

## Free Digital Skills Training Now Available for People with Disabilities in South Carolina

*The Arc of South Carolina brings nationwide initiative to local community, empowering individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through technology*

**Columbia, SC, 11/01/24** – Are you or a loved one with an intellectual or developmental disability (IDD) feeling left behind in our digital world? Help is now available. The Arc of South Carolina is bringing free, accessible digital skills training as part of a nationwide initiative by The Arc of the United States and AT&T. The Arc of South Carolina is one of 26 chapters of The Arc to receive a grant to bridge the digital divide for people with IDD.

"Technology skills are crucial for achieving independence and fully participating in today's society," says **Margie Williamson, Executive Director**. "Our free workshops will empower individuals with IDD to confidently use computers, smartphones, and the internet, unlocking opportunities for employment, education, healthcare, and social connections."

What You Need to Know:

- **Who Can Participate:** People with IDD, their families, and caregivers
- **What's Offered:** Free workshops covering basic web searching, digital safety, online job searching, how to use email and social media, and more
- **When:** November 2024 to June 2025, monthly sessions
- **Where:** Offering in-person training for our clients and virtual training for everyone
- **How to Join:** Contact us directly at [thearc@arcsc.org](mailto:thearc@arcsc.org)

The Arc of South Carolina workshops will help people with IDD acquire essential skills, addressing a critical need in our community. People with disabilities face significant barriers to understanding and adopting digital tools, often due to higher rates of poverty and limited access to adaptive technologies. [According to Pew Research Center](#), 38% of adults with disabilities do not own a computer, compared to 19% of those without disabilities, and 28% of people with disabilities do not own a smartphone, compared to just 12% of the nondisabled population.

**Katy Neas, CEO of The Arc of the United States**, emphasizes the urgency: "The digital divide closes doors to employment, education, health resources, and human connections that many take for granted. The pandemic has amplified these inequities, making it even more crucial to address the digital skills gap for people with disabilities."

"Access to the internet is just one part of the digital divide. Knowing how to use it effectively is just as important," adds **Mylayna Albright, AVP, Corporate Social Responsibility, AT&T**. "This collaboration with The Arc will provide high-quality digital literacy and learning resources for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across the country."

The Arc of South Carolina will deliver accessible, easy-to-understand digital literacy training through both in-person and virtual workshops. Participants will benefit from plain language materials, ensuring everyone can effectively use digital tools.