

Disability Awareness Patch

Brownie Girl Scouts: Complete one activity under General Awareness and four activities, one from each area, under Disability Activities.

Junior Girl Scouts: Complete two activities under General Awareness and four activities, one from each area, under Disability Activities.

General Awareness

1. Discuss famous people who had or have a disability. Make a list and describe each person in a small group or troop of Girl Scouts.
2. Visit a building or facility and identify the areas that have disabled facilities.
3. Invite a professional that serves the disabled population to your troop meeting. Prepare questions prior to the visit for discussion.

Disability Activities:

A. Learning Impaired*

1. Play a get-acquainted game and have everyone sit in a circle. Say all of the names and then repeat all of the names in order. Does this exercise make you more aware of this learning impairment?
2. Obtain a mirror, paper, and pencil and have each girl write and draw on the paper while looking only in the mirror. Can you now read what you have written?

*Please note - a learning impaired child is not the same thing as a mentally impaired child, but both encounter problems in learning.

B. Hearing Impaired

1. Tell a story without talking, and try to understand a story that is told without speaking.
2. Learn the Girl Scout Promise in sign language or finger spelling.
3. While wearing earplugs, listen to an album of music or animal sounds and guess the title or the animal that you hear. How did it sound?

C. Visually Impaired

1. Blindfold the girls and have each girl pass objects around the circle guessing what they are. After the blindfolds are off, identify the objects - color, design, texture and shape. Does this make you more aware of how things feel?
2. Spread petroleum jelly on the outside lens of sunglasses and put them on. Ask the rest of the girls to hold various objects in front of you and describe what you see. Was it difficult to see?

D. Physically Impaired

1. During a troop meeting, try on a physical disability and experience what it is like, i.e. tying an arm or leg behind your back, blindfold yourself, if you have access, use crutches or wheelchair. Assume the disability for the entire meeting during which you try to eat and dress yourself.
2. Talk to a friend about your favorite hobby(ies) with three caramels in your mouth. After you have finished talking, chew the caramel. Was it hard for you to be understood?

Disability Awareness Patch Information for Leaders

Purpose

The purpose of this patch is to increase girls' awareness of individuals with disabilities; to help girls relate to the person, not the disability; and to increase their understanding of what disabilities are and the problems encountered.

Goals

- To develop awareness about disabilities and sensitivity to people with disabilities that is positive and supportive.
- To increase Girl Scouts' awareness that those who are disabled can be successful citizens.
- To discover ways to be a friend to a group of disabled people.
- To be able to identify areas of a building or facility that have disabled facilities.
- To be able to develop/participate in activities that increase girls' awareness of disability.

-To the Leader-

Developing awareness about disabilities or girls with special abilities is an important goal for non-disabled individuals. The Disability Awareness patch will provide girls with a variety of experiences that promote the understanding of the disabilities and their facility needs. Remember, when implementing the patch program with your girls, be careful to use terms that are appropriate like "disability" or "impairment," but not "crippled" or "victim" or even "handicapped."

When beginning activities, allow each girl to express her feelings in a supportive environment. When leading discussions about disabilities, don't be critical of girls who have a bad attitude towards people with disabilities. The positive attitude you portray throughout the disability awareness activities will itself lead to a change in their attitudes.

Sensitivity and awareness of the needs of disabled people will be increased as the girls participate in activities that simulate various disabilities, and as they examine buildings for accommodations for those who are disabled.

The Disability Awareness patch is designed to support the community at large by encouraging girls to take an active role in the awareness of the needs of the disabled population.

Important Definitions Related to Disabilities

Increasing knowledge of and sensitivity to individuals with disabilities will undoubtedly lead to the widespread use of a large vocabulary of terms. Becoming familiar with these terms is a first step in understanding and accepting people with disabilities.

The following terms and definitions have been compiled from several resources and are generally accepted by special educators and psychologists. Share these definitions with Girl Scout leaders, girls, and Girl Scout staff who are interested in learning more about girls with special needs.

Autism- A disorder that appears prior to the age of 30 months and is characterized by profound problems in social relationships and language and by compulsive, ritualistic behaviors.

Blindness- A visual impairment so severe that the individual cannot make use of vision for reading and writing.

Braille- A touch system consisting of raised (embossed) points used by blind individuals for reading and writing.

Hard of Hearing- Those in whom the sense of hearing, although somewhat defective, is functional with or without an amplification device.

Cerebral Palsy- A disability due to damage of centers of the brain during or after birth resulting in imperfect control of the muscles and marked by muscular in-coordination, spastic paralysis, and speech disturbances.

Deaf- A hearing impairment which is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing with or without amplification, which adversely affects educational performance.

Exceptional Children- Refers to children who require special educational programs, services, facilities, etc., in order to meet their educational needs. A traditional and generic term referring to both educationally gifted and educationally handicapped students.

Handicapped Children- Those children evaluated as being mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, deaf-blind, multi-handicapped, or as having specific learning disabilities, who because of those impairments need special education and related services.

Learning Impaired- A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in undertaking or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations.

Multi-handicapped- Concomitant impairments (such as mentally retarded-blind, mentally retarded-orthopedically impaired, etc), the combination of which causes such severe educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blind children.

Orthopedically Impaired- A severe orthopedic impairment which adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease and from other causes.

Quadriplegic- One who has various degrees of loss of function of all four limbs.

Speech Impaired- A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, which affects a child's educational performance.

Visually Impaired- A visual impairment which even with correction adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partially seeing and blind children.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973- Prohibits discrimination against handicapped persons by any agencies or organizations which are assisted by federal funds.

Barrier Free Architecture- Architecture which provides accessibility to those in wheelchairs and those using assistive and prosthetic devices.

Least Restrictive Alternative- If a child is handicapped, he or she is not segregated into a program with only disabled children but rather is treated as an individual allowed to participate in all activities in which he or she is capable of participating-being restricted or limited as little as possible given his or her unique condition.

Mainstreaming- Providing the opportunity for any person with special needs to be involved with able bodied as well as other disabled persons in activities to the extent that the disabled person chooses.

Public Law 94-142- The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 assures that all handicapped children have available to them . . . a free and appropriate education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs.

Resource List

Many national organizations are devoted to serving people with disabilities. Below is a partial list of agencies that might be helpful to Girl Scout adults who wish to work with girls with disabilities. Many of these organizations have offices in your community.

Additional agencies can be found in the local telephone book, online, and in the Directory of National Information Sources on Handicapping Conditions and Related Services, compiled and published by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. This book is updated every few years and is an excellent resource. Check the local library for a copy or write to the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, to purchase a copy.

Directory of Disabilities Organizations
http://www.girlscouts.org/for_adults/volunteering/disabilities_directory.pdf

American Red Cross
National Headquarters
17th and D Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
<http://www.redcross.org/>

Association for Children and Adults With Learning Disabilities (ACLD)
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
<http://www.acldonline.org/>

Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States
ARC National Headquarters
2501 Avenue J
Arlington, TX 76011
www.thearc.org

Blind Outdoor Leisure Development (BOLD)
533 East Main Street
Aspen, CO 81611

Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities (FCLD)
99 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016
<http://www.learningcamp.com/foundation/index.html>

International Committee of Silent Sports
Gallaudet College
800 Florida Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Mainstream, Inc.
1200 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
<http://www.mainstreaminc.net/>

March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation
1275 Mamaroneck Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605
(914) 428-7100
<http://www.marchofdimes.com/>

National Association of the Deaf (NAD)
814 Thayer Avenue
Silver Springs, MD 20910
www.nad.org

Local Resource List

The ARC of Davidson County
1719 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37203
327-0294
<http://www.arcdc.org/>

Autism Society – Middle TN Chapter
480 Craighead Street
Nashville, TN 37204
385-2077
<http://www.autismmidtenn.org/>

Easter Seals Society of TN, Inc.
2001 Woodmont Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37215
292-6640
<http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer>

Foundation Fighting Blindness
367-6060

Juvenile Diabetes
2200 Hillsboro Road
Nashville, TN 37212
383-6781

League for the Hearing Impaired
415 4th Avenue S
Nashville, TN 37201
248-8828

Prevent Blindness
95 White Bridge Road
Nashville, TN 37210
352-0450
<http://www.preventblindness.org/TN/>

Saddle Up!
5319 Leipers Creek Road
Franklin, TN 37064
794-1150

Special Olympics
112 21st Avenue S
Nashville, TN 37203
322-8292

United Cerebral Palsy of Middle TN
209 10th Avenue S
Suite 154
Nashville, TN 37203
242-4091
<http://www.ucpnashville.org/>

Vanderbilt Child Development Center
112 Vanderbilt Medical Arts Building
Nashville, TN
936-0249

This list is by no means complete! You may know of additional resources that would be useful to add to this list.

Thanks

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