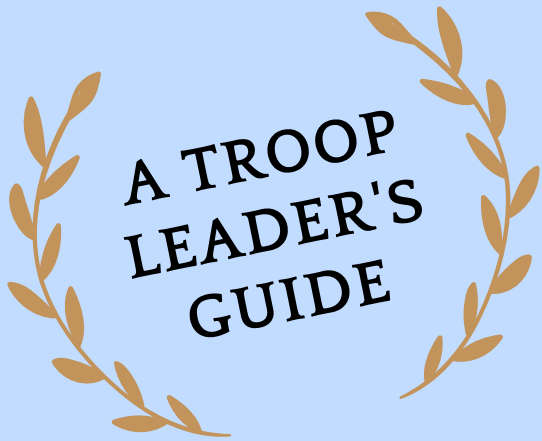


# DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

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CULVER CITY NEIGHBORHOOD GIRL SCOUTS



# INTRODUCTION

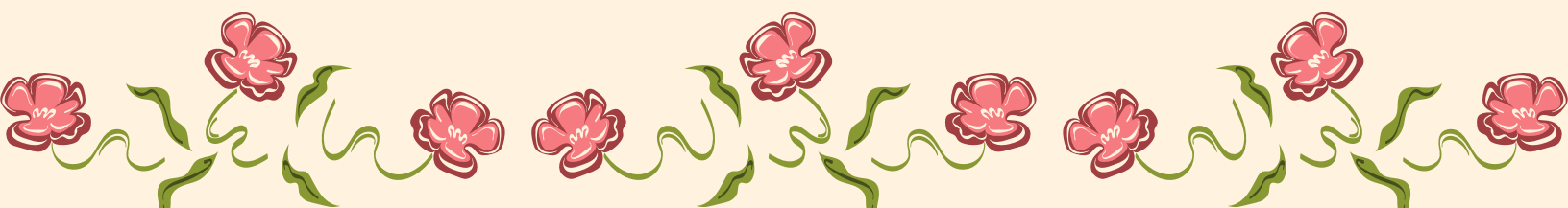
AS OF 2020, THERE ARE ESTIMATED TO BE ABOUT 61.1 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES WHO LIVE WITH A DISABILITY (CDC). THAT'S ABOUT 26%, OR 1 IN 4. WHILE LOOKING AT THIS VIA STATISTICS MAY HELP US UNDERSTAND HOW TO MAKE SOCIETY A MORE WELCOMING AND ACCEPTING PLACE, PEOPLE WHO LIVE WITH DISABILITIES ARE MORE THAN JUST THEIR DISABILITY—THEY'RE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY. YOU MAY SEE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES PASS BY YOU IN THE HALLWAYS AT SCHOOL, OR SIT NEXT TO YOU IN YOUR CLASSROOM. THEY MAY EVEN BE IN YOUR TROOP! IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW DISABILITY ETIQUETTE TO TREAT THEM KINDLY AND ENSURE BOTH OF YOU ARE COMFORTABLE AROUND EACH OTHER. TO HAVE A POSITIVE INTERACTION WITH A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY, KEEP IN MIND THESE 4 BASICS:

## 1. ASK BEFORE YOU HELP

ONLY OFFER ASSISTANCE IF THE PERSON ASKS FOR IT. JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE HAS A DISABILITY, DON'T ASSUME THEY NEED HELP. IF THE PERSON DOES COMMUNICATE THAT THEY WANT HELP, ASK HOW BEFORE YOU ACT.

## 2. BE SENSITIVE ABOUT PHYSICAL CONTACT

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CONSIDER THEIR EQUIPMENT PART OF THEIR PERSONAL SPACE, SO AVOID TOUCHING THEIR WHEELCHAIR, SCOOTER, CANE, OR ANY OTHER AID THEY USE. ADDITIONALLY, DON'T GRAB PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, EVEN WITH THE INTENTION TO HELP, AS IT MAY KNOCK THEM OFF BALANCE.



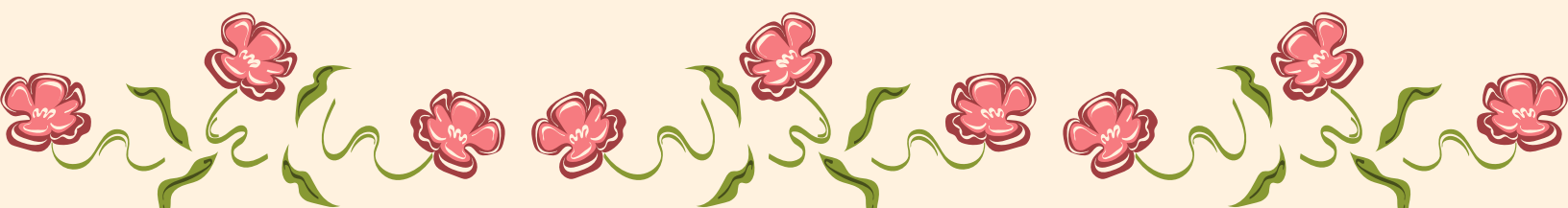
# INTRODUCTION (CONT.)

## 3. THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

ALWAYS SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE PERSON WITH A DISABILITY, NOT THEIR COMPANION, AIDE, OR SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER. WHEN MAKING SMALL TALK WITH SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY, SPEAK AS YOU WOULD WITH ANYONE ELSE—DON'T FEEL BAD IF YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE "SEE YOU LATER" TO A PERSON WITH BLINDNESS OR "I GOTTA RUN" TO A PERSON WHO USES A WHEELCHAIR. IF YOU ASK ABOUT THEIR DISABILITY, DON'T BE OFFENDED IF THEY SAY THEY AREN'T COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT IT. RESPECT THEIR PRIVACY!

## 4. DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS

DON'T MAKE DECISIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. THEY ARE THEIR OWN BEST JUDGE OF WHAT THEY CAN OR CAN'T DO.



# TERMINOLOGY AND THE PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

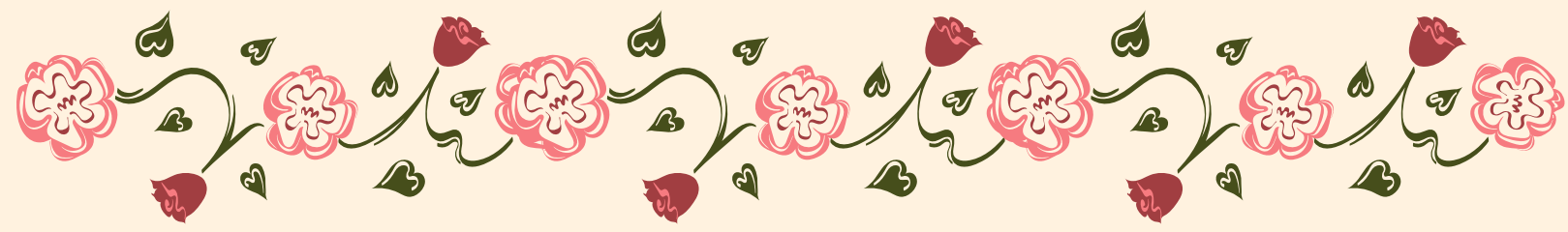
## WHAT IS PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE?

WELL, IT'S EXACTLY AS IT SOUNDS: PUT THE PERSON FIRST. INSTEAD OF SAYING "DISABLED PERSON", SAY "PERSON WITH A DISABILITY" OR "PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES". FOR SPECIFIC DISABILITIES, SAYING "PERSON WITH AUTISM" OR "PERSON WHO HAS A WHEELCHAIR" IS A GOOD BET. HOWEVER, INDIVIDUALS HAVE THEIR OWN PREFERENCES. IF YOU'RE UNSURE HOW TO ADDRESS SOMEONE, DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK.

## THESE TERMS SHOULD BE AVOIDED:

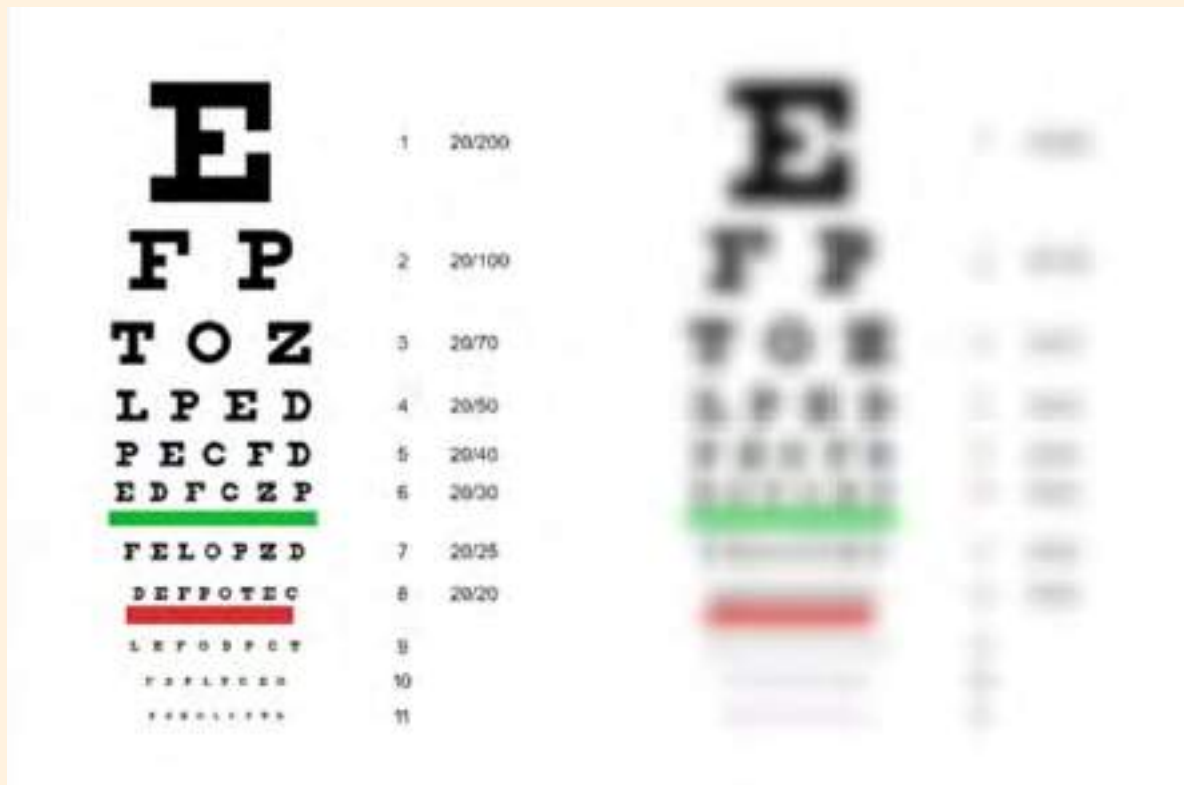
- HANDICAPPED
- CRIPPLED
- RETARDED
- DEFECTED
- INVALID
- WHEELCHAIR BOUND
- VICTIM
- SUFFERS FROM

KEEP IN MIND THAT SAYING TERMS LIKE "PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED" OR "DISABLED" IMPLY THAT THE PERSON DOES NOT HAVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, WHICH IS UNTRUE. FOR EXAMPLE, SAY "PERSON WHO USES A WHEELCHAIR" RATHER THAN "WHEELCHAIR BOUND" BECAUSE THE WHEELCHAIR IS WHAT ALLOWS THE PERSON TO BE ACTIVE IN SOCIETY. HAVING THE WHEELCHAIR IS FREEING, NOT RESTRICTING. WHEN TALKING ABOUT PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE DISABILITIES, AVOID USING THE TERM "NORMAL". USE "PERSON WITHOUT DISABILITIES" INSTEAD.



# LOW VISION OR BLIND

A PERSON WHO CAN BE LEGALLY DEFINED AS BLIND HAS 20/200 VISION. THIS MEANS THAT ON THE SNELLEN EYE CHART THIS PERSON STANDING 20 FEET AWAY FROM THE CHART CANNOT READ THE TOP FIRST AND LARGEST LETTER ON THE CHART. MOST PEOPLE WHO ARE CONSIDERED BLIND ACTUALLY STILL HAVE SOME SIGHT, INSTEAD OF NO SIGHT AT ALL. THEY ARE ALSO VERY MOBILE AND INDEPENDENT! IT'S OFTEN VIEWED AS AN INCONVENIENCE RATHER THAN A DISABILITY. WHILE SOME PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND CAN READ BRAILLE, THE MAJORITY DO NOT. HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT A VISION CHART MIGHT LOOK LIKE TO SOMEONE WITH LOW VISION:



# LOW VISION OR BLIND

## THINGS TO DO:

- INTRODUCE YOURSELF, YOUR ROLE, OR WHO YOU ARE.
- GIVE VERBAL INFORMATION WHERE VISUAL INFORMATION WOULD USUALLY BE REQUIRED.
- WHEN IDENTIFYING DIRECTIONS, BE SPECIFIC! SAYING "OVER THERE" DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING TO SOMEONE WHO CAN'T SEE WHERE YOU'RE POINTING.
- IF SOMEONE WHO IS BLIND HAS ACCEPTED YOUR OFFER TO HELP, LEAD THEM BY LETTING THEM HOLD YOUR ARM. IT IS IMPORTANT TO LET THEM SET THEIR OWN PACE.
- DESCRIBE YOUR SURROUNDINGS FROM THEIR PERSPECTIVE BY USING THE "CLOCK" METHOD. SOMETHING COULD BE POSITIONED AT 3:00 (TO THEIR RIGHT) OR 6:00 (DIRECTLY IN FRONT).
- IF THE PERSON WHO IS BLIND HAS A GUIDE DOG, WALK ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE DOG.
- INFORM THE PERSON WHO IS BLIND IF YOU ARE LEAVING.

## THINGS TO AVOID:

- MOVING FURNITURE OR PERSONAL ITEMS AFTER THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED PERSON HAS LEARNED THEIR LOCATION.
- DO NOT INTERACT WITH THE GUIDE DOG IN ANY WAY WHILE IT IS WORKING.

## ACTIVITIES TO TRY:

- TRY DOING ANY DAILY TASK BLINDFOLDED! (BRUSHING TEETH, GETTING FOOD, POURING WATER)
- DECORATE CUPCAKES WHILE BLINDFOLDED. ADMIRE YOUR BEAUTIFUL DESIGNS!



# DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

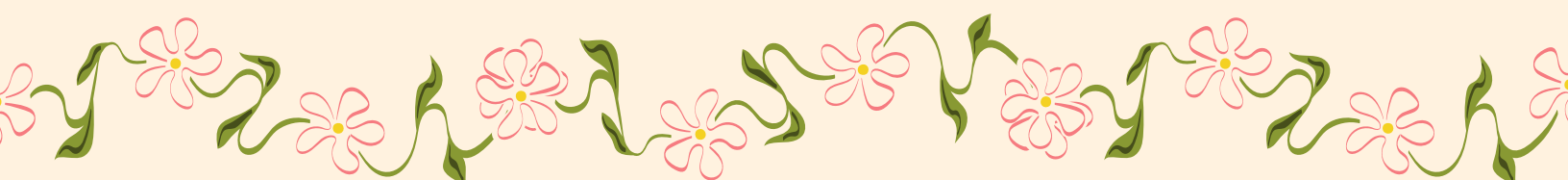
TODAY, 11.5 MILLION AMERICANS ARE CONSIDERED DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING. THAT'S ABOUT 3.5% OF THE POPULATION. NOT ALL PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF LIP READ, AND THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WHO ARE CONSIDERED DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING STILL HAVE SOME HEARING. YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL) AS A WAY FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING TO COMMUNICATE.

ASL IS ITS OWN NATURAL LANGUAGE WITH GRAMMAR THAT DIFFERS FROM ENGLISH. ASL IS NOT A UNIVERSAL SIGN LANGUAGE, AND PEOPLE WHO KNOW ASL MAY NOT UNDERSTAND BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (BSL).

FINGERSPELLING IS PART OF ASL AND IS USED TO SPELL OUT ENGLISH WORDS. IN FINGERSPELLING, EACH LETTER HAS ITS OWN HAND SHAPE. MOST PEOPLE WHO USE ASL WERE BORN DEAF AND ARE USUALLY NOT ORAL. THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WHO BECOME DEAF PREFER LIP READING.

## THINGS TO DO:

- FIND OUT HOW THE PERSON BEST COMMUNICATES
- IF THE PERSON IS USING AN INTERPRETER, TALK TO THE PERSON, NOT THE INTERPRETER.
- IF THE PERSON READS LIPS, SPEAK IN A NORMAL WAY IN SHORT AND SIMPLE SENTENCES. AVOID BLOCKING YOUR FACE WHILE SPEAKING AND DON'T TURN AWAY.
- BE SURE YOU HAVE THE PERSON'S ATTENTION BEFORE BEGINNING TO SPEAK. REMEMBER, IF YOU ARE UNSURE THEY UNDERSTOOD, IT'S OKAY TO POLITELY ASK IF THEY DID. IF THEY DIDN'T, REPHRASE INSTEAD OF REPEATING.





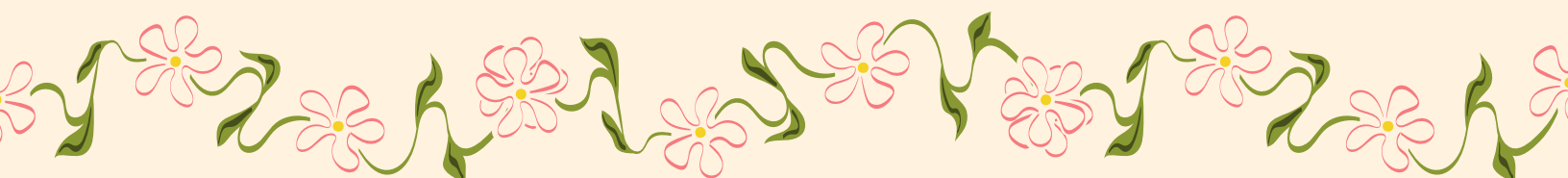
# DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

## THINGS TO AVOID:

- TRY NOT TO BE IMPATIENT OR EXASPERATED WITH THE PERSON IF IT TAKES LONGER TO COMMUNICATE
- IF THE PERSON WEARS HEARING AIDS, AVOID CONVERSATION IN LOUD AND OPEN PLACES
- DO NOT RAISE YOUR VOICE; IT IS IMPORTANT TO SPEAK CLEARLY.
- WHEN A HEARING IMPAIRED PERSON ASKS "WHAT DID YOU SAY?" AVOID ANSWERING "NOTHING", "NEVER MIND", OR "IT'S NOT IMPORTANT". THESE ARE INSULTING BECAUSE THEY COMMUNICATE THAT THE PERSON IS NOT WORTH REPEATING YOURSELF FOR.

## ACTIVITIES TO TRY:

- TRY LEARNING A BIT OF SIGN LANGUAGE ONLINE AND USING IT WITH YOUR TROOP. HERE IS A VIDEO ON BASIC FINGERSPELLING
  - [LEARN ASL](#)
- TRY WATCHING A MOVIE OR SHOW WITH NO SOUND, ONLY SUBTITLES. HOW DOES IT CHANGE THE EXPERIENCE?
- HEADPHONES ACTIVITY
  - GET SOME NOISE CANCELING HEADPHONES AND TRY HOLDING A CONVERSATION. HOW HAS YOUR ABILITY TO INTERACT CHANGED? HAVE THINGS CHANGED? TRY DOING DAILY TASKS WHILE SOMEONE IS RINGING THE DOORBELL OR CALLING ON THE PHONE. CAN YOU TELL THERE IS SOMEONE THERE?





# COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES (DISABILITIES HAVING TO DO WITH THINKING AND UNDERSTANDING) CAN OFTEN UNDERSTAND MORE THAN THEY CAN EXPRESS. THEY MAY BE CAUSED BY A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY THAT OCCURRED BEFORE BIRTH, AT BIRTH, OR FROM A BRAIN INJURY LATER IN LIFE. THERE IS A HUGE RANGE OF ABILITIES IN THIS CATEGORY, FROM PEOPLE THAT, THOUGH THEY HAVE SOME AMOUNT OF DISABILITY, ARE ABLE TO CARRY ON NORMAL LIVES AND ARE ABLE TO HOLD SIMPLE JOBS, TO PEOPLE THAT NEED A LOT OF HELP WITH EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES AND CONSTANT SUPERVISION. THEY MIGHT EVEN BE UNABLE TO MAKE SIMPLE CHOICES.

SOMETIMES IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE HOW MUCH THEY UNDERSTAND. THE AMOUNT OF IMPAIRMENT MAY BE DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT AREAS SUCH AS SOMEONE WITH APPROPRIATE SOCIAL SKILLS, BUT NO UNDERSTANDING OF ABSTRACT CONCEPTS OR HOW TO USE MONEY. SOME PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS HAVE DIFFICULTY COMMUNICATING BUT THEY MAY BE INTELLIGENT, AND SOME INDIVIDUALS WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT MAY UNDERSTAND VERY LITTLE.

AUTISM IS A CERTAIN TYPE OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY. SOME PEOPLE WITH AUTISM MAY HAVE COGNITIVE DISABILITY. OTHERS MAY EVEN BE EXTREMELY INTELLIGENT. OF THOSE SOME MAY NOT BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE AT ALL OR CAN COMMUNICATE USING A KEYBOARD COMMUNICATION DEVICE. THEY MAY HAVE BEHAVIORAL ISSUES, SUCH AS NOT LIKING CHANGE, BEING TOUCHED AND NOT BEING ABLE TO TOLERATE WAITING IN LINE. THEY MAY HAVE SOME SPECIAL ABILITIES THAT OTHER PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE.



# COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

OTHER COGNITIVE DISABILITIES INCLUDE: DYSLEXIA (LEARNING DISORDER AFFECTING READING ABILITY), APHASIA (LANGUAGE DISORDER AFFECTING ONE'S ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE), AND DYSCALCULIA (LEARNING DISABILITY SPECIFICALLY IN MATH) THEY MAY ALSO BE PART OF COGNITIVE DISABILITY.

## THINGS TO DO:

- SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE PERSON AND SPEAK TO THEM LIKE A NORMAL HUMAN. USE SIMPLE LANGUAGE, BUT NOT BABY TALK.
- TAKE YOUR TIME WHEN INTERACTING AND DON'T ASSUME THE PERSON DIDN'T UNDERSTAND YOU SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T RESPOND.
- KEEP IN MIND YOUR SURROUNDINGS: ARE THEY NOISY, CROWDED, OR HAVE DISTRACTIONS? IF SO, IT MAY BE HARD FOR THE PERSON TO FOCUS ON WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

## THINGS TO AVOID:

- DON'T ASSUME THE PERSON IS INCAPABLE OF LEARNING. THEY MAY ONLY NEED A LITTLE MORE TIME TO USE WHAT THEY LEARNED IN ANOTHER SITUATION.
- DO NOT ASK IF THE PERSON HAS UNDERSTOOD YOU, BECAUSE THEY MAY ANSWER "YES" EVEN IF THEY HAVEN'T.
- DO NOT RAISE YOUR VOICE IF THE PERSON DOES NOT UNDERSTAND YOU.
- AVOID OFFERING TOO MANY OPTIONS AS IT MAY BE TOO DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO MAKE A CHOICE.



# COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

## ACTIVITIES TO TRY:

- CONVERSATION ACTIVITY ROLE PLAYING
  - HAVE ONE PERSON SIT IN A CHAIR WITH SOMEONE STANDING NEXT TO THEM AS THEIR 'GUIDE'. THEN, HAVE SOMEONE ELSE COME UP TO START THE CONVERSATION—BUT THEY ONLY TALK TO THE GUIDE, NOT THE PERSON THEMSELVES. WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING IGNORED WHEN THE CONVERSATION IS ABOUT YOU?
- READING WITH DYSLEXIA
  - HAVE A FRIEND WRITE YOU A MESSAGE WITH THE LETTERS IN EACH WORD SCRAMBLED. CAN YOU STILL READ WHAT THEY'RE TRYING TO TELL YOU?



# SPEECH DISORDERS

SOMEONE WHO HAS HAD A STROKE, IS DEAF, HAS A STAMMER, HAS CEREBRAL PALSY, OR ANY OTHER TYPE OF SPEECH DISABILITY MAY BE HARD TO UNDERSTAND. A SPEECH DISORDER IS WHEN SOMEONE HAS PROBLEMS CREATING OR FORMING THE SPEECH NEEDED TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS. IT CAN DEVELOP IN CHILDREN OR ADULTS AND CAN BE CAUSED BY TRAUMA TO THE BRAIN, EMOTIONAL STRESS, OR GENETIC DIFFERENCES.

## THINGS TO DO:

- STAY CALM; THE PERSON WITH THE SPEECH DISORDER HAS BEEN IN THIS SITUATION BEFORE.
- GIVE THE PERSON YOUR FULL ATTENTION.
- BE PATIENT, DON'T FINISH SENTENCES OR SUPPLY WORDS. THE PERSON WITH THE SPEECH DISORDER WANTS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS BADLY AS YOU WANT TO UNDERSTAND THEM.
- ASK SHORT QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ANSWERED WITH A SIMPLE YES OR NO. FOR EXAMPLE, "DO YOU NEED ANY HELP?"

## THINGS TO AVOID:

- DON'T SHOUT. PEOPLE WITH SPEECH DISORDERS OFTEN HAVE PERFECT HEARING.
- DON'T INTERRUPT.
- DON'T PRETEND YOU UNDERSTAND. IT'S OKAY TO ASK THE PERSON WITH THE SPEECH DISORDER TO REPEAT THEMSELVES.
- AVOID NOISY SITUATIONS. BACKGROUND NOISE MAKES COMMUNICATION HARD FOR BOTH OF YOU.



# SPEECH DISORDERS

## ACTIVITIES TO TRY:

- WATCH THIS VIDEO ABOUT THREE TYPES OF STUTTERING AND PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS A PERSON MAY PRESENT WHILE SPEAKING WITH A SPEECH DISORDER:
  - WHAT DO THE THREE TYPES OF STUTTERING LOOK LIKE?



# WHEELCHAIRS

PEOPLE WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS OFTEN HAVE VARYING DISABILITIES. SOME ARE ABLE TO USE THEIR ARMS AND HANDS, AND SOME CAN EVEN WALK SHORT DISTANCES. HOWEVER, MANY PEOPLE WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS ARE ONLY VIEWED AS THEIR EQUIPMENT. IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THEY ARE JUST PEOPLE LIKE US!

## THINGS TO DO:

- WHEN HELPING SOMEONE WITH A WHEELCHAIR OR OTHER EQUIPMENT, BE CAREFUL AND ASK HOW IT WORKS BEFORE USING IT.
- STAND A FEW FEET AWAY WHEN TALKING TO SOMEONE IN A WHEELCHAIR SO THEY DON'T HURT THEIR NECKS.
- SOME PEOPLE HAVE LIMITED USE OF THEIR ARMS OR HANDS, SO BE PREPARED TO OFFER ASSISTANCE LIFTING OR REACHING FOR OBJECTS.

## THINGS TO AVOID:

- DON'T TREAT ADULTS AS CHILDREN
- NEVER MOVE EQUIPMENT OUT OF THE PERSON'S REACH
- NEVER PAT A PERSON IN A WHEELCHAIR ON THE HEAD
- DON'T PUSH OR TOUCH SOMEONE'S EQUIPMENT WITHOUT ASKING FOR PERMISSION.

## ACTIVITIES TO TRY:

- WATCH THIS VIDEO ABOUT TIPS FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS:
  - [TOP TIPS FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS](#)
- WATCH THIS VIDEO ABOUT HOW TO PUSH SOMEONE IN A WHEELCHAIR:
  - [10 THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE PUSHING A WHEELCHAIR](#)



# IN CONCLUSION

KEEP IN MIND THE 4 BASICS WHEN SPEAKING TO SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY: ASK BEFORE YOU HELP, BE SENSITIVE ABOUT PHYSICAL CONTACT, THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK, AND DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS. REMEMBER TO TREAT ALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AS INDIVIDUALS. WHILE THEY DO HAVE DISABILITIES, THEY ARE STILL REGULAR PEOPLE WITH FAMILIES, JOBS, AND HOBBIES. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE NOT SOLELY DEFINED BY THEIR DISABILITY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED VICTIMS.

