

10 ways to break down **BARRIERS**

What is it like to have a disability? Many of us will never know. But we all have the opportunity to interact with people of all abilities. Below are 10 tips to follow when it comes to people with disabilities to ensure you both have a pleasant experience. In the end, remember: it's all about courtesy and acceptance!

1. Include people with disabilities during meetings, worship, parties, games and sports. People of all ages and abilities like to have fun, have friends and participate.
2. Respect and be informed of the rights of people with disabilities (for example, accessible parking spaces, service dogs in public spaces and accessible entrances).
3. Plan ahead for accommodations and accessibility. Be honest if there is a barrier the person with the disability should be aware of.
4. Treat adults like adults, teenagers like teenagers, and kids like kids! Talk to them in a way that is age appropriate.
5. Never assume that a person who has a physical or other visible disability also has a cognitive or learning disability.
6. Avoid overdoing things for people with disabilities. Everyone wants independence! It is polite to offer assistance if the need arises, but wait until your offer is accepted before acting.
7. Speak directly to the person with the disability, not to the interpreter or person that may be accompanying them.
8. Answer questions children may have about differences, special equipment, or disabilities — don't avoid them! Explain to them that we all do many of the same things each day- we may just do them differently.
9. Use "people first" language. The individual is always a person first, the disability is secondary. Examples: a child with autism, a person who uses a wheelchair, students with disabilities.
10. Let the "golden rule" and common friendship break down any barriers you may feel. Find a way to celebrate the similarities and differences in people of all abilities!

talking about **DISABILITIES**

There is some confusion when it comes to talking about disabilities. But we're here to help with our general guide below. This terminology reflects "people first" language, which is typically to depict a clear and positive image when discussing people with disabilities.

Say

people with disabilities

child with Down syndrome

student with autism, autism spectrum disorder

man with paraplegia, woman who is paralyzed,
a person with a spinal cord injury

person who has cerebral palsy

person who uses a wheelchair

student with a cognitive or developmental disability

person with a communication disability
or person who is non-verbal

person who is deaf
or has a hearing disability

people who are blind or have a visual disability

children without disabilities,
typically developing child

congenital disability

accessible buses, bathrooms
reserved for people with disabilities

general education or curriculum

Instead of

handicapped, physically challenged,
disabled people

Down's child

autistic student, he's autistic

paraplegic, quadriplegic

person suffering from or a victim of cerebral palsy

person bound or confined to a wheelchair

mentally retarded

mute, dumb

deaf person, the deaf,
deaf and dumb

blind people, the blind

normal child, able-bodied, healthy

birth defect

handicapped buses, bathrooms, parking

regular education or curriculum