Disability Etiquette in Today’s World

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Learning Objectives

Participants will learn:

- the best practices on working with people with disabilities
- what is ableism through storytime
- local, state, regional and national resources for those working with the disability community
Institute for Disability Studies
The University of Southern Mississippi

Mississippi’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)
Education, Research and Service

www.usm.edu/ids

AA/EOE/ADA I
UCEDDs

- 67 University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs)
- Core funding administered by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD)
- Preservice preparation, performs services, engages in research, and disseminates information
IDS’ Mission

To positively affect the lives of Mississippi citizens with developmental and other disabilities and their families across the lifespan and to work toward increasing their INDEPENDENCE, PRODUCTIVITY, and COMMUNITY INCLUSION.
Current Priority Areas

Early Childhood Inclusion and Education

- Promoting quality educational experiences for young children with disabilities

Housing

- Promoting access to safe, decent, accessible, affordable housing for people with disabilities and their families
Current Priority Areas

Transition to Adulthood

- **Promoting enhanced development and overall achievement for youth and young adults with disabilities to promote independence and community living**

Wellness

- **Promoting enhanced well-being and improved quality-of-life for people with disabilities of all ages**
What is ableism?

Our first speaker
Scott Mullins
Story Time . . .

Our first speaker
Scott Mullins
What is Disability?

- A physical or mental impairment which interferes with individual's walking, talking, hearing or seeing
- Disabilities may range from mid through severe
- Disabilities may be visible or unseen
- Over 50+ million Americans have a disability . . .
- Estimated 1 in 5 Mississippians with a disability

National Organization on Disability
Common Disabilities

- Visual Impairments
- Hearing Impairments
- Spinal cord injuries
- Learning disabilities
- Mental disorders/Psychiatric disabilities
- Hidden disabilities
- Cognitive or intellectual disability
What is Disability Etiquette?

- Treating individuals with disabilities with respect
- Knowing that individuals with disabilities deserve the same courtesies like everybody else
Disability Etiquette Continued. . .

- Learning that it is inappropriate to ask people about their sex lives, their relationships, income, or other complexions?
- Giving privacy . . . Be sure to extend the same courtesy to people with disabilities as you would for others
Examples.

Some examples are:

- Don’t lean or hang on to people’s wheelchair because these are viewed as personal space.
- Allow a person to take your arm if they have a vision impairment. DO NOT PULL.
- Treat adults as adults. Disability or not.
- Talking to a person with a disability. Talk to them directly.
Examples . . .

- Relax and don’t feel embarrassed if you a common expression
- Don’t assume that an individual with a hearing impairment can lip read
- It’s okay to speak to somebody at their eye level
- Make sure you identify yourself and others to someone who may have severe loss of vision
Examples.

- Be encouraging and patient with individual who has difficulty speaking
- It is okay to ask questions with short answers
- Ask a person with a disability if they would like some help before you act
- When giving directions to a person in a wheelchair consider things like weather, distance, and other physical obstacles
Examples...

- When directing an individual with a visual impairment, use specifics.
- Be considerate of extra time it might take for a person with a disability to get things done or say.
- Consider individual with disabilities needs ahead of time before an event.
We have a question for you . . .
Story Time . . .

Our second speaker is Dan Lewis
Walk the Walk, Talk the Talk . . .
Our third speaker is Racheal Barnes
Myths and Facts

1. People with disabilities are brave and courageous
2. All persons who use wheelchairs are chronically ill or sickly
3. Wheelchair use is confining; people who use wheelchairs are “wheelchair-bound”
Myths and Facts

4. People who are blind acquire a “sixth sense”
5. Curious children should never ask people about their disabilities
6. People with disabilities are more comfortable with ‘their own kind’
Story Time . . .

Our fourth speaker is Robert Carley
Question Time . . .

References are available upon request.
Resources

https://www.mscdd.org/
http://211.org/
https://www.lifeofms.com/
http://www.drms.ms/
https://www.mdrs.ms.gov/Pages/default.aspx