

ADVOCACY

People First of Toledo Monthly Newsletter

Accessibility + The Internet

By Quinn Thomas

It is 2023. A century ago, disability accessibility meant ramps and Braille books. Those things are as important as ever, but the world has changed a lot since then, and so have our collective accessibility needs. Globally in 2022, people age 16-64 spent between 5.03 to 7.42 hours a day online. That means on average, the internet takes up a quarter of the average human's day. It is how we get our news. It's how we connect with loved ones. It's how we work, relax, entertain, and inform ourselves. In this day and age, internet accessibility is a necessity.

Online accessibility can come in many forms. It can be as simple as choosing a dyslexic-friendly font, or as high-tech as a custom accessibility widget for a website. There are many ways every one of us can help make the internet a more accessible place for all.

Image Descriptions

Image descriptions are just what they sound like. Whenever you post a photo or other image online, you can add an image



UPCOMING EVENTS

SYNERGY

October 4-6, at Kalahari Resorts in Sandusky.

SPOOKY BOARDWALK

October 15, 2:00-4:00, at Sunshine- 7223 Maumee Western Road, Maumee.

SEXUAL ED FOR ADULTS

Every Monday from 4:30-5:30 starting the 16th. \$300. Presented by Avenues for Autism.

AWARDS GALA

October 21, 5:30-10:30, at the Glass City Pavilion. This is a Diamond Masquerade ball.

TRUNK OR TREAT

October 25, 5:30-7:30, at LCBDD- 1155 Larc Lane, Toledo

HALLOWEEN PARTY

October 27, 5:00-7:00, at Courageous Acres. Hosted by People First of Toledo.

description to make it more accessible to people who are blind or have low vision. All you have to do is take a few short sentences to say what an image is of or what its purpose is. You can put image descriptions in the main part of your post or in the alt text. Most social media websites let you add alt text when you click to edit a photo.

Tone Indicators

It can be hard to tell what tone someone is trying to use over text. It can be even harder for people with autism or cognitive disabilities.

Determining sarcasm is hard enough in person; online it is nearly impossible. That's why some people have started stating their intended tone outright at the end of their messages. This is typically done after a forward slash (example: /joking or /j). Tone indicators are commonly abbreviated, but this has been criticized. Some people have trouble remembering what all the different abbreviations mean.

There are many other ways to be inclusive online. As said earlier, you can make sure you choose dyslexic-friendly fonts. A dyslexic-friendly font is anything sans serif, but there are also dozens of fonts designed specifically to be readable for people with dyslexia.

Another thing you can do is offer both low-contrast and high-contrast options. Low-contrast images prevent eye strain for people with seizures. High-contrast is easily read by people with low vision.

A single thing can't be accessible for everyone. That's why it's important to have multiple options available. Audio files are necessary for some, but inaccessible to others. Having many different versions and choices makes sure that everyone can access content, no matter what their needs may be.



**People First
of
Toledo**

OUR NEXT MEETING

October 19th, 6:00-7:30, virtually on Zoom or in-person at the Ability Center at 5605 Monroe Street, Sylvania. Meeting dues are \$5 or \$50 for twelve months.

Using the Other "R" Word curriculum developed by the Joint Commission on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism+, we will discuss what anti-racism is and what we can be doing.