

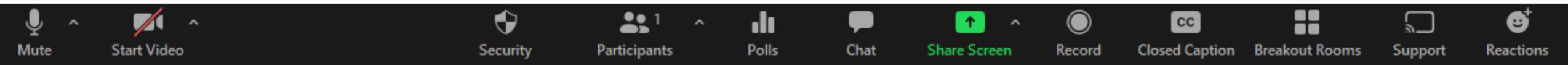
Living and Thriving with a Disability: First-Hand Accounts from Three Georgia Citizens

Presenters:
Johan Rempel,
Nykema Lindsey
John Toles

Live Captions Provided

Two Options:

1. Access StreamText link available in the “Chat” (“Chat” control in Zoom toolbar)
2. Access the “Closed Captions” option (“Closed Captions” control with “CC” above it in Zoom toolbar)



Center for Inclusive Design & Innovation

- Center for Inclusive Design & Innovation (CID) provides practical solutions for challenges faced daily by individuals with disabilities.
- We focus on solutions that offer utility, usability, and durability.
- CID offers services including disability compliance consultation, braille, captioning, accessible digital content, and assistive technology.



The AccessGA Initiative

What is AccessGA?

[AccessGA](#) is a joint initiative of the State of Georgia ADA Coordinator's Office and CIDI.

The objective is to support Georgia state agencies that strive to provide equitable and timely access to their employees, students, and clients with a wide range of disabilities.



Benefits and Services Include...

- Access to live webinars and archived [webinars](#)
- Technical assistance and hands-on training
- Web accessibility evaluations and resources
- Periodic [newsletters](#)
- Up-to-date [wiki](#) of ICT accessibility resources and information
- Special events

WAG - Web Accessibility Group

Its purpose is to bring together individuals in Higher Ed seeking to navigate the complex requirements of state and federal accessibility standards and guidelines.

- Housed at the Center for Inclusive Design & Innovation (formerly AMAC Accessibility) at Georgia Tech
- Focus on web accessibility for higher-ed
- WAG listserv discussion and technical guidance
- WAG website
<http://www.amacusg.org/wag>



Self-Introduction

- Spent first 31 years of my life in Canada
- Educational experience
- Current employment at Center for Inclusive Design and Innovation



Description of Eye Condition

Legal Blindness

Definition of Legal Blindness:

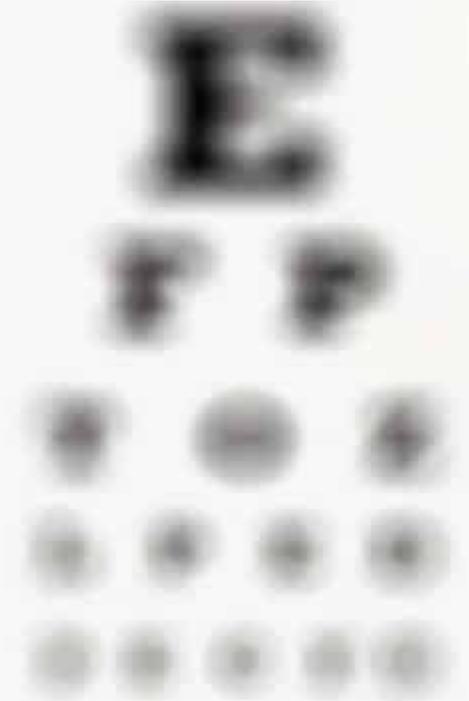
central visual acuity is 20/200 or less in the best vision eye, even with corrective lenses

Or...

Visual field is limited to a diameter of 20 degrees or less



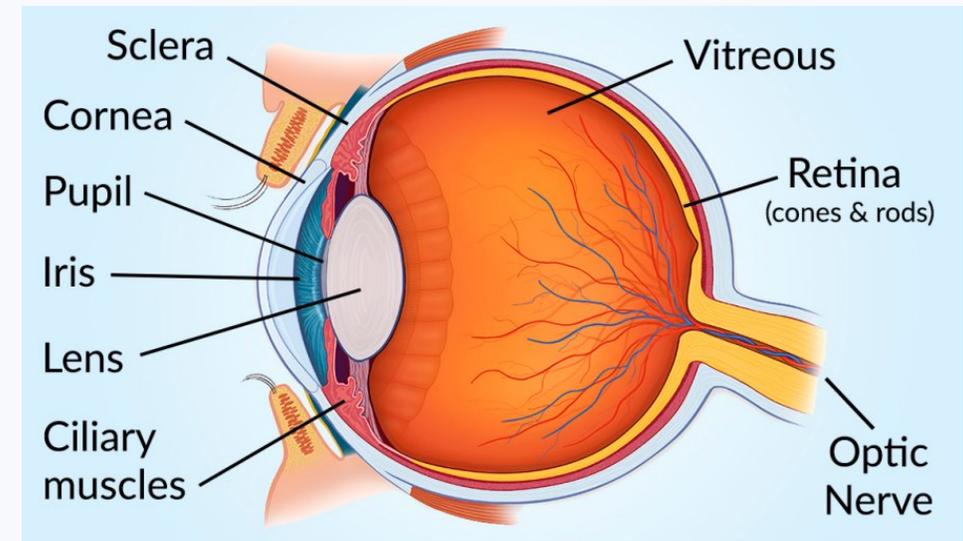
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Multiple Diagnoses

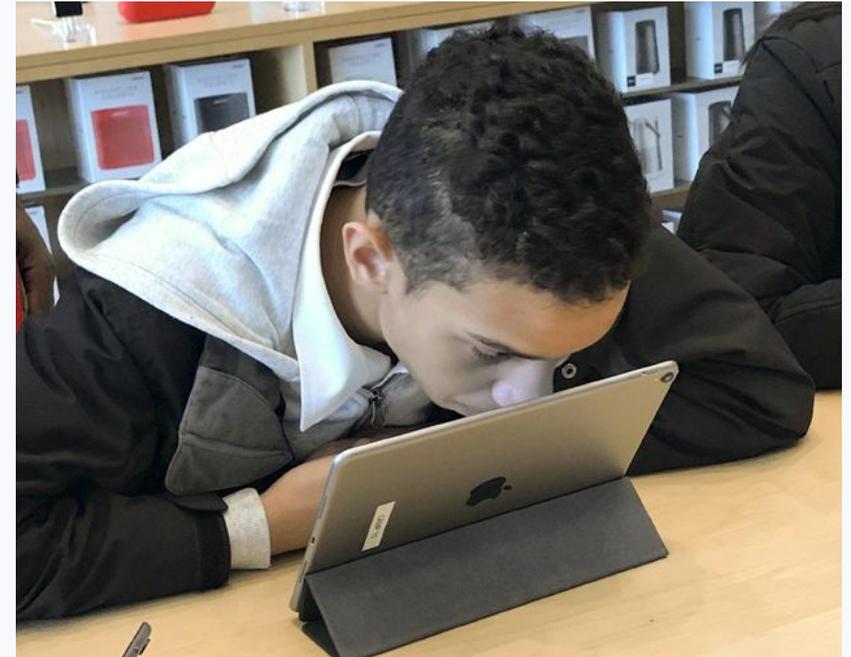
- Rod and Cone Dystrophy
- Retinitis Pigmentosa
- Nystagmus
- Myopia
- Astigmatism



Experiences in Education

Grade School

- Educators uncertain how to accommodate for my visual needs
- It was more important for me to try to fit in than to meet my visual needs
- I would avoid eye contact to prevent people from commenting on how much my eyes moved because of nystagmus
- Embarrassment of getting close enough to text to read it



Experiences in Employment

- When/how to disclose visual impairment
- Transportation needs
 - Personal transportation
 - Work-related transportation
- Physical equipment, adaptations and software needs
- Meeting accommodations



Solutions

- Understanding of environmental needs and technology needs
- Understanding of transportation requirements and accommodations available
- Resources, level of awareness and process for providing accommodations for people with disabilities within the organization



Additional Resources

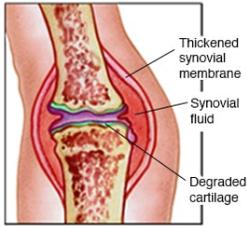
- American Foundation for the Blind: <https://www.afb.org/>
- Hadley: <https://hadley.edu>
- National Federation of the Blind: <https://nfb.org/>
- American Printing House: <https://www.aph.org/>
- Center for the Visually Impaired: <https://cviga.org>

Nykema Lindsey

- ❖ Educational Outreach Coordinator in the College of Computing 2018
- ❖ Passionate about mental health awareness and advocacy
- ❖ Diagnoses:
 - ❖ Rheumatoid Arthritis at 16 years old
 - ❖ ADHD initially at 3 years old and again at 21 years old

v Educational Experience

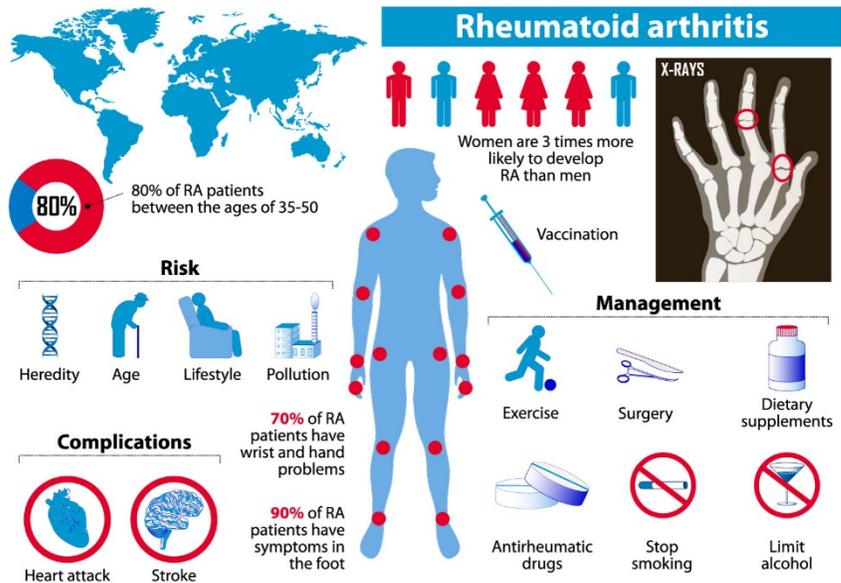




Rheumatoid Arthritis

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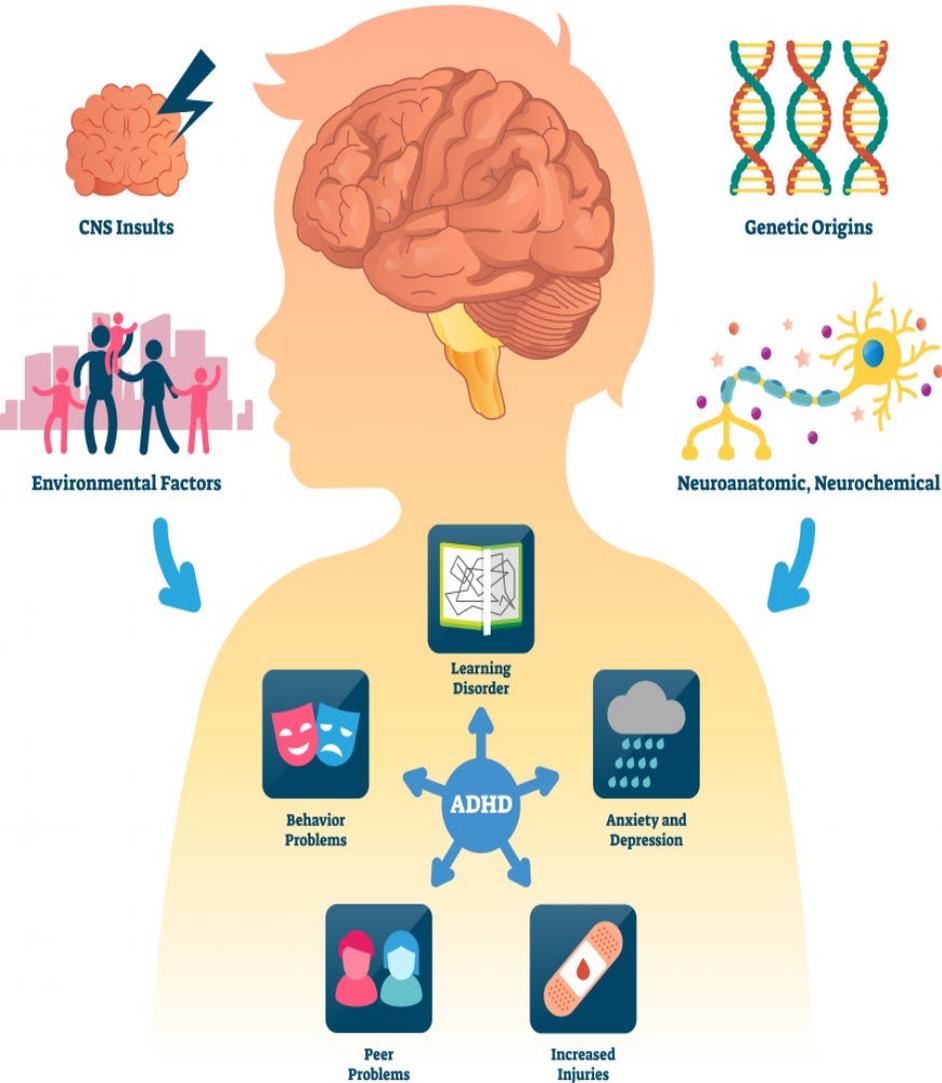
Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an autoimmune disease that develops when certain cells of the immune system are not working properly and begin to attack healthy joints. Roughly 75% of patients with rheumatoid arthritis are women.



- ❑ Tender, warm, swollen joints
- ❑ Joint stiffness that is usually worse in the mornings and after inactivity
- ❑ Joint deformity
- ❑ Fatigue and Anemia
- ❑ Fever
- ❑ Loss of appetite and weight loss

ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder



ADHD

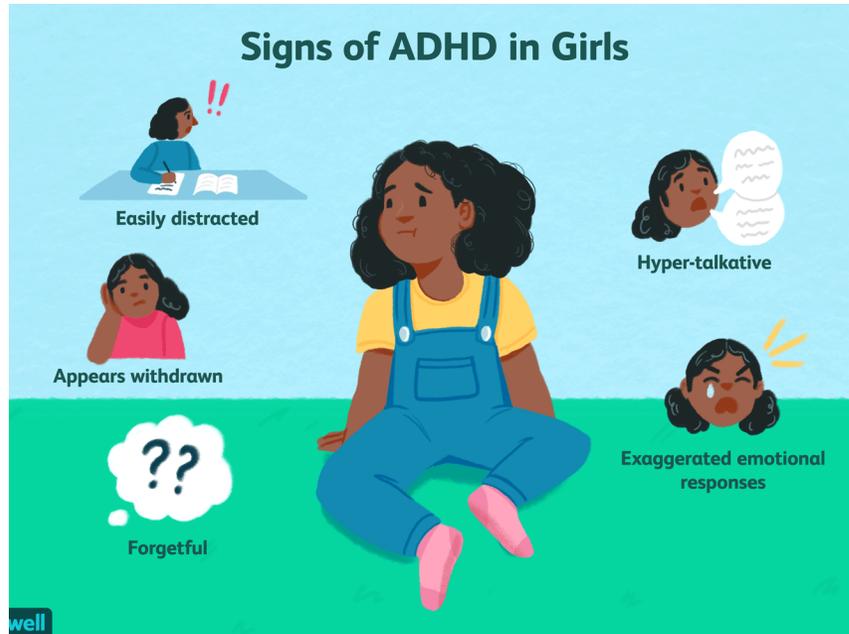
ADHD is one of the most common neurodevelopmental disorders of childhood. Individuals with ADHD may experience symptoms of inattention (not being able to keep focus), hyperactivity (excess movement that is not fitting to the setting) and impulsivity (hasty acts that occur in the moment without thought).

Three subtypes of ADHD

- ❖ **Predominantly Inattentive Presentation:** The person has difficulty paying attention, completing tasks or remaining organized, but does not tend to be disruptive. The person is easily distracted or forgets details of daily routines.
- ❖ **Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Presentation:** The person may be able to focus well, but their hyperactive and impulsive behavior can cause disruptions. They often feel restless, talk incessantly and have a hard time following directions. A person with impulsiveness may have more accidents and injuries than others.
- ❖ **Combined Presentation:** Symptoms of the above two types are equally present in the individual.

ADHD Symptoms in Women/Girls

ADHD in girls/women often goes undiagnosed



- Talking incessantly
- Limited attention span
- Fidgeting
- Poor time management
- Feeling overwhelmed, stressed and/or anxious
- Daydreaming or easily distracted
- Lower self-esteem and/or increased self-blame
- Forgetfulness
- Picking at cuticles or skin
- Trouble maintaining friendships or romantic relationships
- Extreme emotionality and rejection sensitivity
- Tending to attribute success and difficulties to external factors, such as luck or chance, instead of seeing their own actions as responsible
- Experience or develop depression and/or anxiety

ADHD In The Black Community

- ❖ Uncomfortable truth: The face of ADHD in the U.S. is not black or brown, it's white
- ❖ New evidence shows that people of color – black and Latino in particular – are much less likely to be diagnosed with ADHD and if they are diagnosed, they aren't as likely to receive treatment
 - ADHD and other mental health issues are stigmatized in BIPOC communities
 - Inequities in health care: diagnosis biases, lack of access, underinsured, wealth gap
- ❖ “Mental health professionals’ misdiagnosis of minorities directly and indirectly contributes to racial and ethnic minorities being disproportionately represented in the criminal and juvenile justice system” She calls it the “misdiagnosis-to-prison pipeline.” Dr. Natalie Cort, a clinical psychologist and professor at William James College



Coping Strategies and Accommodations

- Alarms & Timers
- Whiteboard
- Notebooks and Sticky Notes
- Color coding
- Music
- Limiting screen time
- Thought journal
- Changing work/study environment
- Flexible seating
- Fidget toys
- Acceptance of ADHD
- Stress Dump Meeting
- Arthritis gloves
- Medication



Multiple roles at CIDI:

- Software/Web Development
- Digital Accessibility Expert
- Assistive Technology Specialist
- Customer Support

I've always worked in technical fields. Previously worked in computer programming, web design, & tax preparation.



Dyslexia in Brief

Language learning disability; causes difficulty:

- Processing sounds
- Recognizing words
- Pronouncing words
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling
- Decoding words

Dyscalculia and Dysgraphia are sometimes grouped with Dyslexia.

Dyslexia can also be linked to negative behavior in school. Students become frustrated with schoolwork and can redirect their frustration to themselves, their teachers and other students.

Students with dyslexia are often excel in some areas of schoolwork but struggle in others. Which leads to them be labelled as “lazy” or not trying hard enough.

Personal Experience

I am different from other people because I can memorize things easily.

I learned to read early by memorizing words and associating them with images but had difficulty reading out loud because I did not learn to associate words with sounds.

I am a highly visual learner as many people with dyslexia are. I understand most concepts by creating a visual model of it.

I struggled the most with math, algebra & calculus especially. The methods for teaching them relied on simplifying the subject into mechanical problem solving. Understanding the more complex fundamentals to the math and how concepts in one type of math relate to concepts in another type of math is more helpful for me.

Accommodation for Dyslexia

International Dyslexia Association, <https://dyslexiaida.org/>

1. Presentation, change the way the material is presented

Verbal instruction, repetition of instruction, text in audio format, ability to change text to preferred formatting

2. Response, change the response required from the student

Mark answers in test book instead of on separate answer sheet, dictate responses to scribe, record oral responses, point to response choices, type (keyboard) response

3. Setting, change the student's location

Individual or small group work, reduce or eliminate distractions, alternative furniture arrangements

4. Timing/Scheduling

Flexible scheduling, extended time for tests and assignments, allow frequent breaks, change the order of tasks and test sections

Accommodation for Dyslexia

Common assistive technology for students with dyslexia:

- Calculator
- Speech-to-Text software
- Text-to-Speech software
- Electronic dictionary
- Spelling checker
- Grammar check



Personal Accommodations

1. OpenDyslexic Font

Exaggerates letter shapes to help differentiate between letters

2. Notepad

Write faster with little distraction

3. Hemmingway Writer

Testing for language complexity

<https://hemingwayapp.com/>

4. YouTube

Someone has made a video to help me visualize a concept

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm
Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy
Zz

5. Trash journal

I write down things I don't understand or are frustrating me to return to later

6. Structured procrastination

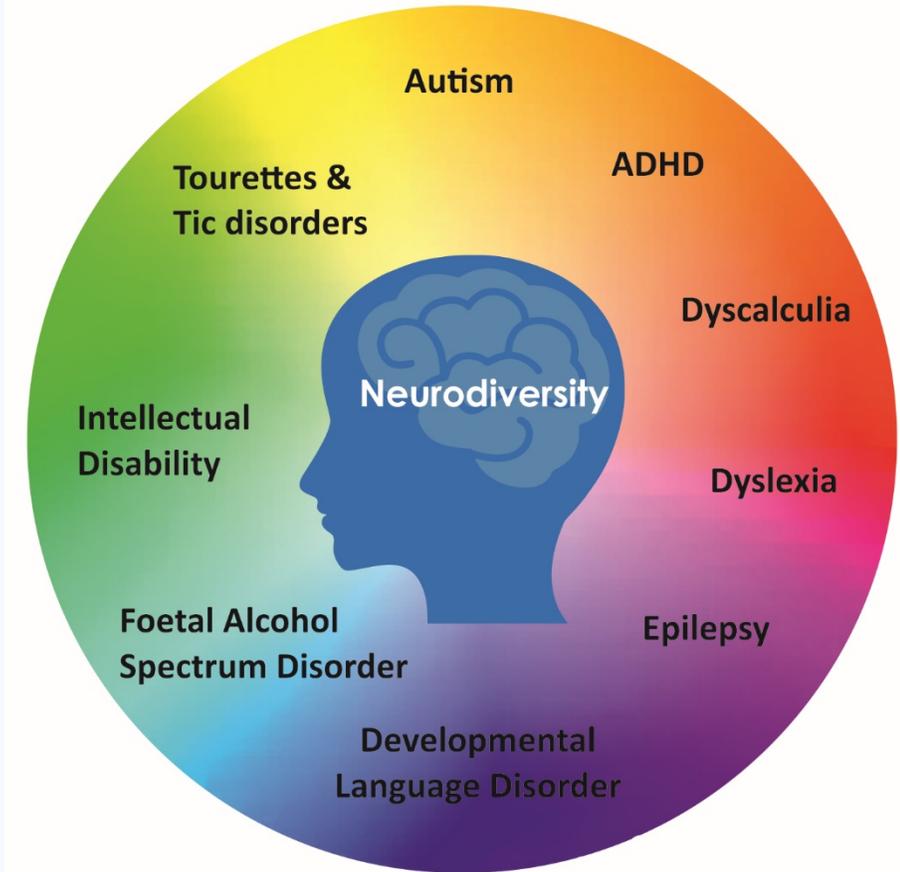
Order tasks in a way that allows me to ramp up to tasks that will be difficult for me

Neurodiversity vs. Medical Model

The medical model of disability focuses on correcting a disability, usually through medical intervention.

People with dyslexia and other learning disabilities do not feel well represented by this mode of thinking on their disability. It fails to recognize the benefits that come along with the draw backs.

I don't consider my dyslexia a disability at all.



Neurodiversity vs. Medical Model

The concept of neurodiversity recognizes that everyone thinks and learns differently

- people with learning disabilities don't need to be fixed or corrected
- focuses on providing people with tools to learn the way that works best for them

Disclosing disability is often controversial for neurodiversity advocates

- accommodation for learning differences should be available to everyone
- everyone can benefit from tailoring their learning for their brains

