

# R[4] Retreat Center

## Impact Statement & Plan

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# R[4] Impact Statement & Plan

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# Our Mission:

R[4] Retreat Center is a Bible based organization that creates retreat opportunities to encourage, inspire and empower persons with special needs and their caregivers.

## Our Current Opportunity

Problems Worth Solving	R4's Solutions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Parents/caregivers are often isolated, feel unseen and forgotten</li><li>2. Respite events don't happen often enough</li><li>3. Most organizations only serve the child</li><li>4. Camps and retreats are expensive</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Blessing Day deliveries each month – building connections with other families</li><li>2. Monthly events with trained volunteers</li><li>3. Our mission is to serve the WHOLE family</li><li>4. R4 makes every event affordable and offers scholarships if needed</li></ol>

Target Market	Competitors	How our solution is better
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Families of children with disabilities</li><li>2. Caregivers in need of respite</li><li>3. Special Needs children in need of socialization &amp; connection</li><li>4. People pursuing inclusivity – volunteers &amp; donors</li></ol>	<i>Joni &amp; Friends Texas</i>	More than 3 retreats/events per year
	<i>Ability Connection</i>	Monthly Respite, Retreats & Connection
	<i>Camp Summit TX</i>	Camps & events for the entire family
	<i>H.E.R.O.E.S. DFW</i>	Focused more on family connections

Even though R[4] was born in 2015 and did much work between then and 2020, the organization took a hiatus between 2020 and 2022. Leadership managed all the things necessary to comply with the IRS and the State of Texas to maintain R[4] Retreat Center's nonprofit status during that time. However, because of this lapse in service and donations, R[4] is now considering itself a start-up once again.

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## Funding Needed in 2023

# \$35K

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## Sales and Marketing

### Sales Channels

1. Website
2. Social Media Campaigns
3. Email Campaigns
4. Direct Mail – Special Invitations & Discounts

### Marketing Activities

1. Website/QR Codes
2. Vendor Tables at Special Needs Events
3. Blessing Day Deliveries with R4 marketing materials
4. Social Media: Facebook, IG, Youtube, TikTok
5. Presentations at area churches/business groups

## Forecast

### Revenue Streams

1. **Monthly Donors – P.A.N.D.A.s\***
2. Event/Retreat Ticket Sales
3. Online and In-Person Fundraisers
4. Event Sponsors
5. Merchandise Sales
6. Individual Donors
7. Foundations & Grants

### Major Costs

1. Rental Deposits/Fees
2. Event/Retreat supplies
3. Advertising
4. Insurance
5. Fundraising
6. Administrative Expenses
7. Greenhouse startup



*\*Partners in Advancement Nurturing Determined Adventurers – The title we’ve given our monthly donors who are so vital to helping us achieve our mission and vision. These donors get special recognition and insider info about how their money is impacting our families through the year. We love our PANDAs.*

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## 2023 Milestones to Achieve

✓	Milestone	Date
	1 <sup>st</sup> Annual Mother's Day Brunch	May 6, 2023
	1 <sup>st</sup> Monthly Blessing Day – Revisited**	May 20, 2023
	1 <sup>st</sup> DFW Pop-Up Retreat – Picnic/Pool Party	June 3, 2023
	1 <sup>st</sup> Annual Dad's Breakfast	June 17, 2023
	Dates for 3 Family Retreats in 2024 Secured (Deposits Paid)	October 2, 2023
	Warehouse Space Secured for Occupancy in January 2024	December 1, 2023

## Our History

The idea for R[4] Retreat Center was born when our founder, Jamie Koesema discovered that her adult daughter was autistic. It was a shock but it explained a lot of her daughter's learning struggles, social anxieties and sensory issues as she grew up. As Jamie dove deeper into the world of autism and disabilities in general, she began to realize how isolated parents and caregivers of children with special needs become so she wanted to become part of the solution instead of the problem.

As a result of our founder's journey of discovery with her daughter, it became evident that there needed to be somewhere for families to go to find respite, hope, peace and community with others. As her family talked more and more about these things, the plan for R[4] Retreat Center was born.

In July of 2016, R[4] Retreat Center, Inc. was approved as a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. In that same year, we had the privilege of serving 27 families in 7 different states representing 31 children with disabilities of some kind through our **\*\*Blessing Day Campaign**. This was our opportunity to bless families impacted by special needs around the country with customized goody bags for each member of the family.

We have since done three family retreats in Texas in 2017, 2018 & 2019 by renting camp facilities in the North Texas. At those retreats, we served 22 different families representing 35 parents/caregivers + 32 children affected by disabilities + 27 siblings. These retreats also included the service of 154 adult volunteers and 21 of their children who became part of our inclusive retreats doing activities with our campers with disabilities and their siblings.

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To see videos of our retreats, check these out:

2017 Winter Retreat



2018 Summer Retreat



2019 Fall Retreat

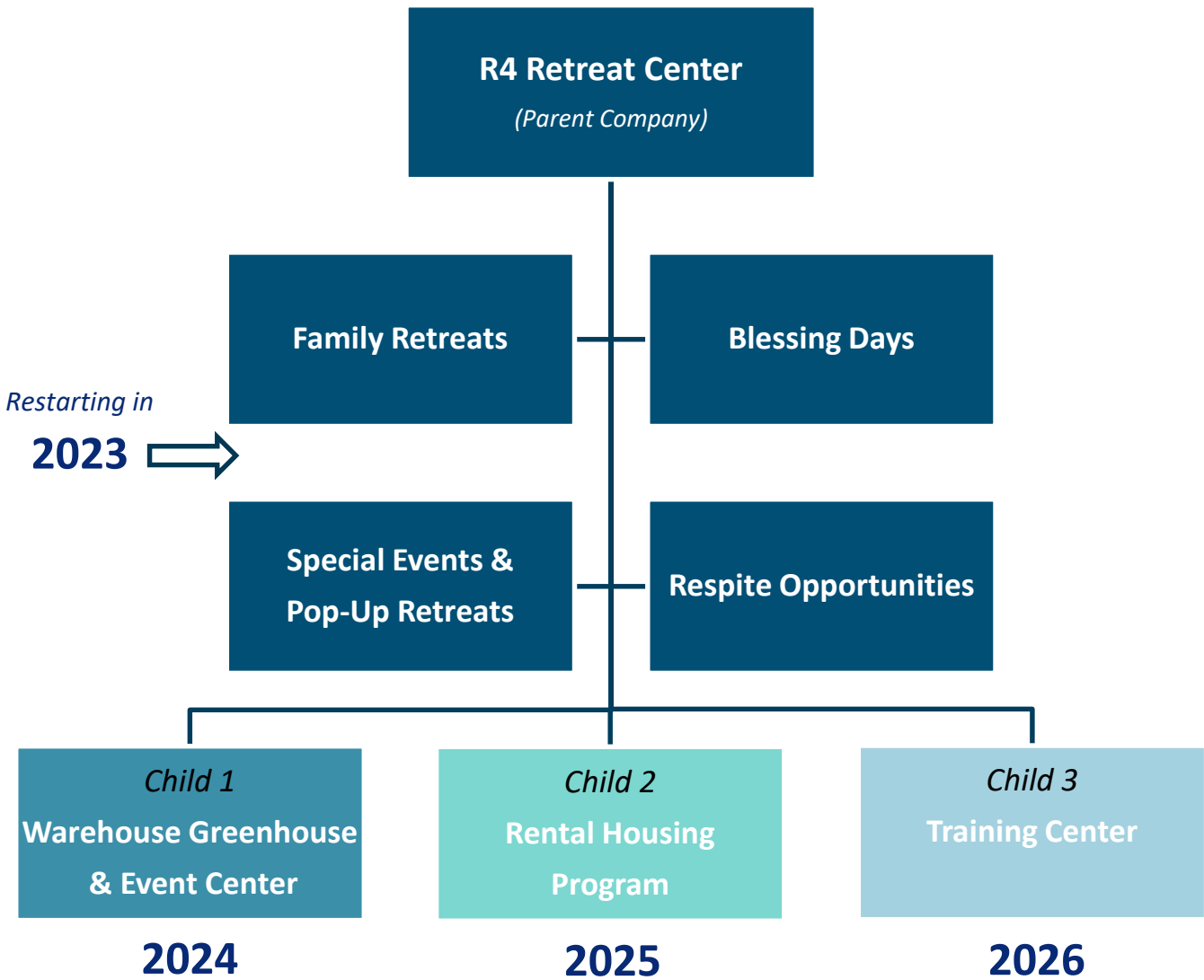


## Our Vision for the Future

Over the years, we have been listening to and learning about the greater needs of this unseen and misunderstood population. As we have considered those needs, our vision has grown exponentially to include not only providing retreats and respite opportunities but also developing a residential village, training center and source of employment for adults with disabilities. The idea is to serve our families holistically from childhood through adulthood through respite/retreats, ongoing support, events, housing, job skills training and employment.



# Our Plan





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# The R[4] Program *(2023 & Beyond)*

## Family Retreats

Until we are able to purchase and develop our own property, R[4] will continue renting camps and retreat centers in **Texas and Michigan** to meet the needs of our families through our retreat ministry. These retreats will provide the following:

1. **Encouragement**, peace, hope, love and acceptance.
2. **Inspiration**: through intentional interactions and fun with other parents and caregivers like them, they will be inspired because they feel seen, heard and understood.
3. **Empowerment**: knowing that there is a place like R4 where our families can be themselves with no judgement, empowers them to join in the fun and build a community that will support them well into the future.



## **\*\*Blessing Days**

R[4] introduced and executed two Blessing Days in 2016. In 2023, we are expanding upon that idea to turn it into a monthly ongoing opportunity to serve and bless our families. This also gives us the privilege of meeting new families and share what R[4] is all about. Each month 5 families will be nominated in either **Texas or Michigan** to receive customized Blessing Bags for each member of their family. R[4] will collect requested items for each family throughout the month. Volunteers are invited to join us on a specific day each month to pack the bags and deliver them. This is a great way to get churches and schools involved. They can do donation drives for our monthly Blessing Days and also bring volunteers to help assemble and deliver the bags.

## Special Events & Pop-Up Retreats

Throughout the year, we will be planning some special events for parents and caregivers as well as Pop-Up Retreats for the whole family at various locations. These events will include Mom Brunches and Dad Breakfasts, Parent/Sibling events and Second Chance Proms for parents/caregivers. Our Pop-Up Family Retreats will include a swimming party/picnic, a mini camp experience, a pizza/popcorn/movie night and a special event at a marina in DFW. These are open to anyone and will have a small fee to attend.



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## Respite Opportunities

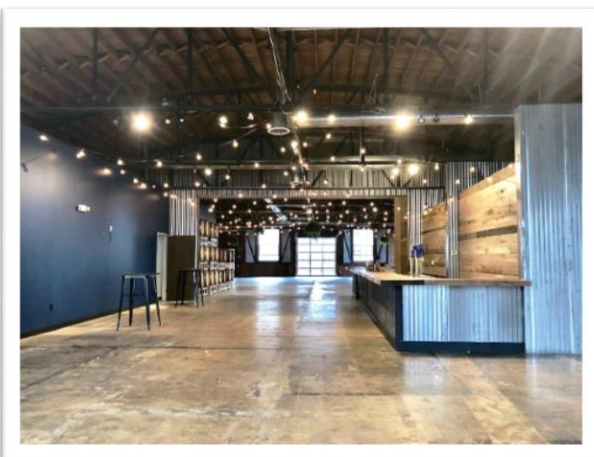
R[4] is developing relationships with some churches and schools in the DFW area and Grand Rapids, MI that are interested in hosting respite nights for parents and caregivers. With the help of trained volunteers, R[4] will partner with these churches and schools to provide these amazing opportunities for parents/caregivers to take a break and for their kids to have some fun with lots of other kids and volunteers who embrace them and accept them just as they are.

## 3 Year Objectives (2024 – 2026)

### Warehouse Greenhouse & Event Space

In order to serve more people more often, R[4]’s goal is to find warehouse space that we will retrofit to include our R[4] Offices, a greenhouse space and an event space. We are looking for a space that may have some outdoor space available to us as well for small outdoor events.

- **Greenhouse Space** – In an effort to provide on-site employment opportunities for teens and adults with disabilities, R[4]’s plan is to open its own fully accessible greenhouse. We will begin that goal with a small greenhouse inside our warehouse with plants that can be grown indoors. These plants will be managed by qualified individuals who can teach their skills to others. The plants grown and harvested in our greenhouse will be sold online and shipped. The purpose of this space is three-fold:
  - 1. To provide training for interested teens and adults with disabilities in the area of horticulture.
  - 2. Employment for the teens and adults who graduate our horticulture program.
  - 3. To provide extra revenue for the Parent Company, R[4] Retreat Center.



- **Event Center** – To make a greater impact on a regular basis and serve more families in different ways throughout the year, R[4] desires to have its own Warehouse Event Center in which we can do respite nights, birthday and holiday parties, space for family support groups, childcare and Pop-Up Retreats. With a large open area within the warehouse and the possibility of creating smaller spaces for different activities, we believe this Event Center will give us many more opportunities to serve our families than we could ever do without it.

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## Rental Housing Program

Another of R[4]'s goals is to launch an affordable housing program for the families it serves using rental homes. By developing strong relationships with investors and landlords, together, we can create a unique and affordable housing program. Creative solutions like this are necessary to assist in creating good options for adults with disabilities facing an absolutely unbelievable housing crisis. Did you know that most organizations that provide housing for adults with



disabilities have waiting lists of 300-400 people? And add to that the shocking cost of having your child in a quality housing option, the situation seems hopeless for most lower to middle class families. R[4] is in the process of developing a uniquely affordable housing program.\* The idea is for R[4] to lease homes in which up to 4 people can live under the supervision of a houseparent. The goal is to rent these homes close to our warehouse spaces so our residents can join us daily for some great activities during the day in our event space in addition to working or volunteering in the greenhouse. We believe this is a win-win situation for our families and for investor/landlord partners. Parents/caregivers will now have hope of finding quality affordable housing for their children and investors/landlords will know that their rental properties will serve an eternal and transformational purpose.

### **\*Families Are the Key to Quality Affordable Housing**

**Quality:** R[4] will become the conduit that puts families together to create unique housing options for their adult children. The goal is that through R[4] retreats, events and support groups; like-minded families will find one another and create “family pods.” These “pods” will then work together with R[4] to create safe and unique places for their kids to live and thrive when they are ready. Before opening a home, R[4] leadership will meet with a group of parents/caregivers and talk to them about the specific systems they would like to be in place for their child’s home. Then R[4] staff, using its own best practices designed by its disability professionals and legal team, will create a unique program for each home using the creative ideas presented by the parents/caregivers. Upon opening a home, R[4] will encourage the parents to take on as much of the leadership in the home as they are comfortable with and even rotate care throughout each month as House Parents to keep costs down. Of course, anyone taking on this role will be fully background checked and trained to care for the specific individuals in the home. R[4] staff will always be available to assist and in the process will learn more about the unique systems created in each home in order for each resident to be successful. This is important because as parents/caregivers age and siblings move away, it will be imperative that R[4] staff can step in and run each home in the way the residents have become accustomed. That way as parents and siblings need step out of their roles in the home, R[4] staff will be able make the transition as seamless as possible.

**Affordable:** In an effort to keep costs down for each family, R[4]'s goal is to rent homes in great neighborhoods where the room/board cost per resident will be no more than what they can afford using their current disability benefits. If there are continuing therapies or services required, those costs will be a la carte and will need to be worked out with R[4] staff as needed.

## Training Center



Another program under development is our Training Center. The idea is to partner with area high schools and colleges to create a Training Center for adults with disabilities where they can get training in various arts and trades if they are able. Being able to expand our warehouse space to include classrooms and a commercial kitchen for cooking classes will be one of the keys to the success of our Training Center. The plans for this program are in their infancy and will be released in the future.

## Our “Why?” Story

*The names have been changed to protect those involved.*

Meet the Smith family; George, Amy and their three kids. On the outside, they appear to be a normal young, growing family. But the reality of their lives is very different than what people expect.

Amy is so tired of being exhausted. She can't remember the last time she felt relaxed and at peace. As she looks back at her kids' lives, she cannot remember a day when she didn't feel stressed out or sad. Two of her three kids have disabilities.

She loves her kids more than life itself and she fights hard for them daily, but her emotions still bubble up like a pot about to boil over. Some days bring triumphs as her kids reach goals in their therapies. Other days, she would like to just hide because she feels like a huge failure as a mom.

Now her kids are older and she hoped things would be easier, but they are not. Her kids are no longer “cute” kids with special needs, they're big kids who are often loud, hard to “control” and always misunderstood. She longs for the world to embrace her amazing kids just as they are but that has yet to happen. And now that her kids are growing up, there are more important things that keep her up at night and those things scare her to death. What will the future look like? How will they manage?

She wishes she could remember some happier days so at least she'd have something to hold on to. But the stress of caring for her kids 24/7 with no break, darkens any recollection of good days. In the silence of the night time, she collapses in tears wondering if she will ever get her life back.

### THE PROBLEM

**1 in 5 households  
in the United  
States are caring  
for a child with  
special needs.**

*Long term support  
and respite options  
for caregivers are  
minimal, leaving  
parents and families  
exhausted, isolated  
and hurting.*

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George watches his wife struggle. He wants to help but doesn't always know how. He sees his wife's tears but never seems to have the right words to console her. Amy is consumed with caring for their kids and he tries to support her as much as he can. But he's tired. Tired of not being sure the best way to help his wife and kids. Tired of his life being scheduled around his kids' insane school schedules, therapy sessions and doctor appointments. He's tired of the constant demand of his job and his family. He feels like he is being pulled apart one limb at a time....and he's sure that his wife feels the same way. He can't remember the last time they actually had time to have an uninterrupted conversation. All he knows is that he can't fix it and that sometimes makes him feel inadequate and lost.

He misses Amy. They used to laugh and have fun together, but those days seem like a distant memory now. He's tried to plan date nights with his wife so they could just get away, but something always happens with the kids and they end up cancelling. And honestly, his biggest wish is to just have a simple conversation with his son, but because his son is non-verbal, that conversation has never happened. He feels very alone and isolated even in the middle of his crazy life. This is not the life he imagined for himself. As much as he loves and adores his family, he longs for something more and is really scared of the future.

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**George and Amy desperately need a break; an opportunity to get away and regroup. A chance to be with other families who understand and support them. A place where their kids will be loved and accepted and included in everything. But where can they find a place like that?**

He's looked into summer camps for their kids. He's heard of some really great ones that he knows his sons would enjoy. He's even committed to saving money for them to go. Amy was so excited about the idea of them going to camp because it would give her a break and hopefully her boys could make some friends. George loved seeing the light in Amy's eyes again just with the prospect of life being somewhat "normal" for a week while the boys were away. But as usual, those plans failed too when the car broke down and they had to empty their savings to get it fixed. George was devastated when he saw the crocodile tears roll down Amy's cheeks when he told her they couldn't go.

Since they couldn't send the boys to camp, they decided to do a staycation and just go places near home where the kids could have some fun and they could get a short break. However, the constant fear of meltdowns and misunderstood behaviors kept them from leaving the house after the first outing. Things didn't quite go as well as they had hoped. George and Amy need a chance to breathe but there just doesn't seem to be anywhere for them to go to do that.

And what about their "typical" child? She always seems to get left behind or their plans have to change because of her brothers. Their daughter is full of grace and is fiercely protective of her brothers. But it breaks George and Amy's hearts that they cannot give her the time, energy and resources they know she needs and deserves. How will they ever be able to express to her what she



## THE REALITY

“Hundreds of thousands of adults with disabilities across the U.S. sit on housing “wait lists” for home and community-based services. Even if they’re ready to make the move out of their parents’ home into community or independent living, the housing options and funding supports often don’t exist.”

*-Micaela Connery  
2015 Research Fellow,  
JCHS M.P.P. 2016,  
Harvard Kennedy School*

[https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/connery\\_disabilityhousing\\_april2016\\_v2.pdf](https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/connery_disabilityhousing_april2016_v2.pdf)

means to them and how proud they are of her? And who is out there to help and support her? Does anyone even understand what she goes through as a sibling? Where can she go to vent? Who can she talk to who will love her through it?

For George and Amy, the present is perplexing and lonely, but the future is frightening. As they attempt to prepare their kids for the future, whatever that may look like, they both feel stressed and frustrated. What is going to happen if they die before their kids are ready and/or able to be independent? Who will care for them? Will they be treated with respect as valued members of society?

They’ve asked around in their Special Needs Groups to see if anyone knows of a good community for adults with disabilities, maybe even housing and jobs for them. No one seems to have a good answer. They’ve heard of a few places around the country where they may be able to go, but they are few and far between and extremely expensive. They wonder if places like that are only created for the rich. How can it be that there is no place to call home for their precious boys? No place with a secure and healthy future?

They try desperately not to lose hope, but each day brings new challenges, fears and stresses as adulthood creeps closer and closer for their children. And they know that once their kids “age-out” of school at 22 years old, they will lose access to some of the services that they’ve grown accustomed to. And then what?

There are thousands of families perplexed by these same issues ... walking that same scary tightrope. Sadly, this story is not the exception to the rule in society today. It is becoming very normal. However, families like these have become the hidden and forgotten ones. They suffer silently because no one knows how to help, what to say or, more often than not, even knows there is a need.

**And that is why R[4] Retreat Center exists!** We exist to provide hope and respite for those who feel unseen and unwelcome in most places. R[4] exists to give encouragement and inspiration to those who are exhausted and have nowhere to turn. R[4] exists to empower those who feel forgotten by giving them a safe place to go with their families where they are seen, heard, loved, supported and understood. That is why we do what we do. RETREAT is family!

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# Get Involved

**Would you consider becoming a part of the solution and supporting any part of R[4] Retreat Center's plan that resonates with you?** One of our goals is to provide donors and volunteers multiple avenues in which to get involved. Please take time to think about what part of this plan resonates with you and contact Jamie Koesema at [jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org) or Sara Mayo at [smayo@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:smayo@r4retreatcenter.org) to talk with us more about it.

**How can you help R[4] provide respite and hope for hundreds of families right now?**

## Pray.

We need an army of people to pray for this vision and for the provision needed to purchase property and become operational.

## Give.

1. **Become a P.A.N.D.A.** Your monthly gift of \$30 or more per month gives you the opportunity to create lasting impact on our families. YOU are granting our families the encouragement, support and community they so desperately need.
2. **Purchase items on our Amazon Blessing Day Wish List:** <https://a.co/g7xFll0> - These items will be used to pack the Blessing Bags for the families being blessed by our donors each month. These are all super fun items that we think you'd love to share with some awesome families.
3. **Give an empowering one-time gift of \$1000 or more** to help R[4] secure retreat venues and a warehouse space for its future endeavors.
4. **Become an Individual or Corporate Retreat Sponsor. A contribution of \$250 or more** creates a transformational partnership with R[4] and provides the extra revenue needed to keep creating life changing retreats. Contact [jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org) for more info.
5. **Become an Individual or Corporate Event Sponsor.** R[4]'s events are different than our retreats. These are community events done aside from our retreats. These events just offer us more opportunity to provide respite and support for our families. Contact [jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org) for more info.

## How to give:

### Online:

Monthly Donor



One Time Gift



Zelle

**zelle**

Now accepting donations via Zelle  
No service fees

Send your donation to  
[jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org)

Paypal



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# Get Involved (cont'd)

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## Mail a Check of Any Amount:

R4 Retreat Center  
1100 N Gateway Blvd #3135  
Forney, TX 75126

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Purchase specific items from our **Amazon Wish List**  
for the Blessing Day campaigns:  
<https://a.co/g7xFIlo>



## Share.

Follow R[4] on social media, engage with us and share our stories.



As you see Blessing Days, events and Pop-Up Retreats advertised on social media, please consider sharing them with people you know who would be interested. We need you to spread the news about what R[4] is doing. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about R[4] Retreat Center's mission and vision, please contact Jamie Koesema at [jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org) or call 972-689-4518 to set up a meeting.

## Subscribe.

Did you know that R4 Retreat Center has a monthly email newsletter? It's a great place to learn about the families we serve, the events we have coming up and the latest news and needs of the organization. Sign up now: <https://www.r4retreatcenter.org/>

## Volunteer.

R[4] will have multiple opportunities to volunteer in the near future. Here is a list of volunteers we will need:

- Blessing Bag Packers and Delivery Drivers
- Buddies and Activity Coordinators for all our events and retreats

Scan the QR Code if you are interested in volunteering.



**Take one more look to see the need and  
discover how you are part of the solution.**





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# The Team

## Current Volunteer Staff:



**Jamie Koesema:** R4 Retreat Center Founder & CEO. Forney, TX

Email: [jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:jkoesema@r4retreatcenter.org)

Phone: 972-689-4518



**Ashley Koesema:** R4 Media Manager, Web Designer, Horticulture Enthusiast, Burlington, KY

Email: [ashleyk@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:ashleyk@r4retreatcenter.org)

## Board of Directors:



**Sara Mayo:** Board President. Special Education Administrator. Pantego, TX

Email: [smayo@r4retreatcenter.org](mailto:smayo@r4retreatcenter.org)

Phone: 917-903-6773

**Jeff Miller:** Board Member. Parent of adult with disabilities. Arlington, TX

Email: [jkmiller76013@gmail.com](mailto:jkmiller76013@gmail.com)

**Anna Gane:** Board Member. Mental Health Advocate. Development Assistant. Dallas, TX

Email: [a\\_gane01@msn.com](mailto:a_gane01@msn.com)

**Ken Swanson:** Board Member. Disability Advocate. Ministry Leader. Fort Thomas, KY

Email: [swansonorse@gmail.com](mailto:swansonorse@gmail.com)

**Pamela Culbertson,** Board Member. Ministry Leader. Director of Volunteers at Dallas LIFE. Dallas, TX

Email: [pamela.culbertson@gmail.com](mailto:pamela.culbertson@gmail.com)

# Future Plans

**R[4] Retreat Center's Strategic Plan** includes the purchase of existing 4-5 bedroom homes on 10-25 acres of land on which to build our campuses around the country. Why does it need an existing home? This plan gives us an existing home to renovate for housing and an infrastructure upon which to expand and build our campuses thus cutting the costs of development.

## What will our future campuses look like?

Below is a sample map of what an R[4] Retreat Center will look like in its entirety upon completion. Notice the 4 different components of the property: Retreat Center, Residential Training Village, Greenhouse & Café and RV Park. All of these things will work in tandem with one another to fund the organization as a whole, provide ample opportunities for employment for our residents, outreach to the community and awareness with those who use our space for private rentals.



# 2023 R[4] Blessing Day Testimonials:

## It Came at the Right Time

*Your gift came at such a cool time. We had just received a call from the doctor requiring another trip to NIH. The day your gift came I was overwhelmed with fear of flying and how I was going to finance our trip. Your letter was such a confirmation that God once again was telling me He had this in His hands and I needed not to fear. Thank you so much for your part in that. Again thank you so much for the blessing! –Laura B.*



## What a Blessing

*You just made my month. Thank you so much. I just opened the card this morning. It's been a crazy couple of weeks. The stress here has been a little rough. I'm going to go relax this afternoon with a pedi using the gift card you gave me. You will never know how much of a blessing you are!! – Diane H.*

## I am so Touched

*Just received this gift in the mail today I am so touched that you thought of me! Thank you so much! I think of you and your ministry often. I haven't forgotten you—just been a bit overwhelmed of late. Thanks again for the card, kind words, and gift card. – Kim S.*

## Thank You!

*Thank you so much for the blessing it has brightened my day. Love y'all. – Sherry S.*

# R[4] Retreat Testimonials:

## Finding Your Tribe

*"I want to talk for a moment about "finding your tribe." I work from home, so I sometimes go days without seeing a human being outside of my immediate family. I long for companionship. I yearn for social interaction. It's easy to just feel...alone. But, with my unique family, I always worry. Are they judging my parenting? Will my kids say something inappropriate? Will there be a meltdown? Will we fit in? Do they even want us here?"*

*But [the retreat] was such an amazing, abundant blessing in so many ways! Because I'll tell you this...I found my people. The adults in the group got kid-free time to talk, to ask questions, connect, and commiserate. Guys, it made my soul so happy. To hear other parents who also struggle....to hear I'm not the only mom who sometimes cries in the closet...to be in a safe space free of judgment. I left with phone numbers of new friends and a renewed sense of purpose and belonging." – Brandi W.*

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## I Came Away Refreshed

*"My boys are high energy we go very, very few places...especially with all three of them. They were accepted and when one started being aggressive later in day, his buddy stepped in to lend a helping hand without judgement. I feel blessed that we got to take part in this. I came away refreshed from having some time off. I was really wondering when we signed up if the boys would be accepted, if they would fit in, etc. but it was such a wonderful experience." – Diane H.*

## I Was Welcomed with Open Arms

*"My family and I were welcomed with open arms and felt at home with people we never met. Everyone was gracious and willing to assist from the minute we parked our car." –Latunya M.*

## And what do our kid campers think about our family retreats?

### My Sons Had a Blast!

*"My sons had a blast and wanted to go back the next day. The boys came home full of stories about their day. They have talked all week since the retreat about the fun they had." –The Hall Family*

### This Was the BEST Day Ever!

*"This was the BEST day ever! My favorite part was the talent show. I got to do a song with my friend Zane. When do we get to come back?" – Chase S.*

### Siblings Become Future Volunteers

**And siblings are not left out.** R[4] has special activities for siblings during our retreats as well. They have an absolute blast as they are given special one-on-one time to enjoy with their parents and with siblings from other families who understand the struggles they go through each day. These siblings are fiercely loyal and protective of the brothers and sisters with special needs, so it is nice for them to just relax and enjoy some fun with no need to defend their siblings or feel stress of any kind.

*"As one of the families was leaving the retreat, they stopped and flagged me down. David, their oldest son (12 years old), rolled down the window and couldn't stop talking about how amazing his day was. He went on to tell me that he loved every part of the day and couldn't wait to come back. He then asked if he could be a volunteer at the next retreat because he loves helping people and he really wanted to come help R[4]'s campers in the future. That was such a blessing to hear that from one of our sibling campers." - Jamie Koesema, R[4] Executive Director*



## What Our Volunteers Say

### We Connected On So Many Levels

*"I will say that our family was blessed hugely. We met another family and connected on so many levels. Our kids have become fast friends and we will continue getting together all because God put both of our families together while you were planning a retreat to bless so many." - Melanie O.*

### It Was Truly a Meaningful Experience for My Whole Family

*"I just wanted to say thank you so much for the opportunity to serve the special kids and their families on Saturday. It was truly a meaningful experience for my whole family. Since the event, my middle daughter Eva has turned a corner with a little boy with autism and ADHD that she has had struggles with since September. She sees him in a new light now and is trying harder to see his special qualities as special rather than "annoying". It made my heart so happy when she shared with me her new perspective and I know it has a lot to do with her experience at the retreat on Saturday. You are doing amazing work and I know the effects are far reaching! God Bless you! Please keep us in mind when you are in need of volunteers in the future." – Heather M.*



## Retreat... is Family!

The R[4] community needs families like yours to join together to create something incredible...

something that serves families from birth through adulthood...

something that models inclusion in a fresh new way to families of all abilities...

something that builds strong bonds and even stronger communities...

something that creates a lasting impact on everyone involved...

something that **encourages**...

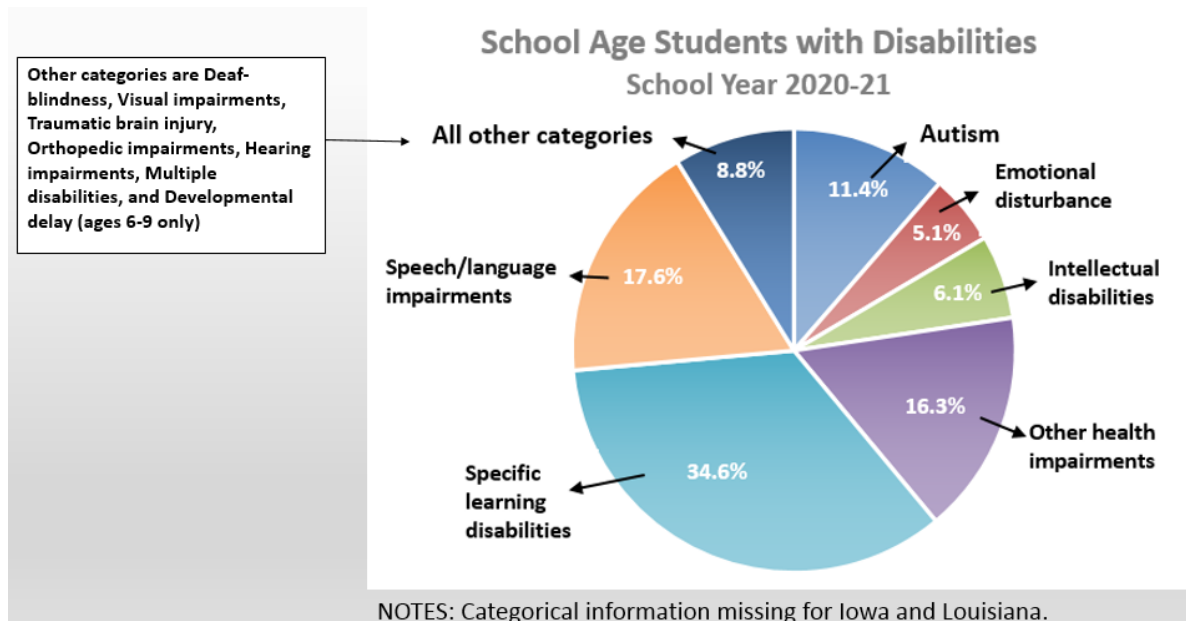
something that **inspires**...

something that **empowers**.

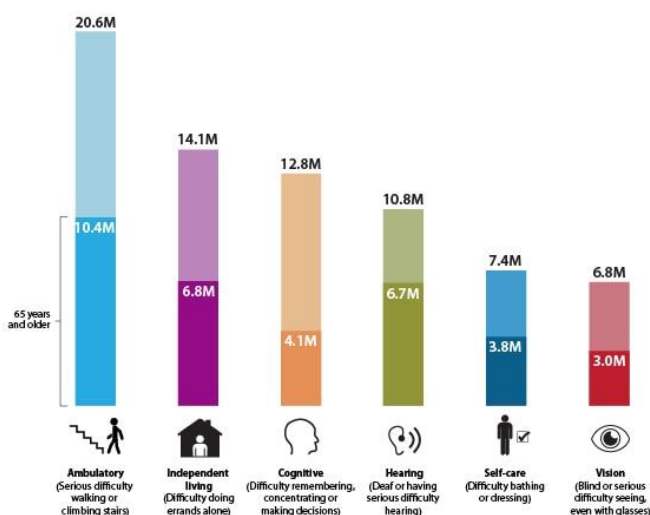
## That is the power of FAMILY!

# US Disability Demographics

Approximately 15% of children age 3-17, or 1 in 6 children, in the U.S. has some type of **developmental disability**. The numbers in the adult population are even more shocking. Across the country, the average is 1 in 4 adults has some type of disability. Yes, approximately 25% of the adult population in the US is living with a disability and many of them have no suitable place to call home. Clearly, something has to be done to meet the needs of this growing population.



## Prevalence of Disabilities for Ages 18+ Individuals in Millions



United States<sup>™</sup>  
**Census**  
Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

Source: 2014 American Community Survey  
[www.census.gov/acs](https://www.census.gov/acs)

## AUTISM QUICK STATS



**1 in 44 kids** identified with autism



**241%**  
higher than baseline stats in 2000

Although autism can be diagnosed before a child reaches the age of two, most kids are diagnosed only after the age of **4**

**BOYS** are 4X more likely to be diagnosed than **GIRLS**

**40%** are nonverbal  
**44%** Have average or above average intellectual ability  
**31%** have an intellectual disability

Some areas have higher than average prevalence rates:  
**California 1/26**  
**South Korea 1/38**

**36.5%** of autism caregivers use ABA  
**20%** of caregivers give CBD to autistic kids

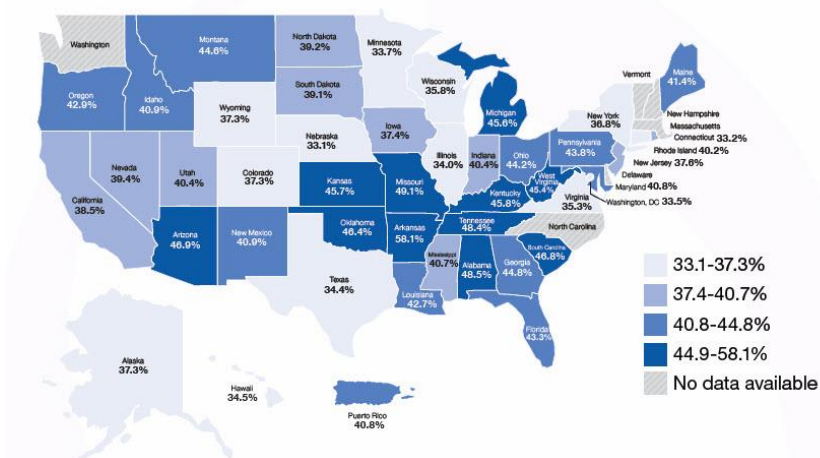
# What About the Caregivers?

A study published by AARP in May of 2020 states, "Today, more than one in five Americans (21.3 percent) are caregivers, having provided care to an adult or child with special needs at some time in the past 12 months. This totals an estimated 53.0 million adults in the United States, up from the estimated 43.5 million caregivers in 2015." That is a major jump...10.5 million more caregivers in just 5 years.

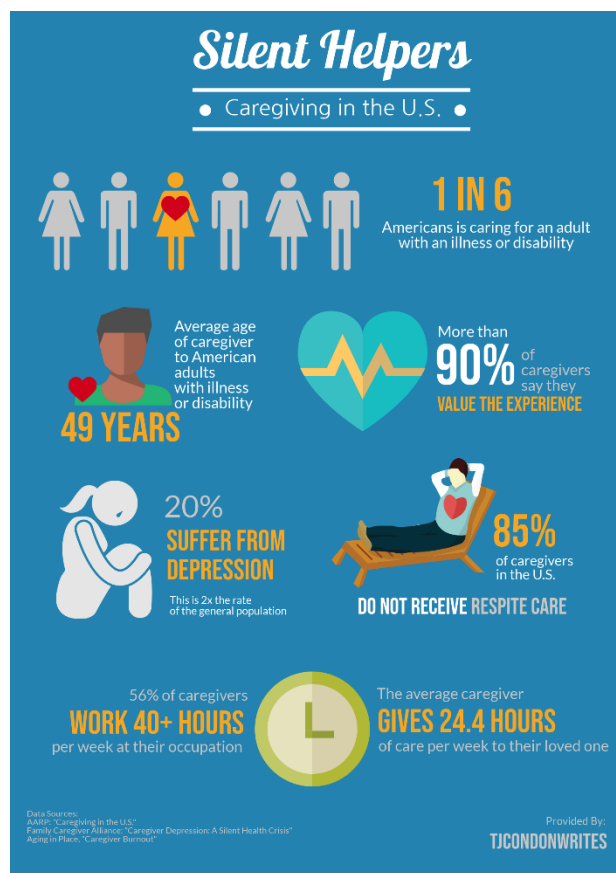
How are these caregivers being helped? More often than not, they are not. The sad truth about caregivers is that most people do not understand what they are going through, the stress they are under and the needs they have. The reality is that life is extremely difficult and taxing. R[4] wants to help by providing retreats, day camps and respite days for caregivers. All of these will give opportunities for caregivers to take a breath, to relax, have a date night and have adult conversations with people who understand without worrying about their child(ren). All of these things are immensely important for both the medical and mental health of the caregivers, giving them the strength to continue. Without healthy caregivers, who will take care of these precious children? We, as a society, have to do better and create affordable, attainable and sustainable solutions!

## Health Status of Adult Caregivers: Prevalence of Chronic Diseases and Disability Status

Figure 4: Caregivers aged 45 years or older who reported having 2 or more chronic diseases



R[4] is working with the Lucas Project to schedule a showing of the film in Arlington, TX. Details will be posted on our website when they are available.



powered by  
**PIKTOCHART**

For more information on the reality of caring for a child/adult with profound disabilities, please check out <https://caregiverdoc.com/> and save the date to see a showing of their documentary, "Unseen: How We are Failing Parent Caregivers and Why it Matters" in your area. This documentary is powerful and gives great insight into the lives of caregivers. It is a must see! It will change your perspective on this subject and stir your spirit to want to do more to effect change.

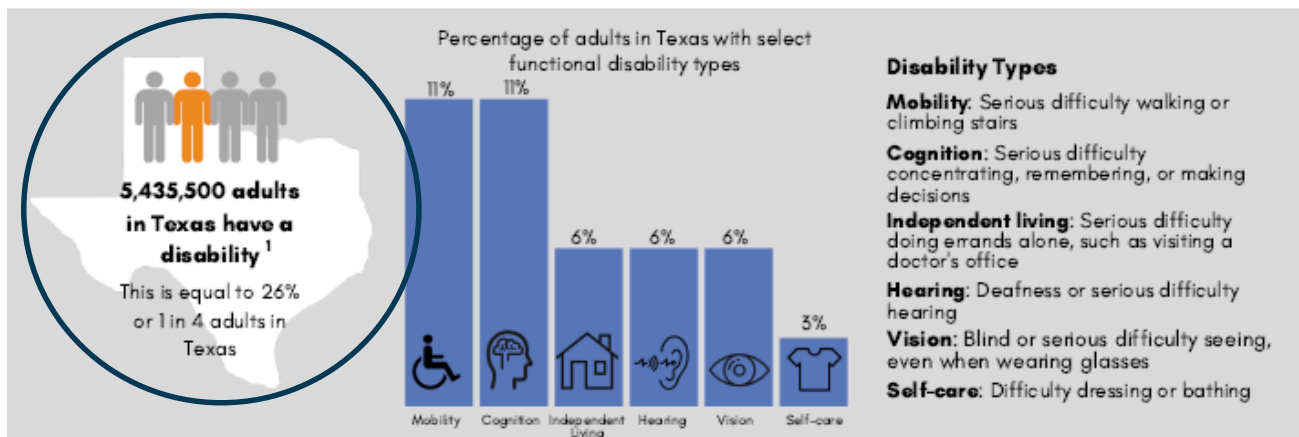


# Texas Disability Statistics

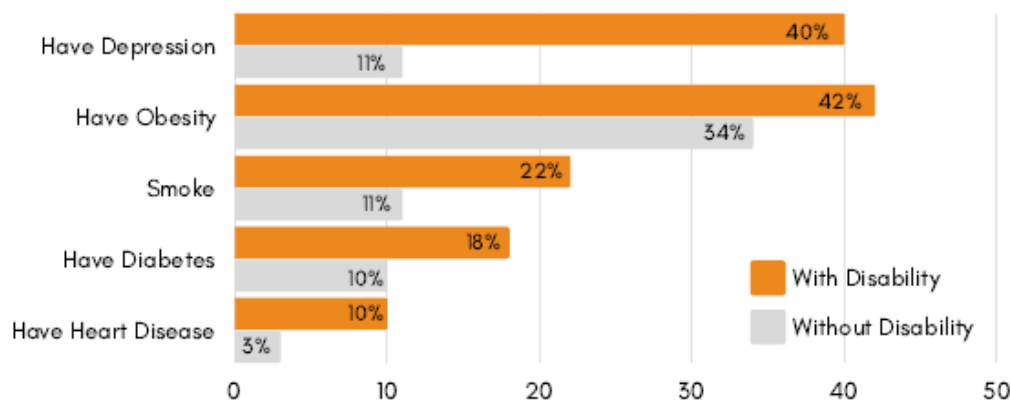
CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities  
**DISABILITY IMPACTS TEXAS**



Everyone can play a role in supporting more inclusive state programs, communities, and health care to help people with, or at risk for, disabilities be well and active in their communities. Join CDC and its partners as we work together to improve the health of people with disabilities.



Adults with disabilities in **Texas** experience health disparities and are more likely to...<sup>1</sup>



Visit [dohs.cdc.gov](https://dohs.cdc.gov) for more disability and health data across the United States.

## 💰 DISABILITY HEALTHCARE COSTS IN TEXAS<sup>2</sup>

- About **\$56.7 BILLION** per year, or up to **32%** of the state's healthcare spending
- About **\$17,189** per person with a disability



Learn how CDC and state programs support people with disabilities at [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/programs.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/programs.html).

NOTE: DATA ARE ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST WHOLE FIGURE. FOR MORE PRECISE PREVALENCE DATA, PLEASE VISIT [DOHS.CDC.GOV](https://dohs.cdc.gov).

1. DATA SOURCE: 2020 BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (BRFSS).

2. DISABILITY HEALTHCARE COSTS ARE PRESENTED IN 2017 DOLLARS AS REPORTED IN KHAVJOU, ET AL. STATE-LEVEL HEALTH CARE EXPENDITURES ASSOCIATED WITH DISABILITY. 2021. PUBLIC HEALTH REP.

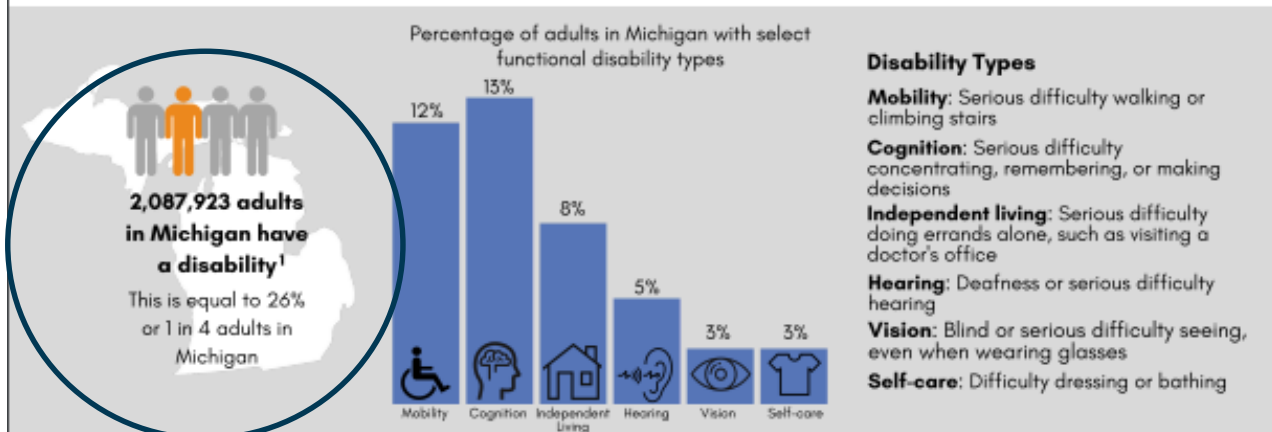


# Michigan Disability Statistics

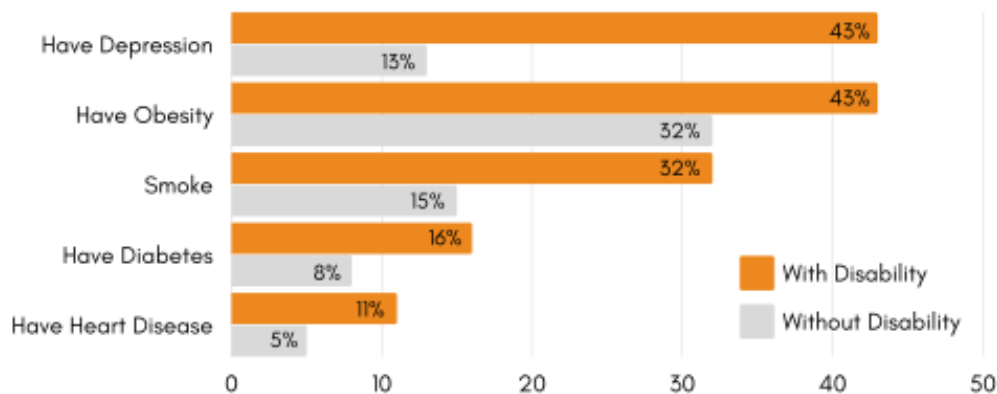
CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities  
**DISABILITY IMPACTS MICHIGAN**



Everyone can play a role in supporting more inclusive state programs, communities, and health care to help people with, or at risk for, disabilities be well and active in their communities. Join CDC and its partners as we work together to improve the health of people with disabilities.



Adults with disabilities in **Michigan** experience health disparities and are more likely to...<sup>1</sup>



Visit [dhds.cdc.gov](https://dhds.cdc.gov) for more disability and health data across the United States.

## 💰 **DISABILITY HEALTHCARE COSTS IN MICHIGAN<sup>2</sup>**

- About **\$28.2 BILLION** per year, or up to **37%** of the state's healthcare spending
- About **\$15,868** per person with a disability



Learn how CDC and state programs support people with disabilities at [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/programs.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/programs.html).

NOTE: DATA ARE ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST WHOLE FIGURE. FOR MORE PRECISE PREVALENCE DATA, PLEASE VISIT [DHDS.CDC.GOV](https://dhds.cdc.gov).

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