

Community Research for Assistive Technology



→ Improving Access Through Collaboration ←

A CFILC project in partnership with the CSU, Northridge Center on Disabilities • A NIDRR funded project, H133A010702

Year 1 - "What we know now"

Four papers will be produced to summarize what we already know about Assistive technology in four areas: Independent living, function, health and employment. When these papers are ready they will be circulated among the communities in California for response. We want to add information, change or update information and collect feedback on these topics. With this feedback we will identify key issues to be investigated in Year two.



Year 5 - Evaluation

Continued distribution of results and a look at how this project has done. In the last year we will do a formal evaluation as well as look to the future for new ideas and research priorities. Products made as a result of this project will be shared, presentations made at conferences and more community members trained.



The Action Research Cycle



Research is about using a systemic method to find answers to questions. We start with what we know, then we plan and ask questions, seek answers and then act on these. We reflect on what we know again, then plan and ask more questions and act on these.

The reflection process improves each level of research with more information. The CFILC Community Research for Assistive Technology Project wants the participating Independent Living Centers to be active leaders in this research process. There are five years of work to do and together we can achieve significant results for people with disabilities.

Year 2 - Focus Groups

Participating Independent Living Centers will be trained through the project to conduct focus groups on various topics. Focus groups are a method of interviewing people that helps collect opinions and ideas about issues that impact a group of people. Some groups will be around topic areas such as employment or health and other groups will be around population such as Deaf people, women with disabilities, or Latinos with disabilities.

The collected data from these focus groups will be analyzed and reported on by the end of Year two. The results will help inform the next project.



Year 4 - Taking Action

We want to take action on what we have learned about from this research. We will work with employers, technology industry leaders and government representatives to implement suggestions made through this research. We will also spend time sharing what we have learned and supporting implementation of change.



Year 3 - Surveys

One way to collect a lot of information from a lot of people is to use a survey. Across California people with disabilities will be supported in completing a survey - by phone, in writing, in alternate format or in person. This survey will include questions designed to collect information based on the topics identified as urgent in the focus groups. In addition, this information will help us learn about patterns of Assistive technology use.

CFILC will also make a survey available through the Internet and add questions about Internet access for people with disabilities who are using the Internet.