



"At the Forgotten Wishes Foundation, we recognize that there is much work to be done to support the needs of people with disabilities in our country. Our mission, however, is a simple one sparked by the desire to let our friends know that they are remembered. We create a sense of belonging for people with disabilities by sending them personalized birthday cards, holiday greetings, thinking of you notes, and small gifts throughout the year. It is a small gesture with a giant impact on the hearts of people who are so often forgotten." -- Lisa Dempsey, Founder

10 Things You Should Know About Living With A Disability

1 in 4

1 in 4 people has a disability that keeps them from living, working, attending school, or caring for themselves without assistance from others.



Over 40%

Over 40% of adults with a disability do not have a loved one or friend to provide care or advocate for them. They become forgotten within our communities.

7-12 Years

The national average wait time for people who have applied to receive benefits for attendant care, residential placement, or support services is over seven years. In Texas, the average wait time is now over twelve years.

After Turning 21

There are NO federal or state-mandated services REQUIRED to provide care or support to people with a disability. Before the age of 21, the primary burden falls on school districts through the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). There is little regulation on how the school districts accomplish this, and it varies significantly by state. Parents must rely on well-meaning but uninformed administrations who are struggling with decreasing budgets and little training.

Interest Lists

Obtaining benefits does not occur automatically because an individual has a disability. There is not a system informing people that they need to register or apply for benefits. A person must identify benefits that may be available to them and request services. They may be removed "from the list" if they fail to update their needs regularly. Each state maintains a separate interest list. Waiting times do not transfer between states if a person moves. They must begin the process again in the new state they have decided to call home.

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2 x Poverty

32% of working-age people with a disability live below poverty compared to 16% of those without a disability.

Poorer Health

People with disabilities have less access to adequate health care. 1 in 3 have an unmet healthcare need because of cost in the past year. As a result, they are increasingly susceptible to preventable health problems that decrease their overall health. The result is having higher amounts of secondary conditions such as depression, obesity, chronic pain, and other impairments.

Caring At Home

Family members are still the primary caregivers for adults with developmental disabilities and they themselves are aging. 25% of caregivers for people with I/DD are over the age of 60 and the recipients of care average age is 38. A Sibling Disability Study survey reported that while 80% of respondents expected to someday be their sibling's primary caregiver, only 33% felt prepared to someday step into that role.

Hidden Ranks

22% of a company's employees are currently assisting with the care of a disabled family member, relative, or friend. Caregivers report that only 56% of their work supervisors are aware of their caregiving responsibilities.

No Voice

When someone is declared incapacitated by the state, in most cases, they lose their right to vote.

Sources include:

Cornell University's 2018 Disability Status Report for the United States. Disability Data Digest 2018 by The ARC and MediSked. The Centers for Disease Control. Easter Seals. The World Health Organization. National Alliance for Caregiving.

What people are saying about the Forgotten Wishes Foundation

"Robert just opened his card. It produced the biggest genuine smile I have seen in a long time. Thank you." Mellody P., Parent

"IT WAS VERY COOL RECEIVING THE CARD, KNOWING I'M APPRECIATED, ESPECIALLY ON VALENTINE'S DAY WHEN MOST PEOPLE FEEL ALONE. IT'S VERY UPLIFTING." ADNAN A.

"Thank you for the Friendship Card. Hayley loved it!" Trisha S., Parent

"This is an inspired idea. I work with so many individuals who are lonely. I actually book my follow-up appointments on patient's birthdays so I can wish them happy birthday! I can't wait to share this them." Emily B., Provider

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