

The Official

A-Z of DISABILITY

Etiquette



ASK before you help; it may not always be wanted.

A

BE patient and don't pretend to understand or interrupt someone with a speech impediment.

B

COMMUNICATE naturally with your language and expressions.

C

Give specific DIRECTIONS considering distance, weather and obstacles eg steps.

D

Get down to EYE LEVEL during longer conversations by sitting or kneeling.

E

FOCUS on the person, not the disability. Don't bring it up unless relevant.

F

Avoid patronising GESTURES like patting a head or shoulder and back slapping.

G

A wheelchair is not a place to HOLD your bags without permission.

H

Always respect a person's dignity, individuality and desire for INDEPENDENCE.

I

JOIN the conversation and talk as you would with anyone else.

J

KNOW that most people with a disability can make their own decisions.

K

LEAVE accessible car spots for people with a disability.

L

Never MOVE a wheelchair without permission; it is personal property.

M

Speak NORMALLY; don't shout or raise your voice unless asked to do so.

N

Avoid OUTDATED terms like "handicapped", "crippled" and "wheelchair bound".

O

Don't PAT an assistance or guide dog if they're in working mode with their owner.

P

Increase QUALITY of life with a donation to disability support services.

Q

REARRANGE furniture to create a clear path for wheelchairs.

R

SPEAK directly to the person with the disability and not to their companion.

S

Offer a seat to people with limited mobility on public TRANSPORT.

T

UNLOCK and unblock all ramps and wheelchair accessible doors.

U

VIEW a wheelchair as freedom to move about independently.

V

Only push or lean on a WHEELCHAIR with permission.

W

See their X-FACTOR and not their limitations.

X

YIELD and give way to wheelchairs on the move.

Y

ZIP it! Not everyone wants to talk about why they're in a wheelchair.

Z