Disability Awareness: Facilitator’s Guide

Objective:
✓ Members will acquire skills and knowledge to confront stereotypical perceptions of disability.
✓ Members will discuss the current topics in the disability community.
✓ Members will review disability rights and laws.

Materials
✓ Demystifying Disability People First Language Exercise Handout A
  o People First Language Exercise answers reference page 8

*Facilitator’s Note - Number of materials dependent upon the number of attendees present at training. Facilitator should make sure that the materials are divided equally among each group.

Resources
✓ Visual Disabilities Handout B
✓ People First Language by Kathie Snow Handout C
✓ A Guide to Disability Rights Laws Handout D

Outline
Welcome and Introduction 2 minutes
Ground Rules 3 minutes
Icebreaker 10 minutes
PowerPoint Presentation 2 hours
Questions and Evaluations 5 minutes
Total Time 2 hours 20 minutes

Welcome and Introduction 2 minutes
“Welcome everyone to Disability Awareness training. My name is ___________ and I will be facilitating this training today. Volunteering provides opportunities for Americans all over the country to have the chance to commit to valuable service within their communities. It is important for people to understand disabilities. This training will help mentors increase their knowledge about people with disabilities and help them foster positive attitudes about them.

Ground Rules 3 minutes
Here you want to set some ground rules and expectations for how your participants should behave and converse during this training. Tell your participants....
• “This workshop requires you to think about your own thoughts feelings and beliefs and articulate them. Please use “I” statements and speak for yourself not for any group.
• As a facilitator, my job is to provide a space where each of you can feel comfortable speaking.
• I would like for each of you to speak at least one time during this training. I would like to hear everyone’s input as we proceed further in this training.”

**Be sure to state the house keeping information (i.e. where are the restrooms and water fountains.)**

**Icebreaker** 10 minutes

**Disability Trivia: Two False one Truths**

**Directions:**
The facilitator will write three sentences on the white board. Two of these sentences will be false and one will be true. Have participants break into 3 groups. Within those groups, have participants determine which of the three statements presented below is true and which is false. Choose any of the following statements to write on the board. Allow groups three minutes to guess the correct answer and 3 minutes to present the correct statement. Have participants give their names before they present.

**List of Statements:** *(Sources [http://hcdg.org/famous.htm](http://hcdg.org/famous.htm) and [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org))*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRUE</th>
<th>FALSE</th>
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| **Helen Keller** (Devoted Life to Persons with Disabilities) was blind and deaf. | **Miss Deaf America** invited to the Super bowl to sign the lyrics to the national anthem and was a huge hit on TV. 
Answer: *She was not shown on TV.* |
| **Albert Einstein**, mathematician/physicist, had a learning disability and did not speak until age 3. | **Ludwig van Beethoven** is widely regarded as one of the greatest composers in history. He achieved all this despite being completely blind for the last 25 years of his life. 
Answer: *He was deaf, not blind* |
| **Tom Cruise**, Hollywood Star, is severely dyslexic. | **Autism** is a disease that can be contracted through sharing needles. 
Answer: *Autism is a mental condition, not a disease, present from early childhood, characterized by great difficulty in communication and forming relationships* |

**Bipolar Disorder** is a severely contagious disorder that is a mood disorder, characterized by extreme changes in mood, behavior and thinking.
**Facilitator Says:** People all around the world have disabilities. Being disabled is the one thing that can happen to any race, age, gender, socioeconomic status etc. It can also happen at birth or at any point in a person’s life.

**PowerPoint Presentation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Training Objective:</strong></th>
<th>Facilitator opens up presentation with the training objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitator says:</strong></td>
<td>“From this training participants will acquire skills and knowledge to confront stereotypical perceptions of disability.”</td>
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</tbody>
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**Language Influences Our Perceptions**

**Facilitator says:**
It is important to know that how we talk about individuals will influence our attitude towards them. People with disabilities have been described negatively, leading to negative attitudes towards them.

**Negative Language**

**Facilitator says:**
“Take a look at this list of negative language adjectives. These are just a few of the many negative names that some people use to describe people with disabilities.

- Retard-Medical Model
- Crippled
- Handicapped
- Crazy
- Palsied
- Suffers
- Dumb
- Spastic
- Confined
- Wheelchair bound
- Idiot
- Abnormal
- Mental
- Burden
When looking at this list of adjectives, what are the first thoughts that come to mind?

**People First Language 1**

**Facilitator says:**
“Who are the so called “handicapped” or “disabled”?
According to stereotypical perceptions, they are:
- People who suffer from the tragedy of birth defects.
- Paraplegic heroes who struggle to become normal again.
- Victims who fight to overcome their challenges.
- Categorically, they are called retarded, autistic, blind, deaf, learning disabled, etc”

**People First Language 2**

**Facilitator says:**
“Who are the disabled….really? (Facilitator Pauses) Well I’m glad you asked! They are….
- Moms and dads
- Sons and daughters
- Employees and Employers
- Friends and Neighbors
- Students and teachers
- Leaders and followers
- Scientists, doctors, actors, presidents, and more
They are people. They are people, first.”

**People First Language 3**

**Facilitator Says:**
“The idea behind using people first language is that it seeks to put emphasis on the person. It seeks to describe the person and not the condition that the person might have.”

**People First Language 4**

**Materials**
- Demystifying Disability People First Language Exercise Handout A
  - People First Language Exercise answers reference page 8

**Resource for Facilitator**
- People first Language by Kathie Snow Handout C

**Facilitator Says:**
“Please take a moment to look at this slide. As you can see, this is an example of how we can use people first language to communicate effectively when talking or referring to people with disabilities. For example instead of saying.…
Handicapped ...........................................a person with a disability
A blind person.................................a person who is blind
A deaf person.................................a person who is deaf
Mute.................................................a person without speech
Retard, feebleminded.........................a person with a developmental disability
Birth defect........................................a person with a congenital disability
Confined to a.......................................a person who uses a wheelchair
Crazy, Insane.................................a person with a behavioral health disability”

*Facilitator’s Note: Pass out the People First Language Exercise handout. Select two or three sentences for participants to correct. Reference the answer sheet for answers to the questions.

Reasonable Accommodations: Providing Equal Opportunity
Facilitator says:
“A reasonable accommodation is any change or adjustment to a task or the environment where a task is performed that permits a qualified person with a disability to apply for an mentoring position, perform the essential functions of a that position and enjoy the benefits and privileges of the service experience equal to those enjoyed by members without disabilities.”

Reasonable Accommodations may include:
Facilitator says:
• “Providing or modifying equipment or devices
• Restructuring the service position
• Part-time or modified service schedules
• Reassignment to a vacant position
• Adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials, or policies
• Providing readers and interpreters
• Making the service site readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.”

Disability Etiquette
Materials:
• Visual Disabilities Handout

Facilitator says:
“Visual Disabilities
• The definition of legally blind is 20/200 vision with the best correction. Many people who are considered blind do have some sight.
• Many people who are blind view their blindness more as an inconvenience than as a disability.

Hearing Disabilities
• There are more people who are partially deaf than people with no hearing at all.
• Sign language is not another form of English. It is an official language with its own grammar, context and rules.
• Lip-reading, while helpful without sound clues, is only 30%-59% effective and can be very tiring after long conversations.

Speech Disabilities
• Use writing as an alternative form of communication
• Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting. Be patient and don’t speak for people. Let them complete their own sentences.
• If you’re trying to communicate in a public area with many distractions, stay calm and try to move to a quieter location.

Wheelchair Etiquette
• There is a wide range of physical abilities among those who use wheelchairs, and people who use them may require different degrees of assistance.
• Some people do not use wheelchairs exclusively. They may also use canes, leg braces or, in some cases, no assistive devices at all.

Cognitive Disabilities
• There can be many causes of a cognitive disability.
• Persons can be born with a cognitive disability or individuals can acquire a cognitive disability due to injury or illness.

Behavioral Health Disabilities
• Behavioral health disabilities refer to a class of disabilities caused in many instances by a medical condition.
• Types of behavioral health disabilities are bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, major depression, etc.
• Stress can trigger some behavioral disabilities but the relationship between stress and these types of disabilities is complex.”

Insuring Equality: What would you do?

Resource for Facilitator
• A Guide to Disability Rights Laws Handout D

Directions:
Have the participants break into teams. You will need three people to one group. You will need:
• Someone to lead the discussion
• Someone to write down the law you will create
Someone to talk to talk to the group about you law

Facilitator says:
“You have been chosen to create laws to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities. (This is your team’s law and all Americans have to follow it.) What happens if the law is violated?”

*Facilitator’s Note: Note laws from the Guide to Disability Rights Laws Handout D listed in as a resource. Give the groups 10 minutes to create their laws and 3 minutes for each group to present their law. If groups need examples or assistance take some time to cover a few of the laws from Handout D.

Questions and Evaluations 5 minutes
Use this time to answer any further questions or take comments. Be sure to leave your contact information in case students have further questions. Pass out evaluations forms and collect them when participants have finished filling them out.

Facilitator says:
“That wraps up our Disability Awareness training for today. Are there any further questions or concerns that any of you might have before we bring this session to a close? Well thank you again for your participation. I will be passing out a short evaluation form that I would like for you to fill out. This will help me better meet your training needs for the future.”

People First Language Exercise Answers

1. Did you know John’s sister is a person with a disability.
2. Billy how long have you been using a wheelchair?
3. I know a girl who is deaf and without speech.
4. Kevin was born with a development disability.
5. Kelly has to take medication because of her congenital disability.
6. Tom has used a wheelchair all of his life.
7. Mary has had a behavioral health disability for nearly ten years.
8. Since the accident Dianna has been unable to walk.
9. Sal is a person with a brain injury.
10. Barbara is a person who is Mongolian.