Statistics on disability and employment

Many organizations have conducted research and gathered data to inform policy and decision-making about disability, employment and accessibility. The following is a collection of statistics that you may see referenced as part of the #AbleTo campaign.

- 46,700 students with disabilities registered at post-secondary institutions in Ontario. [Ontario Chamber of Commerce Accessibility Report]

- Almost 3.8 million Canadians, or 13.7 percent of the population, identified themselves as having a disability in 2012, up 12.4 percent from 2001. [The Conference Board of Canada]

- The employment rate in 2011 for those with disabilities was 49.5 percent versus 73.9 percent for those without. [The Conference Board of Canada – Business Benefits of Accessible Workplaces]

- People with disabilities are three times more likely than people without disabilities to be unemployed or out of the labour force. This gap has persisted and remained unchanged for over a decade. [The Conference Board of Canada – Business Benefits of Accessible Workplaces]

- Unemployment rates are as high as 70 to 90 percent for people with the most severe forms of mental illness. [Mental Health Commission of Canada]

- There are close to half a million job-ready Canadians with disabilities. Half of those Canadians have post-secondary education. [SenseAbility]

- There is an economic benefit to hiring workers with disabilities that ranges from two to seven times the cost of accommodating the worker. [Mental Health Commission of Canada]

- Eighty-seven percent of respondents to a survey on consumer attitudes said they agreed or strongly agreed that they would prefer to give their business to companies that employ people with disabilities. [The Conference Board of Canada - Business Benefits of Accessible Workplaces]

- Statistics Canada found that in organizations with accessible employment practices, staff retention was 72 percent higher among people with disabilities. [Statistics Canada]

- Ninety percent of people with disabilities did as well or better in their jobs than co-workers without disabilities. [The Conference Board of Canada - Business Benefits of Accessible Workplaces]

- Eighty-six percent of employees with disabilities rated average or better in attendance. [The Conference Board of Canada - Business Benefits of Accessible Workplaces]

- Seventy-eight percent of Canadians are more likely to buy a product or service from a business that hires people with disabilities. [Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)]