

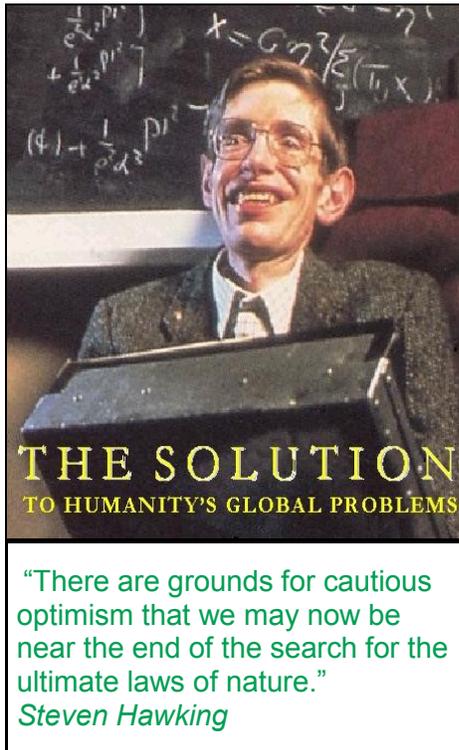
Fact Sheet

Developed by The Center for Disability Studies and Universal Access

Mobility Impairments

Quick Facts

Many types of orthopedic or neuromuscular impairments can impact mobility. These include but are not limited to amputation, paralysis, cerebral palsy, stroke, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, arthritis, and spinal cord injury. Mobility impairments range from lower-body impairments, which may require use of canes, walkers, or wheelchairs, to upper-body impairments, which may include limited or no use of the upper extremities and hands. It is impossible to generalize about functional abilities because of the wide variety of disabilities and specific diagnosis.



Mobility impairment is defined as a condition that affects movement ranging from gross motor skills, such as walking, to fine motor movement, involving manipulation of objects by hand.

Mobility impairments can be permanent or temporary. A broken bone, an injury, or a surgical procedure can temporarily impact a student's ability to walk independently and travel between campus buildings in a timely manner. Likewise, some students may use cane for short distances but may need a wheelchair or scooter for longer distances.

Successful Classroom Strategies

- If a classroom or faculty office is inaccessible, it will be necessary to find an accessible location or alternate class section that is held in an accessible location.
- Treat a wheelchair as part of the person's body space. Do not hang on or lean on the chair without permission - its similar to hanging or leaning on the person. If a class involves field work or field trips, ask the student to participate in the selection of sites and modes of transportation. If the Institution provides transportation for field trips, it must also provide accessible transportation for students who use wheelchairs.
- Classes taught in laboratory settings (science, wood and metal workshops, language labs, art studios, etc.) may require some modification of the work station. Considerations may include under-counter knee clearance, working countertop height, horizontal working reach and aisle widths. Working directly with the student may be the best way to ensure accessibility.

List of well known people who use and used wheelchairs

Itzhak Perlman - (born August 31, 1945) is an Israeli-American violinist, conductor, and pedagogue. He is one of the most distinguished violinists of the late 20th century. Perlman contracted polio at the age of four. He made a good recovery, learning to walk with the use of crutches. Today he uses a wheelchair or walks with the aid of crutches and plays the violin while seated.

Teddy Pendergrass - Theodore Pendergrass, Sr. (born March 26, 1950 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania). Pendergrass' career began when he was a drummer for The Cadillacs, which soon merged with Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes. Melvin invited Pendergrass to become the lead singer after he jumped from the rear of a stage and started singing his heart out. On March 18, 1982, in Philadelphia, Pendergrass was involved in an automobile accident when the brakes failed and he hit a tree, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down with a spinal cord injury.

Stephen Hawking - Professor Stephen Hawking is a well-known example of a person with mobility impairments, and has lived for more than 40 years with the condition.

Stephen Hawking: The internationally renowned Physicist, has defied time and doctor's pronouncements that he

would not live 2-years beyond his 21 years of age when he was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS); also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

F.D. Roosevelt - Franklin Delano Roosevelt (January 30, 1882 – April 12, 1945), he was the 32nd President of the United States. Elected to four terms in office, he served from 1933 to 1945, and is the only U.S. president to have served more than two terms of office. In August 1921, while the Roosevelts were vacationing at Campobello Island, New Brunswick, Roosevelt contracted polio, which resulted in Roosevelt's permanent paralysis from the waist down.

Christopher Reeve - Christopher D'Olier Reeve (September 25, 1952 – October 10, 2004) was an American actor, director, producer, and writer. He portrayed Superman - Clark Kent in four films, from 1978 to 1987. In the 1980s, he also starred in several films, including *Somebody in Time* (1980), *Deathtrap* (1982), *The Bostonians* (1984), and *Street Smart* (1987). In May 1995, Christopher Reeve was paralyzed in an accident during an equestrian competition.

Resources and Further Information



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About us...

Our Office was developed with the support of a Department of Education Grant, *Supporting Students with Disabilities through Professional Faculty Development and Student Curriculum*. We are committed to improving the educational environment for students with disabilities and believe that an effective way to reach our goals is to promote an environment of **Universal Education Access (UEA)** to all people regardless of background or characteristics.

