IOWA DEPARTMENT FOR THE BLIND
Opportunities for Independence

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# MISCONCEPTIONS

## AVOID PERPETUATING MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT BLINDNESS

**Throughout history, blindness has been feared more than most other possible physical conditions. Fear of blindness is based in part on the fact that the seeing world relies on vision as a primary sense.**

**Throughout history, blindness has been feared more than most other disabling conditions. The Iowa Department for the Blind believes that the real problems of blindness do not come from the physical loss of sight but stem rather from misconceptions about blindness that are widely held by the general public – which includes people who are blind or visually impaired.**

**SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS:**

- **"If you can't see, you can't do."**
- **"If you are blind, you're dependent, and not able to meet your own needs."**
- **"Blind people can't work, travel, enjoy recreation or maintain households."**
- **"If you are blind, you can't do most jobs, and you're not employable."**
- **"Blind people are limited to a cloistered, sheltered life."**

**These statements are simply NOT TRUE. Thousands of blind and visually impaired Iowans maintain their own households, go to work, raise families, and enjoy travel, reading and leisure activities just like anyone else. They are productive, contributing members of their communities.**

**The Department maintains:**

- **That misconceptions give rise to forms of discrimination that have denied blind persons first-class citizenship.**
- **That programs and services enabling blind persons to deal with their physical loss of sight must be based on a belief in the competence of persons who happen to be blind.**
- **That blind persons constitute a cross-section of the general public and as such, reflect the general public in terms of talents, skills and abilities.**

**For every Iowan who takes the time to learn about and understand blindness and visual impairment, there is one less person perpetuating misconceptions that lead to stereotyping and discrimination. The Iowa Department for the Blind invites you to become a person who understands the truth about blindness.**

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