

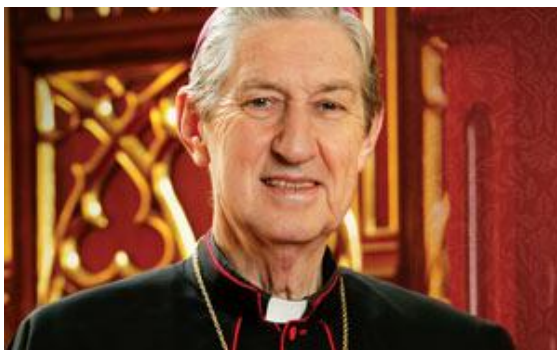
Creating Accessible Events

2010



VOICE OVER: Run by volunteers, the Emmanuel Centre, an agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth, is a network of organisations, support groups and self-help resources for people with disabilities.





Creating Accessible Events

Archbishop Hickey in his Pastoral letter, "One in Christ" (1999) uses the Apostle Paul's image of the body to describe the Church, the Body of Christ. This image, the Archbishop says, is the basis of a theology of inclusion in which all members are necessary, and where everyone is indispensable.

In regards to Access, the Archbishop says, "our thinking and attitudes must go 'beyond the ramp' ". He says:

"All Church buildings, Parish halls, schools, agencies, organisations and Conference venues are to be accessible by wheelchairs, and to be provided with toilets and communication aids appropriate for people with a range of disabilities. People who are sensory impaired must be provided with opportunities for appropriate access and aids in order to participate in all Church gatherings, meetings, seminars and conferences."

"This includes the provision of public address systems, audio loops and visual aids and clearly specified accessible parking."

"A number of State and Commonwealth Acts of Parliament set down legal requirements regarding access in both new and existing buildings. The Western Australian Disability Services Act (1993) aims to ensure that people with disabilities have the same rights, opportunities and choices as other community members. The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992) seeks to provide uniform protection against discrimination for all people with disabilities."

BUILDING CODES

"Building codes and Australian Standards on Access are in force throughout Australia. They apply as much to Church buildings as they do to any other building."

The Archbishop highlights the importance of attitude when he says, "Positive attitudes to disability and inclusion will remove most obstacles to inclusion and will almost always provide access to Church buildings, programmes and services. Positive attitudes will remove low priority in resource allocation and dispel the myth that lack of finances precludes action. Positive attitudes will maximise access to Catholic schooling and religious education. Positive attitudes will lead us to seek out advice and support that we may need to truly include people."

SACRAMENTS ARE EVENTS

Every weekend (and during the week, too in most Catholic churches) our Catholic Churches hold "events" which we call "The Mass" or "The Eucharist" as well as other Sacraments.

Archbishop Hickey quotes the Catechism of the Catholic Church when he writes, "Celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life." And, "Participation in the communal celebration of the Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and being faithful to Christ and to his Church." (Nos 2177 and 2182)

HELP IS AT HAND

Together with the Disability Services Commission, Emmanuel Centre provides some assistance for those who need help to make inclusion a reality.

The attached pamphlet "Creating Accessible Events", from the Disabilities Services Commission highlights some areas that are applicable to any event.

SOME HANDY TIPS AND HINTS

The provision of carers to stay with people/children with disabilities either in the home or at the venue where the event will be held can make attendance for parents and others possible.

Encouraging intending participants to make their needs known prior to the event you are organising.

When advertising events, include a reference that assistance is available and that contact is made with the appropriate organizing person. Eg; on your publicity include something along these lines:

I require:

Care for _____ people

Whose ages are _____ and

Whose needs are _____.

Please tick Box

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Hand out material to be brailled or in large print or disc format,</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>a sign language interpreter</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>a note taker</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>etc. _____</i> |

Please contact:

W.E B Long Toeachother, 26 February Avenue, Your Suburb, WA Tel' (Voice) 09 9555 5555;
Tel. (TTY) 08 9554 5555,
FAX 08 9553 5555; Email: iloveu@access.net.au

- Emmanuel Centre, 25 Windsor St, Perth, Tel (08) 9328 8113 can provide free of charge:
 - ✓ Sign language interpreters on a case by case basis.
 - ✓ A public address system which incorporates a complete sound system with an audio induction loop.
 - ✓ A list of venues in the Archdiocese which are accessible for public meetings. (Emmanuel Centre is currently updating its database.)

- Emmanuel Centre can also arrange :
 - ✓ Workshops with Catholic bodies and organisations to plan for access.
 - ✓ Classes to teach sign language used by people who are Deaf.

ENCOURAGING INCLUSIVE WORSHIP

- ❖ Our Catholic Liturgy lends itself very well to drama and more use of this form of communication could be considered especially for Sunday Weekend Worship.
- ❖ Sermon outlines available before Mass can be very helpful for those who cannot hear/understand the spoken word.
- ❖ Using the gifts of people with disabilities in the Liturgy is to be encouraged. This may mean some adjustment to the sanctuary space to accommodate a reader who uses a wheelchair, for example.
- ❖ Overhead/PowerPoint projection of songs, hymns and Scripture Readings allows for the inclusion of a picture with the words as well transforming the written word in “large format” for easier reading by those people who are vision impaired. (*Scripture Reading for every Sunday and Major Feast are available in large print and can be emailed in PowerPoint form from Emmanuel Centre.*)
- ❖ Liturgical prayers can use simple, yet effective, vocabulary and homilies can use familiar illustrations.
- ❖ Some People fear the presence of members of the Body of Christ who are psychiatrically unwell attending Church functions. Many times the presence in the Congregation of another caring member will be all that is needed to encourage inclusion and to alleviate a tense situation.

APPROPRIATE TERMINOLOGY

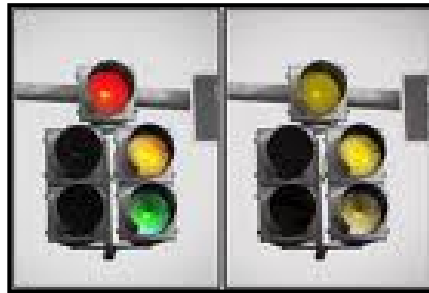
When you are speaking in public or in writing you will need to ensure that you use widely-accepted terminology and avoid potentially offensive terminology. Guidelines for media are available from Emmanuel Centre. 9328 8113.

This pamphlet has been prepared by:



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IS THIS ACCESS?

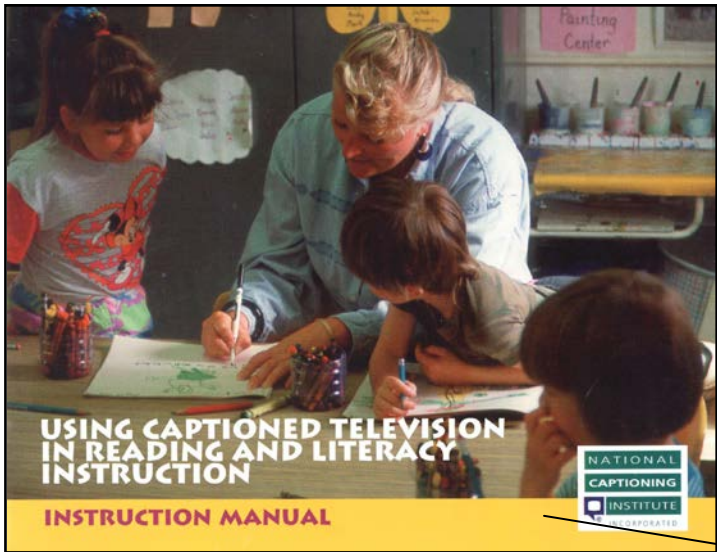
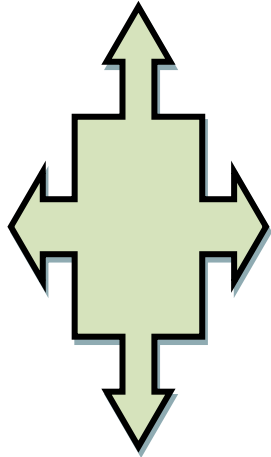


Are your signs and promotional material in large, plain font and in contrasting colours?

No Direct access to shop

Sign Language Art Work

Do not start talking until the person knows he/she is being spoken to



Is your signage accessible for whom it is intended?

Use captioning

Creating Accessible Events

This Checklist is designed to assist with planning events and functions that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.



making a difference



Creating Accessible Events

It is important that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as other community members to access and participate in public meetings, consultations, functions and events.

People with disabilities can face barriers when attending and participating in public functions in a variety of ways. They may experience difficulty hearing what is said, seeing small print on an invitation, climbing steps to the venue, understanding signage or using a rest room in the building.

To ensure that events can be accessed and enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities it is important to consider the items listed on this checklist. It is recommended that the organisers visit any venue chosen for a public function or meeting so that they may be satisfied of the accessibility of the venue and services.

Whenever possible functions should be held in fully accessible venues. It is recognised that standards for access have changed over time and many older buildings will not comply with current requirements. Event organisers, however, should always select the most accessible venues for public functions.

In instances where the venue is not fully accessible some access barriers may be addressed by having informed staff available to provide assistance and through hiring equipment or facilities, such as an accessible toilet, ramp or audio loop. Information about where to hire equipment is available through the Independent Living Centre at phone number 9381 0600. Additional contacts and resources to assist you with organising an event that is accessible to people with disabilities can be found at www.disability.wa.gov.au

Information on accessible events is also available in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) publication *“Accessible events – a guide for organisers.”* The Guide can be found on the HREOC website www.hreoc.gov.au

The checklist

As access requirements for people with disabilities will vary depending on the people attending and the type of event, you may find parts of this publication more relevant than others. To use these checklists, just tick “Yes” or “No” to the questions asked. You may also want to make brief comments.

This checklist is designed to be a quick, overview of the accessibility of a venue and function. It is not designed to assess every aspect of access in detail. It will indicate whether people with disabilities can easily attend your function and participate. For a more detailed audit of the accessibility of a building refer to the publication *“Buildings – A Guide to Access Requirements”*.

Invitations and promotional material

Many people in our community experience difficulty in hearing, seeing and communicating with others. There are many simple ways to ensure your invitations and promotional material are accessible to people with disabilities.

Text	Yes	No
• Have you used a plain font (such as Univers, Helvetica or Arial) in your invitations and promotional material?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is all text at least a minimum of 12 point type size?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Have the invitations and promotional material been printed on matt paper and in contrasting colours?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is the text uncluttered with an absence of background graphics and patterns?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Content

• Did your invitation or promotional material state whether the venue is accessible to people who use wheelchairs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Did your invitation include information about the accessible facilities at the venue such as the location of parking or nearest set down area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Have you encouraged your invited guests to identify whether they have any access requirements such as accessible parking, an audio loop or sign language interpreter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Have you included in the invitation your facsimile number and email address (if you have them) so guests have alternative ways of communicating their attendance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is written promotional material available on request in alternative formats such as large print, audio tape, computer disk or Braille?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Have you considered using alternate methods to advertise the event?		
• Facebook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• YouTube links to Auslan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Email list	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• SMS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Accessible Webpage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Planning Committee

- Have you consulted people with disabilities in The planning process
 - Have you invited people with disabilities onto your planning Committee?
-

Emergency Procedures

- Have you considered emergency procedures taking recognition of the specific needs of people with disabilities
-


External environment

People with disabilities require a continuous, even, and an accessible path of travel. An accessible path of travel means there are no obstacles in the internal or external environment such as revolving doors, kerbs or steps.

Location of the nearest:

- Bus stop: _____
 - Train station: _____
-

Accessible parking bays

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| • Does the venue have an accessible parking bay? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  • Is the accessible parking bay/s identified by the international symbol of access? | | |
| | - raised sign <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - ground markings <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • If the accessible parking is undercover, is the roof a minimum of 2500 mm in height to allow the use of a car top hoist? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Is the distance from the car park to entrance less than 40m? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
-

Continuous accessible path of travel

- Is there a continuous accessible path of travel, including kerb ramps, to the building from the:
- Accessible parking bay/s?
 - Set down area?
 - If there are steps to the building:
 - Is there a ramp available for wheelchair users?
 - Do all steps have handrails?
 - Is there a contrasting strip on step edges?
 - If there is a ramp to the building:
 - Is the gradient no steeper than 1:14?
 - Does the ramp lead to the main entrance?
-

The building

-
- | Entrance | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Is the entrance threshold level? <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • If there is a step/s at the entrance of the doorway: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Is there a ramp of not more than 450 mm in length and with a gradient of at least 1 in 8? <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Is the entrance door easy to open? <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Is the clear door space 800 mm (preferred) or 850 mm? <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
-

Internal environment

- Is the enquiry or reception counter low enough for a wheelchair user?
 - Does the venue have an accessible path of travel from the front entrance to all areas guests will use?
 - If there are internal steps:
 - Do all steps have handrails?
 - Is there a contrasting strip on step edges?
 - If there are ramps:
 - Are they no steeper than 1:14?
 - Do they have handrails?
-

Internal environment continued

- Do all doors have a clear space 800 mm (preferred) or 850 mm?
 - If there is only a side approach to the door, is there 1200 mm clear space in front of the door?
 - Does the venue have a non-slip floor surface or carpets with a firm low pile of 6 mm or less?
-

Visibility**Yes****No**

- Are facilities in the venue clearly signed?
 - Is the venue well lit?
 - Are there any areas of high reflection or glare?
-

Toilets

- Does the venue have an accessible toilet (unisex)?
 - Is the toilet situated on the same floor as the function?
 - Does the door have a clear space of 800 mm (preferred) or 850 mm?
 - If the door of the toilet door opens inwards is the space large enough for the person in a wheelchair to shut the door once inside?
 - Is there 950 mm space at one side of the toilet pan?
 - Is there a grab rail next to the toilet at 800 mm – 810 mm high, preferably in an “L” shape?
-

Signage

- Does the venue have clear, directional signage to:
 - the function room?
 - the toilets?
-

The function

Everyone wants to be able to see the stage, hear speeches being made, understand training or messages being delivered. The following checklist will ensure your function is one where everyone's communication requirements are met.

If you are organising a sit down function and your guests include people using wheelchairs, the following checklist will assist you to create an event where all of your guests feel comfortable and relaxed.

Communication	Yes	No
• Is there a position where the interpreter will stand, so people who are deaf or hard of hearing can see both the person speaking and the interpreter's face and hand movements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Can the audio-visual technicians position spotlights for the interpreters which distribute light clearly and evenly to the face and upper body?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the venue have an audio loop installed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• If there is an audio loop: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- what type: induction loop/ infra-red/FM- has it been placed towards the front of the room with clear sight lines to the stage and the interpreter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sit down function		
• Are there sufficient walkways (1000 mm or wider) in the function room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is there 900 mm space between tables?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is there 710 mm to 840 mm space under the table to allow a wheelchair to slide comfortably underneath?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Presenters Guidelines

Meeting planners also need to prepare presenters for special accommodations since they can sometimes cause an unintentional problem or be caught off-guard.

For example, a presenter with a small, informal audience may move away from a microphone to build audience rapport, not realizing that he or she has just cut off some attendees.

In many instances presenters may experience an odd feeling of having an audience looking not at him/her but at the bright screen nearby. This may make some presenters feel disconnected to their group. If a presenter is particularly concerned about eye contact, planners can ask the person to provide a digital copy of his or her remarks beforehand and tell the audience that a text version is available so people can relax and not take notes.

Another good meeting practice is to have presenters read their overhead/Power Point text first and then begin their explanations, so people who are vision impaired (as well as others who can't see well due to distance, lighting, etc.) can obtain the information.

The same is true of meeting agendas. If there will be materials to distribute that most people won't examine until after the meeting, bring disk versions so people can review them later with a screen reader or other assistive technology. PDF files are generally not readable by screen readers. Word documents are ok.

Many accessible-friendly activities are easy and cost-effective in terms of the potential benefits. Creating some materials in large print can be done easily on any computer; providing computer disk versions of programs or presentation abstracts is increasingly popular anyway; and ensuring that a hotel or convention centre or local parish hall is accessible is not an add-on cost either.

One important note, though, is that planners should recognize that the population of people with disabilities is incredibly diverse, and even for those who are blind, Deaf, or hard of hearing, what works for one person may not work for someone else. The bottom line is it's good to give a range of options. Don't assume a blind person will need Braille.

On a more basic level treat people with respect.

These guidelines are available in alternative formats on application to: Emmanuel Centre



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