

The terms "Blind" or "Visually impaired" refer to persons with sight loss through a variety of causes. In Barbados, The main cause of blindness is diabetic Retinopathy, a common side effect of diabetes. The terms "Blind" or "Visually impaired" refer to persons with sight loss through a variety of causes. In Barbados, The main cause of blindness is diabetic Retinopathy, a common side effect of diabetes. The terms "Blind" or "Visually impaired" refer to persons with sight loss through a variety of causes. In Barbados, The main cause of blindness is diabetic Retinopathy, a common side effect of diabetes.



Screen enlargers, or screen magnifiers,

work like a magnifying glass for the computer by enlarging a portion of the screen which can increase legibility and make it easier to see items on the computer. Some screen enlargers allow a person to zoom in and out on a particular area of the screen. Screen readers are used to verbalize, or "speak," everything on the screen including text, graphics, control buttons, and menus into a computerized voice that is spoken aloud. In essence, a screen reader transforms a graphic user interface (GUI) into an audio interface. Screen readers are essential for computer users who are blind.



Text-to-Speech (TTS) or speech synthesizers

receive information going to the screen in the form of letters, numbers, and punctuation marks, and then "speak" it out loud in a computerized voice. Using speech synthesizers allows computer users who are blind or who have learning difficulties to hear what they are typing and also provide a spoken voice for individuals who can not communicate orally, but can communicate their thoughts through typing.



Speech recognition or voice recognition

programs, allow people to give commands and enter data using their voices rather than a mouse or keyboard. Voice recognition systems use a microphone attached to the computer, which can be used to create text documents such as letters or e-mail messages, browse the Internet, and navigate among applications and menus by voice.



The Barbados Council for the Disabled is a national grouping of all organizations for and of persons with disabilities, dedicated to the health and well-being of its members and all other persons with disabilities in our society.

For additional information, contact:
BARBADOS COUNCIL FOR THE DISABLED

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Opening Hours

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Closed weekend and public holidays

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Blind & Visually Impaired



Making Life Accessible for the Visually Impaired

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Blindness Courtesy Rules

- ❶ I'm an ordinary person, just blind. You don't need to raise your voice or address me as if I were a child. Don't asks my companion what I want-- "Cream in the coffee?"-Ask me!
- ❷ I may use a long white cane or a guide dog to walk independently; or I may ask to take your arm. Let me decide, please don't grab my arm; let me take yours. I will keep a half-step behind to anticipate curbs and steps.
- ❸ I want to know who's in the room with me. Speak when you enter. Introduce me to the others including children, and tell me if there's an animal present.
- ❹ The door to a room or cabinet or to a car that is left partially open is a hazard to me.

Incidence

- ❺ At dinner I will not have trouble with ordinary table skills.
- ❻ Don't avoid words like "see." I use them too. I'm always glad to see you.
- ❼ I don't want pity, but don't talk about the "wonderful compensations" of blindness. My sense of smell, taste, touches or hearing did not improve when I became blind. I rely on them more and, therefore, may get more information through those senses than you do--that's all.
- ❽ If I'm your houseguest, show me the bathroom, wardrobe, dresser, window--the light switch too. I like to know whether the lights are on or off.
- ❾ I'll discuss blindness with you if you're curious, but it's an old story to me. I have as many other interests as you do.
- ❿ Don't think of me as just a blind person. I'm a person who happens to be blind.
- ⓫ You don't need to remember some "politically correct" term, "visually impaired", "sight challenged" etc. Keep it simple and honest, just say blind.

Access

Suggestions for working with persons who have sight loss.

- Provide printed information in Braille, computer disk or audiotape.
- Provide computer systems with Screen readers or Screen Magnification Programmes.
- Install audible warning system
- Install coloured edges on stairs and walkways for improved colour contrast.
- Use enhanced lighting in corridors and keep pathways clear of obstructions.
- Place Braille labels or identification markers on office equipment, doorways
- If gratings are located in walking surfaces, they should have spaces no greater than half an inch wide in one direction.

Some Inclusive Technology available for the Blind

Braille embossers transfer computer generated text into embossed Braille output.

Braille translation programs convert text scanned-in or generated via standard word processing programs into Braille, which can be printed on the embosser.



Refreshable Braille displays provide tactile output of information represented on the computer screen. A Braille "cell" is composed of a series of dots. The pattern of the dots and various combinations of the cells are used in place of letters. Refreshable Braille displays mechanically lift small rounded plastic or metal pins as needed to form Braille characters. The user reads the Braille letters with his or her fingers, and then, after a line is read, can refresh the display to read the next line.



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