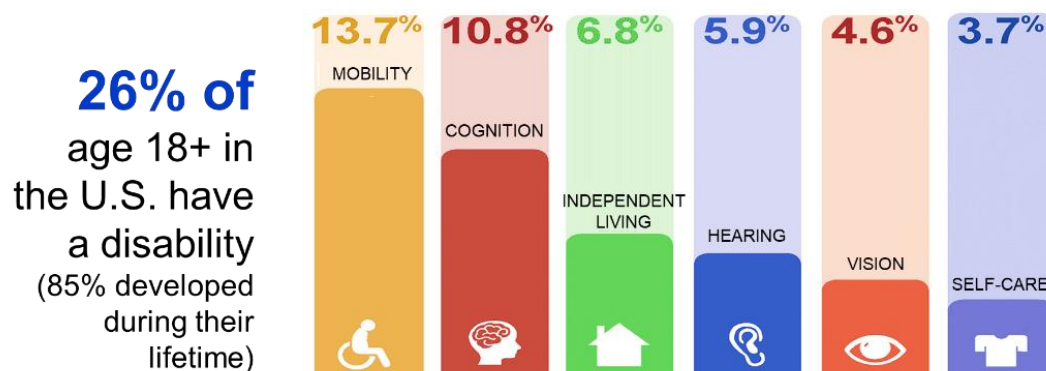


## Product Companies Move Beyond Aging in Place

Most manufacturers have now gone beyond aging in place when designing and marketing. They now realize that by creating products and marketing to only to seniors they lose over 80% of the market that has not reached senior age. Many of those forward-thinking companies are exhibitors at KBIS. They have learned from the education programs of the Living In Place Institute the importance of creating products that help individuals of all ages and needs, and understand how to effectively market to both specifiers and consumers.

Who needs a grab bar or other “special” product? In the past we all thought it was only older persons. The Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) helps us change our approach to all ages when they told us that 26% of age people 18+ have a disability.



Do only individuals of certain ages need “special” products”? Everyone is progressing through life, but people of any age may have a temporary setback or a lifelong challenge. Yes, specific products are needed for specific needs, but we do not know who will be living or visiting in a home? Our responsibility is to sell for now and the future.

Successful companies are now creating products that make all homes safe – comfortable – accessible for everyone. Some examples for kitchens appliances include the great look of a French door oven. Safety benefits start with the doors. Because the doors are half the width of the oven, they take up less room when open, opening one door automatically opens the other, and the racks are full extension allowing hot items to safely come out from the oven and past the open doors. Many appliances offer the convenience of remote monitoring and control, as well as letting you know when food is done or when a device may need service. MONOGRAM now makes a microwave that allows you to scan a frozen dinner barcode with a phone or tablet to remotely program the oven.

Grab bars are only for older folks. Think again. A child entering a bathtub needs

something to hold on to. Some companies show in their catalogs a child holding on to a towel bar, designed and rated to meet ADA public space standards. A person needs a place to hang a wet washcloth in the shower, again a towel bar that meets the same ADA standard. All toilet accessories should hold weight if someone pulls, leans on, or grabs them. Many manufacturers have now stopped calling them "grab bars." Now we see terms like "Assist Bars" from Delta. The Living In Place Institute encourages all manufacturers to simply design all models to hold at least 250 pounds when installed properly. Those companies that have adopted this approach to product design are helping to create safer bathrooms. The newly educated designers and builders are simply calling them "toilet accessories," without trying to add special qualifying and often misleading terms.

There are more examples of manufacturers with attention to combining safety and comfort. Personal hygiene toilet seats like TOTO USA's Washlet that are warm, sanitary and minimize potential health issues and can bring independence and dignity back to the user. Wall mounted toilet systems like those from Viega that open up the floor space to allow for pre-determining the finished seat height and are much easier to clean under, especially in today's need to keep the home sanitary and safe. In the kitchen, cabinet interiors from Rev-A-Shelf that can be lowered to meet the Living In Place Institute's standard, everything in the range of, "nose to knees."

In closing, ask yourself, do our products meet the needs of a wide range of individuals? Are we including all ages in our marketing? Do our marketing messages and images, from a catalog, to a design center, all the way up to KBIS, appeal to all designers, contractors, medical professionals and finally to the end consumer, bringing them a better life, safe-comfortable-accessible.

More information at [www.LivingInPlace.Institute](http://www.LivingInPlace.Institute) or [@LIPInstitute](https://www.instagram.com/LIPInstitute).