

Making it Easy to Get Around *Systems Change to Enhance Mobility for People*

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Transportation & Other Transportation
Initiatives



www.projectaction.org / 800.659.6428

Why **Mission**

Easter Seals Project ACTION

“To increase the availability and use of accessible transportation by people with disabilities of *all* ages”

20 year Cooperative Agreement between Easter Seals and the US Federal Transit Administration

To ensure effective implementation of the transportation provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act 1990

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Accessible Community Transportation

in Our Nation

1988 - Established by Congress as a research and demonstration project to improve access to public transportation for people with disabilities

1990 - Congress expanded Easter Seals Project ACTION's role to assist transit providers with implementation of the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Easter Seals, Paralyzed Veterans of America and the American Public Transportation Association developed the idea that later became the Federal Transit Administration Cooperative Agreement

Getting people where they need to go

When they need to get there

In the most efficient, effective and quality manner possible

What Easter Seals Project ACTION
& National Center on Senior
Transportation
Four Core Activities

1. Training
2. Technical Assistance
3. Research
4. Outreach – website, newsletter, resource material development, conferences, advisory committees and clearinghouse



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ESPA conducts our work through five core activities designed to support collaboration between the transportation industry and disability communities

All ESPA activities are designed by and conducted for disability advocates and professionals working in transit and human services

Help ensure compliance with 1990 Americans with Disabilities ACT which is the major accessibility legislation, we have a twenty year history in our cooperative agreement. We target support in our technical assistance activities, we have an 800 # for information and referral for both the disability community and the transportation community. Safe place for collaboration. Our communications activities – website, collaboration with groups like APTA, support of conferences across the US, newsletter and enews assist in furthering accessibility transportation by providing the answers to key questions. But, today I want to focus on two main areas – training and research and then close with what we've accomplished so far according to the

What

Innovative Training Initiatives

- In-person Training**
 - Communities on the Move
 - Introduction to Travel Training
- Competitive Community Systems Change Initiative**
 - Mobility Planning Services Institute
- Teleconferences**
 - People on the Move
 - Selected Topics in Accessible Transportation
- Online courses**
 - Paratransit manager sensitivity training online course
- Accessible Webinar**
 - Accessible provider websites

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Training

The purpose of our training activities is to provide awareness level information to enhance an individual's general knowledge about a topic.

In-person training is delivered in a group setting at local, state and national events. In-person training events typically include classroom and field instruction which includes riding public transportation.

We've delivered **13 teleconferences** since 2005 and this year on a variety of topics. We're currently field-testing our first **online course** and will introduce two new online courses in 2009. We'll also deliver our first **online conference**, a virtual conference that draws the most interesting presentations from in-person conferences and makes them available to a wider audience via a virtual web-based conference. Perhaps some of you will join us for that conference scheduled for 2009.

ESPA staff develop curriculum for training events based on learner objectives which are recommended by advisory groups of transit professionals and customers with disabilities.

One example of our training activities is our upcoming webinar on "**How transportation providers can build an accessible website for use by all customers.**"

What

Technical Assistance

- 800#
- Email inquiries
- Directed assistance to communities
- Mobility Planning Services Academy for transportation services systems change
- Feedback to advisory committees

What

Resource Materials: Assistive Technology - Wheelchair and Mobility Aids Report

Survey showed 3 major problem areas:

- Boarding/maneuvering
- Training
- Securement

Reports has recommendations:

- Transit vehicle & Equipment Design
- Transit Operations Training
- Regulation & Policy



Person in a wheelchair boarding a bus

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Research

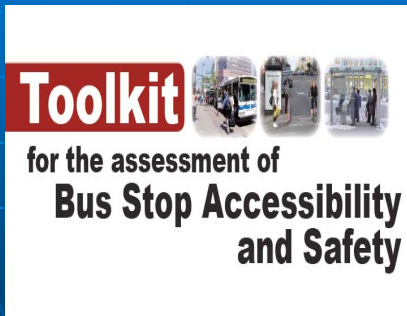
The purpose of our research activities is to support innovation and cooperation in solving transit accessibility issues.


One example of our research activity is our upcoming resource guide on **Effective Approaches for Increasing Stop Announcements by Transit Operators**. An expert panel is currently identifying transportation providers that demonstrate exemplary on-board stop announcements and vehicle/route identification practices. Their policies, programs and materials will be collected and highlighted in a resource guide that contains step-by-step instructions for assessing current performance and implementing successful programs. Sample forms, policies, advanced technology specifications, implementation plans, and other materials will be included in the guide.

Another example of our research activities includes a **competitive scholarship program for university students**. We award scholarships to masters and doctoral level students in transportation related majors and invite them to look at issues that affect customers with disabilities. These students have little or no exposure to customers with disabilities in their academic programs and this scholarship program gives them the opportunity to learn more about the needs of these customers. We also award scholarships to masters and doctoral level students in disability related majors and invite them to look at transportation issues. These students have little or no exposure to transportation services in their academic programs and this scholarship program gives them the opportunity to learn more about the issues faced by transportation providers.

What

Assessing Neighborhood Accessibility



Toolkit 

for the assessment of
**Bus Stop Accessibility
and Safety**



Avoiding Hazardous Stops

What

Studies Concluding in December

- Effective Approaches to Stop Announcements
- Accessible Pathways to Bus Stops and Transit
- Role of Taxis in the provision of Paratransit Services
- Bus Rapid Transit and Accessibility 2005 Consensus Conference

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How does the ADA apply to BRT?

The April 2005 consensus conference participants agreed that regulatory needs for BRT can be largely met by drawing from existing bus and/or rail regulations. Additional federal guidance was discussed to clarify which elements of the bus and rail regulations apply to BRT systems, and how locally-determined variations within the BRT characteristics affect whether a community's BRT service operates more like a bus or more like rail. Until such guidance is published, communities planning BRT services should consult with their FTA regional office for guidance on applying the ADA regulations to their specific BRT services

Results

Transportation Group Results - 2008

- Over 95,000 materials shipped to over 2400 people
- Over 2500 people attended a training event or received technical assistance
- We supported over 12 major conferences and gave more than 25 presentations
- Held more than 20 training events
- Awarded more than 26 grants
- Our newsletters reached more than 12,250 people

Results

Results - National Council on Disability 2007 Report

- People with disabilities perceive greater quality of life
- People with disabilities perceive significant improvements in public facility access and public attitudes
- Public transit has made significant progress in becoming accessible
- More curb ramps and accessible sidewalks

98% of transit buses were ADA lift-or ramp-equipped as of 2004, a 62% increase since 1995



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Results

Results - National Council on Disability 2007 Report

- People in rural areas underserved
- People with sensory or communication disabilities have less access to public accommodations
- Economic self-sufficiency still a major issue
- We have significant data and knowledge gaps on accessibility



Older lady in a chair
In an institution



We also realize that we need a management system to get customers the rides that they need.

Mobility managers will work with a variety of service providers and service strategies ranging from conventional transit to volunteer services to meet customers needs.

APTA is working to build a mobility management infrastructure within the transit industry. You will hear more from Art Guzzetti on this later.

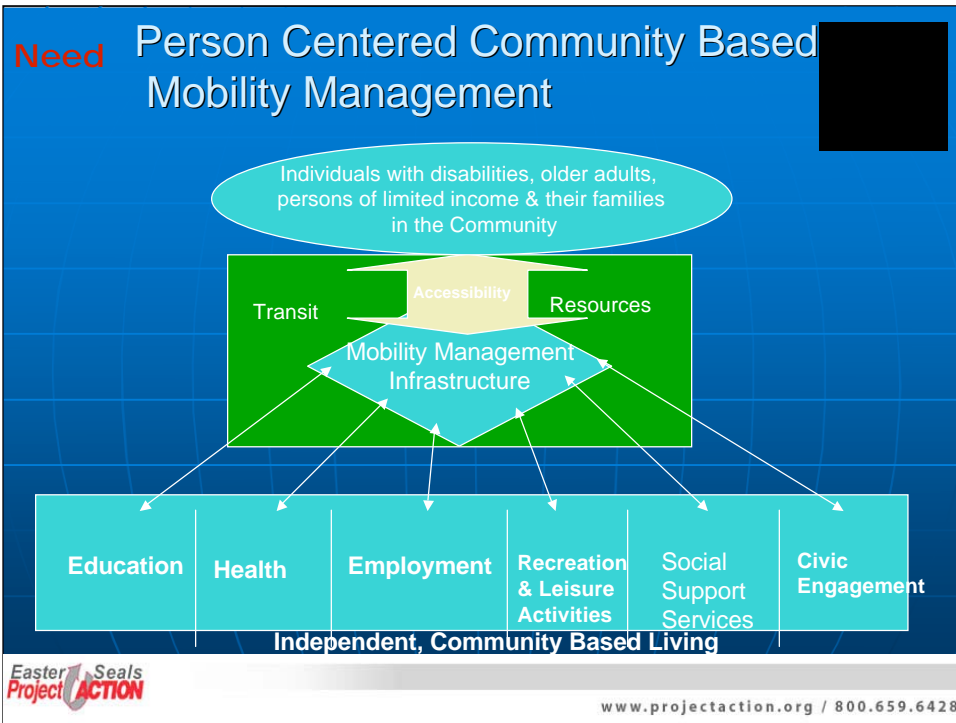
Key Steps in Human Services

Need Mobility Management

- ID needed services
- ID the transportation required to access them
- Assess community transportation resources
- Catalog community resources
- Identify gaps
- Assess the functional ability of client to use available transportation services
- Provide the transportation service
- Train the client if necessary – travel training, mobility coaching
- Ensure EVERY access point is connected – example drivers' examinations



The is at its essence the intersection of case management and the provision of transportation – today, a number of social service organizations including Easter Seals Affiliates are getting involved....New Hampshire is working with a Massachusetts Mobility Services for all Americans Intelligent Transportation System program providing the human services knowledge, training and linkage.



We currently have a project addressing this with the FTA and a conference in about two weeks that will result in a national mobility plan

Need

Coordinate Service – It Takes a Village and a Leader

- Reduce duplication and increase efficient utilization of scarce resources
- Increase & simplify access to transportation services (211, One Call Systems, technology)
- Increase quality and customer satisfaction

Act of joint planning, meeting, builds relationships and creates solutions
BORPSAT – bunch of right people sitting around the table



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Do you want to own a bus or use excess capacity on someone else's. Joint planning is now required by FTA in last transportation reauthorization bill SAFETEA-LU

Stages of Developing National Person-Centered Human Services Mobility Plan

- Convene a conference of thought leaders – YOU!
- Develop a draft national plan
- Vet the draft plan with you and a few other individuals
- Finalize the plan
- Develop useful materials
- Initiate grants to test community approaches
- Assess results

Key Drivers of Success for Systems Change

- Senior Leadership support
- Attention to detail
- Benchmarking best practices
- High degree of participation from those who must implement the solution
- Clearly outline goals
- Assess results regularly and calibrate accordingly

FTA Future Steps

Doug Birnie
Federal Transit Administration
United We Ride Program



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Please Contact Us

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www.projectaction.org
www.seniortransportation.net
www.unitedweride.gov

Suggested tasks: Check out our website &
create a customer profile!

800-659-6428

There is much more to share...



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Brainstorming Process

- Goal is to gather input from across the human services arenas
- We are seeking specific guidance relating to services targeted to people with disabilities, older adults and persons of limited income
- Please cycle through and answer the questions as best you can from your local experience
- Be real world – don't hesitate to share the alligator pools
- Your input will frame the plan