[Transgender Law Center Disability Project](#)

“The [Transgender Law Center] Disability Project magnifies the leadership, collective power, and analysis of marginalized disabled, Deaf, ill, and Mad communities, while increasing Disability Justice capacity in the movements that seek to serve them.”

Local and National Organizations Focused on Supporting People Impacted by Chronic Illness and/or Disability

Nevada Medicaid Long Term Services and Support (LTSS) Unit

The **Nevada Medicaid Long Term Services and Support (LTSS) Unit**, offered through the Nevada Division of Health Care Financing and Policy (DHCFP), aims *“to support those individuals who need ongoing care due to age, physical or intellectual disability or chronic illness. Comprehensive services are delivered in a home and community based settings or long term care facility depending upon the needs and preferences of the individual.”*

The Center for Chronic Illness

The **Center for Chronic Illness** *“is a national nonprofit organization serving patients and their loved ones across the United States and in a number of other countries. [Their] mission is to promote well-being and decrease isolation for those impacted by chronic illness through support and education. CCI focuses on three main pillars in providing support and education to the chronic illness community: Emotional Well-being, Health Education, and Community.”*

Their [Programs webpage](#) has information about a variety of **support groups** that are designed for anyone impacted by chronic illness and/or rare disease. All programs are free of cost, meet virtually, and are facilitated by licensed mental health professionals. They also have a [Resources webpage](#).



APP-BASED SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS EXPERIENCING DISABILITIES, LEARNING CHALLENGES, AND/OR MEDICAL CONDITIONS

App-based resources can help support with learning and daily tasks, to make higher education and the larger world easier for students with disabilities, learning challenges, and/or medical conditions to navigate.

App-Based Support for Hearing Challenges/Disabilities

Live Transcribe

Live Transcribe is available through the [App Store](#); it is FREE, but in-app purchases are also an option. The app provides *“live captioning for [people who are] deaf [or] hard of hearing, in 70+ languages.”* The app is known for being simple to use, effective in capturing what’s being said (even in noisy environments, using bluetooth headphones), easy to read, and helpful with remembering what was said during a conversation (users can save and send transcripts).

Live Transcribe & Notification

Live Transcribe & Notification is a FREE app, available through [Google Play](#). *“Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications makes everyday conversations and surrounding sounds more accessible among people who are deaf and hard of hearing, using just [an] Android phone.”* Users are able to *“pick from over 70 languages and dialects to read accurate captions in the language that’s being spoken.”* It is known for being easy to use and secure (conversations are not stored on servers).

[Live Transcribe +](#)

Live Transcribe + is available through the [App Store](#); it is FREE, but in-app purchases are also an option. The app provides “live transcription and captioning for [people who are] deaf [or] hard of hearing.” The app supports 60+ languages, and it is known for being simple to use, effective in capturing what’s being said (even in noisy environments, using bluetooth headphones), easy to read, helpful with remembering what was said during a conversation or meeting (users can record, transcribe, and save/send transcripts).



[NALscribe](#)

NALscribe is available through the [App Store](#). “NALscribe is a FREE, easy-to-use live speech captioning tool to help people with hearing difficulties understand speech and conversations. It aims to increase understanding and decrease stress levels during communication. NALscribe is especially beneficial when the person speaking is wearing a mask or face-shield, when communication is more difficult because the lips are hidden and sound is muffled.”

Highlighted features include: “offline mode; auto erase screen; accessibility [in terms of readability]; language support [for many different languages and] translation [between languages]; [ability to] save, edit and share transcriptions; [and] risk management [regarding offensive or derogatory language].”

App-Based Support for Physical Challenges/Disabilities



[Flush Toilet Finder](#)

Flush Toilet Finder is a FREE app, available through both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#). “Flush Toilet Finder is the quickest, simplest way of finding a public bathroom or restroom. Simply open the app and it will display the nearest toilets to [the user]. [Users] can even search for restrooms without an internet connection!”

Key features include: “[information on] over 200,000 public [toilets] all around the world; [information on] which [toilets] have disabled access, a fee for usage or require a key; [ability to] get immediate directions on how to locate [the toilets].”

[Wheelmap](#) is a FREE app, available through both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#). Wheelmap allows users to “mark and find wheelchair accessible places — worldwide and for free, [using a] traffic light system.” Green = “fully wheelchair accessible;” Yellow = “partially wheelchair accessible;” and Red = “not wheelchair accessible.” There are 30 countries that have a high number of rated places, and the app is available in 32 languages.

[WheelMate](#) is a FREE app, available through the [App Store](#). “WheelMate gives [users] an instant overview of [their] nearest wheelchair-friendly toilets and parking spaces on an interactive map. It is powered by wheelchair users who add and verify every single location themselves, ensuring it works the way it should. It is easy and simple to use... The WheelMate app currently has more than 35,000 locations across 45 countries — and more are being added every day.”

App-Based Support for Sight Challenges/Disabilities

Envision

Envision is available through both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#). *‘Envision is the fastest, most reliable and award-winning [Optical Character Recognition (OCR)] app that speaks out the visual world, helping people who are blind or have low vision lead more independent lives. Envision is developed for and together with the blind and low vision community. The app is simple, gets things done and brings the best assistive experience to blind and low vision users. Simply use [the user’s] phone camera to scan any piece of text, [the user’s] surroundings, objects, people or products and everything will be read out to [the user] thanks to Envision’s smart artificial intelligence (AI) and Optical Character Recognition (OCR).*

With full talkback support, Envision enables [the user] to:

Read all kinds of text:

- *Instantly read any piece of text in over 60 different languages.*
- *Easily scan [their] paper documents (single or multiple pages) with the help of audio-guided edge detection. All content is spoken back to [the user] and is ready for export and edit.*
- *Import PDFs and images to get a description of the image and recognition of all the text within it.*
- *Quickly read handwritten postcards, letters, lists and other paperwork.*

Know what’s around [them]:

- *Effortlessly describe visual scenes around [them].*
- *Detect [color] on [the user’s] clothes, walls, books, you name it.*
- *Swiftly scan barcodes to get extensive information about the products.*

Find what [the user is] looking for:

- *Find people around [the user]; the names of [their] family and friends are spoken out whenever they are in the frame.*
- *Find objects around [the user]; selecting common objects from the in-app list to find them.*

Share:

- *Share images or documents from [the user’s] phone or other apps like Twitter or WhatsApp by selecting Envision from the share sheet. Envision can then read and describe those images for [the user].*



Seeing AI

Seeing AI is available through both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#). *“Seeing AI is a FREE app that narrates the world around [the user]. Designed with and for the blind and low vision community, this ongoing research project harnesses the power of AI to open up the visual world by describing nearby people, text and objects.*

Seeing AI provides tools to assist with a variety of daily tasks:

- Read - Hear text as soon as it appears in front of the camera. Document alignment provides audio cues to capture a printed page and recognize the text along with its original formatting. Ask Seeing AI about the contents to easily find the information [needed].
- Describe - Take photos to hear a rich description. Ask questions to focus on the information [the user] care[s] about. Explore photos by moving [a] finger over the screen to hear the location of different objects.
- Products - Scan barcodes and Accessible QR codes using audio beeps to guide [the user]; hear the product name and package information when available.
- People - Save photos of friends and coworkers so [the user] can recognize them later. Get an estimate of their age, gender, and expression.
- Currency - Recognize currency notes.
- Find My Things - Teach Seeing AI to recognize [the user’s] personal objects and follow the audio cues to find them later.
- World - An Audio Augmented Reality experience to explore an unfamiliar environment, including hearing objects announced around [the user] with Spatial Audio (requires a device with a LiDAR, and iOS 14+).
- Colors - Identify colors.
- Light - Hear an audible tone corresponding to the brightness of [the user’s] surroundings.
- Photos and Videos in other apps - Just tap “Share” and “Recognize with Seeing AI” to describe media from Mail, Photos, WhatsApp, and more.
- Browse Photos - Hear descriptions of photos and videos saved on [the user’s] device.

Seeing AI continues to evolve as [they] hear from the community, and AI research advances.”

App-Based Support for Verbal (Speech/Language) Challenges/Disabilities

AAC Text to Speech TTS Dinata

AAC Text to Speech TTS Dinata is available on the [App Store](#); many of its features are FREE, but some features require a paid subscription. *“Dinata is a text-to-speech [TTS] app fully designed to help people with any kind of speech disability or impairment, allowing them to speak Dinata through the device. Mainly, it is specially designed to [address] problems in the voice or vocal cords, [including] hoarseness...[it also assists] persons who have undergone a laryngectomy, [those experiencing] hearing problems, stuttering, mutism and autism, and other voice disorders such as aphasia, spasmodic dysphonia, stroke, ALS, Cerebral Palsy or traumatic brain injury. This TTS tool provides [users with] a quick and easy way to communicate through the device with the use of different interactive modes, such as typing text freely or selecting between all predefined phrases, so that the text is reproduced by the device, making [it] possible to communicate with others.”*



BlinkTalker

BlinkTalker is a FREE app, available on the [App Store](#). It “allows [users] to talk by blinking. No complicated calibration or settings are required. [Users] can start using it immediately after downloading. With the combination of blinking with both eyes and blinking with one eye (wink), [users] can enter characters to create a sentence. [Users] can also enter the customized words and sentences. The text [users] enter can be read aloud by a synthetic voice. BlinkTalker only works on hardware with Face ID. Since the built-in camera is used to detect blinks, it may not operate as expected depending on the environment and conditions of use.”



Emergency Chat

Emergency Chat is a FREE app, available on the [App Store](#). It “can be used in any situation where speech is impossible but communication is still necessary. The splash screen has a base text that explains to the person you gave your phone to that you can't use speech and want to use this app to communicate. The default text is aimed at people experiencing an autistic meltdown, where their speech centers stay non-functional for a while even after they've recovered. Both the title and text can be adjusted in the settings screen to be whatever you want the person you give your phone to know. You can then continue to the next screen which has a simple chat client.”

Speech Assistant AAC

Speech Assistant AAC is available through both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#). It is “a Text-to-Speech [TTS] communication app for people who are speech impaired.”

Key features include: “customizable to [the user's] needs; categories to organize [user's] phrases; [ability to] select symbols or photos on the buttons; [ability to] record speech or use one of the iOS voices; full screen button to show [user's] message; history for quick access to previous phrases; backup to iCloud, Mail or AirDrop; tabs for multiple conversations (optional); [and users] can use the app during phone calls [with the iOS version ONLY].”

COST: The iOS version is NOT FREE; but, it only requires a one-time purchase (as opposed to a monthly/annual subscription) of \$23.99. The basic version of the app is FREE on Android; but the full version, with unlimited categories and backup/restore options, requires the one-time payment.

TippyTalk

TippyTalk is available through both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#). “TippyTalk is an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) app for people of all ages who have trouble speaking due to aphasia, nonverbal autism, stroke, apraxia, down syndrome, ALS and other speech and language disorders. Using TippyTalk, non-verbal and speech-impaired persons use pictorial prompts to send messages to friends and family on their mobile phones. They then respond with video, pictures, audio or text to be read aloud. TippyTalk is also a text-to-speech (TTS) app as messages can be read aloud to anyone in the room with them...TippyTalk is a unique AAC app: it is a TWO-WAY communication tool for nonverbal and speech-impaired users. TippyTalkers create a simple sentence by selecting illustrations. This becomes a written message read aloud OR SENT to a member of the TippyTalker's private community, who can RESPOND with video or audio.”

The app promotes 3 core things: 1) Social Inclusion – “TippyTalk creates a private, safe social community for nonverbal persons and those with speech difficulties”; 2) Independence – “TippyTalk gives the opportunity for nonverbal persons and those with speech difficulties to communicate independently”; and 3) Self-expression – “TippyTalkers are able to tell about themselves, ask for what they want, and share what they need.”

COST: The core **TippyTalker** app, for the user with communication needs, is NOT FREE; it requires a paid subscription. There is a 14-day free trial to try it out; after that, it costs \$11.99 monthly or \$119.99 annually. However, the companion **TippyTalk Community** app—which is used by family, friends, and caregivers—is FREE.

For apps that address mental health/wellness, check out our [Mental Health Resource Guide for NSHE Students Who Have Experienced Foster Care:](#)



A Call to Self-Advocacy

By accessing and utilizing the Disability Resource Center on your campus, local disability support service centers, VR Nevada's services, and various web-based resources, you can receive personalized support tailored to your academic and employment needs as a college student navigating a disability, learning challenge, and/or medical condition. It is common to need support with succeeding in school, whether or not you face additional challenges; and it is highly encouraged that you reach out for support. In fact, advocating for yourself is an important skill, and by reaching out to obtain information, resources, and support services, you are building self-advocacy and self-sufficiency skills that will help you throughout your life, both personally and professionally.

