

***Disability Community Progress Report***

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May 2017

The *Disability Community Progress Report* is a project of  
Community Development Initiatives,  
a community engagement program at the  
ASU Center for Community Wellness, Engagement, and Development



*“The ADA is radical only in comparison to a shameful history of outright exclusion and segregation of people with disabilities. From a civil rights perspective the Americans with Disabilities Act is a codification of simple justice.”*

*~ Arlene B. Mayerson ~*

We developed *The Disability Community Progress Report* because we believe that members of San Angelo’s disability community are a vulnerable population that is at risk of falling through the cracks and experiencing exclusion from the community as institutions go about their daily operations.

The report is an evidence-based overview of San Angelo’s progress in addressing the social and economic needs of its disability community. The strength of *The Disability Community Progress Report* is that it goes beyond a single point-in time-snapshot of the community to review progress over time. It also compares San Angelo’s disability community to the West Texas cities of Abilene, Midland, and Odessa, and to the State of Texas overall.

All statistical data presented in this report originates from raw data produced by the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, 1-year samples for 2009 and 2015. Community Development Initiatives at Angelo State University computed all rates and percentages, and produced all graphic charts, presented in the report.

Sections of the report look at the following topics:

- Synopsis: Key facts about San Angelo’s disability community
- Types of disabilities in San Angelo
- Demographics and disability in San Angelo
- Progress toward enhancing the social and economic situation of San Angelo’s disability community, 2009-2015
- Disability communities in West Texas cities
- Social and economic characteristics of disability communities in West Texas cities
- Guidance for using materials in the report



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## **Synopsis: Key Facts about San Angelo's Disability Community**

Following are key results that describe the demographic, social, and economic characteristics of our city's disability community.

- 1) The rate of disability in San Angelo's population increased between 2009 and 2015.
- 2) Seniors aged 65 and over had the highest rate of disability. However, working aged people between 18 and 64 form the largest percentage of the disability population.
- 3) Males formed the majority of the disability community in 2015. They also had a slightly higher rate of disability than females.
- 4) African Americans and veterans in San Angelo experience disparately higher rates of disability with each group being over-represented in the disability community.
- 5) Poverty rates significantly declined among people with disabilities between 2009 and 2015. The decline was especially strong among working aged people with disabilities.
- 6) Labor force participation increased among working aged people with disabilities between 2009 and 2015. Participation declined among people with no disabilities during the same time.
- 7) Lack of health insurance is less an obstacle to care in the disability population than in the population with no disabilities. Between 2009 and 2015, the percentages of people under the age of 65 lacking health insurance fell more sharply in the disability population than it did in the population with no disabilities.
- 8) In 2015, San Angelo had the highest disability rate among the four West Texas cities of Abilene, Midland, Odessa, and San Angelo. Only Midland's rate was lower than the state overall.
- 9) Ambulatory and cognitive difficulties were the most prevalent types of disability in San Angelo in 2015. This was also true of Abilene, Midland, Odessa, and Texas overall. However, ambulatory and cognitive disabilities had approximately equal prevalence in San Angelo, while higher prevalence for ambulatory difficulties characterized the state and the other three West Texas cities.
- 10) Disparate disability rates and over-representation of veterans in the disability population was characteristic of all four West Texas cities, and of the state overall, in 2015.



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- 11) Disparate disability rates and over-representation of African Americans in the disability population was characteristic of all four West Texas cities in 2015. The disparity did not hold for the overall state.
- 12) The 2015 poverty rate among people with disabilities was about five points lower in San Angelo than the state overall. Midland and Odessa each had lower poverty rates than San Angelo.
- 13) Although San Angelo's disability community increased its labor force participation between 2009 and 2015, it still had the lowest participation rate for 2015 among the four West Texas cities, and its participation was slightly lower than the overall statewide level.
- 14) The health insurance coverage rate in San Angelo's disability community was the highest of the four West Texas cities in 2015, and it was significantly higher than the statewide level of coverage.
- 15) Compared to the state, a smaller percentage of San Angelo households with disability members relied on food stamps in 2015. The percentages in Midland and Odessa were lower than in San Angelo.

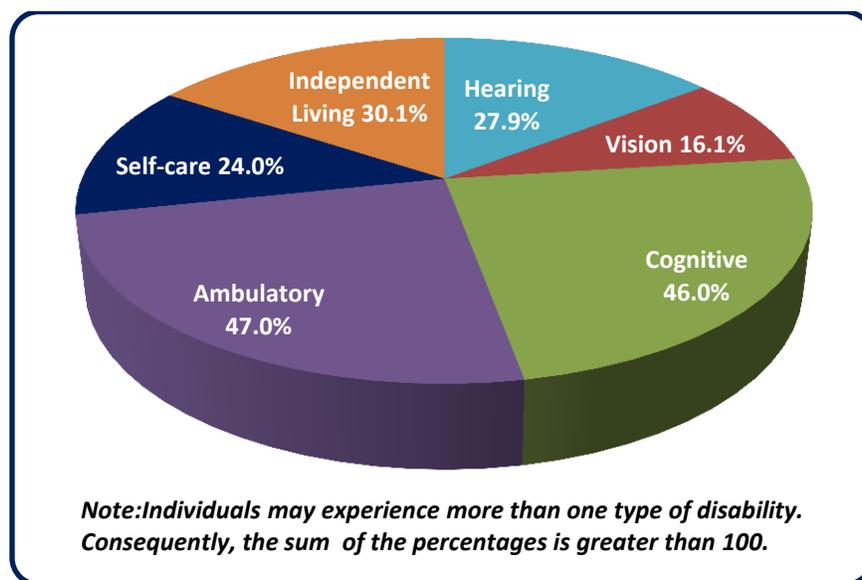


## Types of Disabilities in San Angelo

An estimated 10,731 residents or 12.3 percent of San Angelo's population experienced disability in 2009 according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). The following six years brought an increase to 13,058, raising the city's disability rate to 13.7 percent for 2015.

Individuals with disabilities experienced six different types of functional impairments, with many experiencing multiple types. About 6,136 or 47 percent reported physical mobility (i.e. ambulatory) problems in 2015. Some 2,101 or 16 percent had vision issues; 3,643 (27.9%), experienced hearing difficulties, and 6,012 or 46 percent had problems processing information (i.e. cognitive disability). Many experienced challenges to daily living such as difficulties performing regular self-care activities (3,135 or 24%) or challenges to living independently (3,930 or 30%).

**Figure 1: Types of disabilities in San Angelo: 2015**



Frequencies of certain types of disability changed between 2009 and 2015. For instance, more than 6,000, or 58 percent of persons with disabilities in 2009, reported self-care issues. This fell to just 24 percent by 2015. Similarly, the number experiencing challenges to independent living declined from 36 to 30 percent. The most notable increase was a jump in cognitive disabilities from 26 percent (1,760 persons) in 2009 to 46 percent (6,012 individuals) in 2015.

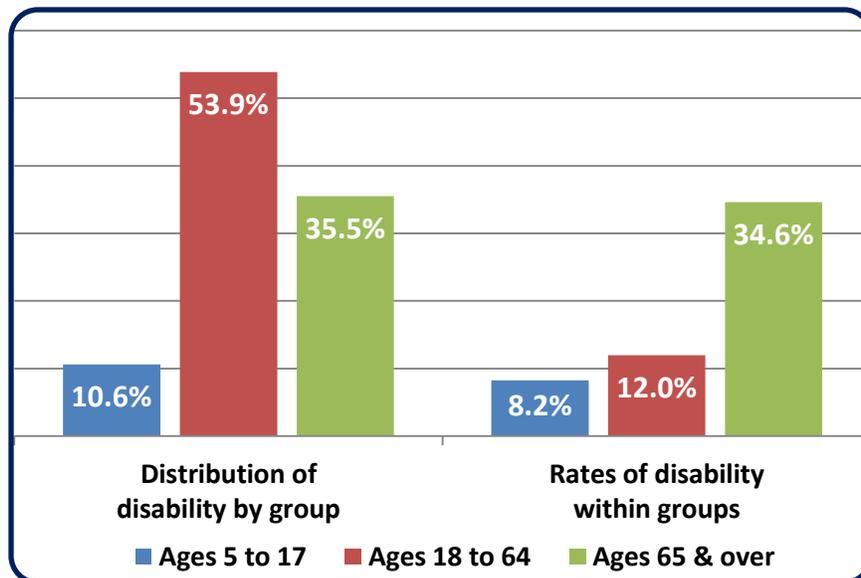
## Demographics and Disability In San Angelo

### Age and Disability

People between 18 and 64 made up the largest (7,036) age group in San Angelo's disability community. These working-aged individuals comprised 54 percent of the 13,058 members in the disability population during 2015. They also signified a 12 percent rate of disability within the city's overall working age population numbering 58,717.

Scientific studies show that children and elders are generally the most vulnerable age groups to frailty and disability. In San Angelo, children had an 8.2 percent rate of disability in 2015, and the rate among seniors was 34.6 percent. Indeed, elder residents of the city experienced a disparately high rate of disability compared to the 13.7 percent level for the overall San Angelo population. Children (numbering 1,384) comprised 10.6 percent of the disability community; 4,638 seniors with disabilities made up 35.5 percent.

**Figure 2: Age groups and  
San Angelo's disability community: 2015**



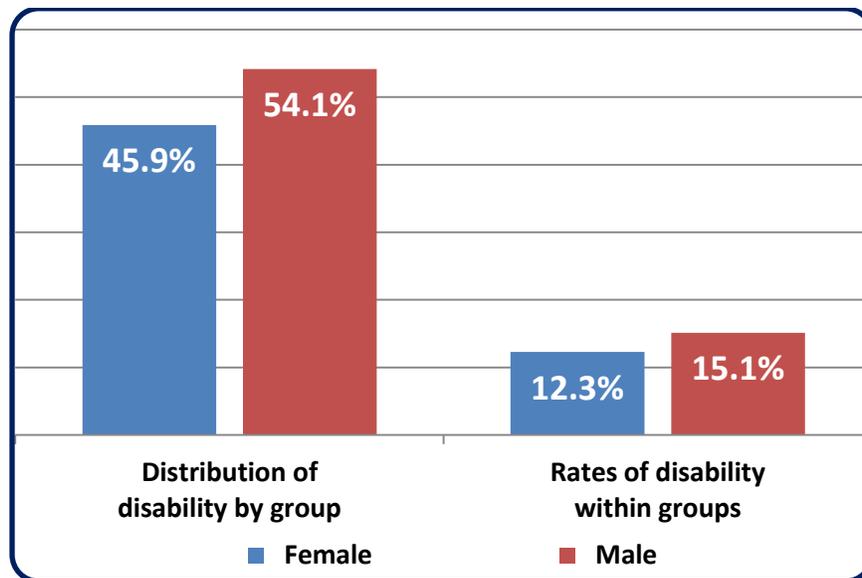
Interestingly, both the number and rate of disability among working aged residents shifted from 2009 to 2015. The number of working aged people with disabilities grew from 4,620 to 7,036 over this time changing from 43 percent of the disability community to 54 percent as depicted in Figure 2. The disability rate of working aged citizens was nine percent in 2009, increasing to

12 percent by 2015. Correspondingly, the numbers and rates of disability among children and elders declined.

### **Gender and Disability**

Similarly, there was a shift in the gender composition of the disability community over time. In 2009, males with disabilities numbered 4,792. They comprised 45 percent of the disability community at that time, and the disability rate was 12 percent. The number of males with disabilities climbed to 7,068, representing 54 percent of the disability population by 2015. The male rate of disability increased to 15.1 percent as seen in Figure 3. Both the number and rate of disability among female residents reduced from 2009 to 2015.

**Figure 3: Gender and San Angelo's disability community: 2015**



### **Race, Ethnicity and Disability**

As previously noted, San Angelo's elder population experienced a health disparity in 2015 with a disability rate of 34.6 percent compared to city's overall rate of just 13.7 percent. African Americans also experienced an elevated disparity.

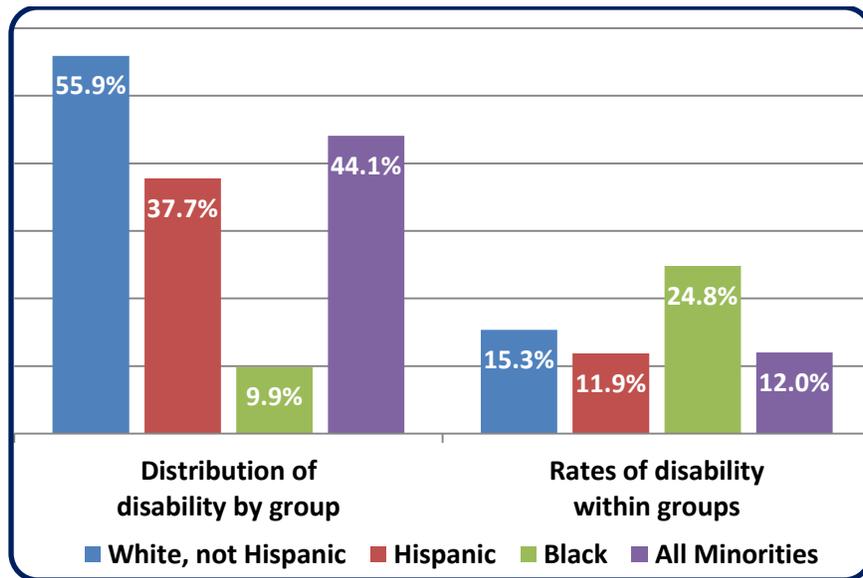
Black residents in 2015 comprise only about one of every 10 members of disability community, but at 24.8 percent, the disability rate among African Americans was 11 points higher than the citywide level in 2015. Other racial and ethnic population segments had rates (15.3% for non-



Hispanic whites and 11.9% for Hispanics) much more in line with the city's 13.7 percent disability rate.

Interestingly, the disparity experienced by senior citizens was pretty much a continuation from earlier years. In 2009, for instance, seniors had a 37.7 percent rate of disability compared to the city's 12.3 percent. On the other hand, the disability rate of African Americans had been in line with the city at 12.4 percent. The elevated rate of disability among Blacks appears to be relatively new challenge.

**Figure 4: Race, ethnicity and San Angelo's disability community: 2015**



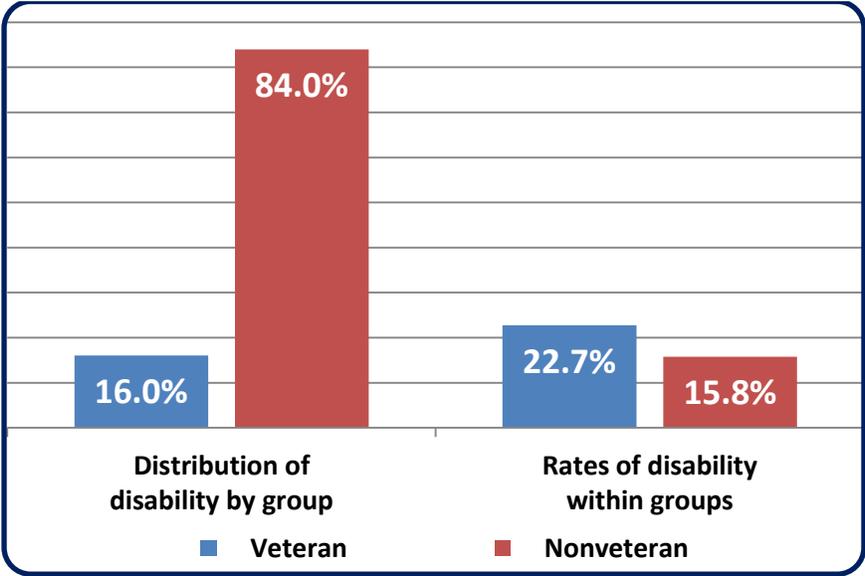
### Veterans and Disability

Veterans also made up only a small 16 percent portion of the disability community in 2015. Similar to seniors and African Americans, however, they experienced disabilities at a 22.7 percent rate that was more than eight points higher than the overall population of the city.

Also like elder citizens, the elevated disability rate among veterans appears to be a carryover from earlier years. In 2009, the disability rate of veterans was 21.4 percent, nine points higher than the citywide number.



Figure 5: Veterans and San Angelo's disability community: 2015

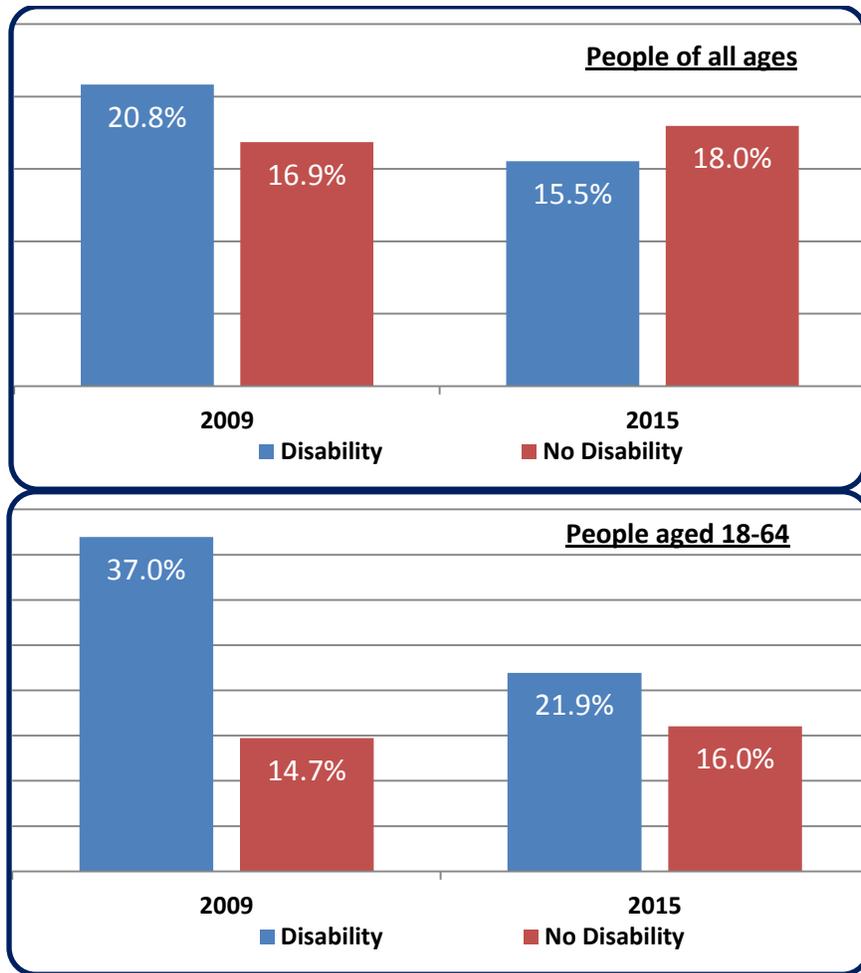


**Progress toward Enhancing the  
Social and Economic Situation of  
San Angelo's Disability Community, 2009-2015**

**Poverty and Disability**

The progress of San Angelo's disability community is evident in several key social and economic indicators. To begin, the poverty rate among residents with disabilities has declined while increasing among those with no disabilities. In 2009, people with disabilities had a poverty rate of 20.8 percent compared to 16.9 percent for residents without disabilities. However, by

**Figure 6: Poverty among residents with disabilities  
and those with no disability,  
San Angelo: 2009-2015**



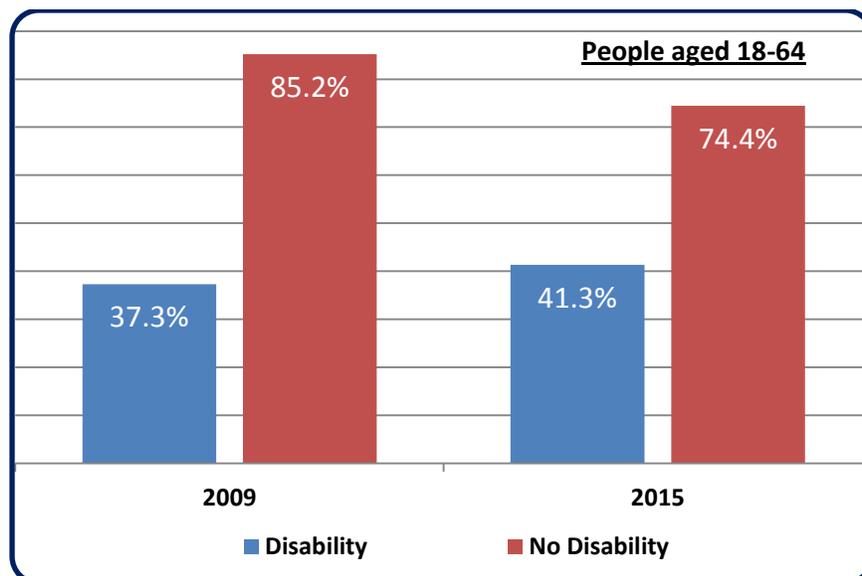
2015, the disability population's rate fell to 15.5 percent, but it increased to 18 percent among individuals with no disability.

The same change pattern held sway in a more pronounced way among San Angelo residents in the working age range 18-64. In 2009, those with disabilities experienced poverty at a 37 percent rate. This declined to 21.9 percent by 2015. Poverty rates among working aged residents with no disabilities were 14.7 percent in 2009, rising to 16 percent in 2015.

### **Disability and Labor Force Participation**

Changes in labor force participation correspond to these shifts in levels of poverty. Working aged (ages 18-64) members of the disability community increased their labor force participation from 37.3 percent to 41.3 percent between 2009 and 2015. During the same time, the participation rate for the labor force declined from 85.2 to 74.4 percent among residents without disabilities

**Figure 7: Labor force participation in the disability community compared to residents with no disability, San Angelo: 2009-2015**



Since the participation rate for the labor force officially includes the unemployed or those training for work, it is important to note employment levels. In the disability community, 91.6 percent of those participating in the labor force actually held jobs. The corresponding

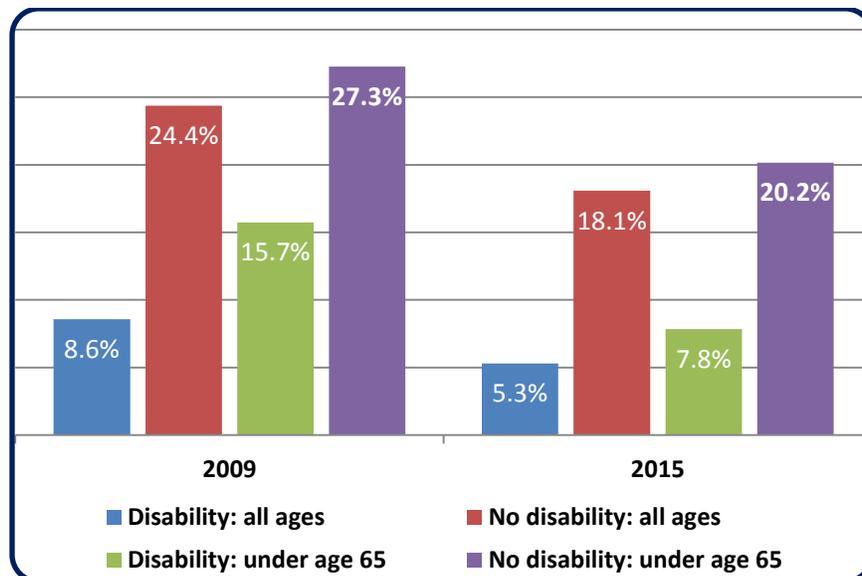


employment rate among residents without disabilities was 89.9 percent; Employments for the two groups in 2015 were 92.9 and 97.4 percent respectively.

### **Lack of Medical Insurance in the Disability Community**

Smaller proportions of the disability population face cost barriers to health care stemming from the lack of medical insurance. In 2009, 8.6 percent of the disability community lacked insurance compared to 24.4 percent San Angelo residents with no disabilities. Local efforts to reduce the insurance barrier to health care reduced percentages between both groups by 2015.

**Figure 8: Lack of medical insurance in the disability community compared to residents with no disability, San Angelo: 2009-2015**



The reduced number of disabled residents under age 65 is especially noteworthy. The proportion decreased by half from 15.7 percent in 2009 to 7.8 percent in 2015. The proportions for residents without disabilities were 27.3 and 20.2 percent respectively.

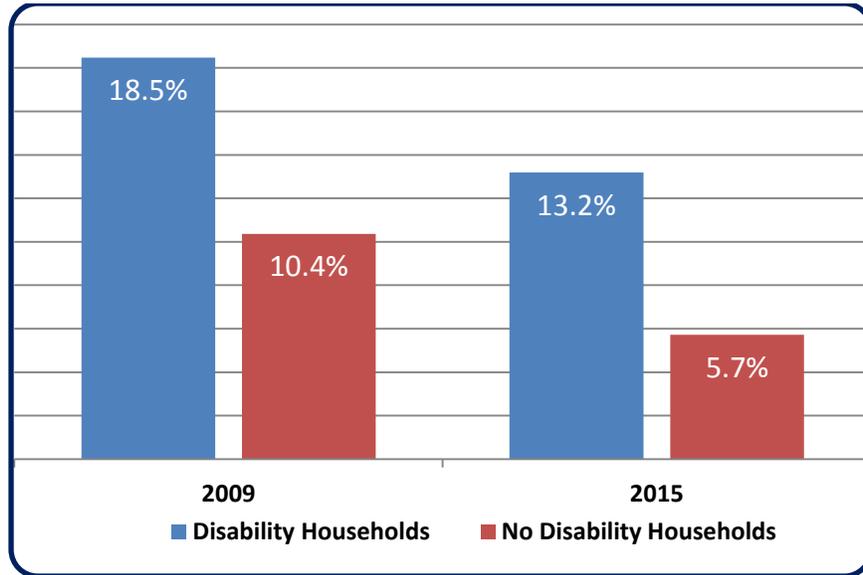
### **Use of Food Stamps among Households with Disability Members**

Reliance on food stamps is a fundamental indicator of food insecurity. Importantly, reliance on food stamps declined among all households across the city between 2009 and 2015. Households with disability members reduced reliance on food stamps from 18.5 to 13.2 percent



between 2009 and 2015. The parallel numbers for households without disabled members were 10.4 and 5.7 percent.

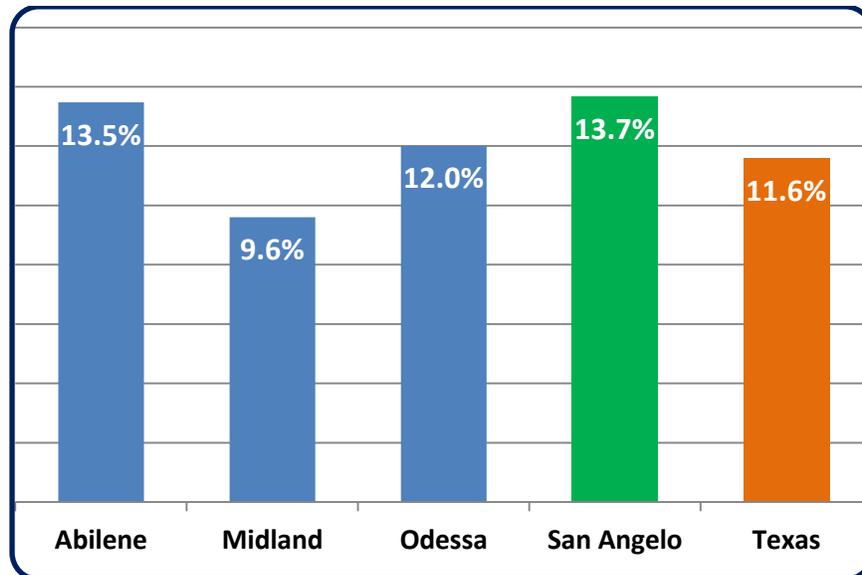
**Figure 9: Reliance on Food Stamps  
In households with and without disability members,  
San Angelo: 2009-2015**



## Disability Communities in West Texas Cities

An estimated 3,126,346 Texans had one or more disabilities in 2015, and 55,111 of them resided in the four West Texas cities of Abilene, Midland, Odessa, and San Angelo. In proportional terms, these numbers translate to the disability rates depicted in Figure 10.

**Figure 10: Disability rates  
in four West Texas cities, 2015**



Three cities in West Texas had higher rates than the State's 11.2 percent in 2015. San Angelo led the cities with its 13.7 percent rate. Only Midland, at 9.6 percent, had a lower rate than Texas overall.

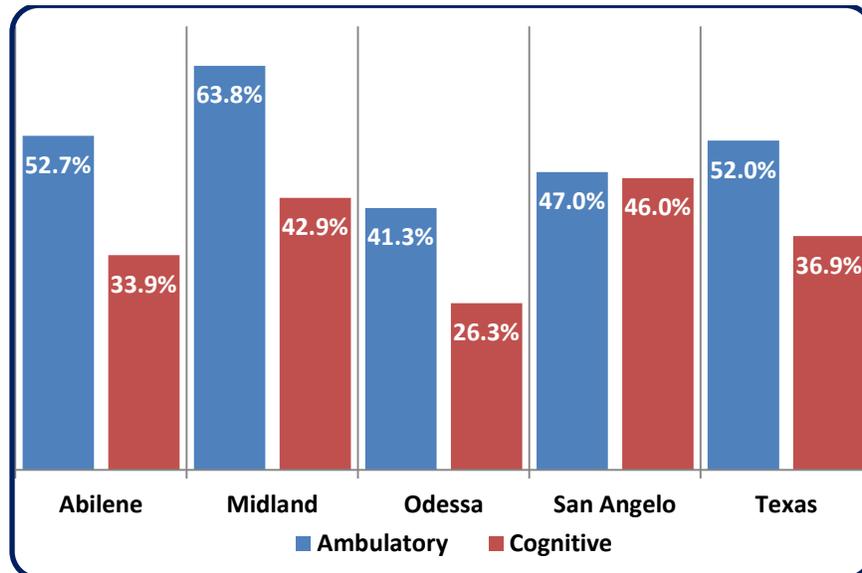
### **Disability Types**

Ambulatory and cognitive disabilities were the two most prevalent types among Texans in 2015. More than half (52%) reported ambulatory problems, while 36.9 percent had cognitive difficulties.

Three of the four West Texas cities also had similar gaps with higher frequencies of reported ambulatory compared to cognitive disabilities. San Angelo was a contrast. The two leading types were equivalent in San Angelo.



**Figure 11: Prevalence of ambulatory and cognitive disabilities in four West Texas cities, 2015**

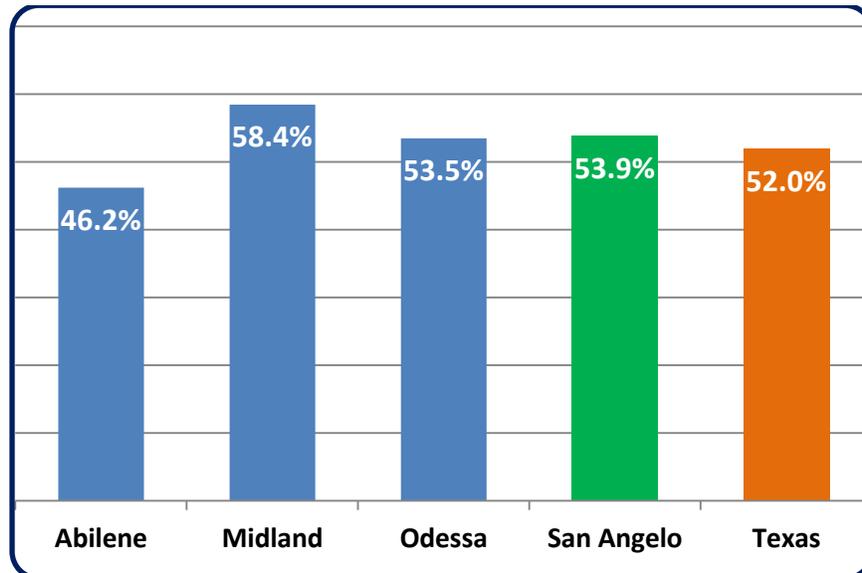


### **Age**

People in the working age range between 18 and 64 made up more than half (52%) of the disability population in Texas during 2015. The working aged population also comprised a majority in three of the four West Texas cities, with Midland leading the way at 58.4 percent.

The exception was Abilene where 46.2 percent of the disability population was aged 18-64 in 2015.

**Figure 12: People with disabilities in the 18-64 age range in four West Texas cities, 2015**



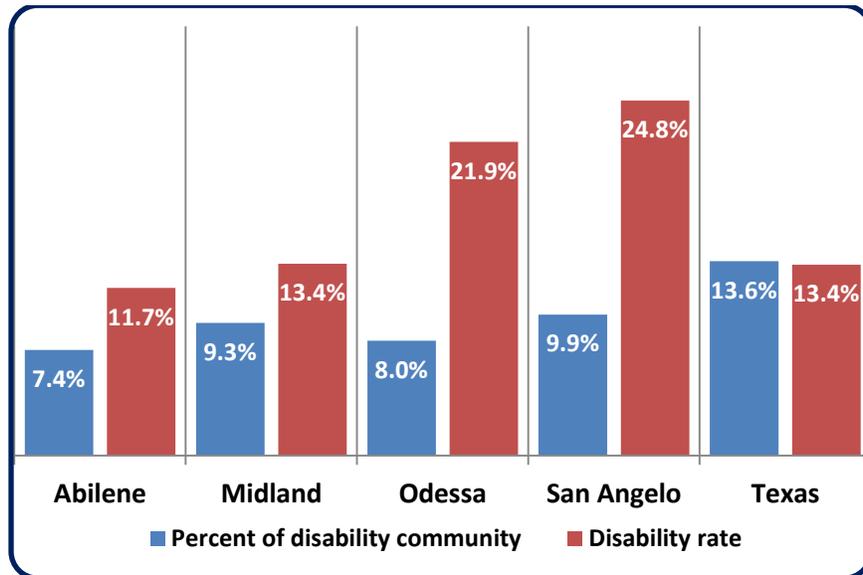
### Race

African Americans experienced at least disparate levels of disability compared to their presence in the populations of all four West Texas cities. The disparities were only slight in two cities, Abilene and Midland, where Blacks comprised 8.5 and 6.6 percent of population, but had disabilities at rates of 11.7 and 13.4 percent respectively.

The disparity gaps were much larger in Odessa and San Angelo. Blacks made up 4.4 percent of Odessa's population in 2015, but their 21.9 percent rate of disability meant they comprised eight percent of the disability community. African Americans were 5.4 percent of San Angelo's population, but their 24.8 percent disability rate pushed their numbers in the disability community up to 9.9 percent.

This health disparity was absent in Texas overall during 2015. African Americans comprised 13.6 percent of the total population; had a 13.4 percent rate of disability; and formed 13.6 percent of the disability population.

**Figure 13: Disabilities and the African American people in four West Texas cities, 2015**



**Veterans**

Veterans experienced health disparities with disabilities in all four cities of West Texas. The least severe instance in 2015 was in Midland where veterans comprised only six percent of the population aged 18 and over. The disability rate among veterans in Midland was the lowest of the four cities at 16.3 percent. The net effect was that veterans made up 7.8 percent of the disability population, 1.8 percent higher than their presence in the city’s adult population.

The most severe disparity was in Abilene where 11 percent of the adult population consisted of veterans in 2015. The disability rate among the veterans was 31.7 percent, about twice the rate of disability for non-veterans in the city. The result was that veterans were 20.1 percent of the disability community, and nine-point over-representation compared to their prevalence in the city’s population.

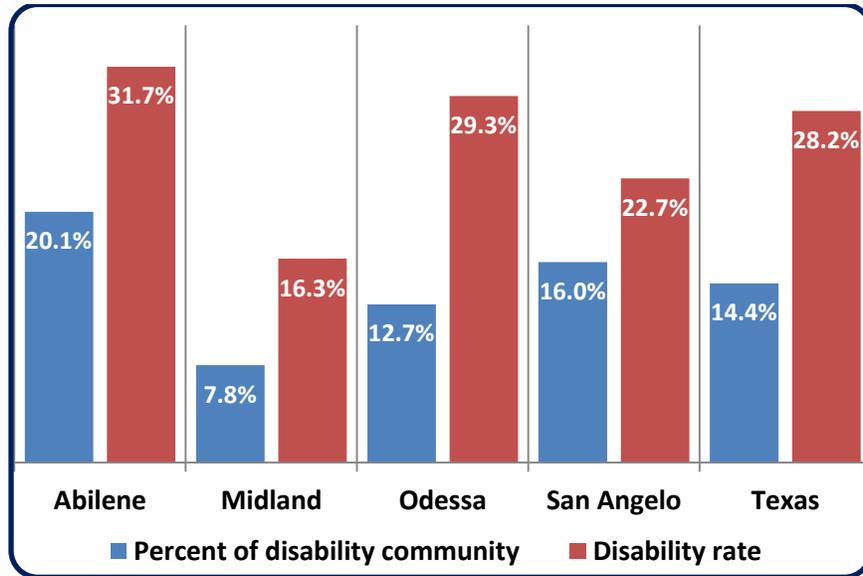
In San Angelo, veterans comprised an estimated 11.7 percent of adults in the city, but their disability rate of 22.7 percent created a 4.3 percent disparity from their numbers in the general adult population. Veterans made up 16 percent of the disability population in San Angelo during 2016.

Disparate representation of veterans in the disability population is not only pervasive in the four West Texas cities; it is also characteristic of Texas overall. The adult population of the state



includes 11.7 percent veterans, while the disability population includes 16 percent veterans. The disparity was consequent of a 28.2 percent rate of disability among the state's population of veterans.

**Figure 14: Disabilities and veterans in four West Texas cities, 2015**

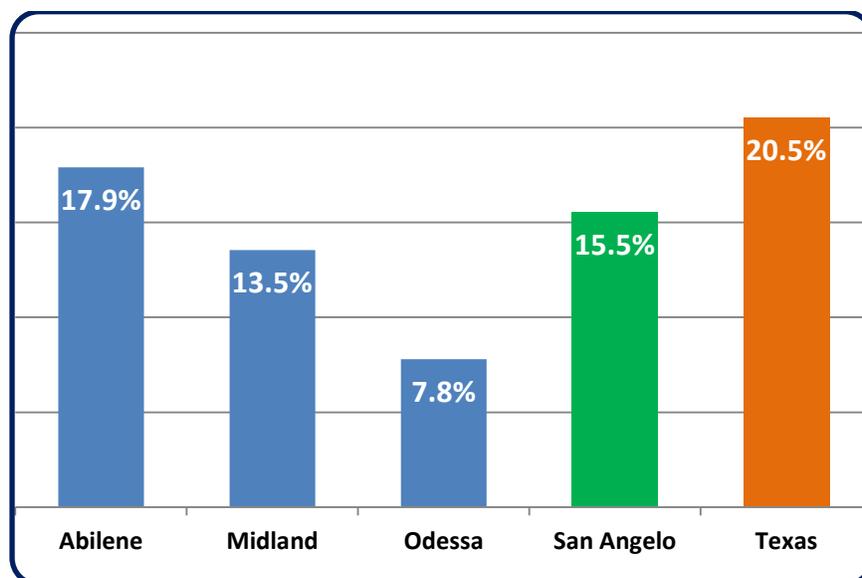


## Social and Economic Characteristics Of Disability Communities in West Texas Cities

### Poverty

Rates of poverty within the disability communities of the four West Texas cities were lower in 2015 than the state overall. Abilene had the highest rate of poverty within its disability population at 17.9 percent, followed by San Angelo's 15.5 percent. Odessa had the lowest rate at 7.8 percent. The overall rate of poverty among people with disabilities in Texas was 20.5 percent in 2015.

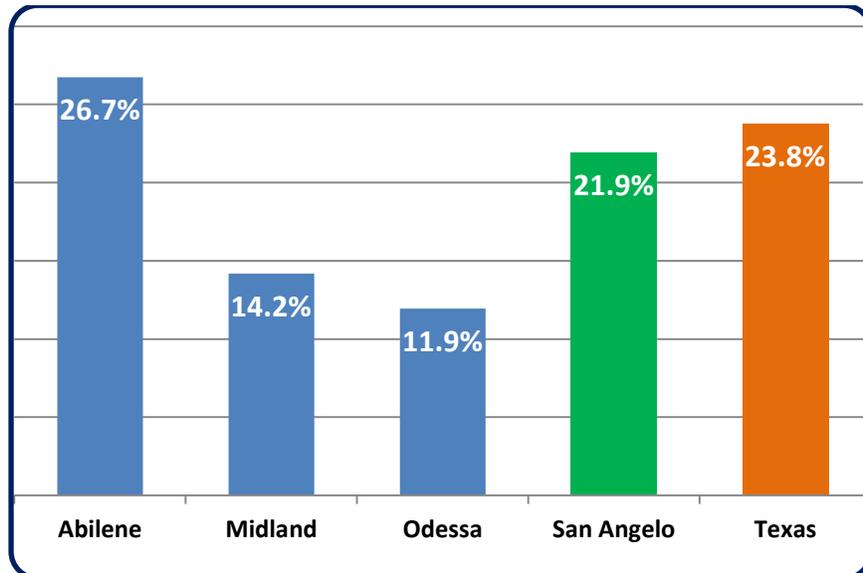
**Figure 15: Poverty rates in the disability communities of four West Texas cities, 2015**



The picture is slightly different when working aged people with disabilities are in focus. Texans with disabilities in the 18-64 age range had a slightly higher 23.8 percent poverty rate in 2015 compared to the 20.5 percent level among the state's disability population of all ages. This differential was larger, however, in Abilene and San Angelo where working aged people with disabilities experienced poverty at 26.7 and 21.9 percent rates.

In Midland and Odessa, by contrast, poverty rates among working aged people with disabilities remained much lower at 14.2 and 11.9 percent respectively.

**Figure 16: Poverty rates among people with disabilities aged 18-64 in four West Texas cities, 2015**

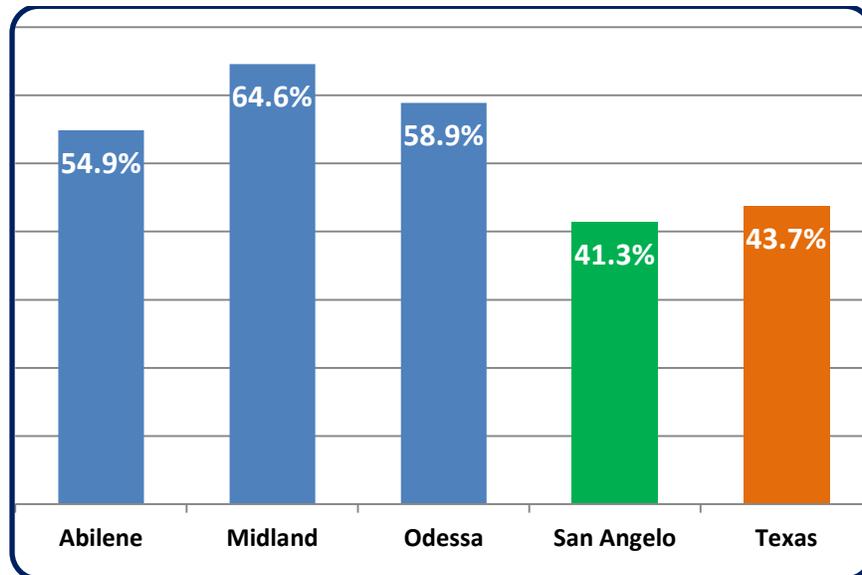


### **Labor Force Participation**

Labor force participation was also generally higher within the disability communities of West Texas compared to the overall state. Working aged people with disabilities in Texas participated in the 2015 labor force at a 43.7 percent rate. San Angelo had a comparable rate at 41.3 percent.

However, labor force participation by working aged people with disabilities in each of the other three West Texas cities reached well above 50 percent. Indeed, the rate in Midland extended to 64.6 percent.

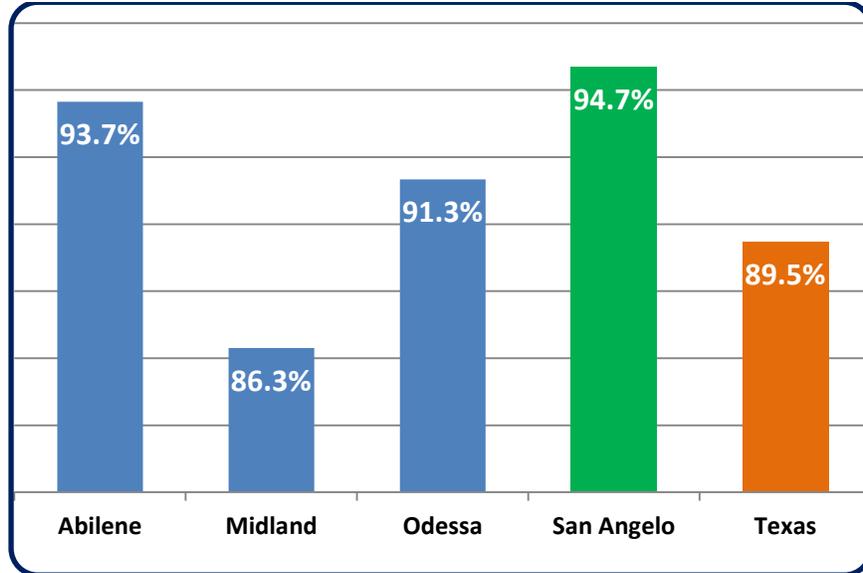
**Figure 16: Labor force participation  
Among people with disabilities aged 18-64  
in four West Texas cities, 2015**



### **Health Insurance Coverage**

Health insurance coverage has historically been relatively higher in the disability population compared to the general population of the United States. In Texas, the coverage rate for people with disabilities was 89.5 percent in 2015. It was higher still in three of the four West Texas cities, with San Angelo leading the way at 94.7 percent coverage. Insurance coverage for people with disabilities was lower only in Midland at 86.3 percent.

**Figure 17: Health insurance coverage  
Among people with disabilities  
in four West Texas cities, 2015**

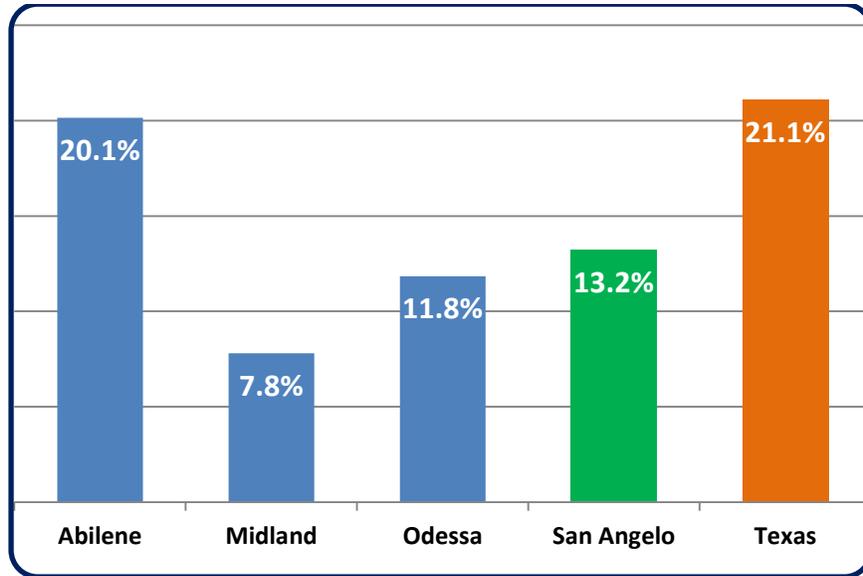


**Use of Food Stamps among Households with Disability Members**

In Texas, 21.1 percent of households with one or more disability members relied on food stamps to defray the cost of nutrition during 2015. The comparable percentages in West Texas cities were lower.

Abilene’s 20.1 percent rate of reliance on food stamps was only slightly below the statewide mark. However, reliance on food stamps by disability households in San Angelo (13.2%), Odessa (11.8%), and Midland (7.8%) was far below the statewide level.

Figure 18: Reliance on food stamps  
Among households with disability members  
in four West Texas cities, 2015



## Guidance for Using Materials in the Report

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