Words with Dignity:

The beginning of wisdom is calling things by their right name.

- Chinese Proverb

“Changing how the public labels categories changes the associations those labels invoke in people’s minds, which in turn changes their affective attitudes toward what is being described.”

- David Green, Hofstra University

Look at the following list and see how the words on the left may have shaped our attitudes towards people with disabilities. The list is not comprehensive, nor is it definitive. Words change - as better words emerge, especially as people with disabilities speak on their own behalf, be prepared to learn and use them.

INSTEAD OF USE

disabled, handicapped, crippled       a person with a disability or people with disabilities
crippled by, afflicted with, suffering from, victim of       a person who has... or a person with...
lame                          a person with a mobility impairment
confined, bound, restricted to or dependent on a wheelchair       a person who uses a wheelchair
def and dumb, deaf-mute, hearing impaired       a person who is deaf or a person who has a hearing impairment
retarded, mentally retarded       a person with a developmental disability
spastic (as a noun)       a person with Cerebral Palsy
physically challenged       a person with a physical disability
mentally patient, mentally ill, mental, insane, crazy
       a person who has a mental illness or a person who has mental health issues
learning disabled, learning difficulty
       a person with a learning disability
visually impaired, blind
       a person who has a visual impairment
disabled sport
       sport for athletes with a disability
normal, able-bodied
       a person without a disability

The terms paraplegic, quadriplegic and amputee are used interchangeably.

Be creative, everything can be adapted!

EQUIPMENT/MATERIAL ADAPTATIONS

INSTEAD OF USE

Baseball     Whiffle Ball
Baseball Glove     Velcro Mitt
Basketball     Rubber Ball
Basketball Hoop     Garbage Can (clean!)
Board Games     Enlarge board and game pieces
Bowling     Bowling Ramp
Crayons     Jumbo Crayons
Flat Surfaces     Textured surfaces - sensory balls, tactile discs
Football     Foam Football
Frisbee/Disc     Large, soft frisbee/disc
Soccer Ball     Giant soccer ball
Volleyball     Giant inflatable ball (preferably not a beach ball)

This is not a comprehensive list of adaptations. Be creative, everything can be adapted!
Acquired Brain Injury: an injury to the brain that has occurred after birth - Characteristics include: motor, physical impairments, cognitive impairments, decreased control over emotions and behavior, difficulty with learning and memory, difficulty with concentration and problem solving, perceptual impairments, communication impairments, and behavioral impairments.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): a neurological condition and a learning disability - Characteristics include: lack of concentration, impulsiveness, and sometimes hyperactivity.

Asperger’s Syndrome: a mild form of autism.

Asthma: an illness in which there are repeated episodes of breathing difficulties due to the narrowing of airways. Asthma is manifested by difficulty in breathing and affects different people in widely varying degrees of severity - Characteristics include: labored breathing, difficulty in catching breath, wheezing, whistling sound, breathing out is very slow and difficult, snared nostrils, pursed lips, hunched over posture, coughing, clear throat, and fast breathing.

Autism: a neurological disorder of development that causes discrepancies in the way information is processed - Characteristics include: difficulty forming relationships, difficulty understanding and using language, difficulty with abstract concepts, and repetitive patterns of behavior.

Cerebral Palsy: a developmental disability caused by damage to the motor portions of the brain resulting in an inability to control muscular and postural movements - Characteristics include: stiffness, limited voluntary control, decreased balance and coordination, difficulty with speech and hearing, and possible limited vision.

Cystic Fibrosis: a hereditary disease that affects the exocrine glands - Characteristics include: difficulty breathing, constant cough, excessive appetite with weight loss, fatigue, difficulty exercising, weakness, and muscle cramps.

Defective Spinal Cord: a developmental abnormality in which an extra chromosome is present - Characteristics include: decreased strength, limited voluntary control, decreased social skills, increased emotional sensitivity, and social withdrawal.

Developmental Disability: any one of a group of conditions that arise in infancy or childhood and may involve physical and cognitive delays such as difficulty using language or difficulty moving for example cerebral palsy and autism.

Disability: a condition resulting from a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.

Down Syndrome: a condition resulting from a genetic abnormality in which an extra chromosome is present - Characteristics include: decreased strength, low muscle tone, difficulty with receptive and expressive language, difficulty with transitions, and difficulty focusing on a task.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: a recognizable pattern of inheritance - Characteristics include: weakness of voluntary muscles, muscles may appear to be bulky, fatigue, and community members are more likely to develop learning disabilities or developmental delays.

Paraplegia: paralysis of both legs and impairment of body functions due frequently to injury or disease of the spinal cord.

Quadriplegia: paralysis afflicting all four limbs.

Scoliosis: a curvature of the spine resulting in a loss of function below the level of injury because of impaired transmission of neural impulses. Severity is a result of the extent and location of the injury to the spinal column - Characteristics include: lack of voluntary movement, loss of sensation, involuntary muscle contractions.

Muscular Dystrophy: a group of muscle diseases, marked by weakness and wasting of skeletal muscles, in which there is a recognizable pattern of inheritance - Characteristics include: weakness of voluntary muscles, muscles may appear to be bulky, fatigue, and community members are more likely to develop learning disabilities or developmental delays.

Traumatic Brain Injury: an outside force impacts the head hard enough to cause the brain to move within the skull or the force causes the skull to break and directly hurts the brain - Characteristics include: motor deficits, sensory deficits, perceptual deficits, communication impairment, and behavioural impairments.

Hemiplegia: paralysis of one side of the body.

Impairment: identifiable organic or functional condition that may be permanent or temporary.

Learning Disability: any one of a diverse group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of speaking, listening, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities or social skills, caused by dysfunction of the central nervous system.

Mental Illness: a term used to refer to a variety of diagnosable mental disorders, characterized by a range of abilities - Characteristics include: mental illness characterized by altered thinking, mood, or behavior associated with distress and impaired functioning. Common mental illnesses include:

Schizophrenia: a brain disease that involves a split or break from reality due to physical and biochemical changes in the brain. Symptoms include: delusions and hallucinations.

Bipolar Disorder: marked by extreme changes in mood, energy, and behavior.

Anxiety Disorder: include obsessive compulsive disorder (inability to control unwanted thoughts or actions) phobias (unreasonable fear of objects, animals, or situations), and panic disorders (intense episodes of sudden fear and physical symptoms).

Children who have Disabilities: includes individuals with diverse needs - Characteristics include: identifyable organic or functional condition that may be permanent or temporary.

Inclusion can be promoted by:

1. Focusing on individual strengths and abilities
2. Recognizing that everyone can make contributions
3. Believing that all people are inherently worthy
4. Helping people to achieve their best

Integration: Full access and opportunity for community based participation, regardless of ability.

Integration occurs when:

1. A person with a disability attends a regular community program
2. Participates in the community program and uses resources
3. Interacts with community members
4. Is independent with community members

Integration can be promoted by:

1. Knowing participants interests
2. Including participants in planning and decision making
3. Encouraging social interaction
4. Helping to build friendship amongst participants
5. Encouraging social interaction
6. Enhancing self image
7. Developing life long skills

Inclusion and Integration for people with disabilities:

1. Cultivate friendships
2. Acquire social skills
3. Engage in social interaction
4. Enhance self image
5. Develop life long skills

Benefits of Inclusion & Integration for people without disabilities:

1. Increase positive attitudes
2. Develop acceptance
3. Experience personal growth
4. Increase understanding
5. Improve social development
6. Encouraging social interaction
7. Enhancing self image
8. Developing life long skills

Inclusion: The process of creating an environment that values and promotes the full access and opportunity for community based participation - Characteristics include:

1. Supporting participation - everyone wants to play
2. Seeing each person as a person with value and differences
3. Interacts with other community members and uses community resources
4. A person with a disability attends a regular community program
5. Participates in the community program and uses resources
6. A person with a disability attends a regular community program
7. Or the force causes the skull to break and directly hurts the brain - Characteristics include: motor deficits, sensory deficits, perceptual deficits, communication impairment, and behavioural impairments.

Mental illness:

1. Recognize that we are all people with feelings and thoughts, we have different ideas and abilities
2. Create choices for people to experience freedom to participate
3. See each person as a person with values and differences
4. Support participation - everyone wants to play

The best way to teach inclusive behaviour is to model it!

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