



# Avenues to Understanding Educator's Guide

**Disability Awareness  
Initiatives for Children & Young Adults**  
An Easter Seals Wisconsin Program

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# Welcome to Avenues to Understanding

We're so glad you've decided to join us in educating children and young adults about disabilities through *Avenues to Understanding*, and we're confident your entire group will enjoy the experience. Easter Seals Wisconsin believes that disability awareness education, by building understanding and encouraging acceptance, is the best way to prevent misunderstandings and habits of avoidance from forming. Most children will, if armed with knowledge, find it easier to meet peers with disabilities and to include them fully in their classrooms, their social groups and in their lives.

We also hope you'll want to share the understanding with others, either through some of the ideas presented at the end of each unit, or by inviting other educators and group leaders to contact Easter Seals to obtain their own *Avenues to Understanding* materials. Thank you so much for joining us in this important educational initiative.

## Help Make Disability Education a Part of ALL Education

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- Do what you can to make certain your public, church, school and classroom libraries have books dealing with disabilities on their shelves. Books that portray people with disabilities as fully developed persons are preferred. We've suggested a number of books in the Resources Section of this Educator's Guide. Librarians and other educators may have additional resources available to aid them in choosing which books to make available.
- People with disabilities are the largest minority group in the country. Do what you can to ensure that diversity materials include information about people with disabilities.
- Promote the inclusion of disability awareness concepts throughout standard curriculum. General awareness education as well as specific issues dealing with disabilities can comfortably be incorporated into, among other subjects, social studies, history, communication arts, health, physical education, music and art classes.

## Disclaimer

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Web addresses to organizations outside Easter Seals Wisconsin are included for information only. The views and opinions of these organizations are not necessarily those of Easter Seals Wisconsin and Easter Seals Wisconsin has no control over the content of their webpages.

## Acknowledgements

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Easter Seals Wisconsin gratefully acknowledges interns Stephanie Zoril and Rachel Tabak for their invaluable contributions to the development of *Avenues to Understanding*. We also thank Jason LaFlash, Micaela Lowney and Erin Linley Holland for their time, input, critiques and suggestions.

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# Table of Contents

## Section One: Young Children (ages 3-8)

Overview .....	4
Introduction to Disabilities.....	5
Exploring Similarities & Differences .....	7
Mobility Disabilities & Adaptive Equipment.....	9
Sensory Disabilities & Adaptive Equipment.....	12
Making Friends & Disability Etiquette.....	17
Sharing the Understanding.....	20

## Section Two: Older Kids (ages 9-13)

Overview .....	22
Architectural Barriers .....	23
Barriers to Recreation .....	26
Attitudinal Barriers .....	28
Sharing the Understanding.....	32

## Section Three: Teens & Young Adults (ages 14-18)

Overview .....	34
Disabilities & Real Life.....	35
Disabilities in the Media & in the Arts .....	38
The Language of Disability.....	41
Disabilities & Civil Rights .....	42
Sharing the Understanding.....	44

## Resources

Q & A: Answers to the Most Common Questions Young Children Ask.....	47
The Language of Disability.....	49
Myths & Realities.....	51
Disability Etiquette.....	53
Bullying.....	55
Tools: Adaptive Equipment & Assistive Technology .....	57
Understanding Disabilities.....	59
Autism.....	59
Cerebral Palsy .....	60
Spina Bifida.....	60
Recommended Reading .....	61
Films.....	69
Disability Quizzes.....	73
General Disability Awareness Quiz.....	74
General Disability Awareness Answer Key .....	75
The Language of Disability Quiz .....	77
The Language of Disability Answer Key.....	78
Wheelchair Accessibility Check List.....	79
Attitude Check.....	80
Photo Gallery .....	81
Well-Known People with Disabilities .....	87
Contact Information for Selected Wisconsin Colleges & Universities .....	88
Bibliography .....	90
Helpful Links.....	92

## Section One:

# Avenues to Understanding for Young Children

Approximate Target Age: 3-8



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## Program Overview

Section One of *Avenues to Understanding* is geared toward children ages 3 through 8. This is the ideal time to start teaching about disabilities. At this age, children absorbing attitudes and ideas that may shape much of their life, and it is vitally important to expose them to disabilities in a positive light.

The discussion and activity options offered can be easily adapted to meet the needs, age levels and interests of the children in your group, as well as the time available. To reinforce the ideas you'll be presenting, we've provided a Parent Guide, available for download. This can be copied and sent home with each child. In this brief brochure, we encourage parents to talk about disabilities at home and give them a few ideas to get them started.

## Program Concepts

- Introduction to Disabilities
- Exploring Similarities & Differences
- Mobility Disabilities & Adaptive Equipment
- Sensory Disabilities & Adaptive Equipment
- Making Friends & Disability Etiquette
- Sharing the Understanding

## Coordinator Prep for the Unit

Before beginning, we encourage you to do a self-inventory of your own knowledge of disabilities and brush up if you feel the need to. You may find helpful information in *Resources*.

## A Word About Disability Simulations

Frequently, disability awareness programs and workshops include simulations meant to convey what it's like to live with a disability. Participants may be blindfolded or put into a wheelchair and told not to use their legs. However, many disability advocates feel that simulations are ineffective and counterproductive.

Quite simply, simulations are unrealistic. A person who has had a visual impairment for all or a large portion of his or her life has the coping skills to handle the environment. A sighted person who is blindfolded doesn't have those skills. This gives participants a false idea of what it's like to live with a disability and this false idea can lead to other problems.

Because *they* couldn't cope while 'blind', participants may believe that people who have a visual impairment that *can* care for themselves and live independently must be somehow superhuman. At the opposite end of the spectrum, participants may believe that, because they felt so helpless while blindfolded, a person who is visually impaired must also feel helpless all the time, and that life with a disability is miserable. To compound the problem, when a person with a disability is seen as helpless, barriers go up in the minds of the people around them.

*Avenues to Understanding* seeks to use alternative methods or simulation scenarios (e.g. turning one's back to a television or turning the television sound off) to help young people understand and be sensitive to people with disabilities and their concerns.



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# Unit One: Introduction to Disabilities

## Goals

- To introduce children to disabilities.
- To provide answers to some of the initial questions children may have.

## Coordinator Prep

- You may wish to review ‘The Language of Disability’ (see *Resources*) to refresh your knowledge on the preferred language used to talk about disabilities and about people with disabilities.

## Activity One

**Purpose:** Introduce disabilities and help children see that a person is made up of much more than their disability.

**Materials Needed:** Choose a book to share with the class, trying to find one in which the main character’s disability is not revealed until the end of the story. We recommend: *Susan Laughs* by Jeanne Willis.

### Read the story.

- Discuss. Were the children surprised that the character used a wheelchair (or had a visual or hearing impairment, etc.)? Did they understand what the condition meant? Introduce the word *disability*.

Definition: A **disability** is a condition caused by an accident, trauma, genetics or disease which may limit a person’s mobility, hearing, vision, speech or mental function. Simply, a disability is something that makes walking, talking, hearing, seeing, thinking, learning or communicating harder for some people. People can have more than one disability.

- Talk about some of the words associated with disability. Explain that the correct phrase is ‘person with a disability’. *The person goes first because they are more important than the disability.*
- Do they know anyone with a disability? Young children may recognize this more easily as a father who wears glasses, a grandmother who uses a hearing aid, or a neighbor who uses a cane or a walker. What do they know about that person? If answers focus on the disability, steer children to share what else they may know about the person – beyond the disability.

## Activity Two

**Purpose:** To answer some initial questions about disabilities. (Note: More about welcoming a person with a disability to your group will be covered in Unit Five: Making Friends & Disability Etiquette.)

**Materials Needed:** None.

- If your classroom or group was going to have a new member who used a wheelchair, what are some of the questions your group would have for them? Help the children make a list of their questions.
- From *Resources*, share Q & A: *Answers to Common Questions Young Children Ask*.



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## Unit Two: Exploring Similarities & Differences

### Goals

- To help children understand the many ways in which individuals may be different from each other and more importantly, to see the ways in which we are all alike.
- To help children understand that similarities and differences are not, in and of themselves bad, good, better or worse. They're just similarities and differences.
- To help children begin to understand that human beings, as a group, are more interesting and stronger in part because of our differences.

### Coordinator Prep

- From those listed below, choose which activities to use with your group and obtain the necessary materials.

## Activity One

**Purpose:** To demonstrate that some differences are only skin deep.

**Materials Needed:** An apple for each child in the class. (If cost is a factor, children may share, but it is best to have at least half a dozen pieces of fruit.) Attempt to choose fruit with some distinguishing characteristics.

- Give each child in the group an apple. Let children spend a few minutes playing with their apple, rolling it around, etc.
- After the children have had time to get to know their apple, place the apples together in a large bowl or other suitable container. Ask the children to find their apple. Most can. Ask how they know which apple was theirs. Children will point out specific characteristics such as lumps, bruises or color differences. Point out that people can also be different but once you get to know them, they become special to you.
- Peel the apples, and replace the peeled fruit in the bowl. Ask the children to again pick out their apple. They no longer can, of course, because all the pieces now look the same. Point out that while people may all look different on the outside, on the inside we're very much the same.



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## Activity Two

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**Purpose:** To demonstrate that while we share many similarities, each of us is also unique. Further, to provide one method for getting to know one another.

**Materials Needed:** None.

**Note to Teacher:** Make note of the choices of one particular child, so that at the end of the activity, that child can serve as your example of uniqueness.

- Talk about the ways in which children are alike. Begin with simple, obvious characteristics such as hair, eye color and age. Have children change which group they're standing in based on what they have in common. Continue to have the children move from group to group as the characteristics or likes/dislikes options are given. This can go on for several minutes. Children may express surprise as they discover what they have in common (or don't have in common) with other members of the group. (Brian may not have known that Kristin loved NASCAR as much as he did, etc.) Then start narrowing down the group. Start with 'everyone who is in this class', get in this group. Then, 'everyone who is in this class and has blue eyes', 'everyone who is in this class, has blue eyes and brown hair', 'everyone who is in this class and has blue eyes, brown hair and reads at least three books a week', etc. (You are narrowing down

the group to single out the one student whose choices you've been noting). The goal is to continue to narrow down the group so that only that one student will remain standing. S/he is unique.

- Point out that, although each of them was like the others in the group in many ways, no one is exactly like them. That makes each of them special – unique – one of a kind. We're all special.
- Let the children talk about the activity. Were they surprised by things they had in common with other members of the group? For example, Brian may never have guessed that Kristin liked NASCAR (because his mom doesn't and his mom is a girl, therefore, girls don't like NASCAR, etc.). Was this a good way to learn new things about people? Talk about other ways they can think of that would help them get to know others better.

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## Activity Three

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**Purpose:** To demonstrate that diversity is good.

**Materials Needed:** Art supplies – construction paper, scissors, paste, etc. – whatever will work for the project you assign.

- Give each child a set of exactly the same art supplies and instruct them to make something – a pumpkin, a dog, snowflakes, etc.
- Put the finished art projects on a bulletin board or tape them to a wall and compare them. Point out how, even though they all used the same things, and made the same thing, each creation is still different.
- Discuss: What if we were all exactly alike? Looked exactly alike, or all liked exactly the same things? Would they like that or not? Why? What if we all did the same things or only knew how to do the same things? What would happen?
- What if we were all exactly the same and none of us knew how to grow food? Or build cars? What if no one knew how to invent new things? Or fix furnaces? Have the children talk about all the things that could happen if different people didn't know how to do different things. Wrap up with the premise that diversity is a good thing. Not only does it make the world more interesting, it also helps keep our world functioning.

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# Unit Three – Mobility Disabilities & Adaptive Equipment

## Goals

- To introduce experiences which allow children to develop a deeper understanding of what it might be like to have a physical disability.
- To provide an opportunity for children to learn more about their senses and how they work.
- To introduce children to the concepts of how people adapt to different disabilities through using the abilities they have and how things in their environment can be adapted to help.
- To help children understand that, while people with disabilities may use different methods to achieve the same results, they can, in most cases, do everything their peers without disabilities can do.
- To help children understand that adaptive equipment and technological advances can open up new activities and make new opportunities possible for children and adults with disabilities. Instead of viewing adaptive equipment as something someone with a disability has to use, the equipment instead should be viewed as something that provides greater freedom for the user.

## Coordinator Prep

You may wish to take some time to brush up your knowledge of some of the more common physical disabilities – those the children in your group are most likely to encounter – in order to comfortably answer questions they may have. Brief descriptions of a few disabilities are included in *Resources*. More information on a variety of disabilities can be found at [www.EasterSealsWisconsin.com](http://www.EasterSealsWisconsin.com).

## Activity One

**Purpose:** To introduce the concept of adapting to limited mobility.

**Materials Needed:** Construction paper, scissors, paste and crayons.

- Have children do an art project that includes cutting, pasting and coloring with their non-dominant hand.
- Discuss. Was it hard? Were some things easier than others (for example, pasting over cutting)? Would it get easier if you did it all the time? Have them think of other things they've learned to do or are in the process of learning (playing baseball or basketball, playing the piano, drawing pictures, riding a bike, etc.). Was it really hard when they first started? Is it getting easier? Do they think that if they had to do everything with their non-dominant hand, they would eventually get good at it, and it would just feel 'normal'?
- Encourage children who have had a broken limb or a sprained ankle to share the difficulties they encountered. Could they write, walk up stairs, play ball, take a bath? What did they have to change about their behavior to accommodate their new situation? (Be sure to keep the focus of this discussion on how they made accommodations to their situation and not how relieved they were when, for instance, they finally got their cast off!)

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## Activity Two

**Purpose:** To demonstrate that different ways of doing things can be equally satisfying.

**Materials Needed:** Music.

- Put on music and have the children dance to it. Talk about everyone's different style of dancing.
  - Ask them to sit on the floor and dance with only their torsos and arms.
  - Then have them dance with just their arms and hands.
- Discuss. In these different versions of dancing, was it still fun to move to the music? Did people still have different styles?

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## Activity Three

**Purpose:** To further demonstrate adaptations to limited mobility and to talk about the hard work and determination that can lead to success for all people.

**Materials Needed:** Roll of butcher paper, taped to the floor. Crayons.

- Have the children attempt to color on the butcher paper with crayons held between their toes.
- Share with the group the story of someone who adapted to their physical disability and how they did so. (Example: author Christy Brown- who had cerebral palsy and wrote books and poetry with his left foot because that was the only part of his body that he could control.)
- Help the children to understand that most people with mobility disabilities adapt in many ways to their disabilities.
- Remind children that lots of things that seem hard at first get easier with practice.
- Also make the point that all people – with or without disabilities – are different and that people who work hard and have a lot of determination can reach their goals. The disability itself doesn't affect the hard work or the determination.

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## Activity Four

**Purpose:** To introduce adaptive equipment.

**Materials Needed:** Several plastic sun visors with paint brushes taped securely to them.

- Have the children put the visors on and attempt to paint by moving their heads to dip the brushes into paint and transferring the paint to the paper.
- Talk about the simplicity behind the 'invention' of this tool for someone who can't use his hands. The idea is to take something 'John' can do – move his head and upper body – and use that ability to make it possible for him to paint, something he couldn't do in the typical way. (Try to avoid using the phrase 'the *normal* way' too frequently.) The visor-brush made it possible for John to paint.
- Have the kids brainstorm other ways people could paint if they couldn't use their hands. ('Toe painting' as opposed to finger painting, holding the brush in their mouths, etc.) Can they think of any other types of 'equipment' that might help?

## Activity Five

**Purpose:** To share different types of adaptive equipment for people with physical disabilities with your group. (Adaptive equipment for people with visual and hearing impairments will be discussed in the next unit.)

**Materials Needed:** Samples or photos of adaptive equipment.

Share the sample of adaptive equipment you were able to obtain (or the photos) with the children. Explain what each is for and how it is used. Be certain children understand that adaptive equipment and technological advances can open up new activities and make new opportunities possible for children and adults with disabilities. Instead of viewing adaptive equipment as something someone with a disability has to use, the equipment instead should be viewed as something that provides greater freedom for the user.

### Other Tools for People With Physical Disabilities

- Wheelchairs of various types (regular, motorized, those designed for a variety of sports, etc. )
- Lever doorknobs
- Page turners
- Communication boards
- Companion dogs
- Adaptive eating utensils



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## Unit Four: Sensory Disabilities & Adaptive Equipment

### Goals

- To help children understand sensory disabilities.
- To introduce children to some of the ways people with sensory disabilities may adapt using the abilities they have.
- To introduce children to some of the adaptive items and devices available to people with sensory disabilities.

### Coordinator Prep

- Choose two DVDs most children will *not* be familiar with. You will be asking children to ‘watch’ the video with their back to the screen and ‘listen’ to another scene with the sound off. Try to choose scenes that will lend themselves to these activities.

## Part One: Visual Loss

**Correct language:** *blind* (usually refers to total loss of vision); *partially sighted* or *visually impaired* (partial loss of vision).

### ———— Activity One ————

**Purpose:** To help children begin to understand that, in some cases, one sense can be utilized to help compensate if another sense is unavailable.

**Materials Needed:** DVD as described in Coordinator Prep and means to play and view it.

Play the DVD for a few minutes and have the children sit with their backs towards the screen and their eyes closed. After a few minutes turn the DVD off, and ask the children about it.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Based on voices, how many people were in the scene?                          | • Do they think the people were friends?  |
| • Could they tell where the story was taking place: a school, a park, a store? | • Ask questions about the characters. How did they treat one another? Were they mean, nice, sad or happy with each other? |

Point out that even without seeing the video, they were able to form opinions and ideas about what was happening just from listening. This is a method of using remaining senses when one is unavailable. Talk to the group about times when they may have done this without thinking about it. For example: Can they sometimes tell what’s cooking or baking from the smell alone? Have they ever hidden under the covers, but known when one of their parents or a sibling was in the room just by listening? Were they able to tell who it was by the amount of noise they made when walking or the sound of their footsteps?



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## Activity Two

**Purpose:** To further demonstrate how one sense may help compensate for another, and to introduce simple adaptive equipment.

**Materials Needed:** Paper bag, scissors, marker, pencil and four or five crayons for each child.

Put a scissors, a marker, a pencil and four or five crayons of different colors into a bag.

- Have the children reach into the bag (no peeking!), and find the scissors. Ask them how they knew it was the scissors (they could feel the distinctive shape).
- Ask them to find the marker. How did they know it was the marker and not the pencil? (They feel different; marker has a cap, etc.)
- Ask them to find the green crayon. (Some may find it by chance, but they should realize that they can't distinguish the green crayon from the other crayons.) Discuss what they could do to the green crayon so that they can tell it apart from the others (bumps on the crayon paper, something they can *feel*).
- Try wrapping a piece of scotch tape around the crayon paper (or try one of the methods the kids thought of). The kids should then be able to identify the green crayon because they can feel the different texture of the tape. They are 'seeing' with their fingers.
- Discuss how they could carry this out further so that they could identify each of the crayons – how each color could be made unique to the touch. (Tie yarn around one; wrap a rubber band around another, etc.)
- Congratulate the group on inventing a method of seeing with their fingers!

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## Activity Three

**Purpose:** To introduce adaptive equipment for people who are visually impaired.

**Materials Needed:** Braille sample (included), and any of the 'other tools for people who are blind or partially sighted' listed below to which you have access.

Share the Braille sample with the children. Explain that Braille is a method for people who are blind to read and see with their fingers. If they think this may be very hard, remind them that many new things may seem hard at first, but that with practice they become easier, and that it can be fun and exciting to learn new things. Kids will also be interested to learn that Braille was invented by Louis Braille, who began to develop his new method of reading when he was 12 years old.

Talk about some of the other tools available for people who are blind or partially sighted. Share photos, or samples if you were able to obtain some items, and explain how each tool is used.

### Other Tools for People Who Are Blind or Partially Sighted

- Glasses
- Large print books, audiobooks or e-readers with adjustable font size
- Screen readers. Computer users who have a visual impairment may use a screen reader for most computing activities. This, in simple terms, is a piece of software that "figures out" what is on the screen and sends information to a speech synthesizer to be spoken, or to a Braille display.
- Guide Dogs

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## —Add-On Activities—

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If you have time available, you may wish to add one or more of the following activities:

- In the same vein as Activity Two, have the children try to identify items of clothing. Ask them to discuss how clothing could be marked so that people who are blind could identify colors and choose matching outfits.
- Read an age-appropriate biography of Louis Braille.
- Share a story book that includes Braille on each page.
- Have children listen to a audiobook, reminding them that books in this format are accessible to people who are blind or partially sighted.
- Invite someone who uses or trains Guide Dogs to visit your group.



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## Part Two: Hearing Loss

**Correct language:** *Deaf or hard of hearing; people with hearing impairments.*

### Activity One

**Purpose:** To help children begin to understand that, in some cases, one sense can be utilized to help compensate if another sense is unavailable.

**Materials Needed:** DVD as described in Coordinator Prep and means to play and view it.

Have the children watch the video for a few minutes with the sound turned off. After a few minutes ask the children questions about the video.

- From what they could see, who were the people in the video?
- Do they think the people were friends? Might they have been members of the same family?
- Could they tell where the story was taking place: a school, a park, a store?
- Ask questions about the characters. How did the people treat one another? Were they mean, nice, sad or happy with each other?
- What do they think the people might have been talking about?

Point out that even without hearing the video, the children were able to form opinions and ideas about what was happening just from watching. Have them talk about *why* they drew the conclusions they did. Encourage more discussion by offering suggestions.

- Because of the earlier activity, did they find themselves paying more attention to what they were seeing?
- What did they do differently to try to understand what was going on?
- Were they using their imaginations more to think about what the people might be saying?
- Were there things that they felt were easier to figure out from hearing the video? Were other things easier to figure out from seeing it?

Discuss the advantages of having more than one sense – that sometimes we can use one sense to figure things out when we can't use another.

### Activity Two

**Purpose:** To introduce alternate methods of communication.

**Materials Needed:** If the children in your group are old enough to read and write, have paper and pencils easily available, but don't point them out.

Divide the children into groups of 4 or 5. Tell them they can play a game of their choice, but they cannot talk about what they're going to play. Observe. How do they decide what to play? Does one member of the group pantomime a game of tag? Does one choose a game off a shelf and show it to the others? Do any of them take advantage of the paper and pencils to communicate by writing? If any of the groups actually begin playing a game, are there other details they attempt to work out (who will go first, etc.)?

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Talk with the children about how they were able (or were not able) to communicate without using words.

Were they able to figure out what other members of their group were trying to convey? How? They may indicate that the others pointed to things, that they made faces or that they acted out a game. Point out that these are all methods of communicating.

**Introduce sign language.** Humans create where there is need. No one person developed sign language. In fact, there are many different versions of sign languages just as there are many different spoken languages.

- Share a book showing various signs to the children, or, if available, show them a video with someone speaking in sign.
- Teach the children about signing and finger spelling. Have the kids sign basic words like hello, goodbye and their name.

### ————— Activity Three —————

**Purpose:** To introduce adaptive equipment for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

**Materials Needed:** Television with closed captioning, and any of the 'other tools for people who are deaf or hard of hearing' listed below that you have access to.

Introduce closed captioning to the children by showing them a television show utilizing the service. Explain that it is one tool available to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Even if the children in your group aren't yet reading, they will understand the concept of reading the television.

Share samples of other tools you were able to obtain and explain their use.

#### **Other Tools for People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

- Hearing Aids
- Telephone typewriters (TTY)
- Vibrating clocks and watches
- Captioned DVDs
- Interpreters
- Hearing dogs
- Amplified telephones
- Flashing light when phone or doorbell rings

### ————— Add-On Activities —————

If you have time available, you may wish to add one or more of the following activities:

- Read a story about the development of sign language.
- Share a storybook that is told in sign.
- Read an age-appropriate biography of someone who was/is deaf or hard of hearing. Children might be interested in a story about Thomas Edison or Helen Keller.



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## Unit Five: Making Friends & Disability Etiquette

### Goals

- To help children feel comfortable when meeting someone with a disability.
- To have children think about ways peers with disabilities can be included in classroom and social activities and to help them understand the importance of inclusion.
- To explain some of the do's and don'ts of 'helping'.

### Coordinator Prep

You may wish to review 'Disability Etiquette' (see *Resources*) to brush up on some of the things to consider or remember when meeting someone with a disability.





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## Activity One

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**Purpose:** To help children feel comfortable when meeting someone with a disability, and to assure them that their natural curiosity about a person's disability is normal and acceptable.

**Materials Needed:** A suitable book about meeting someone with a disability or about having a new person with a disability join your classroom or group. For young children in this age group, we recommend *A Very Special Critter* by Gina Mayer and Mercer Mayer.

Talk with the children about meeting someone new and making friends.

- When a new child joins your class or group, how is he or she usually introduced?
- Do the children wonder what the new kid is like, if he is nice, if she is fun, if the new kid will like them and want to be friends?
- How do they find out what the person likes to do and if they have anything in common? (Talk, play together, sit next to each other at lunch, work on a project together, etc.) You may remind them of the activity they did earlier (Unit Two, Activity Two) that helped them to learn things they had in common with other members of the group.
- Do they sometimes feel nervous or uncomfortable when they're meeting a new kid? Why do they think that is?
- Do they think it's sometimes hard at first to talk to someone new? What if they're shy? What if the new kid is shy?
- How do they make friends with someone new?

Read the story. Discuss, prompting with questions suitable to the story you chose.

- In the story, how did the children feel about meeting someone with a disability? How did they get to know him or her?
- Remind your group of the ways they thought they could find out what a new member of their group likes to do and if they might have anything in common. (Talk, play together, sit next to them at lunch, work on a project together, etc.) Could they do all these things with someone who uses a wheelchair? With someone who has autism? With someone who is deaf? What would be the same? What would be different? (Children might be uncertain how they would communicate with someone who is deaf or think that children with physical disabilities can't play many of the games they enjoy.)
- Lead discussion. What are their favorite playground games? Could children with different disabilities play those games with them? If they don't believe they could, ask them if they think the games could be adapted so that everyone could play together.
- In the story, did the kids worry about things that didn't happen? What? Why were they worried? Were they just nervous about meeting someone new?
- Assure children that it's natural to feel a little uncomfortable when meeting someone for the first time, and that it may have nothing to do with whether or not the person has a disability.
- In the story, how did the group learn more about the new person's disability?
- Let them know that when they meet someone with a disability, it's okay to ask the person questions about the disability. How they ask, however, is very important. They shouldn't say 'What's wrong with you?' but as they get to know the person, it's alright to ask questions about the disability. With the children, make a list of the kinds of questions they could ask.
- Children should be aware that it's also okay if the person with the disability doesn't want to talk about it. Maybe he's just not in the mood. If this happens, they should drop it and talk about other things instead.

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## Activity Two

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**Purpose:** To help children think further about interacting with peers with disabilities and to introduce some simple disability etiquette guidelines.

**Materials Needed:** None.

Meeting a person with a disability for the first time and learning how to include the person in their lives is sometimes somewhat intimidating to children. *The most important thing for the children in your group to remember is that people with disabilities want to be treated just like anyone else.*

The following ‘do’s and don’t’s’ which includes some simple disability etiquette rules may be of help.

### Do:

- Talk to and make friends with people with disabilities.
- Invite kids with disabilities to your house to hang out.
- Hang out with children with disabilities during recess, at lunch or on school or group trips.
- Think about what indoor and outdoor games might be hard for the person with the disability to play, and about how the games might be changed so that everyone can take part, or if different games could be played instead.
- Tell a teacher or other adult if you hear someone making fun of the person with the disability. This is called bullying and it is not funny or cool. Telling an adult about it is *not* tattling.
- Plan your birthday party so that everyone in the class can take part.
- *Treat people with disabilities with respect and kindness, the same way you like to be treated!*

### Don't:

- Think that you should feel sorry for people with disabilities. They'd rather you thought of them as someone you can be friends with.
- Think that children with disabilities can't play games with you or be fun to hang out with.
- Think you know everything about a person with a disability because you've met someone else with a similar disability. Everyone is different.
- Lean on or touch a person's wheelchair. It's part of the person's personal space.
- Pet or play with a guide or companion dog unless you have permission. Service dogs are working, and playing with them could distract them from their important job.
- Try to help without asking first. Being helpful is nice, but, just like everyone, people with disabilities like to do lots of things for themselves and don't always want or need someone to help them. If you offer to help and the person says 'no', don't feel bad, and don't be afraid to offer again another time.
- Talk to a person's personal attendant or interpreter about the person as though he or she isn't there. That's rude. When you're talking with someone who has a disability who uses an attendant or an interpreter always look directly at the person with the disability. The attendant or the interpreter will step in if needed.

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## — Add-On Activity —

If you know someone with a disability whom you feel would be *very comfortable* meeting with and talking to children about his or her disability, invite the person to talk with your group.

## — Sharing the Understanding —

- Have the children share what they've learned with another class or group.
- Invite parents to join the group and have the children share something they've learned with them.
- If you live in a smaller town with a local paper, have the children help you write an article about what they learned and submit it. Including a photo increases the chance of publication. You may also wish to consider asking the paper if they would be interested in coming in while you're doing one of the suggested activities.
- Children in this age group who are reading could read books on disabilities to younger children during a special reading hour.
- Have the children make posters on disability awareness and post them in the hallways of your school or child care facility, in your public library or in another high traffic community venue.

## Section Two: Avenues to Understanding for Older Kids

Approximate Target Age: 9-13



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## Program Overview

Many people with disabilities feel that their main ‘handicap’ is not their disability, but instead, the architectural and attitudinal barriers they encounter daily.

In Section Two of *Avenues to Understanding*, which is geared toward older kids age 9- 13, participants will begin to explore those architectural and attitudinal barriers. They will also look at how those barriers may provide stumbling blocks to integration for people with disabilities, as well as looking at them in conjunction with their own need, so strong at this age, to fit in.

The discussion and activity options offered can be easily adapted to meet the needs, age levels and interests of the kids in your group, as well as the time available.

## Program Concepts

- Overview

- Architectural Barriers

- Barriers to Recreation

- Attitudinal Barriers

- Sharing the Understanding

## Coordinator Prep for the Unit

Before beginning, we encourage you to do a self inventory of your own knowledge of disabilities and brush up if you feel the need to. You may find helpful information in *Resources*.



# Unit One: Architectural Barriers

## Goals

- To help kids develop a better awareness and understanding of the architectural barriers existing for people with disabilities in schools and other public buildings.
- To help kids understand that architectural barriers may be more subtle than, for instance, the lack of a ramp into a building.

## Coordinator Prep

In Activities One and Two, your group will be assessing the accessibility of a building. Choose a building for this activity. Your school or the building where your group regularly meets is fine. However, if you choose a different building, arrange all necessary permissions and take care of transportation details.

## Activity One

**Purpose:** To raise awareness of architectural barriers.

**Materials Needed:** *Wheelchair Accessibility Basic Check List* from *Resources*. If you prefer, you can choose not to use the check list and see which possible barriers your group is able to discover without it. Another option for this activity is to have the group draw maps of the building, and on them indicate where barriers or potential barriers are located.

Meet and share your findings.

- Did any of the groups find barriers or potential barriers? What were they?
- Do their findings apply to the entire building? For example, are all of the bathrooms accessible, or only some of them? Could that cause potential problems? How?
- Does anyone in the group use a wheelchair or have a friend or family member who does? If so, were they more aware of potential barriers? They may like to share examples of some of the barriers they or the person they know have come across both locally and while traveling.



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## Activity Two

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**Purpose:** To raise awareness of additional architectural barriers that may not be immediately apparent.

**Materials Needed:** Refer again to the *Wheelchair Accessibility Basic Check List* from *Resources*. Question 9 and the 'a' & 'b' portions of questions 10 & 11 differ slightly from the rest of the check list questions because they deal with a slightly different form of accessibility. For instance, if a teenager using a wheelchair can attend a football game, but can't sit anywhere near her friends, she may well feel barriers still exist.

Barriers of this type are often more difficult to address and remove, but awareness of their existence may help eliminate them in the future.

Do a second sweep of the building you already assessed, this time focusing on these less obvious types of barriers or potential barriers. Or have the group simply think about places they frequent and potential barriers that might exist in those places. Things to look for:

- In classrooms: Is it possible that the arrangement of desks might contain barriers? Could there be problems when the desks are filled with students? Are backpacks stored out of the aisles while class is in session?
- In libraries: While the aisles between rows of bookshelves are probably wide enough to maneuver a wheelchair, what percentage of the books are out of reach of the person using the wheelchair? If the percentage is high, is there a staff person available (and willing) to help students locate a list of books they might need?
- In cafeterias: Would the lunch line present a problem? How about the tray return area?
- In student centers: Are the tables arranged so that someone using a wheelchair can negotiate them without too much trouble? Will that still be the case when the room is filled with people?
- In malls: Is the space between clothing racks so tight that, while someone using a wheelchair might be able to get into the store, they would have a very difficult time actually seeing most of the merchandise? Are dressing rooms accessible? How about the check out areas? The restaurants at the food court? The seating area at the food court?
- Have the kids think of other things that may present problems that are not limited to the structure itself.

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## Activity Three

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**Purpose:** To consider the importance of barrier-free environments.

**Materials Needed:** Lists of barriers discovered.

Have each group share what they discovered, and then have the entire group brainstorm ways to fix any barriers they found. If they believe solutions involve extensive renovations, have them try to think of alternative solutions that will, at the least, provide a temporary solution. If there are problems that they feel might be dangerous, they should consider notifying the appropriate people. Invite discussion.

- What did they learn from the first assessment and the second sweep or discussion?
- Were there barriers that they had never given any thought to before? What?
- What if every public building was *fully* accessible? How might that affect education, recreation and job opportunities for people with disabilities?
- Why is it important for buildings to be accessible? Have them discuss how things would be different for people who use wheelchairs if most public buildings were *not* accessible? How might that affect education, recreation and job opportunities for people with disabilities?

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## Add-On Activities

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- Arrange to visit a series of buildings and have the building owner or architect give you a guided tour. Choose an older building where a number of barriers to accessibility exist, another older building that has made renovations in order to accommodate people with disabilities, and a newer building that has used innovative methods to be as accessible as possible.
- If you know someone who was involved in lobbying or otherwise working for the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which deals with accessibility, or who works to oversee its implementation locally, ask them to speak to your group.



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## Unit Two: Barriers to Recreation

### Goals

- To help kids understand that people with disabilities enjoy and participate in a full range of social and recreational activities.
- To help kids develop a better awareness and understanding of the architectural barriers existing for people with disabilities in social and recreational activities.
- To help kids discover how the creative minds of determined people are able to find solutions to physical barriers, making more and more activities possible for people with disabilities.

### Coordinator Prep

We've included some photos of people participating in a variety of adaptive sports in *Resources*.

### ———— Activity One ————

**Purpose:** To raise awareness of potential barriers to participation in social activities for peers with disabilities.

**Materials Needed:** None.

- Have kids plan the 'perfect' class or group outing. Then have them decide what, if any, aspects of the outing might present difficulties for someone in the group who has a physical disability. Have them decide how the plans could be altered or the difficulties otherwise addressed.

### ———— Activity Two ————

**Purpose:** To increase the group's awareness of potential barriers to participation in social activities, and to help them understand that pre-planning may help eliminate many of them.

**Materials Needed:** None.

- Have the kids brainstorm the things they like to do best when socializing with friends. Since sports will be addressed more completely in Activity Three, try to steer the choices toward spectator sports or non sports-related activities such as going to a movie and out for pizza.
- Choose three or four favorites and discuss. Attempt to determine what barriers to participation in each might exist for people with a variety of disabilities (difficulty hearing or seeing a film, transportation, building accessibility, maneuvering a wheelchair through a crowd at a concert, sitting together at a sporting event). How can these barriers be dealt with or otherwise addressed? It is important for the group to realize that, with some thought and pre-planning, many of the potential barriers can be eliminated. Have them discuss what types of pre-planning might be necessary.



## Activity Three

**Purpose:** To introduce the group to adaptive sports equipment and the many experiences such equipment has made possible for their peers with disabilities.

**Materials Needed:** The group will need Internet access.

*Note to Coordinator: The huge range of disabilities in the world makes the field of adaptive sports equipment one that is constantly growing and changing. Equipment is often designed or adapted for a single individual, addressing his or her unique strengths and weaknesses. It's unrealistic to expect that kids will understand all the issues that need to be addressed in the process. However, activities of this sort strengthen their awareness of the needs of others and the issues their peers with disabilities deal with.*

Adaptive equipment has made participation in dozens of sports possible for people with a variety of disabilities.

- Divide your group into three or four smaller groups and assign each a popular sport. Have them research adaptive equipment or alternative methods of play for their assigned sport. Remind kids that there are a lot of different types of disabilities. Have them give some thought to how many different disabilities the equipment they discovered might address.
- Have the small groups report on their findings and share photos of adaptive sports equipment with the larger group.
- As a group, choose a sport that wasn't assigned to a small group and, without researching it, try to come up with your own ideas for adaptive equipment or alternative methods of play for that sport.

If anyone in the group participates in adaptive sports or has a friend or family member who does, have them share their experiences and any pertinent information.



Photo by Ken Watson; used with permission.



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## Unit Three: Attitudinal Barriers

### Goals

- To help kids evaluate their own attitudes toward people with disabilities.
- To help kids determine how negative and positive attitudes are formed.
- To help kids evaluate how disabilities are viewed in their school or community, to determine if changes are desirable and to brainstorm ways to affect those changes.
- To encourage kids to take a look at the causes and effects of bullying and at how bullying can impact the entire school population – both kids with disabilities and those without.

### Coordinator Prep

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources has an excellent and highly recommended website – [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov) – dealing with bullying. The site offers extensive information, much of which is downloadable for kids, parents, teachers, school administrators and other concerned parties. You may wish to review the information presented there to brush up on your knowledge of bullying, which will be the focus of Activities Three, Four and Five. For a brief overview of this pervasive problem, and of the information available at [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov), see *Resources*. For school-based educators: If your school or school district has a bullying policy, you may wish to have it on hand.

## Activity One

**Purpose:** To help members of the group assess their own attitudes toward people with disabilities and to help them determine if some of those attitudes may have been formed by incorrect information.

**Materials Needed:** *Attitude Check* from *Resources* (one for each participant); printouts of *Myths & Realities* from *Resources* (one for each participant).

Attitudes deriving from lack of experience with individuals who have disabilities can distort our interactions and relationships with them. These attitudes and beliefs may seem innocent, but may, in fact, affect our ideas and our ability to see past a disability to the person. Taking the time to get to know people with disabilities can help change these misconceptions, which are most often based on inaccurate or insufficient information.

Have the kids do a check on their own attitudes. Questions from *Attitude Check* can be asked verbally to get kids to think about attitudes they may have, or you can use the handout and collect responses, using them to help determine common attitudes. An additional option for this activity is to have the group ask their parents about *their* attitudes and then have them graph generational differences.

From *Resources*, print out and distribute *Myths & Realities*. Many misconceptions are addressed in this handout. Use the kids' *Attitude Check* answers and the *Myths & Realities* handout to foster discussion of their attitudes and how they might have been formed.

Have the kids discuss the types of attitudes toward people with disabilities they see in school, in groups they're a part of, in their community, on television and in films.

- Do they see more positive attitudes or negative attitudes?
- How do they think these attitudes are formed?
- Have the kids list the positive attitudes they've encountered. How do they feel they were formed? How can they be reinforced and enhanced?
- Have them list negative attitudes they've encountered. How do they feel they were formed? How can they be changed?

## Activity Two

**Purpose:** To raise awareness of the isolation young people with disabilities often feel, and to help the group determine possible causes of and solutions to the isolation.

**Materials Needed:** None.

*Statement: Kids with disabilities often feel ignored or left out. Sometimes peers see the disability and are never able to see past it. Often, after the initial meeting, peers simply avoid talking to them or even meeting their eyes.*

Discuss this statement in your group.

- Do they feel this is true? To what degree?
- When avoidance does take place, what do they think is the cause?
- Do they think some of the negative attitudes they discussed above might contribute to avoidance? Example: If they think kids with disabilities lead boring and uneventful lives, could that belief discourage them from making more effort to interact with a peer with a disability?
- What needs to change for kids to stop avoiding peers with disabilities? Increased understanding? Organized interaction? How can those things happen? What types of interaction would be easy to arrange and fun to take part in?
- Should the push to increase interaction between kids with disabilities and kids without disabilities come more from one of these groups than the other? Which one? Why?

Have the kids come up with a number of activities that could increase interaction between kids with disabilities and those without. Have them decide if the activities should have secondary goals such as changing attitudes, dispelling misconceptions and demonstrating that kids with disabilities are unique individuals who are made up of much more than their disability. If they feel any of these secondary goals are important, how would they try to promote them?



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## Activity Three

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**Purpose:** To raise awareness of bullying and the short and long term problems caused by it.

**Materials Needed:** None.

**Note:** Bullying may be a sensitive subject to some members of your group. Please use your best judgment in handling the topic.

Share the following statistics (taken from [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov) – a program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) with your group:

- 28% of students in grades 6-12 report being bullied.
- Kids who bully are more likely than those who don't bully to skip school and drop out of school.
- As many as 160,000 students may stay home on any given day because they're afraid of being bullied.
- 1 in 4 students who bully others in middle school have spent time in jail by the age of 25.

Discuss these statistics with your group, and encourage a general discussion of bullying. *To aid them in Activity Four, have the kids take notes on the discussion.*

- What do they feel constitutes bullying?
- What do they think causes it? Why do they feel so many students participate in bullying? (Bullies have listed the following reasons for bullying: because they see others doing it, because it makes them feel stronger, smarter or better than the person they're bullying, because it's what you have to do if you want to hang out with the 'right' crowd, or because they see it as a way to keep others from bullying them.)
- What do they feel the effects of bullying are? For the victims? For the bullies? For the bystanders and the rest of the kids exposed to it?
- Do they feel bullying is a problem in their school or in the schools they attend? How much of a problem? What types of bullying are the most common?
- Do they think kids are reluctant to befriend kids who are being bullied because it might make them the target of bullies as well?
- Do they feel bullies have a lot of power in setting some behaviors in the school? Why? Do they feel bullies think they're funny and/or cool? If so, why?
- Do they feel kids with disabilities are bullied more than other kids? Less? The same? Are they bullied in a different way?

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## Activity Four

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**Purpose:** To look further into bullying.

**Materials Needed:** The group will need access to the Internet.

Divide your group into three smaller groups. Assign each of them one of the following:

- Bullying and the Victim
- Bullying and the Bully
- Bullying and the Bystander

Have each of the small groups research their assigned topic of the bullying problem and report their findings to the entire group. They should use their notes on the group discussion during Activity Three to help them choose the direction of their report.

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## Activity Five

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**Purpose:** To look into school-based anti-bullying programs and determine the effectiveness of or the need for one in the schools attended by the young people in your group.

**Materials Needed:** The group may need access to the Internet. If your school has an official policy on bullying, you may wish to have it on hand.

Continue the discussion of bullying by discussing school anti-bullying policies:

- Does your school or the school most of the kids in your group attend have an official policy on bullying?
- If so, are the kids aware of it and of the details? Do they feel the policy is effective? Is it enforced? Does it help control and reduce bullying? Are teachers and other adults open to being told about bullying incidents when kids report them? Do the kids feel that teachers follow through after receiving a report of bullying? Are there some teachers who believe there's nothing wrong with bullying? Are there some who participate in bullying in some way?
- If there is no official policy, have the kids do an anonymous survey of students to help assess the need for such a policy. If appropriate, have them research successful policies other schools have enacted and offer the plan to the administration.

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## — Add-On Activity —

If you know someone who is active in an anti-bullying organization, ask them to talk to your group. Or, as part of ‘Sharing the Understanding,’ arrange for the speaker to address a larger audience (the entire school, several Scout troops, etc.). Have your group help organize and promote the speaking event.

## — Sharing the Understanding —

- Arrange to hold a special reading hour with a younger group of kids at your school, another school or preschool or a public library, and share books about disabilities or about kids with disabilities.
- Make posters on disability awareness and post them in the hallways of your school, in your public library or in another high traffic community venue.
- Have your group write an article for a local newspaper on one aspect covered in this unit.
- Give one of the disability-related quizzes found in *Resources* to another classroom or group, and share some of the things you’ve learned and discussed with them.
- Have your group brainstorm ways they feel they can share disability awareness information with their school or community, choose one and follow through.



## Section Three: Avenues to Understanding for Teens

Approximate Target Age: 14-18



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## Program Overview

In Section Three of *Avenues to Understanding*, which is geared toward teens age 14-18, participants are encouraged to explore their communities, viewing them through the eyes of a teen or young adult with a disability who is facing some of the same real world challenges and opportunities they themselves are facing (or soon will be) – independent living, college and jobs.

Participants will also have the opportunity to discuss how people with disabilities are portrayed – in print, in the news, in films and on television, and to compare the drive of the disability community to achieve equality with that of other groups.

The discussion and activity options offered can be easily adapted to meet the needs, age levels and interests of the young people in your group, as well as the time available. Participants are also welcome to visit our website at [www.EasterSealsWisconsin.com](http://www.EasterSealsWisconsin.com) for additional information.

## Program Concepts

- Overview

- Disabilities & Real Life

- Disabilities in the Media & in the Arts

- The Language of Disability

- Disabilities & Civil Rights

- Sharing the Understanding

## Coordinator Prep for the Unit

Before beginning, we encourage you to do a self inventory of your own knowledge of disabilities and brush up if you feel the need to. You may find the resources offered in this Educator's Guide helpful.

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# Unit One: Disabilities & Real Life

## Goals

- To increase the group's awareness of how architectural barriers might impact important real life decisions - such as finding a job, choosing a college, or moving away from home - made by people with disabilities.

## Coordinator Prep

See *Resources* for a list of selected public and private Wisconsin colleges and universities. Print out enough for the group. For this unit, it is likely that members of your group will be unable to gather information in standard classroom settings and will be using the Internet, email, telephone and traditional mail for research. When planning activities, consider the time it may take groups to gather pertinent information.

## Activity One

**Purpose:** To gather information on accessibility in Wisconsin colleges.

**Materials needed:** Internet access.

Divide your group into four smaller groups and assign each of them two public and two private Wisconsin colleges. Have groups contact colleges and obtain information about their accessibility. The following will give them some ideas of information to seek; however, they should brainstorm to decide if additional information would be valuable.

- Is there accessible housing on and off campus? Have students chosen a different school because of lack accessible housing or poor quality of accessible housing?
- Are all the classroom buildings and other facilities accessible?
- What accommodations for various disabilities are in place or can be arranged with relative ease?
- How about student life? Are there organizations specifically for students with disabilities? Are students with disabilities welcome in most campus organizations? Do the organizations meet in accessible locations?
- Is the college willing to make additional accommodations based on the needs of individual students? What is the process?
- How would the college rate their accessibility for mobility disabilities? For sensory, emotional or learning disabilities?
- What percentage of their total enrollment is students with disabilities? What is the breakdown of types of disabilities?
- Is there a fair number of suitable student jobs in the community, accessible to students with disabilities?

Once information has been gathered, the groups should put it into report form and share their findings with the entire group. Open the room up for discussion.

- Did they feel that there was a significant difference between the colleges contacted? more attentive to the needs of students with disabilities? Explain.
- Did they find that there was a notable difference between public and private colleges? Did they believe one or the other was
- Did anything they discovered surprise them in any way? What? Why?

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## Activity Two

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**Purpose:** To gather additional information on accessibility in Wisconsin colleges and to raise awareness of how architectural barriers might impact college and career choices of their peers with disabilities.

**Materials needed:** None.

Have the group contact friends attending colleges and universities in Wisconsin. (It is helpful if those friends attend colleges that were contacted in Activity One.) Participants should explain Activity One to their friends and ask them about their perceptions, as students, of the accessibility of their campus and their school's accommodation of students with disabilities. If the members of your group do not know many college-aged students, ask a high school guidance counselor if he or she can recommend someone who might be able to assist your group in gathering information.

- Ask them if there are other things about their campus that they feel students with various disabilities may need to consider when choosing a college.
- For example, the campus of the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire has ‘The Hill’. Students living in dorms have to descend and climb ‘The Hill’ daily to get to classes. Do they know how students with physical disabilities manage it?
- Wisconsin campuses are going to experience weather extremes. How would that affect students with disabilities and how could this issue be addressed?
- Thinking about their daily routine, their classrooms and dorm life, do they feel there are things that could present potential problems for people with different disabilities? What are they?
- Talk to them about their perceptions of their campus and students with disabilities. Is there anything else they would like to share?

Have the group meet again to go over any additional information and insight provided by the college students, adding it to what they’ve already learned.

Discuss:

- Do they think it might be more difficult for a student with disabilities to make a college choice? Why?
- Could problems with accessibility limit the college choices for people with disabilities? To what degree?
- If, for some reason, students with disabilities settle for schools and majors because of accessibility issues, do they feel that might impact their success in college or in their career? How?
- Could problems with accessibility limit career choices for people with disabilities? How? To what degree?

**Brainstorm:** If they’re running into accessibility stumbling blocks to their goals, what innovative steps could young people with disabilities take to work around those barriers and get exactly the education and start in life that they’ve always dreamed of?

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## Activity Three

**Purpose:** To help members of the group discover how vastly life has changed for people with disabilities in the last generation and think about further changes that could make independent living even more feasible.

**Materials Needed:** Internet access.

*Topic: A generation or two ago, living independently was not a choice for many people with disabilities.*

Have your group research this statement, looking into typical living conditions for people with disabilities and the choices available to them prior to 1970. To deepen the discussion, have another group do the same research, using a time frame prior to 1950.

Have the group discuss their findings and the changes that occurred that helped to make independent living possible for many people with disabilities.

- What might prevent someone with a disability from living on his or her own?
- What services or other things are available today that might address some of those issues? (e.g. increased availability of adapted housing and public transportation, personal assistants)
- What changes in public housing and transportation could still be made to make it feasible for more people with disabilities to live independently?
- Have the group make a list of the things they would take into consideration when choosing housing for themselves. How would their list differ from the list of someone with a disability? What would be the same?
- Do they feel limited housing options might limit job opportunities for people with disabilities? How?

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## Activity Four

**Purpose:** To help members of your group look at the lives of famous people with disabilities and attempt to determine how they dealt with barriers and what might be learned from their successes.

**Materials Needed:** See *Resources* for a list of famous people with disabilities. Print out enough for the group.

Have each member of your group write an essay on a famous person with a disability, focusing on how the person's disability may have affected the life choices he or she made. How did the person deal with architectural or attitudinal barriers they encountered? Other barriers?



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## Unit Two: Disabilities in the Media & in the Arts

### Goals

- To encourage the group to use critical thinking when reading books or magazines, watching films or hearing news stories about people with disabilities.

### Coordinator Prep:

More than other units, Disabilities in the Media & in the Arts will require resource materials – books and films as well as magazine and newspaper articles. Some resources are available in *Resources* to assist you. However, you may wish to seek the assistance of your school or public librarian in finding additional source materials for your group.

## Activity One

**Purpose:** To look at and assess depictions of people with disabilities in novels and biographies.

**Materials Needed:** The list of books found in the Resources Section of *Avenues to Understanding* may assist members of your group in finding appropriate books for this activity.

Have students choose a book – fiction or a biography – about a person with a disability, read it, and present an oral report. (In works of fiction, the character with the disability does not need to be the protagonist of the story, but should, for this activity, have a significant role.)

The report should address the following:

### Biographies

- Based on the reader's prior knowledge of the subject of the book, did they feel it was an accurate account of the person's life?
- Did the author show both positive and negative aspects of the person?
- Did the book have some sort of underlying theme? What was it?
- Why do they feel the author chose to write about this person?
- In the reader's opinion, will reading the book help people without disabilities understand life with a disability? In what ways?

### Fiction:

- In the reader's opinion, why did the author choose to portray a person with a disability?
- What was the purpose of the disability to the story?
- How was the person with the disability portrayed? (As a well-rounded human being? As heroic because of the disability? As an object of curiosity or pity?)
- What did they feel was positive or negative about the characterization? Why?
- How did the book make them feel?
- Did it affect their attitudes or ideas about people with disabilities? How? Why?

Have the group discuss their general impression of the books they chose for this activity. Did they feel disabilities were, for the most part, presented in a manner they would consider negative, positive or neutral? Comparing publication dates of the books the group chose, was there any marked difference in the depiction of the person with the disability based on when the book was published? Did they find it difficult to find suitable books for this activity?

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## Activity Two

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**Purpose:** To look at and assess depictions of people with disabilities in film or in television.

**Materials Needed:** DVDs of films or television shows in which one of the main characters has a disability and means to play and view it. A list of films dealing with disability in some way is available in *Resources*. You may wish to view several of the films and choose those you feel are appropriate for the age and maturity of your group and that you feel will best promote discussion.

Watch selected films or television shows and discuss, using many of the points given in Activity One to promote the flow of ideas.



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## Activity Three

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**Purpose:** To look at and assess depictions of people with disabilities in newspaper and magazine articles.

**Materials Needed:** Newspaper and magazine articles relating to disabilities in some way. If needed, librarians may assist you in finding articles. Internet access. If possible, obtain samples of magazines created *by* people with disabilities. One possible source of disability related news articles is <http://www.napas.org>.

- After reading and sharing a number of newspaper and magazine articles dealing with disabilities (disabilities do not need to be the main focus of the article), discuss how the disabilities are presented and whether they shape the story in any way. Questions posed in Activity One can also be used here to further promote discussion. Compare articles written over the years. Is there evidence of increased sensitivity to how the person with the disability is depicted? Did the words used to describe the disability or the person with the disability change over time? How?
- Have your group visit the website of the *National Arts and Disability Center* (<http://semel.ucla.edu/nadc>) where they can find links to a number of magazines and online magazines *by* people with disabilities. Have the group compare articles that deal with disabilities written by people with disabilities to those written by the more 'mainstream' magazines and newspapers. In their opinion, are there significant differences? What are they?

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## Activity Four

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**Purpose:** To review and compare depictions of people with disabilities in the media and the arts.

**Materials Needed:** None.

Wrap up the discussion of Disabilities in the Media and in the Arts by discussing how portrayals of people with disabilities in news media, television, film and literature affect public opinion. Compare to the effects on public opinion of media dealing with other civil rights issues and movements.





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## Unit Three: The Language of Disability

### Goals

- To explore the importance of language in shaping and changing attitudes.

### Coordinator Prep

- You may wish to review ‘The Language of Disability’ (see *Resources*) to refresh your knowledge on currently preferred language used to talk about disabilities and about people with disabilities.

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## Activity One

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**Purpose:** To look at how language may help shape attitudes.

**Materials Needed:** Copies of *The Language of Disability Quiz*, found in *Resources*.

To introduce the topic, hand out and have the group take *The Language of Disability Quiz*.

How did the members of the group do on the quiz? Were they surprised by some of the answers? Explain that while ‘political correctness’ can sometimes seem to go overboard, there is legitimate reason for members of minority groups – or any group – to have an interest in the language used to discuss and describe them. Discuss the role of language in shaping positive and negative attitudes.

Analyze language that is or has been used to describe or talk about people with disabilities. Examples: *confined* to a wheelchair; *victim* of polio; *suffers from* cerebral palsy; *defective*; *unfortunate*; *invalid*.

- What images do these words conjure up?
- How could these images affect perceptions of people with disabilities?
- How could these perceptions affect attitudes toward people with disabilities?
- How could attitudes affect inclusion of people with disabilities in society?

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## Activity Two

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**Purpose:** To look at how language has been used as a tool in a variety of historic human rights battles.

**Materials Needed:** Access to research materials.

Historically, language has been used as a tool to help oppress or uplift specific populations or those who hold specific political beliefs. Divide your group into smaller groups and have each explore how language was used as a method to oppress or dehumanize one of the groups listed here.

- Jews and/or gypsies in Nazi Germany
- Native Americans
- African Americans
- Women
- Irish immigrants to America

Variation: Rather than assigning each small group a different group from the list, choose one group and assign each of your small groups a different period of time, analyzing language used in that era. Have the group meet and compare how language changed as a given group fought for better treatment and began to gain civil rights.

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## Unit Four: Disabilities & Civil Rights

### Goals

- To help participants become aware of the existence of the Disability Rights movement (and branches thereof) and to understand the historical reasons for its formation.
- To help participants draw parallels between the drive for full participation for people with disabilities and other historic civil rights movements.
- To raise awareness of accessibility limitations in voting for people with disabilities.

### Coordinator Prep:

You may wish to preview the sources given for Activity One and augment them as you feel is necessary.

### ————— Activity One —————

**Purpose:** To raise awareness of the Disability Rights movement and some of the historic reasons for its existence.

**Materials Needed:** Access to the Internet and to other resources.

The following subjects are significant to people with disabilities and to many involved in the Disability Rights movement. Divide your group into smaller groups and assign each one of the topics from the list. The weblinks provided should not be considered comprehensive, but will give groups a starting point.

- **The Eugenics Movement** and the forced sterilization of people with disabilities in the U.S.A.  
<http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/>  
<http://www.nature.com/scitable/topicpage/human-testing-the-eugenics-movement-and-irbs-724>  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugenics>
- **Useless Eaters:** The elimination of people with disabilities in Nazi Germany  
<http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005200>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action\\_T4](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_T4)  
<http://www.regent.edu/acad/schedu/uselesseaters/>
- **The ‘Rolling Quads’** and the formation of the Independent Living movement  
<http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/collections/drilm/>  
<http://www.mtstcil.org/skills/il-2-intro.html>  
<http://www.independentliving.org/>
- **The Americans with Disabilities Act:** Conception, enactment and battle to keep it strong  
<http://adata.org/>  
<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h2050.html>  
<http://www.dredf.org/>
- **Not Dead Yet,** formed to speak out on the issues of assisted suicide and the rationing of health care for people with disabilities.  
<http://www.notdeadyet.org/>  
<https://disabilityrightscenter.wordpress.com/>  
<http://jfactivist.typepad.com/>

**General Disability History sites:** <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/>  
<http://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/index.html>  
<http://www.disabilityhistory.org/dshp.html>



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Have small groups share the information they were able to gather with the entire group. Sharing can include both oral and written presentations. Encourage group discussion.

- Have the group compare the Disability Rights Movement to that of other historic movements for justice, equality and inclusion. Do members of the group feel that drawing comparisons between the Disability Rights movement and that of the Civil Rights movement or the Feminist movement is valid? Why or why not? How do they differ? What similarities exist?
- While researching, did they find notable differences between sources with strong ties to disability rights groups, and those without, in how historical events and information was presented? In what way? What significance do they place on those differences?
- Did they find ties between historical events and current events? Which ones? How do they feel these past and current events are related?

## ———— Activity Two ————

**Purpose:** To help participants become aware of issues regarding voting for persons with disabilities.

**Materials Needed:** Information on and possible access to your community polling places; contact information for your County Clerk.

*According to a study released by the United States Government Accountability Office in 2013, 73e% of polling places nationwide have at least one barrier that may limit access to people with disabilities. In many counties, accessibility is not even one of the criteria for selecting polling sites – despite at least 3 federal laws mandating access to the polls for voters with disabilities.*

- How could limited access to voting sites affect people with disabilities?
- Could awareness of this limited access to voting affect political sensitivity to the concerns of people with disabilities?

Have the group do some research into the polling places in your community, their accessibility, and how people with disabilities vote if there are accessibility issues.

- Are all polling places fully accessible? (Polling places must be architecturally accessible, but there are a number of additional accessibility issues involving the voting process itself. As part of the activity, have your group research what those issues are.) If not, what percentage pose accessibility problems?
- How readily available is information on alternative voting methods if polling places are not fully accessible? Do the alternative methods seem reasonable and easy to arrange?
- In the group's opinion, is there anything in arranging to vote using alternative methods that might limit the number of people who actually follow through and vote? If yes, have the group brainstorm things that could be done to address the situation.
- How would the group rate the severity of the accessibility issues? For people who use wheelchairs? For people with vision loss?

If the group feels that significant problems with voting for people with disabilities exist in your community, have them share their concerns with the County Clerk or other appropriate persons.

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## — Sharing the Understanding —

### **Hold a Disability Awareness Fair for younger children.**

- Determine what you'd like to include, how many people you believe will come, how much space you'll need and whether you will offer refreshments.
- Choose a date and arrange a location. Suggestions: school gyms, churches or community halls.
- Promote the event by sending invitation flyers to area schools and childcare programs. Contact a local paper and ask them to do an article promoting the event.
- Plan the disability awareness activities that will be offered. Activities suggested in Section One of *Avenues to Understanding* can be adapted for use.
- Include a number of additional children's activities such as face painting, a fishing booth, an obstacle course and a bean bag toss. Obtain materials and prizes if needed.
- Consider arranging for the use of some adaptive equipment the kids can see and touch, and have someone available to explain how the equipment works. Or you might like to have separate 'booths', each focusing on a variety of equipment used by people with different types of disabilities (mobility, sensory loss, etc.)
- Have a printed list of suggested books on disabilities to hand out to parents.

### **Approach your public library and ask them to assist you in hosting a Disability Awareness Month.**

- Ask the library to display books about disabilities, about people with disabilities or that were written by people with disabilities. Librarians will be able to suggest suitable books but you may also wish to do some independent research and suggest additional books. Be aware that libraries will be more willing to participate if they're not asked to purchase new books, but can use books already on hand or that they can obtain from other branches in their system.
- Make disability awareness posters that can be displayed in the library during the month chosen for your event.
- Contact the local newspaper asking them to do an article promoting Disability Awareness Month.
- During your Disability Awareness Month, hold a weekly story time at the library for young children, reading books about people with disabilities or books with a character that has a disability. If the library doesn't have enough suitable books, consider purchasing some to use during your story times and to afterward donate to the library.\* You may also wish to have something for participating children to take home – a bookmark or a coloring poster.\*

### **Have your group brainstorm ways they feel they can share disability awareness information with their school or community, choose one and follow through.**





## Resources



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## Q & A: Answers to Common Questions Young Children Ask

We asked our resident experts (some of the young people who attend Easter Seals Camp Wawbeek) what questions very young children most commonly ask them, and how they reply. Children might be interested to know that all four of the responders here (Ashley – 16; Brad – 18; Ed – 29 and Megan – 13) have the same disability – cerebral palsy. Differing answers may help illustrate that individuals are differently affected by their disabilities and that they deal with them in different ways.

### Why are you in a wheelchair?

**Ashley:** My muscles don't work as well as other people's do.

**Brad:** My legs don't work like they should.

**Ed:** I'm in a wheelchair because that's how God made me. I can't walk or stand on my own. I need support. My legs do not work like others who can run, jump, hop and skip.

**Megan:** Because my legs don't work.

### Does it hurt?

**Ashley:** No.

**Brad:** Yes, sometimes certain parts of my body hurt, but not very often.

**Ed:** No, having a disability doesn't hurt! My leg muscles tighten up from time to time.

**Megan:** No.

### Can you walk?

**Ashley:** Yes, with a grown up's help or with my walker.

**Brad:** No, I can't walk.

**Ed:** Yes, I can walk. I walk with a special walker that gives me support. It's good for me to walk to help keep my leg muscles loose. I can only walk short distances, though. Getting around campus using my chair is pretty easy, but when the weather is bad – deep snow or heavy rain – I count on my friends to give me a hand.

**Megan:** Yes, I can walk, but it's hard for me. Using my wheelchair makes me much more independent.

### How do you get dressed?

**Ashley:** I need help from a grown up to get dressed.

**Brad:** My parents help me.

**Ed:** I can get dressed as far as putting on shirts, shorts, and pants. I need help putting on my socks, braces and shoes.

**Megan:** I get help, but I pick out my own outfit and make myself pretty.

### How do you take a bath?

**Ashley:** I have a bench that I sit on in the shower in our bathroom.

**Brad:** I have a special chair my parents put me in to take a shower or bath.

**Ed:** I take a shower by using a special shower chair with rollers on it, so that way I can just roll in to the shower with little help.

**Megan:** I get undressed, get in the tub and take a bath. :-)

### Do you sleep in your wheelchair?

**Ashley:** No, my mom or dad picks me up and puts me in bed.

**Brad:** No, my parents and friends help me into bed.

**Ed:** Yes, I fall asleep in my chair from time to time for a few hours when I'm really tired from watching TV or doing homework. But just for naps. At night, I sleep in a bed.

**Megan:** No. I sleep in my bed just like you and I get tucked in by my parents, too.



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### How do you go up and down stairs?

**Ashley:** I have a special chair that sits on a rail and it takes me up and down the stairs by pushing a button. I also use ramps to get into other places.

**Brad:** I either take the elevator if there's one or my parents take me out of my chair and carry me up or down the stairs. Then they carry my chair up. That can be a lot of work, so it's great when there are ramps and elevators.

**Ed:** I walk upstairs hanging onto railings. One person goes in front of me and one behind. They are there for support.

### Do you go to school?

**Ashley:** Yes, I take a bus that has a lift in the side of it so I can get my wheelchair into it. I go to regular classes.

**Brad:** Yes, I go to school just like you, but I have someone there that helps me with what I need.

**Ed:** Yes, I do go to school. I attend the University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh, majoring in Radio/TV/Film. Having a disability doesn't stop you from following your dreams and doing whatever you want to do.

**Megan:** Yes, I go and learn just like everybody else. My favorite subject is reading.

### Do you play sports?

**Ashley:** Some sports are made especially for people in wheelchairs, so yes, I can play sports.

**Brad:** Yes, I can play some sports with some special equipment. My favorite sport is bowling, and there's a ball ramp I can use. All they have to do is put the bowling ball on the ramp and then I can push it down the ramp and it rolls down the alley toward the pins. They also have adapted pool tables where I can wheel my chair right under the table and use shorter pool cues.

**Ed:** Yes, I do play sports. I compete in Special Olympics. I participate in sports like basketball, bowling, and track and field. In track and field I compete in the 100 meter and 200 meter wheelchair racing.

**Megan:** Yes, I do. I love playing basketball.

### What do you do with your friends?

**Ashley:** I go shopping, to movies and talk to them on the phone a lot. I also have friends spend the night and go camping with us.

**Brad:** I go shopping, I go to the movies, I talk with them on the phone and many other things.

**Ed:** I go to movies, go out to eat, and go to sporting events with my friends. I also just hang out and have a good time.

**Megan:** We play. We talk. We go places like the movies. We hang out.

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# The Language of Disability

Language is a fluid thing, evolving as sensitivity to the impact that words can have on attitudes increases. Terms that are thought to be perfectly acceptable one day may be deemed unacceptable the next. Like any group of people, people with disabilities often do not agree on what terminology is ‘correct’ for their ‘group’. But most agree that language can foster negative, positive, or neutral images and attitudes and that because language *does* play an important role in shaping beliefs and behavior, the words used to describe people with disabilities or the disabilities themselves are important and should be used with thought and care.

While not universally accepted by disability rights groups and by people with disabilities, the following will give you a number of tips regarding currently preferred language.

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## Disabilities and Handicaps

The words *disability* and *handicap* are not interchangeable.

A **disability** is a condition caused by an accident, trauma, genetics or disease which may limit a person’s mobility, hearing, vision, speech or mental function. Some people have more than one disability. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, one in every five Americans has a disability, and it is estimated that 50% of all people will have some type of disability during their lifetime.

A **handicap** is a physical or attitudinal constraint that is imposed upon a person, regardless of whether that person has a disability.

Many people with disabilities feel their *real* disability involves problems with the environment rather than problems with their bodies. Architectural barriers limit participation, productivity, and independence.

For instance, if a person who uses a wheelchair is offered a job that he or she cannot accept because it is located on the second floor of a building without an elevator, the real problem – *the handicap* – is that there is no elevator. Attitudinal barriers can cause further limitations. If an employer passes on a qualified candidate with a physical disability because he believes the person will miss too much work because of the disability, the real problem – *the handicap* – is the attitudinal barrier in the mind of the prospective employer.

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## ‘Person First’ Language

When speaking about people with disabilities, perhaps the most important thing to remember is to always put the person *first*\*. Referencing the person before their disability conveys respect and simple good manners.

*person with a disability* rather than *disabled person*\*  
*student who is deaf* rather than *deaf student*

People are not medical conditions, and prefer not to be referred to as such.

*people with spinal cord injuries* rather than *the spinal cord injured*

*people who have epilepsy* rather than *epileptics*

\* While it is preferable to always reference the person first, then the disability, it is acceptable to use ‘disabled person’ occasionally when writing, in the interest of conserving print space or to avoid repetitiveness.

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## Replacing Outdated Language with More Appropriate Words

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*Person with a physical disability* or *physical disability* can replace: crippled, the crippled, cripp, lame, invalid, defective, deficient, bed-ridden, bound/confined/restricted to a wheelchair, deformed, handicapped, physically-challenged, differently-abled, spastic, paralytic or victim.

*Person with spina bifida* (for example) or *person who has spina bifida* can replace: stricken with/by spina bifida, victim of spina bifida, afflicted with/by spina bifida, burdened with/by spina bifida, suffers with or from spina bifida, crippled with/by spina bifida.

*Person with an intellectual disability* or *person with a cognitive delay* can replace: mentally ill, mentally retarded, retarded, retard, slow, crazy, nuts, lunatic, maniac, mentally diseased, psycho, feeble minded, moron, deficient, mentally defective, imbecile or idiot.

*Person who does not have a disability* or *person who is able to walk* (for example) can replace: healthy or normal. When used for comparative purposes, the words *healthy* and *normal* imply that people with disabilities are *unhealthy* (many are in excellent health) or *abnormal*.

*Person born without legs* (for example), or *born with* or *condition present at birth* can replace: birth defect, congenital defect.

*Seizure* can replace: fit, spell or attack.

*Nonverbal* or *does not speak* can replace: dumb or mute.

*Accessible parking* and *accessible bathrooms* can replace: Handicapped parking/bathroom or disabled parking/bathrooms.

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## Words to Avoid

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Avoid: special, burden, burdens to their families or to society, unfortunate, less fortunate, sick (a disability is not a sickness), fragile, abnormal, subnormal, deformed, deformity, pitiful, deaf and dumb, dependent, incompetent, patient (unless the person under discussion is in the hospital) or poor.

Avoid suggesting that people with disabilities are in constant need of charity or welfare, or that they are 'non-contributing' members of society.

Avoid suggesting that people with physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities are in any way menaces, deviants or dangers to society, that they are outcasts or that they are somehow biologically inferior or less than fully human.

Also avoid words like courageous, brave and inspirational. Adapting to a disability does not automatically mean acquiring those traits.

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## A Final Word

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As mentioned earlier, the language of disability can be confusing, more so because not all advocates agree on preferred language. Finding contradictions in what is considered 'correct' language in printed materials or on the web is not uncommon. Some websites contradict themselves!

Because of the lack of hard and fast rules and definitions, people are sometimes afraid of using the wrong word. Don't let that uncertainty stop you from discussing disability-related issues or from speaking to people with disabilities.

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## Myths & Realities

Myths are roadblocks usually caused by misunderstandings and a lack of experience interacting with people with disabilities. Too often, these misunderstandings interfere with the ability of people with disabilities to find acceptance among their peers because they evoke fears and discomfort.

Misunderstandings about a disability can evoke the following fears:

- That we might “catch” it.
- That we will do or say the wrong thing.

Misunderstandings can also create discomfort or embarrassment if we are afraid of the following:

- That people with disabilities are so different from us that we cannot understand them and they cannot understand us.
- That we cannot communicate with people with disabilities.
- That the needs and wants of people with disabilities are not the same as ours.
- That we may feel our own vulnerability in their presence, and have to face up to the fact that we are likely to experience a disability at some point in our lives.

Misunderstandings can lead to pity if we believe the following:

- That people with disabilities want others to feel sorry for them.
- That people with disabilities only need our help, rather than our support and friendship.
- That people with disabilities are less fortunate and want “special” attention.

### **Myth: People with disabilities are brave and courageous.**

Reality: Adjusting to a disability requires adapting to a lifestyle, not bravery and courage. Going to college, having a family, participating in sporting events and working at a job are normal – not heroic – activities for people with disabilities, just as they are for people without disabilities.

### **Myth: People with disabilities are sick.**

Reality: Of course, individuals with disabilities are sometimes sick, just as people without disabilities are sometimes sick. A disability, though, is a condition, not an illness. Assuming they are the same thing can foster negative stereotypes, including fear of ‘catching’ the disability, or that people with disabilities need to be ‘cured’.

### **Myth: If you cannot see a disability it does not exist.**

Reality: One out of every five Americans has a disability, and not all disabilities are visible or immediately apparent. Conditions such as chronic back pain and arthritis, as well as learning disabilities and psychological disabilities, can create significant limitations or difficulties for those experiencing them.

### **Myth: People with physical disabilities have lower IQs or are ‘uneducable’.**

Reality: People with physical disabilities have a full range of IQs and academic abilities. The degree of the physical disability has no bearing on a person’s mental capacity.

### **Myth: A wheelchair is confining; people who use wheelchairs are ‘wheelchair bound’.**

Reality: A wheelchair, like a bicycle or a car, is a personal assistive device that enables someone to get around. Rather than ‘confining’, most people who use wheelchairs consider them liberating!

### **Myth: People who use wheelchairs can’t walk.**

Reality: Some people using wheelchairs cannot walk and others can. Many people use wheelchairs because they tire easily or because their strength is limited and a wheelchair makes it possible for them to travel longer distances, or to be ‘out and about’ for longer periods of time.

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**Myth: People who are blind acquire a ‘sixth sense’.**

Reality: Although many people who are blind may refine their remaining senses and use them more fully, they do not develop a ‘sixth sense’.

**Myth: People with disabilities are more comfortable with ‘their own kind’.**

Reality: People with disabilities are most comfortable with people they like and enjoy spending time with. This misconception probably came about because, in the past, many people with disabilities often went to separate schools or lived in institutions.

**Myth: People with disabilities should be protected from the harsher aspects of life.**

Reality: People with disabilities want to participate in the full range of human experiences – the good and the bad.

**Myth: Curious children should never ask people about their disabilities.**

Reality: Many children have a natural, uninhibited curiosity and may ask questions that some adults consider rude. But ‘shushing’ curious children may make them think that having a disability is ‘wrong’ or ‘bad’, and embarrassed ‘shushing’ by parents may leave a child with the impression that they shouldn’t speak to people with disabilities. Most people with disabilities won’t mind answering a child’s questions.

**Myth: The lives of people with disabilities are totally different than the lives of people without disabilities.**

Reality: People with disabilities go to school, get married, work, have families, laugh, cry, pay taxes, get angry, have prejudices, vote, plan, dream and set goals like everyone else. People with disabilities are human beings who can be just as annoying, nice, rude or amusing as anyone else you might know.

**Myth: People with disabilities cannot participate in sports and recreational activities.**

Reality: People with disabilities take part in a wide variety of sports. In recent years, technological advances in adaptive sports equipment have opened doors to even more recreational opportunities.

**Myth: There is nothing one person can do to eliminate the architectural and attitudinal barriers confronting people with disabilities.**

Reality: Everyone can contribute to change. You can help remove barriers by:

- Encouraging participation of people with disabilities in community activities by using accessible meeting and event sites.
- Understanding children’s curiosity about disabilities and not immediately ‘shushing’ them when they ask questions.
- Speaking up when negative words or phrases are used about disabilities or about people with disabilities.
- Understanding the need for accessible parking and leaving it for those who need it.
- Writing producers and editors a note of support when they portray someone with a disability as a ‘regular’ person in films, plays or on television.
- Accepting people with disabilities as individuals capable of the same needs and feelings as yourself.

**And now, a couple of myths about people *without* disabilities:**

**Myth: People who don’t have disabilities don’t want to be around those that do.**

Reality: Not true. However, lack of experience in meeting people with disabilities sometimes makes those without uncomfortable. They’re often afraid of saying the wrong thing or are nervous about doing something offensive. People with disabilities and those without must get past this initial hesitation and discover ways to make interaction more comfortable for everyone involved.

**Myth: People who offer to lend a hand to people with disabilities know how to provide the needed help.**

Reality: The desire to help and the knowledge of how to do so do not necessarily go hand in hand. If a person with a disability accepts an offer for assistance, it’s helpful for him or her to give specific instructions on exactly what type of assistance is needed and the best way to carry it out.



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# Disability Etiquette

Meeting someone with a physical disability can sometimes cause discomfort, particularly if it is a new situation, and if you're worried about saying or doing the 'wrong' thing. This needn't be an awkward situation. The most important thing to remember is that people with disabilities want to be treated just as you like to be treated. Be friendly and show the same interest you would show when meeting anyone for the first time.

There is some etiquette involved when conversing with people with various disabilities however, and we offer some guidelines here to help ease those first meetings.

## Common Courtesies

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When talking with someone who has a disability, speak directly to him or her rather than through a companion who may be along, including interpreters and personal aides.

Offer to shake hands when introduced. People with limited hand use or an artificial limb can usually shake hands. Offering the left hand is an acceptable greeting.

Don't lean or hang on someone's wheelchair. Wheelchairs are an extension of personal space.

If possible when talking with a person in a wheelchair for more than a few minutes, place yourself at his or her eye level.

Treat adults as adults. Call a person by his or her first name only when you extend this familiarity to everyone present.

Don't pet guide or companion dogs. They are working. However, it's more than appropriate to compliment the beauty and good behavior of the dog.

Don't discourage children from asking questions about a wheelchair or other assistive devices.

Never start to push someone's wheelchair without first asking if you may do so.

Relax. Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions, such as "See you later" or "I've got to run" that seem to relate to the person's disability.

When greeting a person with a severe loss of vision, always identify yourself and others who may be with you. When conversing in a group, remember to say the name of the person to whom you are speaking to give a vocal cue.

People with disabilities are entitled to the same courtesies you would extend to anyone, including personal privacy. However, it's fine to talk about the disability if it comes up naturally, and if you do so in a courteous and respectful way and without prying. Be guided by the wishes of the person with the disability.

Give whole, unhurried attention when you're talking to a person who has difficulty speaking. Don't talk for the person, but give help when needed. Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting, and be patient. When necessary, ask questions that require short answers or a nod or shake of the head. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Repeat what you understand. The person's reaction will guide you to understanding.

To get the attention of a person who has a hearing disability, tap the person lightly on the shoulder or wave your hand. Look directly at the person and speak clearly and slowly to establish if the person can read your lips. Not everyone who is deaf or hard of hearing can lip-read. Those who do will rely on facial expressions and other body language to help interpret. Show consideration by facing a light source and keeping your hands and food away from your mouth when speaking. For people who use hearing aids, speak in a normal tone; hearing aids are set to standard voice levels. If the person asks you to speak up, do. Written notes may also help.

Some people with disabilities don't exhibit the same types of visual 'I understand' cues you may be accustomed to. It might take some time and experimenting before you're certain you're both on the same page.

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## When Offering Assistance

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If you would like to help someone with a disability, ask if he or she needs help before you act, and listen to any instructions the person may want to give. If your offer is accepted, don't assume anything. If you have a question about what to do and how to do it, ask.

Don't be offended if your help is refused and, if this is someone you will interact with again, don't hesitate to offer help again on other occasions.

Before deciding whether or not to push a wheelchair up or down a step, curb or other obstruction, ask the person if and how he or she wants you to proceed, and be aware of your own limitations.

Be considerate of the extra time it might take a person with a disability to get things done. Let the person set the pace in walking, talking and eating.

When giving directions to a person in a wheelchair, consider the distance involved, weather conditions and any physical obstacles the person may encounter such as stairs, curbs and steep hills.

When directing a person with a visual impairment, use specifics such as "left a hundred feet" or "right two yards".

When you offer to assist someone with a visual impairment, allow the person to take your arm. This will help you to guide, rather than propel or lead, the person.

When planning events involving persons with disabilities, consider their needs ahead of time. If an insurmountable barrier exists, let them know about it prior to the event. It is also courteous to inform the venue of the number of people with disabilities you expect to have in attendance and what their needs might be so that they may prepare in advance.

When dining with a person who has trouble cutting meat or buttering rolls, offer to help.

Be alert to the presence of architectural barriers in places you may want to enter with a person who has a disability.

If the person you're with transfers from a wheelchair to a different chair, do not move the wheelchair out of their reach without permission.

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## Parents & A Child's Curiosity

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*"I was 10 when my older brother, Bob, was paralyzed in an accident and as I was growing up, I saw a lot of interaction between him and others. I remember standing next to him as we waited to go into a restaurant, and having kids come up, eager to talk about his electric wheelchair. My brother, being a guy, was more than happy to show off the controls, but the parents kept pulling their kids away, often with whispered instructions not to mention that the poor man was in a wheelchair. I remember turning to Bob and saying, "Do they think you haven't noticed?"*

As parents, our intentions are good. We don't want our children to be rude or to intrude on another's privacy. But in situations such as the one above, our reactions could instead plant other, unintended messages in our children's minds: Don't talk to the person in the wheelchair, don't look at the person in the wheelchair, don't be curious about them, don't be their friend, don't include them. In all innocence, the habit of avoidance may have taken root.

Allow your child's curiosity. If they approach someone in a wheelchair, join them. Relax. Smile and say, 'He's curious. Do you mind?' Most often, the answer will be 'No.' Offer your hand and introduce yourself. While your child is satisfying his curiosity and you're getting to know the person, you may want to pull up a chair if one is convenient so that you and the person in the wheelchair are at the same eye level.

Instead of unintentionally promoting avoidance, your easy, open and comfortable attitude will help instill in your child a message of acceptance and inclusion.

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# Bullying

Information on bullying is taken from [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov) a program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The program has an excellent website offering comprehensive information for children, parents and educators as well as numerous downloads for distribution, including brochures and posters. If you are able, we highly recommend you visit the site. For those who do not have access to a computer, we offer the following information to give you an overview of the subject of bullying and its importance.

## What is bullying?

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Bullying is intentional, aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Typically, it is repeated over time, and can take a variety of forms including physical, verbal and emotional bullying. Cyber bullying – the sending of insulting messages by email or text messaging – also occurs and is on the rise.

Because of the devastating effects bullying can have on all students – those being bullied, the bullies themselves and those witnessing the bullying – bullying has been identified as a major concern by schools across the country.

Being bullied can interfere with students' participation in school and community activities and affect their ability and motivation to learn. Victims of bullying are more likely than other children to be depressed or lonely, to experience anxiety and to frequently feel unwell. They may fear going to school, using school bathrooms or riding the bus. Recess and gym classes can be a nightmare for them. Sometimes

they contemplate suicide. And the effects can be long lasting; research suggests that, as adults, people who were bullied as children are more likely to be depressed and have low self-esteem.

Those being bullied are not the only ones bullying hurts. The kids at school who are bystanders to the bullying are also harmed through the climate of fear and disrespect that bullying creates. Bullying also has a negative impact on student learning.

Creating an atmosphere intolerant to bullying may also benefit the bullies themselves. Kids who frequently bully their peers are more likely than others to get into frequent fights, vandalize or steal property, develop problems with alcohol, tobacco and truancy, and are more likely to drop out of school or carry weapons. Intervening to help bullies to understand and stop their inappropriate behaviors may steer them toward a more productive future.

## Why is Easter Seals concerned with bullying?

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Bullying is a form of victimization or abuse, and it is wrong. Children and teenagers should be able to attend school or take part in community activities without fear of being harassed, assaulted, belittled or excluded.

Aside from the obvious concern for the well-being of young people in Wisconsin, research indicates that children with physical, sensory, cognitive and learning disabilities may be at a higher risk of being bullied than other children. While the emotional and possible physical harm to kids with disabilities is paramount, the bullying of kids with disabilities may also cross

the line to become 'disability harassment', which is illegal under sections of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

With studies showing that up to 25% of students are the victims of bullies, and can be subjected to unacceptable behaviors for months on end, Easter Seals believes this is an issue that should be of concern to everyone who works with or cares about the emotional and physical well-being of children – both those with disabilities and those without.

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## What can be done?

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### stopbullying.gov

Understanding the depth of the problem and learning as much as you can about bullying is an important first step in bringing about change. As mentioned previously, **stopbullying.gov** is an excellent source for comprehensive information on bullying. Here, we've included an overview of some of the sections you'll find there that we found particularly helpful. **stopbullying.gov** offers much of this information in .pdf format that can be printed for distribution.

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## Kids

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### Understand what bullying is...

Bullying is not just the big kid beating up a smaller kid and stealing money or other things from them. It is also making fun of people, calling them names, gossiping about them behind their backs or deliberately leaving them out of activities. It can mean scaring people, hurting them physically or purposely hurting their feelings. Both girls and boys can be bullies and can be the victims of bullies. Usually, the victim finds it difficult or impossible to fight back. Bullying is not funny or cool. It is cruel and unfair, it is wrong and it hurts.

### For kids who are being bullied:

At **stopbullying.gov**, kids who are being bullied are offered advice on what they can do including details on why it's important to tell an adult and tips on doing so. They will also find ideas on how to help prevent future bullying, what to say (and not say) to a bully and what to do if they're being bullied online.

### For bullies:

Bullies need help as well. **stopbullying.gov** offers a quiz for kids who aren't sure if what they're doing is bullying, and offers tips for those who *are* bullying others to think about what they're doing and get help to stop.

### For bystanders – kids who witness bullying:

Kids who aren't bullies and aren't being bullied can still be adversely affected by the disruptive climate bullying can create. Most will witness some type of bullying and many will do nothing about it. **stopbullying.gov** helps bystanders learn what they can do to help bring an end to bullying. Kids are assured that telling an adult what they've witnessed is not tattling, and are encouraged to take careful note of bullying incidents so that they can accurately report them. They are also encouraged to support the person being bullied and, if it's safe, to stand up to the bully.

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## Parents, Family Members & Educators

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Statistics cited at **stopbullying.gov** tell us that more than 30% of kids believe that adults do little or nothing to help in bullying incidents. One study in schools indicated that while 70% of teachers believed that teachers intervene "almost always" in bullying situations, only 25% of students agreed with this assessment. Further, 25% of teachers see nothing wrong with bullying or putdowns and consequently intervene in only 4% of bullying incidents.

It is vitally important that kids understand that bullying is an issue that the adults in their lives – parents, teachers and club and organization leaders – care about. Often, kids fear that telling adults will only bring more harassment from bullies. Kids being bullied need to know that once they tell an adult about the situation, steps will be taken to protect them and prevent further harm.

**stopbullying.gov** offers advice for parents and educators, and may be of assistance to adults as they talk with their own children or with the children in their care.

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## Tools: Adaptive Equipment & Assistive Technology

Products, devices and equipment that help people with disabilities to accomplish everyday tasks, assist them in work, at school or in recreational activities and that can help to ease communication, are known as adaptive equipment or assistive technology. As people with disabilities gain greater levels of independence, the demand for additional types of assistive devices increases, and the following is only a small sampling of the types of products available.

### Wheelchairs

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Wheelchairs may be the type of assistive device most familiar to people. They can be manual or battery-powered and come in a number of different types designed to meet the needs of those who use them to gain independence and increased mobility. While

chairs for everyday use are most common, there are also designs for racing, for standing, for going 'off road' and to make participation in a number of different sports possible.

### Artificial Limbs

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Artificial limbs (prostheses) were created to replace arms and legs or parts of arms or legs lost to illness or accident, and have been in use for hundreds of years. They continue to evolve as scientists and health care professionals work to make them more comfortable for users and capable of filling a variety of needs.

Prostheses are designed to suit the person using them, and it takes time and training in order for individuals to master their use.

An exciting step forward in artificial limbs is the currently developing technology that surgically interfaces nerves that once led to the missing limb, with electrodes. The result is a limb that can move simultaneously at different joints and allows the user to feel sensation – the feel of a paintbrush in the hand, or the feel of the ground under a foot.

### Sign Language

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Sign Languages are complete and complex languages used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing, their families and those who frequently communicate with them. About 70 million people use Sign as their native tongue. Languages develop regionally, and just as with spoken languages, there are hundreds of versions used around the world. In the United States, the version most often used is American Sign Language (ASL) which is thought to be the fourth most common language in the country following English, Spanish and Chinese.

ASL should not be considered to be a mimed or gestural form of English. ASL has its own set of grammatical rules and uses hand shape, position and movement as well as body movements, gestures and facial expressions. For example, raising the eyebrows,

widening the eyes and leaning the body forward can indicate a question. ASL also makes use of the space surrounding the signer to describe places and persons that are not present. Because of their complexity, sign languages are easiest to learn when very young, and it can take many years to become fluent.

International Sign Language is a version of sign language used primarily at international meetings of the World Federation of the Deaf and events such as the Deaflympics as well as informally when traveling and socializing. However, it is more a vocabulary of signs than a complete language.



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## Communication Boards

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Communication Boards were created to help people who are temporarily or permanently nonverbal, or who have difficulty speaking, to communicate with the world around them. They range from simple picture boards that come preprinted with common words and

symbols, making it easy for the user to indicate such things as hunger, thirst, anger or pain, to complex communication devices that users can program to speak their message for them.

## Descriptive Video

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Designed for people with visual impairments, descriptive video provides narration detailing the visual elements of a film or television show, including actions taken by characters, locations and costumes, without interfering with the actual dialogue and sound effects.

Descriptive video is accessible on television sets with multi-channel television sound and is an option for a limited amount of television programming.

## Screen Readers

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Widely used by people who are blind or visually impaired, screen readers are computer software applications able to identify and interpret what is being displayed on a computer screen and relaying that information to the user. Information is presented either through text-to-speech or by driving a braille

display, and users may switch between the two systems depending on circumstances. People with some vision loss also use screen magnifiers.

## Toward Universal Design\*

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Universal design is an approach to the design of all products and environments to be as usable as possible by as many people as possible regardless of age, ability or situation.

To the surprise of some, the curb cuts that were created to accommodate wheelchairs also proved useful to people pushing strollers, delivery persons and skateboarders. In this same way, larger print labels are easier for everyone to read, and bathtubs that are easier to get in and out of benefit older people as well as parents of young children.

Universal design is based on the belief that a broad range of human ability is ordinary rather than special, and seeks to accommodate people with disabilities, older people, children, and others in a way that benefits all users.

Because it seeks to address a broad range of user ability from the very beginning, universal design can increase the usability of a product or environment without significantly increasing cost, and also reduces or eliminates the expense of modification as or when abilities change. Further, because the accessibility was incorporated into the original design, the performance of the product or environment is superior to one that has been modified.

The universal design concept is still relatively young, but its importance has been recognized by governments, businesses and industries worldwide.

*\* Information on Universal design, including some of the language used here, was taken from Universal Design Education Online: [www.udeducation.org](http://www.udeducation.org).*

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# Understanding Disabilities

## Autism

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Autism is a neurobiological disability typically diagnosed by the age of three. Individuals are affected in ways that impact regular development of the brain in the areas of social interaction and communication skills. This results in difficulties with verbal and nonverbal communication, social interactions and other leisure activities. Effects range from mild to severe, with a full range of IQ scores found among people with autism. Even so, many have some delays in mental processing. One child may have advanced physical skills but no speech and another may have great memorization skills (math facts or dates) but be unable to read with comprehension. Many people with autism receive assistance and learn to develop good language skills or use other alternatives to communication such as sign language, computers, or other electronic devices.

Individuals with autism interact with others differently. They may have difficulty understanding and expressing emotion, and may express attachment in a different manner.

Approximately 40 percent of individuals with autism do not develop effective spoken language. Others have echolalia, a parrot-like repeating of what has been said to them. Persons with autism often have difficulty understanding the nonverbal aspect of language such as social cues, body language and vocal qualities (pitch, tone and volume).

Typically, individuals with autism have difficulty relating to objects and events and a great need for “sameness”; changes in their environment or time schedule may upset them. Children with autism may not play with toys in the same manner as their peers and may become fixated on specific objects. They may greatly overreact to sensory stimuli that they see, hear, touch, feel or taste. Conversely, they may not react at all to various stimuli from the environment.

Children with autism often have a different rate of development, particularly in the areas of communication, social and cognitive skills. In contrast, motor development may occur at a typical rate. Sometimes skills will appear in children with autism at the expected rate or time and then seem to disappear.

Autism is a lifelong disability. Although, as stated, it is generally diagnosed before the age of three years, children are often misdiagnosed or not diagnosed until later in life.

Approximately 3.5 million Americans are believed to have some form of autism, and many children with autism spectrum disorders are mainstreamed in regular classrooms.

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## Cerebral Palsy

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More than 500,000 Americans have some degree of cerebral palsy. Currently, about 8,000 babies and infants are diagnosed with the condition each year. Additionally, some 1,200 - 1,500 preschool age children are recognize to have cerebral palsy each year. It is the most common of all childhood disabilities.

Cerebral palsy (“cerebral” refers to the brain and “palsy” means to deprive of action or energy) is not a disease, but a condition caused by damage to parts of the brain that control muscle coordination, balance and purposeful movement. Most commonly, injury occurs to the developing brain of an unborn child or a newborn before, during or after birth. Preventive measures are increasingly possible, and include ensuring the well-being of mothers prior to conception, adequate prenatal care and the protection of infants from accidents and injuries.

Individuals with cerebral palsy may be affected differently, depending on the specific areas of the brain that have been damaged. Muscle tightness or spasms, involuntary movement, and disturbance in gait and mobility are common effects. Individuals may also

experience abnormal sensations and perceptions, sight, hearing or speech impairments, seizures, and cognitive delay. Related problems may include difficulties in feeding, bladder and bowel control, difficulty breathing due to posture, skin disorders from pressure sores, and learning disabilities.

Infants in the high-risk category for cerebral palsy can be tense and irritable, experience difficulty eating, and lag in developing muscle control. Although cerebral palsy does not have a cure, early identification - often possible through routine physical examinations - is important for children with cerebral palsy. With support and care from informed parents and the help of a variety of professionals children with cerebral palsy can actively participate in their schools and communities.

Cerebral palsy is not communicable or progressive. With the exception of a very rare type, cerebral palsy is not inherited. Professional medical supervision, appropriate therapy and adequate training can control many of cerebral palsy’s effects. Since each person with the condition is different, support programs must be tailored to the individual.

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## Spina Bifida

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Spina bifida (“open spine”) is a birth condition characterized by an incomplete closure of one or more of the spinal vertebrae. This causes an opening in the spine, where the spinal cord pokes through. Often times this opening is at the bottom of the spine which, depending on severity, may result in a loss of control of the legs and feet. Children born with spina bifida may have varying degrees of muscle paralysis, bladder and bowel problems, loss of skin sensation, and spine and limb problems.

Spina bifida is not rare. It occurs in one of every 1,000 children born, and is the most common permanently disabling birth condition. However, with help from parents and a team of doctors, therapists, teachers and others, individuals with spina bifida can achieve independence and participate fully in their communities.

Although spina bifida occurs in different forms and has varying degrees of effect, most children born with the condition will require surgeries to correct spinal, foot or leg problems, shunt surgery to drain fluid from the brain, techniques to control bladder and bowel function, and braces and other equipment to assist in walking.

The effects of spina bifida vary from person to person with some cases involving paralysis, others cognitive disabilities, and still others resulting in little or no disability. Through advances in treatment and management as well as education programs, people with spina bifida can learn how to adapt to their environment, minimizing side effects of the condition.

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## Recommended Reading

Books can be a great tool for introducing disabilities to your own child or to the children in your group or for furthering their education. A good book can help foster understanding, and help young people to feel more comfortable and accepting when they meet peers and others in the community who have disabilities.

However, not all disability-related books are created equal. Some contain inaccurate or outdated information. Some contain objectionable or stereotyped depictions of people with disabilities. ***Not all of the books listed here have been reviewed by Easter Seals Wisconsin.*** It is always best to read the books before sharing them with your group or your child.

### Books for Children age 7 and under

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#### **A Button in Her Ear**

Ada B. Litchfield

*Somewhat outdated (the style of the hearing aid), but the pictures are more timeless, and the story is told in an amusing manner.*

#### **A Picture Book of Helen Keller**

David A. Adler

*A factual look at the life of Helen Keller; this story concentrates on her childhood.*

#### **A Very Special Critter**

Gina and Mercer Mayer

*In this wise and funny picture book adventure, a new student, who uses a wheelchair, joins Little Critter's class at school. Little Critter is worried. Will his classmate be very different? Will the class know how to act around him? It's an honest, realistic look at ways kids deal successfully with the unknown – well-mixed with humor.*

#### **Accept and Value Each Person**

Cheri J. Meiners, M.Ed.

*This book teaches the importance of respect and understanding for others, including people with disabilities.*

#### **Adventures of Everyday Geniuses Series:**

**If You're so Smart, How Come You Can't Spell**

**Mississippi**

**Last to Finish – A Story about  
the Smartest Boy in Math Class**

**Mrs. Gorski, I Think I Have the  
Wiggle Fidgets**

**Stacy Coolidge's Fancy Smancy  
Cursive Handwriting**

**Free Association, Where My  
Mind Goes During Science Class**

**Keep Your Eye on the Prize**

Barbara Esham

*This series humorously addresses various disabilities that may affect academic performance, like dyslexia and attention-related disabilities.*

#### **An Alphabet of Animal Signs**

S. Harold Collins

*Colorful, simple book of sign language for animals, numbers and the alphabet.*

#### **The Balancing Girl**

Berniece Rabe

*Margaret comes up with a good idea for a school carnival, and makes friends with the boy in her class who doesn't seem to like her. Her disability is incidental to the story and is barely mentioned.*

#### **Be Quiet, Marina**

Kirsten Debear

*Marina and Moira like playing together, but Marina is noisy and Moira likes quiet. How two preschoolers, one with Cerebral Palsy and one with Down syndrome, become best friends is beautifully told in words and photographs.*



#### **Captain Tommy**

Abby Ward Messner

*At Space Camp, Tommy meets John, a boy with autism, who has difficulty interacting with the other campers. A camp counselor encourages Tommy to help John fit in.*

#### **Cory Stories: A Kid's Book about Living with ADHD**

Jeanne Kraus

*A young boy named Cory describes what it's like to have ADHD: how it affects his relationships with friends and family, his school performance, and his life in general. He also talks about various treatments and offers tips for school, home, and friendships.*

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## **Dad & Me in the Morning**

Patricia Lakin

*A young boy, who is deaf, and his father share the magic of a sunrise. The boy's disability is very well handled and the illustrations are lovely.*

## **Don't Call Me Special: A First Look at Disability**

Pat Thomas and Lesley Harker

*This delightful picture book explores questions and concerns about disability in a simple and reassuring way. Younger children can find out what a disability is, and learn how people deal with their disabilities to live happy and full lives.*

## **Extraordinary Friends**

Fred Rogers

*Part of his "Let's Talk About It" series, Mr. Rogers talks about children with all types of disabilities. Good choice for children just being introduced to disabilities.*

## **Friends in the Park**

Rochelle Bunnett

*Full color photos of a group of preschoolers playing in the park. Many of the children have physical or cognitive disabilities. The book ends with a 'cast of characters', sharing a few details about each of the children.*

## **Grandma's Wheelchair**

Lorraine Henriod

*A young boy enjoys spending the day with his grandma while his brother is in school. They do somewhat stereotypical grandma things – cook and clean, etc. The fact that Grandma uses a wheelchair is rather incidental to the story.*

## **The Gym Day Winner**

Grace Maccarone

*Brief story subtly illustrating the strengths and weaknesses of a group of children, one of whom uses a wheelchair. There is no mention of her disability at all, and she is not the 'star' at the end, either. Instead she is, like most of the characters, an active participant.*

## **Hi, I'm Adam:**

### **A Child's Book About Tourette Syndrome**

Adam Buehrens

*10 year old Adam Buehrens' story of how it feels to have Tourette syndrome and ADHD.*

## **Hooray for Our Heroes! (Sesame Street)**

Sarah Albee

*While Grover lists the characteristics of traditional superheroes, Big Bird and Elmo discover everyday heroes living in their neighborhood.*

## **Imagine...Amazing Me!**

Libbi Chilia

*Photo collection of children with limb disabilities enjoying sports, games and life.*

## **The Making of My Special Hand: Madison's Story**

Jamee Riggio Heelan and Nicola Simmonds

*A child who was born with one hand tells the story of how people at the hospital made a helper hand for her, how the new hand operates, how it feels, and how she can use it.*

## **Mama Zooms**

Jane Cowen-Fletcher

*A delightful, simply told story of a young child's mother who zooms - in her wheelchair!*

## **Mandy Sue Day**

Roberta Karim

*This story follows Mandy Sue through an autumn day on her family farm as she spends time with her horse. It isn't until the end of the story that it is revealed to readers that Mandy Sue is blind.*

## **Me, Hailey!**

Sheri Plucker

*Hailey, who has Down syndrome, is excited about starting kindergarten. Her kindness and friendly personality help make the first day wonderful.*

## **Molly the Pony: A True Story**

Pam Kaster

*After being attacked by a dog, a pony's leg must be amputated. Molly is fitted with a prosthetic limb and learns how to walk again. A true story.*

## **The Moses Series:**

### **Moses Goes to a Concert**

### **Moses Goes to School**

### **Moses Goes to the Circus**

### **Moses Sees a Play**

Isaac Millman

*At a public school for children who are deaf, Moses and his friends share experiences like those of all children.*

## **My Friend Emily**

Susanne M. Swanson

*Katy's friend Emily has epilepsy. They have a lot in common and Katy really likes playing with Emily. That's why she wants to learn what to do if Emily has a seizure. She wants to be able to help her friend. A truly heartwarming tale.*



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## **My Friend Has Autism**

Amanda Doering Tourville

*The narrator, a young boy, describes his friend who has autism. A simplified and general introduction to some behaviors associated with Autism Spectrum Disorders.*

## **My Friend Leslie**

Maxine B. Rosenberg

*The young narrator of book talks about her friend, Leslie, who was born with multiple disabilities. The book depicts Leslie with strengths and weaknesses, and as an active, accepted member of the classroom. (Afterword uses outdated language.)*

## **Nathan's Wish: A Story about Cerebral Palsy**

Laurie Lears

*Nathan lives next door to Sandy, a woman who cares for injured birds of prey, like owls and hawks. Nathan is fascinated by her work and would like to help her, but is concerned that, because he uses a wheelchair, he not be able to make a worthwhile contribution.*

## **Our Teacher's in a Wheelchair**

Mary Ellen Powers

*Positive portrayal of a young man whose disability was caused by an accident, rather than a condition present at birth. (Contains some outdated language.)*

## **Rolling Along:**

### **The Story of Taylor and His Wheelchair**

Jamee Riggio Heelan

*A glimpse into the life of a young boy with cerebral palsy. Taylor describes his condition, aspects of his daily activities at home and at school, and his desire for independence. While he can get around using a walker, he prefers a wheelchair as it enables him to go faster and not tire as quickly. This story also touches on accessibility issues, something Taylor is more aware of once he's using his chair.*

## **The Secret Code**

Dana Meachen Rau

*A young girl notices that one of her classmates, Oscar, who is blind, has books written in a secret code. Obliging, Oscar teaches his classmates about Braille.*

## **Seal Surfer**

Michael Foreman

*Touching story about a young boy and his relationship to the seals living near his home. The illustrations show that he has a disability, but the fact is never mentioned in the text.*

## **Someone Special, Just Like You**

Tricia Brown

*Many photos show preschool aged children with disabilities playing and learning. Good introduction to physical disabilities.*

## **Susan Laughs**

Jeanne Willis

*Rhyming couplets describe common emotions and activities experienced by Susan, a child whose physical disability is not revealed until the last page. Highly recommended!*

## **Tacos Anyone? An Autism Story**

Marvie Ellis

*Four year old Michael has autism and his older brother, Thomas is having difficulty understanding why he behaves as he does. A therapist helps Thomas understand his brother and suggests ways they can play together, bringing fun back into their relationship.*

## **We Can Do It!**

Laura Dwight

*Not a story book, but a picture book giving kids with disabilities the chance to demystify their disabilities to some extent by talking about them and showing other kids the things they can do, not those they can't.*

## **We Go in a Circle**

Peggy Perry Anderson

*An injured racehorse becomes a therapy horse for people with disabilities. The author explains hippotherapy (using horseback riding as physical therapy) and the benefits to everyone involved.*

## **We'll Paint the Octopus Red**

Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen

*Engaging story of a young girl whose new brother is born with Down syndrome. As she and her father talk about this unexpected turn of events, they discuss all the things they had planned to do with the new baby, and discover that, even though he has a disability, he will be able to do everything they'd looked forward to.*

## **Where's Chimpy?**

Berneice Rabe

*Misty is all ready for bed, but has lost her stuffed chimp. Her father helps her retrace the events of her day, and Chimpy is found at last in the bathroom, hidden under a towel. The photos reveal that Misty has Down syndrome, but her disability plays no part in the story, and is never mentioned.*

## **Winter's Tail:**

### **How One Little Dolphin Learned to Swim Again**

Craig Hatkoff, Juliana Hatkoff and Isabella Hatkoff

*A true story about a young dolphin who is fitted with a prosthetic tail after being injured in a crab trap. The story inspired the film Dolphin Tale.*

## **Words in Our Hands**

Ada B. Litchfield

*Words in Our Hands is somewhat dated, but the story about a boy whose parents are deaf and the message about fitting in and the fear of being different is still relevant.*

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## Books for Children age 8 – 12

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### **The Berenstain Bears & the Wheelchair Commando**

Stan and Jan Berenstain

*Even though he's a whiz at the computer and chess, Harry is having a hard time fitting in at his new school where Too Tall makes fun of him because he uses a wheelchair. Can Harry teach Too-Tall a lesson by playing him in a game of basketball?*

### **Blue Bottle Mystery: An Asperger's Adventure**

Reading level: Ages 9-12

Kathy Hoopmann

*After Ben and his friend Andy find an old bottle in the schoolyard, surprising happenings follow. Bound up with this exciting mystery is the story of how Ben is diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome and how he and his family react to and cope with the diagnosis.*

### **Bringing Nettie Back**

Nancy Hope Wilson

*Eleven-year-old Clara's life changes when her friend Nettie is struck down by a cerebral hemorrhage, leaving her with brain damage. While Nettie regains physical and some mental capabilities, she has changed. A story of friendship found, lost and regained.*

### **Buddy: The First Seeing Eye Dog**

Eva Moore

*True account of the training and early work experiences of the German shepherd that became the first seeing eye dog in America.*

### **The Clementine Series:**

**Clementine**

**The Talented Clementine**

**Clementine's Letter**

**Clementine: Friend of the Week**

**Clementine and the Family Meeting**

**Clementine and the Spring Trip**

**Completely Clementine**

Sara Pennypacker

*The delightful Clementine has a warm heart and trouble staying focused in school. While Pennypacker never plainly states that Clementine has ADD or ADHD, many of the character's actions suggest she at least shares many of the symptoms. This humorous series will appeal to both children and adults as will the wonderful illustrations by Marla Frazee.*

### **Cowgirl Megan**

Trisha Magraw

*(This book is part of the Magic Attic Club series, in which four girls are magically transported into other lives or times.) Megan magically lands at a Wild West Show where she gets a chance to train as a stunt rider after another girl, Kate, is blinded in an accident.*

### **Do You Remember the Color Blue?**

**and Other Questions Kids Ask About Blindness**

Sally Hobart Alexander

*Author Sally Hobart Alexander lost her sight to disease at the age of 26. Encouraging respectful curiosity, she responds to questions from teens in this volume. Topics include her daily life, raising two sighted children, how others react to her disability, and how much she remembers of the visual world.*

### **Dolphin Tale: The Junior Novel**

Scholastic and Gabrielle Reyes

*A true story about a young dolphin who is fitted with a prosthetic tail after being injured in a crab trap. The story inspired the film Dolphin Tale.*

### **Don't Call Me Marda**

Sheila Kelly Welch

*Sixth-grader Marsha is an only child. She's thrilled about her parents' plan to adopt a little sister, but when Wendy arrives, Marsha's life is turned upside down. Wendy is developmentally delayed with behaviors that Marsha has trouble accepting.*

### **The Door in the Wall**

Marguerite De Angeli

*This Newbery Medal winning story, set in medieval times, is about a boy who learns his own strength when he saves the castle and discovers there is more than one way to serve his king.*

### **Dragon in the Clouds**

Rosemary Nelson

*A beautiful long summer stretches out in front of 12 year-old Nikki with lots of time to spend at the beach and riding her horse. When her cousin, Trevor, arrives in his wheel chair, the two take an instant dislike to one another. But a vision in the clouds will change a lot of things, and, in fact, will help make a dream come true as Trevor competes in the Games for the Physically Disabled.*

### **Extraordinary People With Disabilities**

Deborah Kent, Kathryn A. Quinlan

*Profiles 48 people throughout history with various physical or mental disabilities. Additional articles provide historical background on the disability rights movement.*

### **The Falcon's Wing**

Dawna Lisa Buchanan

*After the death of her mother, Bryn and her father move to rural Ontario to live with relatives Bryn has never met. The story follows the process of Bryn's grieving, her eventual acceptance of her mother's death and her increasingly close relationship with her cousin, who has Down's syndrome.*

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## **Freak the Mighty**

Rodman Philbrick

*For an eighth-grader, Max is big, and finds it hard to fit in. Things begin to change however, when Kevin, born with a disability that has restricted his growth, moves in down the street. The boys become friends. With Kevin, who's brilliant, providing the brains and imagination and Max providing the locomotion, the boys unite to become "Freak the Mighty" and venture out on "quests" around the neighborhood.*

## **From Anna**

### **Listen for the Singing**

Jean Little

*These two books tell the story of Anna, a young girl whose family moves from Germany to Canada in the 1930s. Her family has always thought that Anna was clumsy and they couldn't understand why she wasn't able to read until a doctor discovers that Anna actually has severe vision impairment. Armed with this knowledge and a new pair of glasses, Anna learns to read and thrives.*

## **Imagine Me on a Sit-Ski!**

George Moran

*Billy and his classmates, all of whom have physical disabilities, experience skiing for the first time with the help of adaptive equipment.*

## **Johnny Tremain**

Esther Hoskins Forbes

*Fourteen-year old Johnny Tremain, an apprentice silversmith with a bright future ahead of him, injures his hand in a tragic accident, which forces him to look for other work. In his new job as a horse-boy, riding for the patriotic newspaper, the Boston Observer, and as a messenger for the Sons of Liberty, he encounters John Hancock, Samuel Adams, and Dr. Joseph Warren. Soon Johnny is involved in the pivotal events shaping the American Revolution from the Boston Tea Party to the first shots fired at Lexington.*

## **Kids Explore the Gifts of**

### **Children With Special Needs**

Westridge Young Writers Workshop

*For a student writing project, students profiled 10 young people with disabilities ranging from dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, and Down syndrome to hemophilia, brittle bone disease, and dwarfism. Each chapter tells what it is like for that individual to live with their particular disability.*

## **Mine for Keeps**

Jean Little

*Sally, who has cerebral palsy, has lived at a rehabilitation school for most of her life and has dreamed of actually living at home with her family rather than just visiting them; but her dreams are nothing like the reality she faces when she does go home permanently, only to face the typical challenges of a new school and friends and the unique problems of living with a disability.*

## **Mockingbird**

Kathryn Erskine

*When her brother Devon dies, eleven-year-old Caitlin, who has Asperger's Syndrome, loses the only person she felt really understood her. She is left to come to terms with his death and to try to communicate with her devastated father.*

## **Morris and Buddy: The Story of the First Seeing Eye Dog**

Becky Hall

*In 1928, 20-year-old Morris Frank, who had lost his sight four years earlier, traveled to Europe. Onboard the steamship, he was dependent on attendants to take him from place to place and was locked in his cabin at night. His life changed, however, when he reached his destination in Switzerland, where American dog trainer Dorothy Harrison Eustis and her colleague Jack Humphrey were waiting to teach him to work with the German shepherd he eventually christened Buddy. This biography follows Frank and Buddy as they learn to trust one another and eventually demonstrate the value of the "Seeing Eye" dog.*

## **Out of My Mind**

Sharon M. Draper

*Melody is not like most people. She cannot walk or talk, but she has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She is smarter than most of the adults who try to diagnose her and smarter than the classmates in her integrated classroom—the very same classmates who dismiss her as mentally challenged, because she cannot tell them otherwise. But Melody refuses to be defined by cerebral palsy. And she's determined to let everyone know it...somehow.*

## **My Name is Brain Brian – ages 8-12**

Jeanne Betancourt

*Brian is seen as the class clown but some of his antics, spelling his name Brain instead of Brian, and making mistakes when reading aloud, aren't things he intends to be funny; Brian has dyslexia. This book presents a lot of factual information about this learning disability and draws from the author's own experience with dyslexia.*

## **Owning It – ages 12 & up**

Donald R. Gallo

*This collection of short stories that highlight teens with disabilities was written by young adult authors.*

## **Quit It**

Marcia Byalick

*Seventh-grader Carrie seems at first glance to be like everyone in her class; she gets good grades, performs in school plays, and plays soccer and Game Boy. But Carrie has Tourette syndrome which makes her feel like she stands out at an age when all kids just want to fit in.*

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## Rules

Cynthia Lord

*Twelve-year-old Catherine loves her younger brother David who has autism but she is embarrassed by some of his behaviors. She comes up with a list of rules to try to get David to behave "normally." With the help of her new friend Jason, who is paraplegic and nonverbal, Catherine realizes that "normal" isn't so easy, or even necessary to define.*

## Tru Confessions

Janet Tashjian

*Twelve-year-old Tru wants two things more than anything else-- to find a cure for her twin brother, Eddie, who is developmentally delayed, and to create her own television show. Written in the form of a computer diary by the sassy heroine, this humorous novel sensitively portrays the struggles and triumphs of living with a sibling with a disability.*



## Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio

Peg Kehret

*All excited about her part in the upcoming 1949 Homecoming parade in her small Minnesota town, Peg suddenly found herself feverish and unable to control the muscles of her arms and legs. Diagnosed with polio, she was quarantined and taken to a hospital in Minneapolis, and later to a rehabilitation center, where she slowly learned to walk again.*

## TM 3000: The Maiden Voyage

### TM 3000: The Riddle of the Hieroglyphs

Katherine O'Mahoney

*Alice and Sarah are twins, identical in every way except one - Sarah uses a wheelchair. When she receives an amazing new chair from her eccentric doctor, Sarah is ecstatic. Little does she realize, however, the phenomenal powers of the TM 3000. Before long, bizarre things start to occur. When Sarah's wheelchair accelerates, the twins find themselves in a kaleidoscope tunnel hurtling through time and space.*

## The View from Saturday

E.L. Konigsburg

*A sixth grade teacher, who has recently begun using a wheelchair after a serious car accident, and the four students on her Academic Bowl team, find success and confidence in this amusing novel.*

## Views from Our Shoes: Growing Up with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs

Donald Joseph Meyer

*In Views from Our Shoes, 45 siblings share their experiences as the brother or sister of someone with a disability.*

## Wild Horse Summer

Hope Ryden

*Alison spends her thirteenth summer on a ranch in Wyoming where she learns to ride a horse and where Kelly, who is blind, helps her overcome an old fear.*



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## Books for Children age 13 & up

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### **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time**

Mark Haddon

*Christopher, a 15-year-old boy with autism, is wrongly accused of dog-slaughter and must deal with parents who are less than understanding. Christopher's narration provides a look into the mind of one person with autism.*

### **Flowers for Algernon**

Daniel Keyes

*Told in journal form, Flowers for Algernon is the story of Charlie Gordon, a developmentally disabled man who becomes a genius after undergoing a brain operation. But getting smarter brings cruel shocks and as he passes the human average to genius level and beyond.*

### **Hear No Evil Series**

**Death in the Afternoon**

**Missing**

**A Time of Fear**

**Dead and Buried**

**Sudden Death**

**Playing with Fire**

Kate Chester

*Similar to the Nancy Drew series, the Hear No Evil books feature a teenage sleuth who solves murder mysteries while giving insight into her own deaf culture.*

### **My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir**

Samantha Abeel

*This book is the autobiographical account of Samantha Abeel's seventh grade school year and her struggles with a math based learning disability.*

### **The One Where the Kid Nearly Jumps to His Death and Lands in California**

Mary Hershey

*Tale of Alastair, who nicknames himself Stump after losing a leg after a fall from a ski lift. Hershey offers a sensitive portrayal of life as a teenage amputee, while skillfully making Stump's disability just one facet of his personality, not the story's focus.*

### **Tell Me That You Love Me, Junie Moon**

Marjorie Kellogg

*The story of three people with disabilities who decide to live together.*

### **Temple Grandin: How the Girl who Loved Cows Embraced Autism and Changed the World**

Sy Montgomery & Temple Grandin

*A look at the life of Temple Grandin. Grandin, who has autism, is a doctor and professor of animal science and a well known autism advocate. (The film, "Temple Grandin," based on Grandin's book, "Emergence," is listed in this Resources Guide under "Films.")*





## Books for Adults

### **A Paralyzing Fear:**

#### **The Triumph over Polio in America**

Nina Seavey, Paul Wagner & Jane Smith

*Based on thousands of hours of research, this companion book to the PBS documentary of the same name tells the story of the polio epidemic in America. (The documentary film, "A Paralyzing Fear: the Story of Polio in America" is listed in this Resources Guide under "Films.")*

### **Motherless Brooklyn**

Jonathan Lethem

*Lionel, a boy who has Tourette syndrome, and three of his fellow orphans from St. Vincent's Home for Boys, are taken under the wing of Frank Minna, a neighborhood tough guy. The four grow up to become Frank's 'Minna Men' until one night their leader is murdered and they are left to find his killer.*

### **My Left Foot**

Christy Brown

*The autobiography of author, poet and painter Christy Brown, who was born with cerebral palsy. (A film adaptation of this book is listed in this Resources Guide under "Films.")*

### **The Other Side of the Mountain:**

#### **The Story of Jill Kinmont**

Evans G. Valens

*The true story of Jill Kinmont, a champion skier paralyzed in an accident. (This book inspired the movie "The Other Side of the Mountain" which is listed in this Resources Guide under "Films.")*

### **The Way I See It:**

#### **A Personal Look at Autism and Asperger's**

### **The Learning Style of People with Autism:**

#### **An Autobiography**

### **Animals in Translation:**

### **Using the Mysteries of Autism**

#### **to Decode Animal Behavior**

Temple Grandin

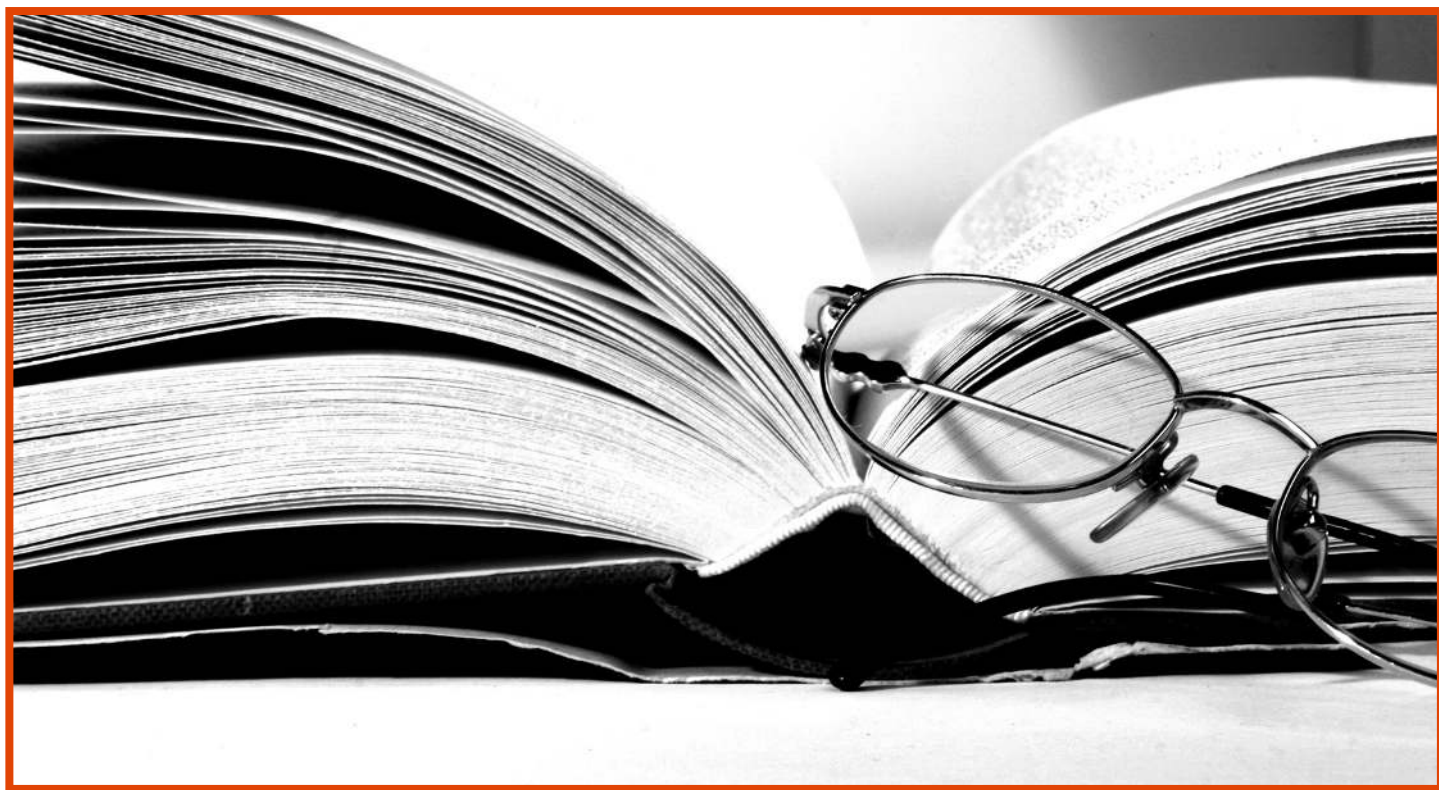
*Temple Grandin is a successful scientist in the area of animal science. She is also autistic. Her many publications are about animal handling and husbandry, her experience with autism, and a few titles on how these two subjects have intersected in her life. (The film, "Temple Grandin," based on Grandin's book, "Emergence," is listed in this Resources Guide under "Films.")*

### **The Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships:**

#### **Decoding Social Mysteries Through the Unique Perspectives of Autism**

Temple Grandin & Sean Barron

*Following very different paths, both Grandin and Barron (each of whom has autism), ultimately came to terms with the social world and found their places in it.*



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## Films

The films listed here deal in some way with various disabilities. *These films have not been reviewed by Easter Seals Wisconsin.* Before sharing a film with your group, we urge coordinators to view films to determine whether the film is age-appropriate and in other ways suitable for use as part of *Avenues to Understanding*.

### Rated G

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#### **Amy (1981)**

*After the death of her child, a woman works to teach deaf children how to speak.*

### Rated PG

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#### **Benny and Joon (1993)**

*Benny is devoted to taking care of his sister Joon, a talented artist with a development disability. This relatively stable situation is shaken up when Benny brings the eccentric Sam to his home for a few days. Sam and Joon find themselves drawn to each other. When Benny finds out, it creates a rift between the siblings as they struggle to accept their changing relationship.*

#### **The Boy Who Could Fly (1986)**

*New in town, teenage Milly develops a relationship with her next-door neighbor, a boy with autism.*

#### **The Brooke Ellison Story (2004)**

*A quadriplegic since a near-fatal neck injury as a young child, Brooke fights to succeed in life, from elementary school to getting into college, with the support of her loving, dedicated mother.*

#### **Butterflies Are Free (1972)**

*Donny, a young man who has been blind since birth, is striving to live independently from his overprotective mother. Free-spirited hippie Jill moves in next door.*

#### **Crazy Moon (1987)**

*Romance between rich teenager with learning difficulties and a salesgirl who is deaf.*

#### **Dolphin Tale (2011)**

*A true story about a young dolphin who is fitted with a prosthetic tail after being injured in a crab trap.*

#### **Mr. Holland's Opus (1995)**

*Glenn Holland is a musician and composer who takes a teaching job to pay the rent while striving to achieve his true goal - compose one memorable piece of music to leave his mark on the world. As the years pass, he discovers that sharing his passion for music with his students becomes his new definition of success, and he grows in his understanding of his son, who is deaf.*

#### **The Other Side of the Mountain (1975)**

*The true story of Jill Kinmont, a champion skier paralyzed in an accident.*

#### **Radio (2003)**

*Football coach befriends Radio, a young man with developmental delays. Their friendship extends over several decades, during which Radio transforms from a shy, tormented man into an inspiration to his community. Based on a true story.*

#### **Tell Me That You Love Me, Junie Moon (1970)**

*The story of three people with different disabilities who choose to live together.*

#### **Temple Grandin (2010)**

*This biopic looks at the life of Temple Grandin. Grandin, who has autism, is a doctor and professor of animal science and a well known autism advocate.*

### Rated PG-13

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#### **A Beautiful Mind (2001)**

*A biopic of the meteoric rise of John Forbes Nash Jr., a math prodigy with schizophrenia who won the Nobel Prize.*

#### **Adam (2009)**

*In this film, Adam, a young man who has Asperger's Syndrome, develops a relationship with his upstairs neighbor, a beautiful writer.*

#### **As Good As It Gets (1997)**

*Melvin Udall, a cranky, bigoted writer with obsessive-compulsive disorder, finds his life turned upside down when Carol, the only waitress who will tolerate him, must leave work to care for her son.*

#### **At First Sight (1999)**

*Virgil, who has been blind since age 3, is persuaded by his girlfriend to undergo a new radical surgery. He regains his sight but must learn to process these new images and find his place in his changed world.*

### **Dominick and Eugene (1988)**

*Dominick, who was left with some brain damage after an accident, works as a garbage man and is putting his brother Eugene through medical school. Their loving relationship becomes strained when Eugene must decide between his devotion to his brother, or his need to go away to complete his training.*

### **Edward Scissorhands (1990)**

*A modern day fairy tale which tells the story of Edward, the man created by an inventor, who died before finishing him and left Edward with scissors where he should have hands. One day when the local "Avon" representative calls at the historic mansion where Edward has been living alone, she takes him home to stay with her family. He has to adapt to the new life and environment that he isn't used to. Soon he shows a talent in cutting hair and hedges, and wins every body's heart. But life isn't always so sweet...*

### **Forrest Gump (1994)**

*Forrest Gump is the story of a man with a developmental disability and his experiences with some of the most important people and events in America from the late 1950's through the 1970's.*

### **Gattaca (1997)**

*Futuristic story of a world where genetic engineering has created superior human beings, called 'Valid's', while those who are born without the benefits of genetics are called 'Invalid's'. These lesser mortals have defects like inferior vision and a shorter life span, and are unable to obtain any type of meaningful employment. One of the Invalids, who dreams of going into space, takes steps to fool the genetic screening to achieve his goals.*

### **The Man Without a Face (1993)**

*Justin McLeod has been living the life of a recluse since his face was disfigured. Known as "Hamburger Head" to the locals, he's the subject of many rumors and wild stories. Chuck is a young boy looking for a tutor. Chuck encounters the reclusive McLeod, and together they begin to help each other deal with a world that has shunned them both.*

### **Mask (1985)**

*Rusty Dennis is the mother of Rocky, an intelligent and emotionally warm child with disabilities. She is determined that Rocky be given the same chances and happiness that everyone else takes for granted.*

### **The Mighty (1997)**

*This is a story of two guys: Max, who has learning disabilities and Kevin, who has a variety of physical disabilities. Kevin lives next door to Max and one day is assigned as a reading tutor to him. Together they travel to the land of knights and heroes in their books.*

### **Shine (1996)**

*Based on the true story of Australian pianist David Helfgott, a child prodigy who spent time institutionalized after a breakdown.*

### **What's Eating Gilbert Grape? (1993)**

*Gilbert cares for his brother Arnie, who is developmentally delayed and his obese mother, which gets in the way when love walks into his life.*

### **Wildflower (1991)**

*An abused and partially deaf girl is helped back into society by two resourceful children.*



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## Rated R

### **Children of a Lesser God (1986)**

*Teacher at school for deaf falls in love with deaf woman.*

### **Go Now (1995)**

*Nick is a young Scottish soccer player living in the big city. He meets Karen, and the two fall in love and move in together. Soon after, Nick exhibits signs of serious illness. As his body slowly succumbs to multiple sclerosis, he experiences a wide sweep of jagged emotions, and in the process gives himself and those who love him the strength to carry on.*

### **My Left Foot (1989)**

*The story of Christy Brown, who was born with cerebral palsy. He learned to paint and write with his only controllable limb - his left foot.*

### **Niagara, Niagara (1997)**

*An outsider and a young woman with Tourette's Syndrome meet and journey to Canada together.*

### **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975)**

*Upon arrival at a mental institution, a brash rebel rallies the patients together to take on the oppressive Nurse Ratched, a woman more a dictator than a nurse.*

### **Passion Fish (1992)**

*Soap actress May-Alice Culhane is paralyzed from the waist down in an accident. She returns to her old home in Louisiana, where she proceeds to drink quite steadily and to drive away five personal attendants in the first twenty minutes of the movie. Then she meets with Chantelle, whose stubbornness matches her own.*

### **Rain Man (1988)**

*Selfish yuppie Charlie Babbitt's father dies and leaves a fortune - to Raymond, the institutionalized brother with autism that Charlie didn't know he had. The brothers meet and set out together on a cross-country journey of discovery.*

### **The Tic Code (1999)**

*A jazz saxophonist with Tourette Syndrome befriends a young piano prodigy who also has Tourette Syndrome and dreams of becoming a jazz pianist.*

### **The Waterdance (1992)**

*Author Joel Garcia breaks his neck while hiking, and finds himself in a rehab center with Raymond, an exaggerating ladies man, and Bloss, a racist biker. Considerable tension builds as each character tries to deal with his new disability and the problems that go with it.*

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## Unrated

### **The Best Years of Our Lives (1946)**

*Three WWII veterans return home to small-town America and deal with the changes in themselves and in their families.*

### **Bill (1981)**

*Based on a true story. Mickey Rooney plays Bill, a man with learning difficulties who leaves a mental hospital for the first time in 46 years and has to find his way in the outside world.*

### **David's Mother (1994)**

*Sally Goodson has been raising her autistic son David alone since her husband left many years ago. Now a social worker discovers that Sally has been dodging 'The System' to keep her son with her, instead of putting him in an institution. Each feels they know what's best for David, but their opinions are not the same.*

### **Fly Away (2011)**

*As the pressures of her job and the needs of her teenage daughter with autism increase, Jeanne must decide whether or not to enroll her daughter in a therapeutic residential facility.*

### **Follow the Stars Home (2001)**

*A single mother and her daughter who has disabilities befriend a girl who comes from a troubled home.*

### **Profoundly Normal (2003)**

*After the institution they've lived in closes, Donna and Ricardo are sent to separate facilities. But their dreams of marriage and family fuel their determination to find each other again.*

### **The Miracle Worker (1962)**

*B/W. The story of Helen Keller and her teacher, Annie Sullivan.*

### **The Miracle Worker (2000)**

*The story of Helen Keller and her teacher, Annie Sullivan.*



## Documentaries

### **A Brief History of Time (1992)**

Documentary about Stephen Hawking, the theoretical physicist who wrote the bestselling book "A Brief History of Time". Hawking, who has Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), has the use of only two fingers and communicates through a voice synthesizer.

### **A Paralyzing Fear: The Story of Polio in America (1998)**

Interviews with polio survivors, their families and others.

### **Breathing Lessons:**

#### **The Life and Work of Mark O'Brien (1996)**

Mark O'Brien is a journalist and poet who lives in Berkeley, California. He is in his 40's, and for most of every day, he is encased in an iron lung, the result of polio as a child and a relapse 20 years later. O'Brien comments on his life, his parents' courage and devotion, his studies at Cal, his writing, the sweetness of friendship, and his fears.

### **Dancing From the Inside Out (1994)**

Moving portraits of three outstanding performers with the acclaimed AXIS dance troupe, which includes both disabled and non-disabled dancers.

### **Helen Keller in Her Story (1955)**

This documentary features footage and still photos of Helen Keller.

### **In the Land of the Deaf (1993)**

A series of anecdotes strung together to present a positive image of being deaf and an example of how able deaf people are. (In French and French sign language with subtitles in English.)

### **King Gimp (1999)**

Documentary of Dan Keplinger, an artist with cerebral palsy.

### **Kiss My Wheels (2003)**

Kiss My Wheels follows the Zia Hot Shots, a nationally ranked junior wheelchair basketball team, through a season of training and tournament competition.

### **Murderball (2005) PG-13**

Quad rugby as played by the United States team, between the 2002 games in Sweden and the 2004 Paralympics in Athens. Young men, most with spinal injuries who play this rough and tumble sport talk frankly about their injuries, feelings, competitiveness, and love of the game.

### **Not On the Sidelines:**

#### **Living and Playing with a Disability (2000)**

Not on the Sidelines profiles four people, whose lives were suddenly changed by injury or illness when they were teens or young adults.

### **Twitch and Shout (1993)**

This documentary on Tourette's Syndrome sheds some light on this disorder and looks at the way society often treats those who fall outside the limits of conventional behavior.

### **When Bill Broke His Head, and Other Tales of Wonder (1995)**

A video first-person road movie about disability, civil rights and the search for intelligent life after brain injury.





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## Disability Quizzes

Following are two quizzes dealing with general disability knowledge and the language of disability. Answer keys are also provided.

Quizzes can be used in a number of ways, including:

- to test your own knowledge
- by parents to test the knowledge of their children
- by educators and *Avenues to Understanding* coordinators while teaching the program
- by kids as they share what they've learned in *Avenues to Understanding* with another group.

Quizzes can be adapted to suit various ages or used as a starting point to create your own.



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## General Disability Awareness Quiz

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Next to each statement, indicate if you believe that statement to be true or false.

- |   |   |     |  |
|---|---|-----|--|
| T | F | 1.  | Only people who can't walk use wheelchairs.  |
| T | F | 2.  | You have a friend who has difficulty speaking and sometimes you're not sure what he said. To make things easier, you should pretend that you understand. |
| T | F | 3.  | When you meet someone who is blind or visually impaired, you should introduce yourself to that person.   |
| T | F | 4.  | When communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing, it is necessary to speak through an interpreter.   |
| T | F | 5.  | It's safe to assume that people with disabilities usually need help.   |
| T | F | 6.  | It's okay to gossip about people who are deaf or hard of hearing because they can't hear you anyway.   |
| T | F | 7.  | People who use wheelchairs can't go any place fun.   |
| T | F | 8.  | People with cerebral palsy usually have a cognitive disability, too.   |
| T | F | 9.  | People with disabilities want to be treated just like everyone else.   |
| T | F | 10. | When you meet someone with a guide or companion dog, you should make friends with the dog first so that the dog is comfortable with you being nearby.    |
| T | F | 11. | Among other professions, people with disabilities work as stockbrokers, lawyers, doctors and teachers.   |
| T | F | 12. | People with disabilities prefer to hang out with others who have disabilities.   |
| T | F | 13. | Most public places such as movie theaters, restaurants and ballparks are easy for people who use wheelchairs to enjoy.                                   |
| T | F | 14. | People with disabilities can't dance.  |
| T | F | 15. | It's okay to ask people with disabilities about their disabilities.  |
| T | F | 16. | People with disabilities can participate in competitive sports.  |
| T | F | 17. | People with disabilities can't live on their own as adults.  |
| T | F | 18. | Disabilities are illnesses to be treated by medical professionals in the hope of a cure.   |
| T | F | 19. | People can become disabled at any point in their lives.  |
| T | F | 20. | Many people with disabilities feel their real disability involves problems with their environment rather than problems with their bodies.                |

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## General Disability Awareness Quiz Answer Key

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**1. Only people who can't walk use wheelchairs.**

FALSE

While it is true that many people who use wheelchairs can't walk, many can. People with disabilities who can walk on their own or with the aid of braces or a walker may tire easily and choose to use a wheelchair because it gives them more independence.

**2. You have a friend who has difficulty speaking and sometimes you're not sure what he said. To make things easier, you should pretend that you understand.**

FALSE

Never pretend you understand what someone is saying if you don't. Instead, ask your friend to repeat himself. If you're still having trouble, make your best guess about what the person is saying and ask if you heard correctly. Occasionally, your friend may need to write something down for clarity.

**3. When you meet someone who is blind or visually impaired, you should introduce yourself to that person.**

TRUE

Introductions are always appropriate when meeting new people. When you have a friend or acquaintance with vision loss, it is appropriate to simply state your name whenever you meet them. "Hi Michael, it's John Anderson."

**4. When communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing, it is necessary to speak through an interpreter.**

FALSE

Because some people who are deaf or hard of hearing use sign language, others read lips and still others use a combination of both, you need to find out how you can best communicate with them. If he or she has an interpreter, it's perfectly fine to use this person, but look at and speak directly to the person with the disability, not to the interpreter. The interpreter will stand beside you and interpret as necessary.

**5. It's safe to assume that people with disabilities usually need help.**

FALSE

Most people with disabilities prefer to be independent. When offering help to a person with a disability, always ask first, wait for his or her response and then ask about the best way to provide the help he or she might need. Don't feel bad if your help is turned down.

**6. It's okay to gossip about people who are deaf or hard of hearing because they can't hear you anyway.**

FALSE

People who are deaf or hard of hearing are just as likely to know they are being talked about as other people would be. Even if they do not hear exactly what's being said, they will notice. Why be rude?

**7. People who use wheelchairs can't go anywhere fun.**

FALSE

People who use wheelchairs may face some architectural barriers when going out into the community. But this doesn't mean they can't go anywhere fun. Instead, it's a reason to check out the places you plan to go ahead of time to see if there are potential problems. Decisions can then be made to work around barriers or to choose another location. Knowing what to expect ahead of time will make planned activities more enjoyable for everyone.

**8. People with cerebral palsy have cognitive disabilities, too.**

FALSE

Cerebral palsy is a disability affecting movement. Although cerebral palsy affects the motor control center of the brain, it does not affect one's natural intelligence. People with cerebral palsy have a full range of IQs and academic abilities.

**9. People with disabilities want very much to be treated just like everyone else.**

TRUE

People with disabilities have said that this, more than anything, is what they want—to be included and treated just like everyone else.

**10. When you meet someone with a guide or companion dog, you should make friends with the dog first so that the dog is comfortable with you being nearby.**

FALSE

You should always meet the person before their dog! Guide and companion dogs are working and should not be disturbed. As you're getting to know the person, you can ask about the dog, and ask to be introduced.

**11. Among other professions, people with disabilities work as stockbrokers, lawyers, doctors and teachers.**

TRUE

People with disabilities are involved in a full range of professions.

**12. People with disabilities prefer to hang out with others who have disabilities.**

FALSE

Friendship is usually based on common interests and activities, not on whether or not a person has a disability.

**13. Public places such as movie theaters, restaurants and ballparks are easy for people who use wheelchairs to enjoy.**

FALSE

Although the Americans with Disabilities Act calls for public places to be accessible to people who use wheelchairs, the fact is that there are still many places that are difficult for people who use wheelchairs to navigate. When making plans with someone with a disability, possible architectural barriers should be considered.

**14. People with disabilities can't dance.**

FALSE

Most people have their own style of dancing, and people with disabilities are no different.

**15. It's okay to ask people with disabilities about their disabilities.**

TRUE

What's important is how you ask. Don't ask, "What's wrong with you?" Instead, learning more about a person's disability should be a part of getting to know each other. Even then, some people may be willing to answer questions, while others may choose not to. Be sensitive to and respect their wishes.

**16. People with disabilities can participate in competitive sports.**

TRUE

Competitive sports are as important to people with disabilities as they are to those without. Having a physical, sensory or cognitive disability does not necessarily preclude involvement in individual or team sports. People with disabilities ski, play tennis and racquetball, race in 10Ks and marathons and participate in dozens of other sports. Keep in mind, though, that just like everyone else, some people with disabilities love sports, while others just aren't interested.

**17. People with physical disabilities can't live on their own as adults.**

FALSE

With adapted housing, personal assistants, accessible transportation and available employment, most people with physical disabilities can and do choose to live independently.

**18. People can become disabled at any time in their lives.**

TRUE

People can be born with a disability or the disability may come after birth, the result of illness, age or an accident. Statistics show that during their lifetime, 50 percent of people will experience a disability.

**19. Disabilities are illnesses to be treated by medical professionals in the hope of a cure.**

FALSE

Disabilities are not the same as illnesses. People with disabilities are not sick, and most are seeking acceptance and inclusion rather than a cure.

**20. Many people with disabilities feel their real disability involves problems with the environment rather than problems with their bodies.**

TRUE

Architectural barriers limit participation, productivity, and independence. For instance, if a person who uses a wheelchair is offered a job that he or she cannot accept because it is located on the second floor of a building without an elevator, the real problem – the handicap – is that there is no elevator.

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## The Language of Disability Quiz

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Write 'yes' to indicate terms and phrases you feel are acceptable and 'no' to indicate those you feel are not.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| _____ a person with a deformity                     | _____ invalid                          |
| _____ a person who has a speech impairment          | _____ is afflicted with                |
| _____ a person with a congenital disability         | _____ is arthritic                     |
| _____ a person who has fits                         | _____ is cerebral palsied              |
| _____ a person who has had a disability since birth | _____ less fortunate                   |
| _____ a person who has seizures                     | _____ lives with a disability          |
| _____ a person who is deaf                          | _____ maimed                           |
| _____ able-bodied person                            | _____ midget                           |
| _____ abnormal                                      | _____ moron                            |
| _____ afflicted                                     | _____ mute                             |
| _____ bed-ridden                                    | _____ non-verbal                       |
| _____ birth defect                                  | _____ normal person                    |
| _____ confined to a wheelchair                      | _____ palsied                          |
| _____ congenital defect                             | _____ people of short stature          |
| _____ crazy   | _____ person who overcame a disability |
| _____ crippled                                      | _____ person with a disability         |
| _____ deaf mute                                     | _____ person without a disability      |
| _____ deaf person                                   | _____ physically challenged            |
| _____ deformed                                      | _____ polio victim                     |
| _____ differently-abled                             | _____ retard                           |
| _____ disability community                          | _____ retarded                         |
| _____ disfigured                                    | _____ spastic                          |
| _____ disability                                    | _____ spaz                             |
| _____ disabled people                               | _____ special people                   |
| _____ feeble-minded                                 | _____ stroke patient                   |
| _____ handicapped                                   | _____ suffers from                     |
| _____ had polio                                     | _____ unhealthy                        |
| _____ has an emotional disability                   | _____ victim of cerebral palsy         |
| _____ has cerebral palsy                            | _____ wheelchair bound                 |
| _____ idiot   | _____ wheelchair user                  |
| _____ imbecile                                      |  |



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## The Language of Disability Quiz Answer Key\*

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**\* What is considered appropriate terminology may differ among disability rights groups and elsewhere within the disability community. Preferred terms also change over time. Some of these answers are open to continuing debate.**

N	a person with a deformity	N	invalid
Y	a person who has a speech impairment	N	is afflicted with
Y	a person with a congenital disability	N	is arthritic
N	a person who has fits	N	is cerebral palsied
Y	a person who has had a disability since birth	N	less fortunate
Y	a person who has seizures	Y	lives with a disability
Y	a person who is deaf	N	maimed
N	able-bodied person	N	midget
N	abnormal	N	moron
N	afflicted	N	mute
N	bed-ridden	Y	non-verbal
N	birth defect	N	normal person
N	confined to a wheelchair	N	palsied
N	congenital defect	Y	people of short stature
N	crazy	N	person who overcame a disability
N	crippled	Y	person with a disability
N	deaf mute	Y	person without a disability
N	deaf person	N	physically challenged
N	deformed	N	polio victim
N	differently-abled	N	retard
Y	disability community	N	retarded
N	disfigured	N	spastic
Y	disability	N	spaz
N	disabled people	N	special people
N	feeble-minded	N	stroke patient
N	handicapped	N	suffers from
Y	had polio	N	unhealthy
Y	has an emotional disability	N	victim of cerebral palsy
Y	has cerebral palsy	N	wheelchair bound
N	idiot	Y	wheelchair user
N	imbecile		

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# Wheelchair Accessibility Basic Check List

1. Is the international symbol of access (an outline of a person in a wheelchair) displayed at entrances to the building?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are parking spaces available close to the entrance of the building and are they clearly marked with the access symbol?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are there curb ramps between the parking lot and the building?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are hallways wide and flat enough to accommodate a person who uses a wheelchair?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are doorways wide enough for wheelchairs to maneuver through easily? Are there power assist buttons near doors that are heavy or awkward to open?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are the tables throughout the building high enough so that wheelchairs can fit under them?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Are water fountains at a height that can be reached by a person in a wheelchair?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do bathrooms have accessible stalls? Are the sinks and mirrors at an accessible height?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are materials commonly accessible to those using the building accessible to someone in a wheelchair? For example, the books in a library, the groceries in a market, the clothing in stores, etc.  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional questions for schools sports facilities:

10. Are there paved paths leading to the football, baseball, soccer and other fields?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10a. Do the sports facilities – indoor and out – have accessible seating?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10b. Would students who use wheelchairs be able to sit near their friends?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional questions for school or community playgrounds:

11. Are there paved or smooth paths leading to and around the playground equipment?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- 11a. Is any of the equipment accessible to children who use wheelchairs?  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- 11b. Is the playground accessible to parents who use wheelchairs? Would they be able to watch their child play? Would they be able to reach their child if the child was hurt and needed assistance? (e.g. if the child fell off a swing).  
☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there other barriers or potential barriers not included on this basic check list? What? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Attitude Check

Do you see...

'Disability' as synonymous with 'inability'?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

People with disabilities as courageous or as heroes?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

People with disabilities who do things you would normally consider unexceptional, such as graduating from college or deciding to start a family, as 'exceptional'?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A disability as a tragedy?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

People with disabilities as deserving of pity?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

People with disabilities as leading boring and uneventful lives?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

People with disabilities as unable to do most things?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

People with disabilities as unable to care for themselves?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Photo Gallery



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Photo by Ken Watson; used with permission.





Photo by Ken Watson; used with permission.







Photo by Ken Watson; used with permission.

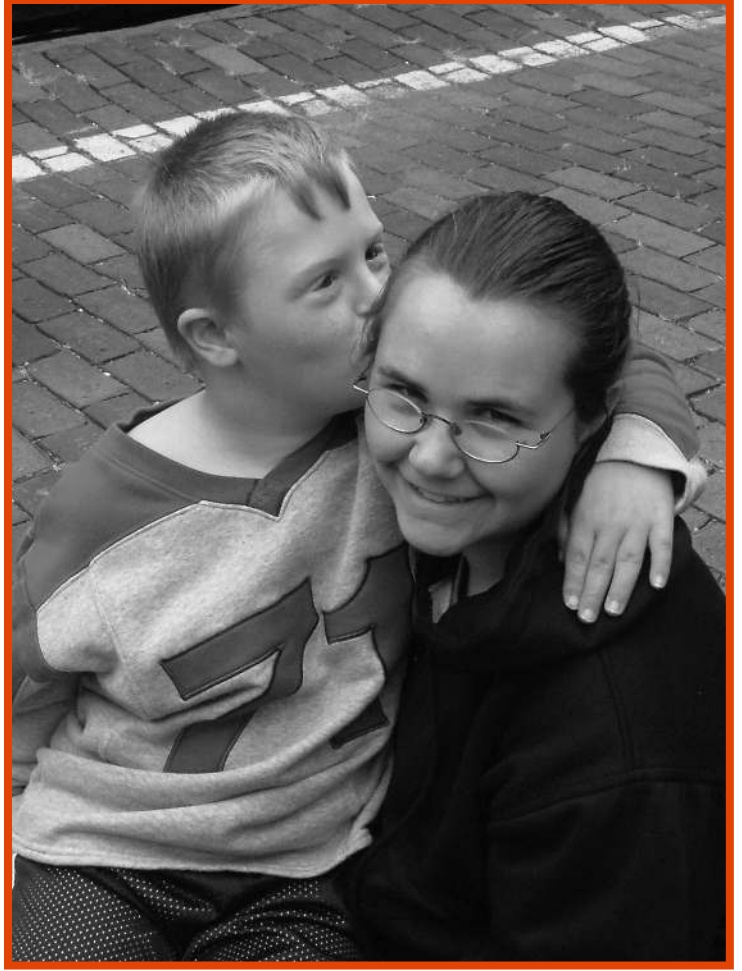








Photo by Ken Watson; used with permission.







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## Well-Known People with Disabilities

Jim Abbott, baseball player, Olympian (born with one hand)  
Rick Allen, drummer for Def Leppard (lost an arm in an accident)  
Ludwig von Beethoven, musician (deaf)  
Sarah Bernhardt, actress (lost a leg after an accident)  
Orlando Bloom, actor (dyslexia)  
Josh Blue, comedian (cerebral palsy)  
Christy Brown, author (cerebral palsy)  
Chris Burke, actor (Down syndrome)  
Julius Caesar, Roman Emperor (epilepsy)  
Ray Charles, musician (blind)  
Agatha Christie, author (epilepsy)  
Francis Ford Coppola, film director (polio)  
Sammy Davis, Jr., musician (partial vision loss)  
Jean Driscoll, track & field athlete, Olympian, Paralympian (spina bifida)  
Thomas Edison, inventor (hard of hearing)  
Peter Falk, actor (partial vision loss)  
Aaron Fotheringham, extreme athlete (Spina Bifida)  
Michael J. Fox, actor (Parkinson's Disease)  
Temple Grandin, doctor, professor, animal welfare activist (autism)  
Bethany Hamilton, surfer (lost an arm to a shark attack)  
Stephen Hawking, astrophysicist (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also called Lou Gehrig's disease)  
Geri Jewell, comedian (cerebral palsy)  
James Earl Jones, actor (speech impairment/stuttering)  
Frida Kahlo, artist (paraplegia)  
Helen Keller, educator (deaf and blind)  
Dorothea Lange, photographer (polio)  
Juliette Gordon Low, founder of Girl Scouts (hard of hearing)  
Howie Mandel, comedian (ADD/ADHD)  
Wilma Mankiller, activist (muscular dystrophy)  
Marlee Matlin, actress (deaf)  
John Mellencamp, musician (spina bifida)  
Alfred Nobel, scientist (epilepsy)  
Terrance Parkin, swimmer, Olympian (deaf)  
Itzhak Perlman, musician (polio)  
Cole Porter, musician (lost a leg after an accident)  
John Wesley Powell, explorer (lost an arm in war)  
Christopher Reeve, actor (quadriplegia)  
Pierre Auguste Renoir, artist (arthritis)  
Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States (polio/Guillain-Barre Syndrome)  
Harilyn Rousso, activist (cerebral palsy)  
Wilma Rudolph, track & field athlete, Olympian (polio)  
Harriet Tubman, activist (epilepsy)  
Clay Walker, musician (multiple sclerosis)  
Hugo Weaving, actor (epilepsy)  
Hank Williams, Sr., musician (spina bifida)  
Bruce Willis, actor (speech impairment/stuttering)  
Stevie Wonder, musician (blind)  
Neil Young, musician (epilepsy, polio)



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# Contact Information for Selected Wisconsin Colleges & Universities

## Private Colleges & Universities

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### **Alverno College**

www.alverno.edu  
3400 S. 43rd St.  
P.O. Box 343922  
Milwaukee, WI 53234-3922  
800.933.3401

### **Bellin College**

www.bellincollege.edu  
3201 Eaton Road  
Green Bay, WI 54311  
800.236.8707  
admissions@bellincollege.edu

### **Beloit College**

www.beloit.edu  
700 College Street  
Beloit, WI 53511  
800.923.5648  
608.363.2500

### **Cardinal Stritch University**

www.stritch.edu  
6801 N. Yates Rd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53217  
414.410.4000

### **Carroll University**

www.carrollu.edu  
100 North East Avenue  
Waukesha, WI 53186  
800.227.7655

### **Carthage College**

www.carthage.edu  
2001 Alford Park Dr.  
Kenosha, WI 53140  
262.551.8500

### **Columbia College of Nursing**

www.ccon.edu  
4425 North Port Washington Rd.  
Glendale, WI 53212  
414.326.2330

### **Concordia University**

www.cuw.edu  
12800 N. Lakeshore Dr.  
Mequon, WI 53097-2402  
888.628.9472

### **Edgewood College**

www.edgewood.edu  
1000 Edgewood College Dr.  
Madison, WI 53711  
608.663.2294

### **Herzing University**

www.herzing.edu  
(Madison Campus)  
5218 East Terrace Drive  
Madison, WI 53718  
608.249.6611

#### **(Brookfield Campus)**

555 S. Executive Drive  
Brookfield, WI 563005  
262.457.7623

#### **(Kenosha Campus)**

4006 Washington Road  
Kenosha, WI 53144  
262.293.5475

### **Lakeland College**

www.lakeland.edu  
W3711 South Drive  
Plymouth, WI 53073  
800.242.3347

### **Lawrence University**

www.lawrence.edu  
711 East Boldt Way SPC 29  
Appleton, WI 54911-5699  
920.832.6500

### **Maranatha Baptist Bible College**

www.mbbc.edu  
745 West Main Street  
Watertown, WI 53094-7638  
800.622.2947

### **Marian University**

www.marianuniversity.edu  
45 South National Ave.  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935-4699  
920.923.7650

### **Marquette University**

www.marquette.edu  
1250 West Wisconsin Avenue  
PO Box 1881  
Milwaukee, WI 53201-1881  
888-222-6544

### **Medical College of Wisconsin**

www.mcw.edu  
8701 Watertown Plank Road  
Milwaukee, WI 53226  
414.955.8246

### **Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design**

www.miad.edu  
273 E. Erie St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
888.749.6423

### **Milwaukee School of Engineering**

www.mscoe.edu  
1025 North Broadway  
Milwaukee, WI 53202-3109  
800.332.6763

### **Mount Mary University**

www.mtmary.edu  
2900 North Menomonee  
River Parkway  
Milwaukee, WI 53222  
414.256.1219

### **Nashotah House Theological Seminary**

www.nashotah.edu  
2777 Mission Road  
Nashotah, WI 53056  
262.646.6506

### **Northland College**

www.northland.edu  
1411 Ellis Avenue  
Ashland, WI 54806-3999  
715.682.1224

### **Ripon College**

www.ripon.edu  
300 Seward Street  
P.O. Box 248  
Ripon, WI 54971-0248  
800.947.4766

### **Silver Lake College of the Holy Family**

www.sl.edu  
2406 S. Alverno Road  
Manitowoc, WI 53056  
800.236.4752 ext. 175

### **St. Norbert College**

www.snc.edu  
100 Grant Street  
De Pere, WI 54115-2099  
920.403.3005

### **Viterbo University**

www.viterbo.edu  
900 Viterbo Drive  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
800.848.3726

### **Wisconsin Lutheran College**

www.wlc.edu  
8800 W. Bluemound Road  
Milwaukee, WI 53226  
414.443.8811

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# The University of Wisconsin System

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## **UW – Eau Claire**

www.uwec.edu  
715.836.2637  
105 Garfield Avenue  
P.O. Box 4004  
Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004

## **UW – Green Bay**

www.uwgb.edu  
920.465.2000  
2420 Nicolet Drive  
Green Bay, WI 54311-7001

## **UW – LaCrosse**

www.uwlax.edu  
608.785.8000  
1725 State Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601

## **UW – Madison**

www.wisc.edu  
608.263.2400

## **UW – Milwaukee**

www.uwm.edu  
414.229.1122  
P.O. Box 413  
2200 E. Kenwood Blvd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0413

## **UW – Oshkosh**

www.uwosh.edu  
920.424.1234  
800 Algoma Blvd.  
Oshkosh WI 54901

## **UW – Parkside**

www.uwp.edu  
262.595.2345  
900 Wood Road  
P.O. Box 2000  
Kenosha, WI 53141-2000

## **UW – Platteville**

www.uwplatt.edu  
800.362.5515  
1 University Plaza  
Platteville, WI 53818-3099

## **UW – River Falls**

www.uwrf.edu  
715.425.3911  
410 South Third Street  
River Falls, WI 54022-5001

## **UW – Stevens Point**

www.uwsp.edu  
715.346.0123  
2100 Main Street  
Stevens Point, WI 54481-3897

## **UW – Stout**

www.uwstout.edu  
715.232.1122  
712 S. Broadway St.  
Menomonie, WI 54751

## **UW – Superior**

www.uwsuper.edu  
715.394.8101  
Belknap & Catlin, P.O. Box 2000  
Superior WI 54880-4500

## **UW – Whitewater**

www.uww.edu  
262.472.1234  
800 West Main Street  
Whitewater, WI 53190-1790

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Stern-LaRosa, Caryl & Bettmann, Ellen Hofheimer (2000) "Hate Hurts: How Children Learn and Unlearn Prejudice." Scholastic.

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McMurtry, Lisa. "Teaching Children about the Five Senses." Retrieved from the web 11/16/05. <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/nibbles/succeed-senses.html>

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*The following websites contain information that was helpful in guiding the development of the ideas and concepts presented in Avenues to Understanding.*

Disability Social History Project. <http://www.disabilityhistory.org/dshp.html>

Disability Awareness in Action. <http://www.daa.org.uk/>

Bullying Online. [www.bullying.co.uk/index.php](http://www.bullying.co.uk/index.php)

National Arts and Disability Center. <http://nadc.ucla.edu/about.cfm>

The Family Village. Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin – Madison. <http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/general/disability-awareness.html>

NICHCY: National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities. <http://www.nichcy.org/>

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## Helpful Links

**Disclaimer:** Links to organizations outside Easter Seals Wisconsin are included for information only. Easter Seals Wisconsin has no control over the views or actions of these organizations or the content of their webpages. The views and opinions of these organizations are not necessarily those of Easter Seals Wisconsin.

### **KidsHealth • [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)**

*KidsHealth is the largest and most-visited site on the Web providing doctor-approved health information about children from before birth through adolescence. Divided into areas for kids, teens and parents, the site covers an extensive variety of health-related issues.*

### **stopbullying.gov • [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)**

*Stop Bullying Now! is an excellent website from the United States Department of Health and Human Services with comprehensive information on bullying and numerous helpful downloads.*

### **Through the Looking Glass • [www.lookingglass.org](http://www.lookingglass.org)**

*Through the Looking Glass is a nationally recognized center that has pioneered research, training, and services for families in which a child, parent or grandparent has a disability or medical issue.*

### **National Arts & Disability Center • [www.semel.ucla.edu/nadc](http://www.semel.ucla.edu/nadc)**

*The mission of the NADC is to promote the full inclusion of audiences and artists with disabilities into all facets of the arts community. Their web site offers free resource directories and materials and articles on a wide array of subjects including: disability art and culture, accessible programs for museums, mixed-ability dance, inclusive theatre, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the arts, common terms used regarding accessibility and the arts, products and services, marketing and publicity, and strategies to design accessible arts web sites.*

### **Kid's Quest • [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/kids/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/kids/index.html)**

*Kid's Quest is a site designed to guide children to a better understanding of people with disabilities and some of the issues related to daily activities, health and accessibility.*

### **Disabled Sports USA • [www.disabledsportsusa.org](http://www.disabledsportsusa.org)**

*Disabled Sports USA is an organization established in 1967 by Vietnam veterans with disabilities to serve the war injured. Disabled Sports USA now offers nationwide sports rehabilitation programs to anyone with a permanent disability. Activities include winter skiing, water sports, summer and winter competitions, fitness and special sports events. Participants include those with visual impairments, amputations, spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, head injury, cerebral palsy, and other neuromuscular and orthopedic conditions.*

### **Adaptive Adventures • [www.adaptiveadventures.org](http://www.adaptiveadventures.org)**

*Adaptive Adventures is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with disabilities and their families through outdoor sports & recreation.*

### **Disability is Natural • [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com)**

*Disability is Natural is writer/activist Kathie Snow's website with articles espousing her 'New Way of Thinking' philosophy, which challenges common language and attitudes and offers advice on raising successful children with disabilities.*

### **Fanlight Productions • [www.fanlight.com/catalog/subjects/disability.php](http://www.fanlight.com/catalog/subjects/disability.php)**

*Fanlight Productions reviews and offers for sale a number of films dealing with a variety of disabilities.*





Thank you so much for helping to foster better understanding of people with disabilities and the issues they face by sharing *Avenues to Understanding* with the children in your group.

If children develop positive attitudes toward people with disabilities as they grow, we believe they will, as adults, help create an environment of dignity, self-respect and opportunity for their peers with disabilities. Thank you for the part you've played in helping to make that vision a reality.

We appreciate your feedback, welcome suggestions for improvements or additions, and hope you'll recommend *Avenues to Understanding* to colleagues.

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# Easter Seals Wisconsin Programs

## Respite Camp

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Parents and caregivers of individuals with severe and multiple disabilities say their number one need is respite care. The Wisconsin Elks/Easter Seals Respite Camp in Wisconsin Dells provides a camping experience for people ages 3 to adult who need one-to-one care. Campers enjoy an individualized recreational program including crafts, swimming and nature activities while their caretakers enjoy some much-needed and well-deserved time off. Weekend Respite sessions are available September through May with full week sessions during the summer.

## Camp Wawbeek

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Easter Seals Camp Wawbeek has been offering outdoor fun and friendship to people age 7 and up with disabilities since 1938. This beautiful 400 acre, fully-accessible facility near Wisconsin Dells is accredited by the American Camp Association. Children and adults enjoy camp-outs, nature hikes, swimming, fishing, canoeing, a climbing tower and high and low ropes courses. Day Camp for kids with and without disabilities and Bring-a-Buddy opportunities for siblings and friends are also available, as are sessions for children with autism spectrum disorders, ADHD, cognitive delays and other conditions. There are also sessions for Veterans and their families.

## FARM Program

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Since 1991, Easter Seals Wisconsin FARM Program has been helping farmers and agricultural workers with disabilities successfully accommodate their disability and continue to farm, return to farming or develop an alternative agricultural occupation. In partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the University of Wisconsin Extension (to form AgrAbility), the FARM Program helps through on-site assessments, recommendations for technical modifications of work sites and equipment, and referral to funding sources. The program boasts a better than 90% success rate of helping farmers achieve their rehabilitation goals and serves as *the* national model for similar programs across the United States.

## Self-Employment Services

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Self-Employment Services works one-on-one with entrepreneurs to evaluate their self-employment ideas from a business standpoint and with respect to the issues presented by the individual's disabilities. Rehabilitation staff provide training and assistance in business development for people with disabilities who would like to create their own opportunities or expand their current ones. Currently this service is available to residents in northeastern Wisconsin.

## Disability HelpLine of Outagamie County

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The Disability HelpLine of Outagamie County is the result of a major bequest from the Loretta K. Ricker estate, given to Easter Seals to provide services to persons with disabilities in Outagamie County. The HelpLine serves as a point of contact for obtaining information and resources for people with disabilities.



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