

DISABILITY

UNIT 3



Kids Inclusive



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For every child,
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

unicef 

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Disability



Background

Disabled young people are often defined by what they lack rather than what they have. They are not valued as equal to others and their talents and even their emotions are frequently ignored. They end up being denied the opportunities in life that their peers take for granted: a good education, full social life and respect for their dignity as a human being. All this dehumanises a young person, it also dehumanises the societies that allow this to happen. Many countries do not entitle disabled people to vote, own property or have the right to privacy. Some do not even guarantee a disabled child the right to an education.

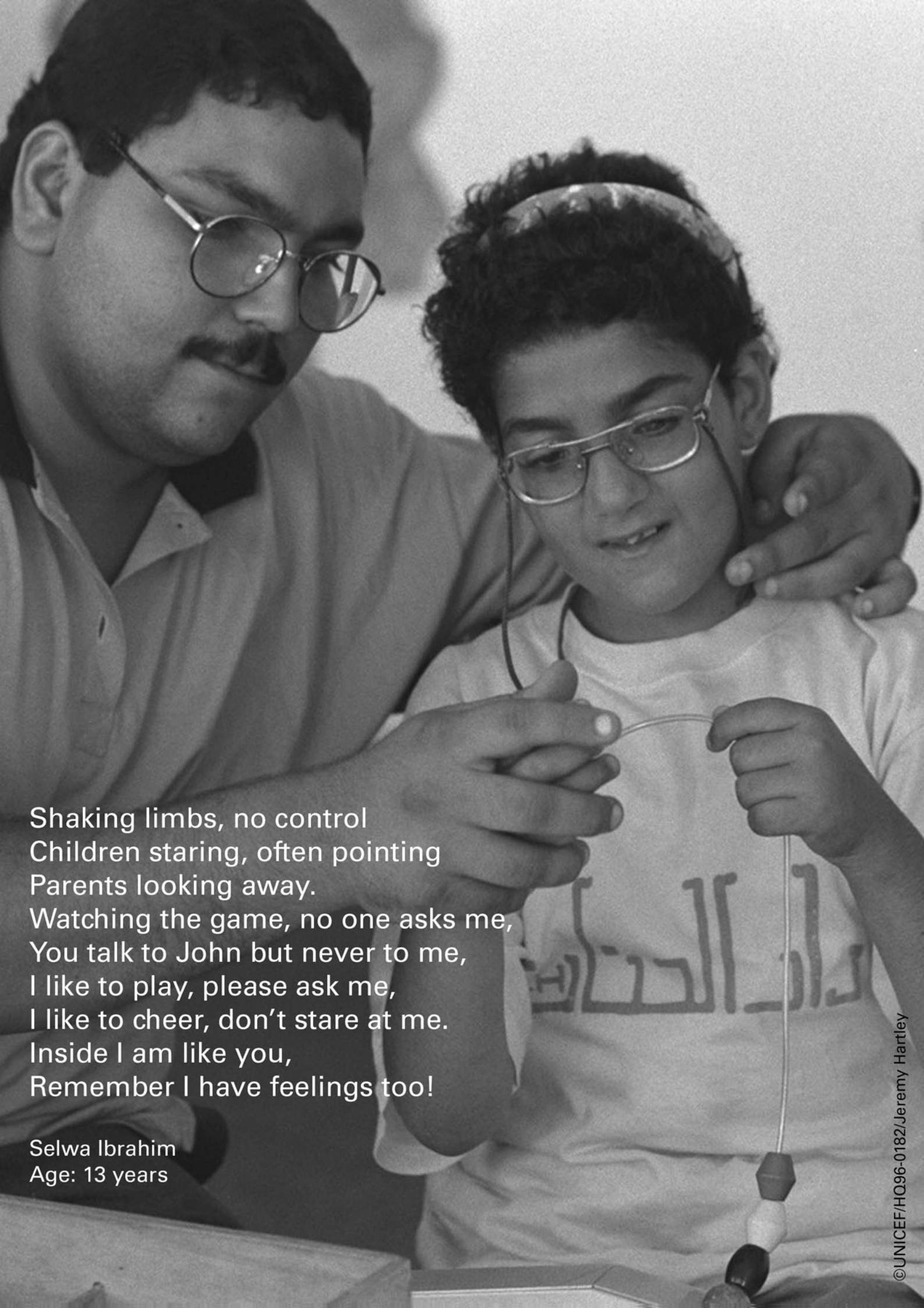
About 120 million children in the world live with a disabling condition. A significant number of these conditions were caused by something that could have been prevented. Widespread poverty in many developing countries increases the risk of children being born with disabling conditions caused by malnutrition, iodine deficiency and inadequate health care. Children today are still being subjected to violence and abuse that leave them physically and mentally disabled, others work in terrible conditions that result in long-term disabilities.

Common causes of preventable disability include:

- Malnutrition 100 million
- Accident/trauma/war 78 million
- Infectious diseases 56 million
- Non infectious diseases 100 million
- Congenital diseases 100 million

It is only in the past decade that disability has been formally recognised as a human rights issue. Since then progress has been made and there is greater awareness of the abuses of rights and the need for action to address them. Disabled children and young people however, still suffer from the lack of explicit attention to their situation. Steps must be taken to ensure full recognition of their rights. Disabilities should be prevented, whenever possible but, whatever the cause of their disability, everyone has the right to live and to receive appropriate care to help them develop to their full potential. Disabled children and young people should not be denied the right to live with their families, receive a good education and participate in life to the full.

Many of the reality check stories in this module focus on young disabled people and children who are good role models for us all, disabled or not. Projects that have engaged disabled children with non-disabled children working towards a common goal have proved beneficial to all and any opportunities to do this should be seized. If this is not possible, young people are given the chance to experience life through the eyes of young people with disabilities in several of the activities in this module. One of the activities examines how hurtful it can be to stigmatise people just because they have HIV/AIDS. One of the main objectives of all of the activities and the stories is to encourage young people to respect and not to pity others who are ill or disabled. The last activity encourages people to take action against exclusion.



Shaking limbs, no control
Children staring, often pointing
Parents looking away.
Watching the game, no one asks me,
You talk to John but never to me,
I like to play, please ask me,
I like to cheer, don't stare at me.
Inside I am like you,
Remember I have feelings too!

Selwa Ibrahim
Age: 13 years

Disability

Reality Check



The Tragedy of Landmines¹

Abdul, 12 **Afghanistan**

Abdul is lying on his bed in the Children's Hospital in Kabul. His mother sits beside him fanning away the flies. He stares at the ceiling, showing little emotion. Ten days ago he survived the blast of an anti-personnel mine. One leg was amputated, his other leg and his abdomen were badly torn apart. Despite his injuries Abdul is more worried about his family than himself. "Since my father was killed my older brother and I have provided for our family. We were looking for clay to rebuild our house when we saw a mine. My little sisters were playing near us. I ran towards them to stop them touching it. I must have stepped on another mine. Now I will be a burden to my family instead of being a breadwinner (Abdul worked in a bakery earning half a Euro a day). I don't know how we will manage."

Facts



There are an estimated 110 million landmines in the ground in 64 countries. 800 people are killed by landmines every month. Only 10% of children disabled by landmines have access to artificial limbs. Many landmines are designed in different shapes and colours and look like toys. UNICEF works with governments and NGOs on mine awareness education and rehabilitation of landmine victims in 16 countries. UNICEF supports a boycott of companies that sell or produce landmines.

CRC Article 23:

You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so you can live a full life.

CRC Article 38:

You have the right to protection and freedom from war.

Quotes

"We couldn't survive without humour and self irony."

Amelia, 10

Mozambique

I asked Amelia if she wanted anything. She lifted her head and grinned "Yes, a doll, with a smooth face and hair that I can plait." The next day Amelia struggled to open her parcel. When she had unwrapped the doll she ran her hands over its face and hair and smiled. "My doll's name is Nina. That's my little sister's name."

Amelia wanted to play with 'Nina' and was reluctant to get on with her daily challenge...to walk on her false leg, using a white stick for direction. After a few steps she stumbled and sat down heavily on the ground. She covered her scarred face with her hand. I asked if she was OK. "I'm fine" she said. When Amelia was first brought to the hospital in Maputo the nurses thought she was going to die. She had stepped on a landmine and the blast had removed her left hand, her left leg and both her eyes. One of the nurses said "Amelia is learning to manage very quickly; she's developing new senses to help her cope and is making an amazing recovery. Most important of all, she has a great sense of humour. It will be hard for her to keep her spirits up, but Amelia won't give in."

What can I do?

1. Find out what your government's position is on landmines. Do they support a global ban? Are landmines manufactured in your country? Who by?
2. Write to government leaders to express your concern if you do not agree with their position. Organise a petition.

Disability

Reality check



Life is good when you are in it.²

Paula

England

"I was born with cerebral palsy and water on the brain. When I was nine months old my doctor said that I was so badly brain damaged I'd never recognise anyone, I would never be able to think or communicate. They said I should be left in a mental institution! My parents never gave up on me. One day, when I was 10, my mum was talking about a cake in the magazine she was reading. I was sitting on my mum's lap and I jerked myself forward and touched the picture with my nose. Just to be sure it wasn't an accident my mum pointed at a picture of a family. "Which one is mummy's age?" she asked me. Once again I 'pointed' at the right one.

The first time my mum worked out a way for me to 'talk' I cried with relief. Have you any idea what a nightmare it is to be able to understand everything going on around you, without anyone knowing that you can? When I was 16 I needed to have life-saving surgery on my spine. The doctors said that it wasn't worth doing! They still didn't see me as a person with a life worth living. My mother fought their decision until they agreed to operate.

I think I would have given up on life in the end though, if I hadn't joined the Chicken Shed Theatre Group. They accept everyone for who they are and what they can do. Everything about them shouts out "Go for It!" and we all do. I now have a Masters Degree and I'm even writing a rock opera! Amazing but true. Oh yes, life is good when you are in it."

The Chicken Shed Theatre Group, UK was set up in 1974 in a chicken shed! The group consists of 250 young performers. They are a fully integrated group of young people who happen to be poor or wealthy, disabled or non-disabled. They are all equal.

What do you think?

1. Why did the doctors say that Paula should be left in a mental institution?
2. How did Paula finally show her parents that she could understand them?
3. How do you think Paula's mum worked out a way for Paula to 'talk'?
4. Why didn't the doctors want to carry out a life-saving operation on Paula?
5. After her parents what had the biggest, positive impact on Paula's life?
6. Why do you think Paula has done so incredibly well?
7. Why does she say that "life is good when you are in it"?

CRC Article 6:

You have the right to be alive.

CRC Article 9:

You have the right to live with your parents.

CRC Article 24:

You have the right to the best health care possible.

Quotes

"There are no youth clubs where I can enter with my wheelchair. It's the same story with most leisure activities."

"...After school and in the holidays you just stay at home at night...it's too difficult to go anywhere...and finding a friend is difficult."

"I'd like to play football outside the house but the others don't let me play with them. They say I'll hurt myself...but it's them that are hurting me."

"The owner of the shop thought he was helping when he let me go first, but I want to be treated like everyone else."

Disability

Reality check



Autumn Leaves

Lazar, 14³

Hungary

You who now read these lines: for you sunshine means warmth, snow is a cold, white blanket and summer recalls blue seas. But what does a mentally disabled person see and make of these wonders? How does he see the sun, the sea and the snow? I experienced this wonder once in a park one autumn.

I heard someone crying, a boy of 10 or 12. "What's the matter?" I asked him. "Are you lost?" He was shivering so I put my coat around him. He raised his head timidly. "A lot of... paper," he said pointing at the leaves gathered in thick piles on the ground. "They're not paper, they're leaves." I told him. He shook his head "A lot of... paper...colour paper, dry....paper," he insisted, raising his voice to shout.

A woman came "Come on love, I'll pick some colour papers for you." She smiled and thanked me for my coat, then she took him by the hand and walked off. I looked around. The child was right, the autumn leaves did look like coloured paper. Suddenly he let go of his mother's hand, grabbed a fistful of leaves and ran to me. "Good boy...leaves for you." I was lost for words.

His mother caught up with us. "Don't be angry with him. He is...different, but we love him very much." I stood there in the autumn dusk with a bunch of leaves in my hand looking at the now empty path. Dear little boy you have given me the nicest gift of all. You have helped me to see the wonder in you...to see the human being in you and to accept you for who you are.

What do you think?

1. Why do you think the boy said that the leaves were paper?
2. Why do you think the boy gave the author a fistful of leaves?
3. Why do you think the author said that they boy had given him the 'nicest gift of all'?
4. Write a story, or a poem, about someone you meet, or have met, who is unlike anyone you have ever met before. They may be mentally or physically challenged. Describe how you feel and what you learn from the experience.

Facts

Less than 2% of disabled children attend schools.

CRC Article 12:

You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults (and children) to listen and take it seriously.

CRC Article 13:

You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others.

Quotes

"Don't walk behind me, I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend."

-Albert Camus (1913-1960)

"An 11 year-old girl with Down's Syndrome was playing with a little boy on the beach. "Are you disabled? He asked. "No, I'm Daisy," she replied and they went on playing."

Disability

Reality check



Dare to Care⁴

Elizabeth, 13

Samoa

Do you find it hard to make new friends or learn new things? Do you ever feel out of place or that you don't belong? Imagine if you had all these feelings with no knowledge of why you were different. Imagine seeing the world through the eyes of someone who is mentally challenged.

I speak from experience when I say that everyone, regardless of mental capacity, has the right to be treated as a human being and not to be judged for their behaviour. The mentally challenged have no outlet for expressing fear, anger, sadness or frustration. They don't respond the way we think they should and so we tend to put them in a category or group in which we exclude them from others and think of them as different. They are, but we shouldn't make it worse than it is.

Why is it that I am expected to go to school but my little brother, who is mentally challenged, is not accepted at school? If I have the right to go to school and get an education then so should he. If I have the right to participate in sports, so should he. If I can walk into a public area and not be stared at or made fun of, then so should he. We don't just take away their privileges and opportunities; we take away their lives. Many are even hidden away so that no one can see them.

Parents need to learn how to best help their children. The government should make it a priority to meet the needs of those who are mentally challenged and their caregivers. And we all need to stop exclusion and DARE TO CARE.

Facts

28 million babies are mentally impaired because their mothers did not have enough iodine in their diet (IDD). This can easily be prevented by putting iodine in salt. UNICEF promotes the iodisation of salt worldwide.

What do you think?

1. Do you agree with what Elizabeth says?
2. What do you think is the most important point she makes? Why?
3. Who else may be excluded in a similar way to someone who is mentally challenged?
4. What can we do to stop exclusion and show that we DARE TO CARE?

CRC Article 5:

Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.

CRC Article 31:

You have the right to play and rest.

Quotes

"You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you."

Dale Carnegie

Disability

Reality check



The Campaigner⁵

Imran, 17

Pakistan

My mother didn't understand what immunisation was all about. When I was small we lived in a remote village in Pakistan and very few families had their children immunised. The clinics were far away and most people thought that things like immunisation were for wealthier families.

I got Polio when I was four years old. My father says that before that I was the fastest runner in the family. I was always getting into trouble and running away as fast as my little legs could carry me! Then I came down with a fever. My parents thought I had flu and gave me tablets. I got worse and became weaker. They took me to the health worker in the next village. He gave them more tablets but still I got worse. Finally my father took me to the nearest town. It was a long journey and he thought I was going to die. After we reached the hospital tests showed that I had Polio but by then I was already paralysed from the waist down.

My parents blamed themselves for what happened to me but I don't. They're not well educated and they hadn't heard about the importance of immunisation. I know all about it so I am determined to stop other children from suffering from Polio, or any of the other

diseases that can be prevented by immunisation. I give talks at all the schools and at the clinics. I even go from door-to-door with my friends, talking to parents about what immunisation can do for their children. I feel that people really listen to me because they can see for themselves what might happen if they don't get their children vaccinated. My parents tell me that they're proud of me. That makes me very happy but it's not why I'm doing it. If I can prevent one child from suffering, then I think I've done a good job.

Facts

Children most at risk of suffering from diseases that could have been prevented by immunisation are those who are victims of war, conflicts and natural disasters or live in remote areas with limited access to health-care.

Just \$2 can immunise one child against Polio in Pakistan.

UNICEF is working within a partnership that includes WHO and the Gates Foundation, to increase the number of children who are fully immunised.

What do you think?

1. Why is Imran so determined to tell people about the importance of immunisation?
2. What qualities has Imran got that we should admire?
3. Do you know which childhood diseases can be immunised against? If you don't, find out.
4. Why do you think that immunisation rates are much lower in poorer countries than in richer ones?
5. Do you feel strongly about something, like Imran does? What can you do about it?

CRC Article 24:

You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.

Quotes

"Disabled people throughout the world are standing up for their rights. We demand the recognition we deserve. Don't pity us, become actively involved and support us!!!"

Disability

Reality check



Seeing what I see⁶

Sam, 12

Ireland

"I prefer sport to studying and I am especially good at baseball, but I enjoy all sports. Who do you think my hero is? It's Albert Einstein, and I even have a poster on my bedroom wall. Why Einstein? Because he had dyslexia, too!"

I have trouble reading and remembering what I have read. It doesn't mean I'm not smart. (Einstein had dyslexia, and everyone knows he was very smart.) Most people with dyslexia have average or above-average intelligence. I'm really good at maths, science, art, and (of course) gym.

At first, my teachers were not worried because I was doing well in most of my schoolwork. But gradually, reading became more of a struggle. My parents were worried and they found a specialist in learning disabilities who gave me loads of tests. The testing showed that I have dyslexia.

I have real trouble telling the difference between certain sounds, like "p" and "b." The reading specialist taught me a unique way to remember sounds. For example, I learned that "p" and "b" are brother sounds - they are both "lip poppers." "P" is the quiet brother and "b" is the noisy brother.

I used to feel dumb sometimes, reading was hard. But it's easier after you know the sounds. I know I have a good brain, when Einstein was a kid, everybody thought he was dumb, he would stand outside for hours looking for God on top of the clouds, dreaming up the Theory of Relativity, no doubt."

The good news about dyslexia is that it doesn't have to keep people from achieving things. Ever heard of the MONA LISA? It was painted by the great master - and dyslexic - Leonardo da Vinci. Authors Agatha Christie and Hans Christian Andersen had dyslexia. So had the man who built a cartoon and theme park empire, Walt Disney.

When he was a boy, the famous inventor, Thomas Edison's teacher told his mother that he was stupid and slow. Furious, she took him out of school and taught him at home herself. She believed her son was intelligent and encouraged him to think and experiment. It just goes to show what encouragement will do.

What do you think?

1. What kind of difficulties did Sam encounter at school?
2. What steps were taken to help him?
3. What is important to Sam?
4. Did you know all these famous people have dyslexia? Do you know any others?
5. It is very important to diagnose dyslexia at an early age. Do you know what measures are taken at your school to help young people with disabilities?

CRC Article 23:

You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in the CRC, so that you can live a full life.

Quotes:

"Sometimes the biggest challenge is just to change attitudes, not just of schools but of family and friends."

"If you see dyslexia as a gift there's no limit to what you can do."

Sam's mum

Disability

Reality check



Listen to Me!⁷

Jimena, 13 years old:

Mexico

It's Election Day in Mexico City. One of the first to fill out and post her ballot is Jimena Loza. Jimena is one of the 4 million Mexican children who cast their ballots and registered their opinions about family life, school, their communities and their country on July 2, 2000. The Children's Consultation started a new chapter in Mexican politics; politicians actually wanted to know what children thought!

Jimena is one of the child rights activists who inspired millions of children to register their opinions.

"Adults really need to listen to young people of all ages, shapes, sizes and colours. We all have different opinions that are relevant to who we are and what we want out of life," says Jimena with the smile and confidence of a seasoned campaigner. "My disability is not an obstacle to me, it is part of who I am," she adds. "I think, in a strange way that it actually inspires people. They see that I don't consider it a problem and they realise that they can also reach their goals."

Jimena has cerebral palsy and is confined to a wheelchair. She speaks slowly with great difficulty but lots of conviction! She spent her summer promoting the voting project and encouraging other children to take part. Shortly before Election Day Jimena participated in a children's radio programme in which a panel of other children interviewed her.

"It is important to listen to children, because we are also citizens," Jimena explained during her interview. "After all, we are the ones who will rule the world and the country in the future."

CRC Article 12:

You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

Quotes

"I don't like the way children like me are presented as helpless... Yes, we need help, but we don't need our dignity to be taken away..."

"Visibility makes you vulnerable. Invisibility makes you even more vulnerable."

"I cannot listen to the radio, understand television or attend political meetings - because I cannot hear. But I do think and I do have something to say."

Facts

Disabled children are four times more likely to be neglected and physically abused and over three times more likely to be emotionally abused.

What do you think?

1. Do you think it would be a good idea to have a Children's Consultation in your country? Try to find out if anything like this has already taken place.
2. What sort of issues do you think children should be consulted on? Try to think of at least five important topics.
3. Write one question on each of these issues.
4. Work as a group, or class, to compile five questions for each of the five chosen issues.
5. See if you can conduct a Children's Consultation by getting the students in your school or youth group to fill out your opinion polls.
6. Display the results for everyone to see.

Disability



① See the ability!⁸



Aims

- To raise awareness about some of the everyday problems faced by disabled people.
- To develop insight and skills in order to respond to the needs of disabled people.
- To promote empathy and solidarity.



Materials

- Sheets of paper and pens (for parts 1 and 3)
- A blindfold
- Role cards (copied and cut out)



Time 45 minutes to 1 hour



Method

This activity is divided into 4 parts

Part 1 - Introduction

Part 2 - Blindfold walk

Part 3 - Signing

Part 4 – Are disabled people different?

This is a serious activity, but funny situations may arise. Let it be so. Feel compelled to intervene or comment only if people are doing something unsafe or making comments that ridicule people with disabilities.

Part 1 - Introduction

1. Explain that you'll be looking at how disability might affect their life and how people might see them.
2. Give each participant a piece of paper, ask them to write a brief timetable of their normal weekday. Then ask them to write a summary of how they think others would describe them.
3. Tell them that they are now going to try to experience what it may feel like to be disabled in some way and that you will come back to their writing later.

Part 2. The blindfold walk

1. Divide participants into pairs. Hand out the blindfolds. One person from each pair is to be the disabled person and the other is his/her guide. It is the guides' responsibility to ensure the safety of their partners at all times. They may answer simple questions related to the safety of their partner only with a 'yes' or 'no' answer.
2. Start by asking the 'blind' participants to stand up. Ask them to make a line in front of the class – with no assistance.
3. Ask the guides to take their partners for a five-minute walk around and about, including up and down stairs or outside if possible.
4. On returning to the room let the guides lead their partners to their chairs.
5. Give the participants a few minutes to come out of their roles and move on to part

Part 3 - Signing

1. Tell the pairs that they are going to swap roles, the guides are now to be the disabled (this time they are mute), and the partners are the able-bodied helpers.
2. Hand out one of the situation cards below to each of the disabled player. They must not show the cards to their partners. Give a piece of paper and a pen to the helpers.
3. Explain that the 'mute' players have to convey their problems to their helpers. They may not write, speak or draw. The helpers must write down what they understand the message to be about.
4. When the 'mute' players have communicated as much as they can, they should show the role card to their helper. Invite the pairs to briefly review their intentions, problems and frustrations.

Part four – Are disabled people different?

1. Ask the participants to look at their timetables again. This time ask them to imagine that they had become blind, or deaf and mute.
2. How would their timetable change? Which activities would become difficult or impossible to do? How would they feel about this?
3. Ask them to look at the descriptions of themselves that they wrote at the beginning of the activity. Would people see them differently? How would the descriptions change?
4. Finally ask the participants whether they think that having a disability would turn them into a different person. How would they feel if people saw them in a different way?



Debriefing and evaluation

The blindfold walk

Ask both those who were blindfolded and those who were the helpers to share their reactions:

- How did it feel for the 'blind' person to get around unaided at the beginning?
- What was the most difficult thing? What was funny? What was scary?
- How hard was it to trust and to be trustworthy?

The signing

- How did each of them feel during the exercise?
- What was most difficult? What was funny? What was scary?
- Was it frustrating to 'sign' and not to be understood?
- Was it frustrating or embarrassing not to be understood?

Are disabled people different?

- What was the most surprising thing the participants learnt through this activity?
- Would this experience make them think differently the next time they see or come across a disabled person?

Disability



② What do you see?¹⁰



Aims

- To raise awareness about the relevance of participants' rights and disabilities.
- To develop 'visual literacy' skills, listening and communication skills.
- To promote empathy and respect for human dignity.



Materials

- Photographs depicting children with disabilities.
- Voices quotes sheet.
- Large sheet of paper and pens.
- Glue, scissors and tape.



Time 45 minutes 1 hour

- Poster to be finished off as homework.



Method

1. Ask the participants to form small groups.
2. Distribute the photos and ask the participants to pass them around once they have looked at them.
3. Ask the groups to discuss these images. What do the images show? Which ones are positive? Why? Which are negative? Why?
4. Give out the 'Voices' sheet. Explain that the comments on the sheet were all genuinely made by young disabled people. Give the participants time to read the comments and to discuss them in their groups.
5. Ask them what are the main messages that come out of those quotations.
6. Explain that what you want them to do is to put together images and opinions to make a poster speak out on behalf of disabled people. It should be positive and eye-catching. They may wish to use just one opinion but more than one can be used if preferred. They may add their own illustrations.



Debriefing and evaluation

1. Start with a review of the activity itself and then go on to talk about what the participants learned.
2. Was it difficult to choose pictures to represent the quotes?
3. Did different participants choose the same pictures, or did people have very different ideas about what the different quotes represented? What does this tell us about how each of us sees the world?
4. Review the list on the flipchart. Which photographs were chosen most often? What was special about those images? Why were they chosen often? Did the size or colour make a difference, or was it what was in the picture that was significant?
5. What did the pictures tell the participants about the rights of people with disabilities? Can the participants start to identify the different types of disability that exist? What impact do those disabilities have on people's lives?



Follow up: Read the reality check story: 'Autumn leaves'

Disability



Variations

You may simulate other kinds of disability, including less obvious ones, such as learning disabilities or language difficulties.



Follow up

- Give the participants a copy of the sign language alphabet. Get them to learn how to sign their name and how to say hello.
- Ask the participants to find out about young disabled people in their own social environment. What particularly frustrates them? Is there anything they can do to help? An example might be to help disabled children, of a similar age, to attend social events.
- They could further investigate what services and provisions those people have access to.
- Who initiates decisions and policies for disabled people in your area? Write to these people and express your concerns.

Situation cards

Situation 1

Without words, try to explain to a shop assistant that you are feeling very ill. You need to have some medication that you left at home and they should phone your mother urgently.

You cannot speak, write or draw on paper.

Situation 2

You are at school, trying to tell one of your classmates that you love skateboarding (just like them), and that there is a great skateboarding competition on in town at the weekend. You would really like to go to it with them.

You cannot speak, write or draw on paper.

Situation 3

You are at the bus station and want to take a bus to the next largest city. You need to find out what time the next bus leaves, where from and how much the return ticket will cost.

You cannot speak, write or draw on paper.

Situation 4

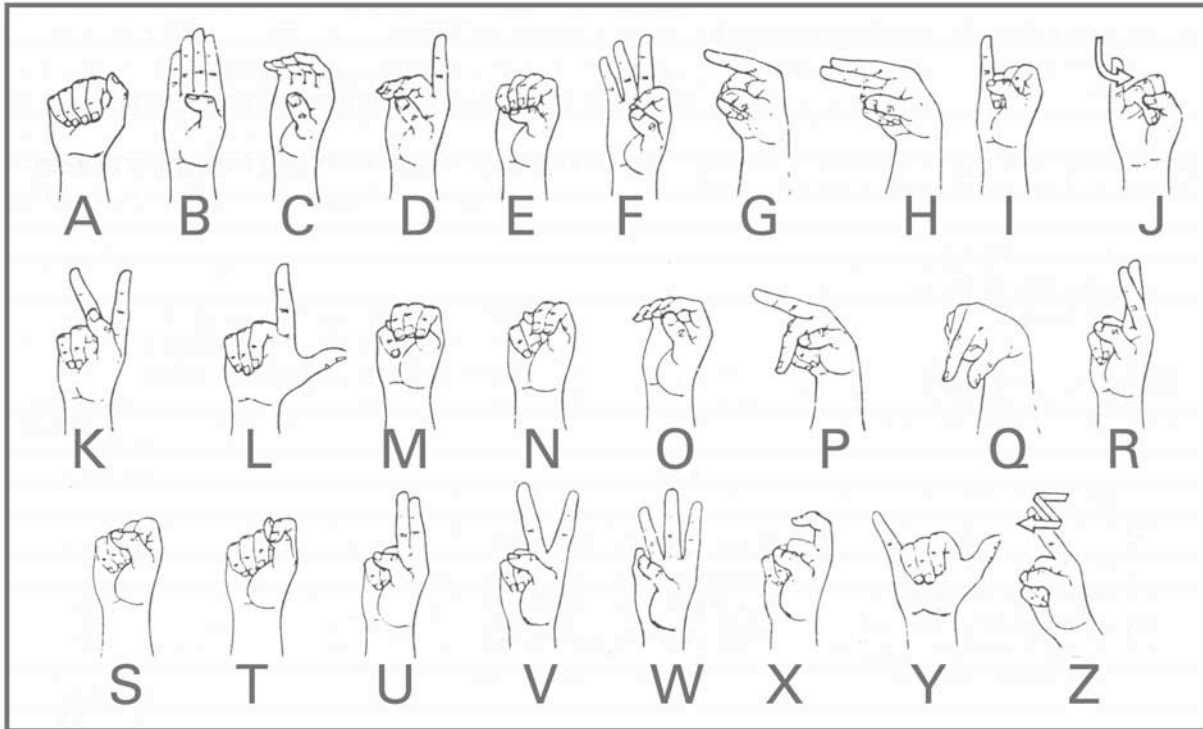
Try to explain to your teacher that you have not done your homework because you had a doctor's appointment in the city. You went by train but on the return journey the train broke down and you did not make it home until 11pm. You were tired and went to bed.

You cannot speak, write or draw on paper.

1

Sign Language⁹

You can use your fingers to form letters and to spell words; there are examples of finger movements for each letter.



Examples of signs



Disability

2

Photographs¹¹



Disability



Voices quotes¹²



“Disabled people throughout the world are standing up for their rights. We demand the recognition we deserve. Don’t pity us, become actively involved and support us!!!”

“Visibility makes you vulnerable. Invisibility makes you even more vulnerable.”

“There are no youth clubs where I can enter with my wheelchair. It’s the same story with most leisure activities.”

“I don’t like the way children like me are presented as helpless... Yes, we need help, but we don’t need our dignity to be taken away...”*

“We couldn’t survive without humour and self irony.”

“...After school and in the holidays you just stay at home at night...it’s too difficult to go anywhere...and finding a friend is difficult.”

“I cannot listen to the radio, understand television or attend political meetings -because I cannot hear. But I do think and I do have something to say.”

“I’d like to play football outside the house but the others don’t let me play with them. They say I’ll hurt myself...but it’s them that are hurting me.”

“The owner of the shop thought he was helping when he let me go first, but I want to be treated like everyone else.”

“Sometimes the biggest challenge is just to change attitudes, not just of schools but of family and friends.”

An 11 year-old girl with Down’s syndrome was playing with a little boy on the beach. “Are you disabled? He asked. “No, I’m Daisy,” she replied and they went on playing.

These are genuine statements made by young people

Disability



③ The Story of two communities¹³



Aims

- To understand stigmatisation associated with HIV/AIDS
- To teach young people respect for people with HIV/AIDS



Materials

- Copies of “The Story of Two communities: Community A and Community B”
- Pens



Time 45 minutes to 1 hour



Method

1. Introduce the activity by leading a discussion about HIV/Aids. Find out how much the participants know about it, for example how it is and is not transmitted.
2. Get the participants to work in pairs.
3. Give each pair a copy of ‘Community A’ and ‘Community B’
4. Explain to the participants that this is the story of Ryando, the true story of a person infected with HIV, who moved from community A to community B.
5. Read the stories to the class.
6. Tell the class to read the stories again to themselves and to answer the questions at the bottom of the page. Allow 15 minutes to complete the tasks.
7. Go through the answers with the participants.



Debriefing and evaluation

Start the discussion by asking the participants:

1. How did you feel about the people in community A and the people in community B?
2. Why do you think there was such a difference between the two communities?
3. Why do people discriminate against others?
4. Why is it important not to?
5. What could you do if you heard derogatory remarks about a person with HIV or AIDS from someone in your community?
6. What would be most difficult for you if a friend or relative of yours had HIV or AIDS?
7. What would be most difficult for the person with HIV or AIDS?



Variations

For the 14 –17 age group: get the participants to read the story aloud to the class.



Follow up

- Have a follow up group discussion about HIV/AIDS. Find out how much the participants have learnt about HIV/AIDS from this activity.
- Read the reality check story: ‘Dare to care’ or ‘It’s not easy’

Disability

3

The Story of Two Communities

-Community A



- a) Every time I coughed, people turned around to see how close I was to them. On the way out of church, people told their kids to move away from me.
- b) One day I went to see a girlfriend of mine. She did not seem happy to see me. What's wrong? I asked her. My parents don't think we should see each other any more, she mumbled.
- c) The shopkeeper of the restaurant recognised me when I asked for a glass of water. How wouldn't let me have any. He gave me a can of coke instead. As soon as we finished eating he threw away all my dishes.
- d) My parents heard from a friend that one of my teachers didn't want me back in school. I can't believe it, I said, he was my favourite teacher.
- e) My mom got it worst. She had four friends at work who wouldn't even talk to her. In the food store she wasn't allowed to touch any of the food. Some stores didn't even want to take money from her.
- f) Kids in my school were warned about me by their parents, so they stayed away from me. They told me I would have to use paper plates and plastic cups, spoons and forks that could be thrown away when I was done. They thought I shouldn't use the toilets and water fountain.
- g) Someone stole one of my books and wrote bad things about me in it. They threw it on the street and ran away laughing at me.
- h) No one would play with me and when I asked two girls to the dance they said 'no'. Their parents had told them they weren't to go near me.

In your opinion which three comments would be the most hurtful to Ryando?

Most hurtful	Reasons why

- Community B



- a) A student in the community came by to see me. She said, I want to welcome you to our school. Now, you'll know someone when you come on your first day.
- b) I found out that school officials had talked to the students and teachers about how you can get AIDS, and they had nothing to fear. They even informed the press and the churches in town. What a difference from community A.
- c) Kids told their parents how you get AIDS, and that they weren't scared of me and they wanted to be in the school with me. One family asked their kids to stay home and he said he didn't want to.
- d) When I walked into my classroom, a number of students said, Hey, Ryando! Sit beside me! In another class a pretty dark-haired girl asked me to do a project with her.
- e) I asked my mom if she thought it would be OK to ask Alyssa (a friend from another country) for a kiss goodbye. Mom said, She can only say no! Well, she gave me a kiss and a hug. I felt eight feet tall.
- f) A famous soccer player visited our community and invited me and my family to watch the game. After, he signed his name in my book and told me he was proud of me.
- g) When I turned 18, a man offered me a job at his vegetable stand. My first money. I guess he took a chance on me. Most people were very nice and stopped to buy and talk to me.
- h) What a difference at church. People stopped to talk to me and put an arm on my shoulder. Some even bought food for us – bread, fruit, jam. When I became sicker they brought us a whole meal at home. That sure helped mom.

In your opinion which three comments would be most helpful from this community?

Most helpful	Reasons why

④ Free-fall Writing Exercise¹⁴



Aims

- To develop reflective thinking on people with disabilities.
- To encourage young people to express their feelings about disability.



Material

- Large sheets of paper
- A4 sheets of paper
- Pens



Time 45 minutes to 1 hour

Free-fall writing develops the ability to reflect on our thought process, and records the words in our head. It is a form of self-observation that can produce very honest and powerful writing.



Method

1. Start by asking the participants about the issues of disability that have been raised throughout this module. (See glossary for some examples).
2. Draw up a list of all the disabilities on the board.
3. Give the participants a sheet of paper and a pen. Ask them to choose a disability and imagine what their lives might be like if they had this disability, at home, at school in the community, at leisure.
4. Prepare the exercise by asking everyone to be 100% honest with yourself, don't go back and correct or change anything, when describing something use all five senses.
5. Now get the participants to write down whatever thoughts are in their heads as soon as they have them. Let them know that what they are about to write can be kept private and need not be shared. Allow 10 to 15 minutes writing time.
6. When they have finished writing, ask the participants to underline the best six phrases of what they have just written. Ask the participants whether they would be willing to share the six phrases, or some of them, with the rest of the group.
7. Read the phrases to the group and discuss the phrases' meaning, and what makes them effective.
8. Record the qualities that make writing effective on the flip chart
9. Ask the participants to link their six lines into a verse, they may change the order, and they do not have to rhyme. Support young people individually.
10. Get them to rewrite the verse on another sheet of paper, they could give the verse a title and write their name.
11. Get a large sheet of paper and invite the participants to attach their verse to it, leave it up for everyone to read.

Disability

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Variation

For 10 to 13 year olds, you may want to specify the structure of the poem. For example 'Imagine you are a disabled person and write a sentence for each of the following:'

- How do you think people see you?
- How do people react to you?
- How do you feel about this?
- What are you excluded from?
- How do you want to be treated?
- What would you like to change?



Debriefing and evaluation

When everyone is seated ask the participants the following questions:

- What was it like to write your thoughts down?
- How did you choose the words to express your thoughts?
- Did you hear your thoughts as statements, or as ideas?
- Do some words work better than others to get your point across?
- Do you think the verse worked well?



Follow up

- Using a variety of artistic media such as pencils, poster paint, collage, watercolours, get the participants to reproduce a pictorial impression of their verse.
- Read from the 'Reality Check' stories – 'Life is Good When You are In it.'
- What messages do we need to promote in the world about this cause? Songs and poetry are a good way to get messages across. Get the participants to imagine that they are important songwriters. Ask them to write the lyrics to a song about landmines. If there are any musicians in the group encourage them to try and write some music to go with the words.

Disability



5 How, how, how?¹⁵



Aims

- To get the participants to start thinking about ways of including disabled people.
- To encourage young people to methodically plan action that can be taken to improve a situation.



Materials

- Wide pieces of paper and pens.
- List of 'How' questions adapted for each age group.
- Action plan, promoting the rights of disabled participants.



Time 45 minutes to 1 hour.



Method

1. Get a large sheet of paper, some pens and a 'how' question.
2. Write out the question on a long and wide piece of paper, and draw four or five arrows coming from it.
3. Ask the question and write down any suggestions at the end of the arrows. Explore each suggestion in more detail by asking 'How...?' again. Do the same with each round of suggestions.



Debriefing and evaluation

1. When you have explored each of the 'How?' avenues, go through them again to identify the actions that the participants could do themselves.
2. Were they aware of the amount of action that could be undertaken by them?
3. Get the participants to set the actions in order of importance.



Variations

Divide the class into smaller groups and get the participants to work on a question by themselves, and then present their findings to the class.



Follow up

- From reality check stories read: 'Listen to me'
- In groups ask the participants to write a 10-point action plan to assist disabled children.
- Invite the participants to try and undertake further action based on the answers to the 'How?' game.
- Participants could choose a story from the reality check, develop an action plan and present it to the group.

How questions

Recommended questions for 10 to 12 year-olds. They can also be used by other age groups

1. How can children with disabilities be given a chance to speak for themselves and express their thoughts and feelings?
2. How can positive ideas about disabilities be integrated into class work, children's play and other activities?
3. How can lessons, learning materials and classrooms be adapted to the needs of children with disabilities?
4. How can children with disabilities be shown as equal to those without disabilities?
5. How can negative stereotypical attitudes towards children with disabilities be prevented?

Questions for older age groups

6. Who can people be sensitized (parents, families, caregivers) to the special needs of children with disabilities?
7. How can frustrated parents learn simple ways to deal with and manage their child's needs?
8. How can abuse be prevented?
9. How can parents of young children with disabilities be actively involved in the planning of school activities?
10. How can the early detection of disabilities be improved?
11. How can equal rights to education for children with disabilities be ensured?
12. How can disabled children be more visible?
13. How can more disabled children be involved in decision making?

Disability



Further Information

Cedir's disability Awareness Site for Youth

This web site has been developed to help you begin to answer questions about disabilities

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/cedir/kidsweb/disabilch.html>

Deafsign.com

<http://www.deafsign.com>

Just giving

<http://www.justgiving.com/?articleid=12104>

A new two-year project to research and promote access for disabled people to volunteering opportunities. Common media images show disabled people passively receiving help from volunteers. This project will turn these images on their head by focusing on disabled people who are keen to make a contribution themselves by volunteering.

Disability challengers

<http://www.disability-challengers.org/html/main.html>

Disability International Foundation

<http://home.teleport.com/~dif/>

Is a nonprofit, educational foundation providing global awareness, consultation, networking, publications, and training in fostering progress for the inclusion of people with disabilities - children, youth and adults.

Handicap international

<http://www.handicap-international.org>

UNICEF - Lnadmines

<http://www.unicef.org/programme/info/topic/mines.htm>

A selection of web sites providing information, publications, statistics and resources on landmines, list international organisation and non governmental organisations

World Health Organization.

www.who.int

The World Health Day 2001 featured a school contest for children and adolescents around the world addressing the problem of stigma. The theme of the contest mirrored the theme of World Health Day "Dare to Care: Stop Exclusion." The contest drew worldwide participation and resulted in the publication of a WHO book "Through Children's Eyes" which provides, through essays and pictures, a child's and adolescent's view of stigma associated with mental disorders.

http://www5.who.int/mental_health/main.cfm?p=0000000116

Autism	A disturbance in psychological development in which use of language, reaction to stimuli, interpretation of the world, and the formation of relationships are not fully established and follow unusual patterns.
Cerebral Palsy	A condition caused by brain damage around the time of birth and marked by lack of muscle control, especially in the limbs. Also called spastic paralysis.
Cleft palate	A congenital fissure along the midline of the roof of the mouth.
Congenital	Used to describe an unusual condition present at birth.
Cystic Fibrosis	A hereditary disease starting in infancy that affects various glands and results in secretion of thick mucus that blocks internal passages, including those of the lungs, causing respiratory infections. Also called mucoviscidosis.
Diabetes mellitus	A disorder in which there is no control of blood sugar, through inadequate insulin production (Type 1) or decreased cellular sensitivity to insulin (Type 2), causing kidney, eye, and nerve damage.
Disability	1. An inability to perform some or all of the tasks of daily life 2. A medically diagnosed condition that makes it difficult to engage in the activities of daily life.
Down's syndrome	A chromosomal abnormality resulting in mental handicap and characteristic physical appearance. People with Down's syndrome have one too many chromosomes – 47 instead of the normal 46. Because the extra chromosome is number 21 (affected individuals have three, instead of two, number 21 chromosomes), the disorder is also called trisomy 21.
Dyslexia	A learning disorder marked by a severe difficulty in recognizing and understanding written language, leading to spelling and writing problems. It is not caused by low intelligence or brain damage.
Epilepsy	A medical disorder involving episodes of abnormal electrical discharge in the brain and characterized by periodic sudden loss or impairment of consciousness, often accompanied by convulsions.
Infectious	1. Used to describe a disease that is capable of being passed from one person to another. 2. Caused by bacteria, viruses, or other micro organisms.
Iodine	An element essential for the formation of the thyroid hormones. These hormones control the rate of metabolism (internal chemistry) and growth and development. About 100 to 300 micrograms are needed daily. The amount of iodine in food depends on the amount contained in animal feed and the amount in the soil; shortages occur in limestone areas. Shortages can be largely overcome by consuming bread or table salt fortified with iodide or iodate. Iodine deficiency in newborns can lead to a congenital condition characterized by impaired mental abilities, stunted growth, and coarse facial features in infants. A complete cure is possible by means of replacement therapy with thyroxin provided the condition is recognized early.

Disability



Legislation	1. The process of writing and passing laws. 2. A law or laws passed by an official body, especially a government assembly.
Malnutrition	A lack of healthy food in the diet or an excessive intake of unhealthy food, leading to physical harm.
Muscular dystrophy	A medical condition in which there is gradual wasting and weakening of skeletal muscles.
Paraplegia	Total inability to move both legs and usually the lower part of the trunk, often as a result of disease or injury of the spine.
Pesticide	A chemical substance used to kill pests, especially insects. Also called biocide.
Poliomyelitis	A severe infectious viral disease, usually affecting children or young adults, that inflames the brainstem and spinal cord, sometimes leading to paralysis and muscular wasting.
Prosthetics	A branch of medicine dealing with the design, production, and use of artificial body parts.
Spina bifida	A congenital condition in which part of the spinal cord or meninges protrudes through a cleft in the spinal column, resulting in partial to total paralysis of the lower body.
Traumatism	A condition resulting from a physical injury or wound or from an emotional shock.
Vitamin A	A fat-soluble vitamin essential for normal growth, for the formation of bones and teeth, for cell structure, for night vision, and for protecting the linings of the respiratory, digestive, and urinary tracts against infection. Vitamin A is absorbed by the body in the form of retinol. This is found in animal foods, such as liver, fish liver oil, egg yolk, and dairy produce, and is also added to margarine. Carotene, which is converted into retinol in the body, also provides a good source of vitamin A. Carotene is present in green vegetables, tomatoes, and various fruit, such as oranges, plums and peaches. It is especially abundant in carrots. The first symptoms of vitamin A deficiency is night blindness (inability to see in dim light), followed by dryness and inflammation of the eyes, and eventually blindness. Deficiency also causes reduced resistance to infection, dry rough skin, and, in children stunted growth.

Disability

Endnotes



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- ¹ Based on stories from UNICEF Afghanistan and UNICEF Mozambique
- ² From an article in the Guardian newspaper, UK 2002
- ³ A story from a WHO contest on mental health. 2002
- ⁴ A story from a WHO contest on mental health.2002
- ⁵ Story by Sue Maskall
- ⁶ Story from 'Kids Health' – the Nemours Foundation <http://kidshealth.org>.
- ⁷ Based on a story from UNICEF Mexico.
- ⁸ Based on an activity from 'Compass' Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People – Council of Europe, Council of Europe Publishing May 2002.
- ⁹ Training in the community for people with disabilities, World Health Organization, Geneva 1989.
- ¹⁰ Activity by Sue Maskall and Gelise McCullough
- ¹¹ Photographs courtesy of UNICEF photo library New York
- ¹² 2001 report on the lives of disabled children for the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children. Hello, is anyone there? Report to the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, 2001
- ¹³ Activity from 'School Health Education to Prevent AIDS and STD' – A resource package for curriculum planners. World Health Organization and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 1994.
- ¹⁴ Adapted from 'Creative Force', Save the Children Fund, 2001
- ¹⁵ Based on an idea from 'Spice it up!' Dynamix Ltd. Serious fun. Save The Children Fund 2002.
- ¹⁶ Encarta® World English Dictionary © 1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Developed for Microsoft by Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
The British Medical Association – Complete Family Health Encyclopedia. 1992 Dorkling Kindersley London.

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