

Creating Disability Friendly Disaster Plans: Insights from Collaborative Research in Dunedin, Florida

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A multi-year research collaboration with the Dunedin's *Planning Department, Committee on Aging, Disability Advisory Committee* and students enrolled in Senior Seminars in Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences at the University of South Florida

**Disability
Inclusion:
An Achievable
Goal with
Important
Implications for
Community
Sustainability
and Resilience**



Data Source: Results from the *Dunedin Shaping our Future Together Survey*

Extensive online survey designed in collaboration with the ***Dunedin Committee on Aging***. Survey examined current well-being and concerns in five broad areas:

1. Transportation;
2. Health;
3. Housing;
4. Emergency Preparedness and Climate Change;
- and 5. Community Engagement and Social Life.

548 residents of Dunedin completed the over 40 page survey (just under 2% of all adult residents)

15% of survey participants identified as disabled (focus of today's presentation)

Survey results are currently being used as basis for Dunedin's participation in the *AARP Livable Communities* program and for a new collaboration between Senior Seminar students and the *Dunedin Disability Advisory Committee* that is currently underway.

Disability and Overall Well-being:

Results of multiple regression analyses (controlling for age and other demographic characteristics) show that compared to participants without disabilities, those with disabilities:

- Report lower levels of subjective well-being;

- Feel less prepared for the future;

- Are less satisfied with the experience of living in Dunedin

HOWEVER, results also show that these differences can be explained by **social and economic disadvantages associated with disability.**

Inclusion, Social Support, and Economic Resources:

Compared to participants without disabilities, those with disabilities reported:

Lower levels of social inclusion and social support

Less likely to be married or in domestic partnerships

Less likely to be employed full or part time

Participated less frequently in social, recreational, and community activities

Lower levels of economic resources

Lower household income

Less money available for discretionary spending

Perceptions of Stigma Toward People with Disabilities:

Participants with disabilities are more aware of disability stigma.

They are more likely than others to feel that people in Dunedin:

Feel sad or awkward in the presence of people with disabilities;

Discriminate against people with disabilities (in terms of work, friendship and dating);

Blame or think less of people with disabilities

Emergency Preparedness:

Concerns about emergency preparedness matter: *The more concerned participants are about future emergency preparedness, the less happy they are overall, and the lower they rate the overall quality of life in Dunedin.*

Most participants are at least a little concerned about emergency preparedness.

People with disabilities are more concerned.

Likelihood of Evacuating:

Most participants said they are very likely to evacuate for a Category 4 or 5 Hurricane.

Most participants said they would probably evacuate for Category 3 Hurricane.

Most participants are undecided about whether to evacuate for a Category 2 Hurricane.

Few participants said they would evacuate for Tropical Storms or Category 1 Hurricanes

Participants with disabilities are more likely than others to say they would consider evacuating for: Tropical Storms and Category 1 Hurricanes

Evacuation Location Preferences:

For survey participants overall, the most likely evacuation locations are:

- friend or family home outside the area
- hotel outside the area
- friend or family home in the area

Participants are somewhat likely to say they would evacuate to:

- a pet friendly shelter
- hotel in the area

Participants are least likely to say they would evacuate to:

- an integrated shelter for people with and without disabilities
- a shelter that doesn't allow pets
- a special needs shelter

Participants with disabilities are more likely than those without disabilities to say they would evacuate to:

A pet friendly shelter;
Special needs shelter;
Integrated shelter

Participants with disabilities are less likely than those without disabilities to say they would evacuate to:

The home of family or friends in the area;
Shelter that does not allow pets

Our goal this semester is to work with the *Dunedin Disability Advisory Committee* to develop an online survey to solicit ideas from people with disabilities who live, work, or visit Dunedin in order to address questions such as:

Why do the disparities noted in the previous survey exist?

What might the city of Dunedin do to reduce disparities between the experiences of residents with disabilities and their non-disabled counterparts?

Many thanks to project collaborators:

- Michael Whalen, Sharon Williams, Andy Demers and members of the *Dunedin Committee on Aging*
- Barry Steinhart and members of the *Dunedin Disability Advisory Committee*
- Greg Rice and members of the City of Dunedin staff and city council
- Maggie Kusenbach, Department of Sociology, USF Tampa
- Sociology Department honors graduate Brianna Vice and students enrolled my Senior Seminars in Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences who have contributed to this ongoing project in a variety of ways

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