

## Disability in Afterschool 101: The Basics

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## Did You Know?

- 1 in 5 has a disability



## Individuals With Disabilities Are Not:

- Tragedy of birth defects
- Afflicted
- Struggle to become normal
- Victims
- Suffers from
- Fight to overcome

## They Are People...



## Question

- Is there a universally accepted definition of disability?



### Definition

- *“A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities”*
- And a record of impairment and being regarded as having impairment



### CDC BRFSS Definition

- *“Limited in any way in any activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems”*
- *“Any health problem that requires use of special equipment, such as a cane, a wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone”*

– Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, CDC, 2012

### Types of Disabilities

- Hearing
- Vision
- Movement
- Thinking
- Remembering
- Learning
- Communicating
- Mental health
- Social relationships

### Prevalent Disabilities in the Afterschool Setting

- 1 in 6 children (15%) in the United States has 1 or more developmental disabilities

– (Ages 3 through 17. Source: 2011, Pediatrics and CDC)

### Types of Developmental Disabilities

- Attention deficit/hyperactive disorder
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Cerebral palsy
- Hearing loss
- Intellectual disability

### Types of Developmental Disabilities

- Learning disability
- Vision impairment
- Other developmental delays

### Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- 14% of youth in Alabama ages 4-17 ever diagnosed with ADHD
- About 1 out of every 6 kids diagnosed

– (Source: National Survey of Children's Health, 2007)

### Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- 1 in 50 school - age children diagnosed
- Did you know?
  - The majority (62%) do not have an intellectual disability

– (Source: CDC's 2011-2012 National Survey of Children's Health, parent reported)

### Disability Rates are Rising

- Prevalence increased over the last 12 years:
  - DD's by 17%
  - Autism by 290%
  - ADHD by 33%



• (Source: CDC)



What do you see first?

*Sticks and stones can break my bones,  
but . . .  
words will never hurt me*

*Words, language, and labels are  
POWERFUL!*

### People First Language

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THE MOST APPROPRIATE LABEL IS USUALLY THE ONE PEOPLE'S PARENTS HAVE GIVEN THEM.

### Examples of People First Language

Say this:	Instead of:
People with disabilities	The handicapped or the disabled
People without disabilities typical person	Normal, healthy, able-bodied
Susie uses a wheelchair/mobility chair	She is wheelchair-bound / confined to a wheel chair
Congenital disability	Birth defect / affliction
Joe has a cognitive disability (diagnosis)	He is mentally retarded
Nancy has Down's Syndrome (or a diagnosis)	She's Down's/ Down's person; mongoloid
Mary receives special ed services	She is special ed; inclusion student

### Examples of People First Language

Say this:	Instead of:
Bobby has a physical disability (diagnosis)	He is crippled; quadriplegic
Debbie has a learning disability (diagnosis)	She is learning disabled
Jill has a mental health condition	She's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill
Jim has autism (or a diagnosis of...)	He's autistic
Jenny has a developmental delay	She's developmentally delayed
Brain injury	Brain damaged

- ### Exception to Person – First Rule
- Saying 'the deaf' and 'the speech of the deaf' violate the person – first rule
  - However, the community of persons who are deaf prefer to use deaf with a capital D to denote the Deaf culture and the Deaf community, not the hearing loss
  - The same can be said for those individuals who are blind

### Now, what do you see?



### People First Language and the Media

- Can this be improved?
  - Wheelchair, Class Photo Didn't Mix: Disabled Boy Almost Edged Out (newspaper headline)
- Better way:
  - Miles Ambridge, 7-Year-Old in Wheelchair, Isolated by Photographer in Class Picture (newspaper headline)

### People First Language and the Media

- Can it be reworded better? Sensationalized headline?
  - California Authorities Continue to Search for Autistic, 'Very Inquisitive', Girl (ABC News headline)

### What is Inclusion?

- Inclusion is being a part of what everyone else is, being welcomed and embraced as a member who belongs

-Source: Kids Together, Inc.



### Benefits of Inclusion of Students With Special Needs In Classroom

- Academic gains in a number of areas, including:
  - Improved performance on standardized tests
  - Mastery of individualized education goals



### Benefits of Inclusion of Students With Special Needs In Classroom

- Higher grades
- Improved behavior
- Increased motivation to learn
- Bottom line = beneficial to all kids
  - (Source: National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities)

### Benefits of Afterschool Programs for Special Needs Kids

- Higher academic achievement
- Improved school attendance
- Higher aspirations
- Improved social competence
- Improved behavior
  - (Source: National Center for Technology Innovation and Center for Implementing Technology in Education)

### **Legal Responsibilities for Inclusion**

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (1990)
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1975)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973



### **Potential Problems**

- Children with disabilities not considered in decisions that affect all children / students
- Low or no expectations for students with disabilities
- Stereotyping by label and categorical placements

### **Potential Problems**

- False perceptions that "children" must be ready, instead of classes / programs being ready for students
- Teacher preparation not adequately addressing inclusion of students with disabilities

### **Possible Solutions**

- Anti-bullying / inclusion games
- Model respect
- Knowledge and awareness of each child
- Provide modifications and accommodations as needed

### **More Solutions – Adapt the Environment**

- Use a “Go To” Bag
- Support positive behavior



### **Another Solution - Work with Families**

- From the start, you set the tone
- Ask about a child’s behavior
- See families as advocates
- Learn about previous experiences
- Realize families are doing the best they can



***“I don’t think of him as my son with  
Asperger’s. I think of him as my son.***

***He’s not wrong. He’s not broken.***

***He is who he is.***

***We, as his parents, are going to do  
our best - as we do with all of our kids***

***- to give him the best shot  
at having the best life he can.”***

**– Christopher Gorham, Actor**

**• Source: Disability Scoop**

## **For Additional Resources:**

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