

Why is Disability Awareness Important?



Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Defined



Intellectual Disability

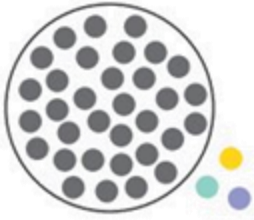
Characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem-solving) and in adaptive behavior, which covers a range of everyday social and practical skills, such as handling routines or social situations. Intellectual disabilities often originate before age 18.

Developmental Disability

An umbrella term including intellectual disability but also includes other disabilities diagnosed during childhood or physical disabilities. Developmental disabilities are lifelong that and can be cognitive, physical or both. The disabilities appear before age 22.

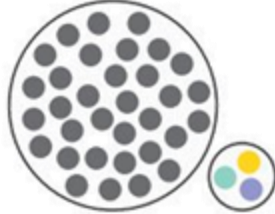
What Does Inclusion Look Like?

EXCLUSION



People with disabilities are directly or indirectly denied access to employment opportunities based on their disability status.

SEGREGATION



People with disabilities are provided employment opportunities in isolation from people without disabilities, often being paid sub-minimum wage.

INTEGRATION



People with disabilities are hired to work alongside employees without disabilities but require the support of outside agencies to adjust to the requirements of the job.

INCLUSION



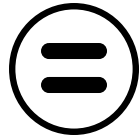
Best practices moving forward are headed toward full inclusion.

People with and without disabilities working together with a natural support system in an environment that values people's unique strengths.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA)



Diversity refers to the variety of characteristics and backgrounds individuals bring, such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, abilities, and more.



Equity focuses on ensuring fairness and justice by providing equal opportunities and resources to all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds.



Inclusion emphasizes creating a supportive and welcoming environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to fully participate.



Accessibility focuses on removing barriers and providing accommodations to support active participation of individuals with disabilities.

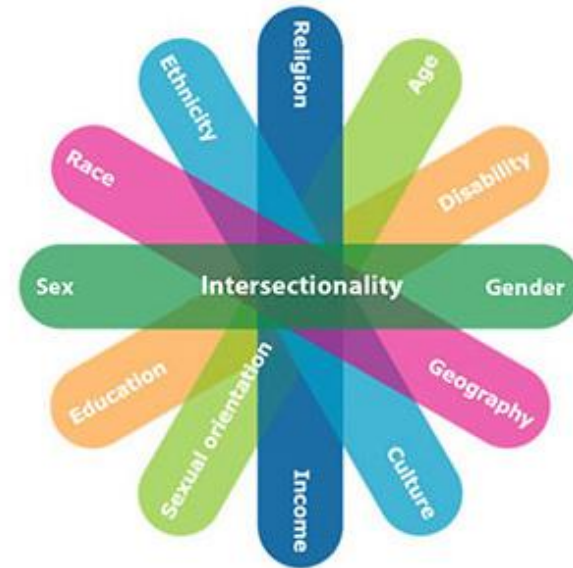
Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility are foundational to Best Buddies International's core values and help the organization continue to achieve its mission of creating opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living for individuals with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. Inclusion is how we live our commitment to fairness and diversity.

HOW CAN WE ACKNOWLEDGE & CELEBRATE OTHERS?

Understanding how intersectionality impacts others is critical to acknowledge the barriers of discrimination that need to be removed. As members of society, we must build a cohesive and collective purpose and vision to create inclusive communities.

HOW DO WE PUT INTERSECTIONALITY INTO PRACTICE?

- Recognize difference
- Avoid oversimplified language
- Analyze the space you occupy
- Seek other points of view
- Show up



Disability Etiquette Tips

1

Words Matter

Words affect attitudes which affect actions. Don't use derogatory language or talk down to people with disabilities. Speak to them as you would anyone else and encourage others to do the same.

2

Ask, Don't Assume

Don't make assumptions about what people with disabilities can and cannot understand or what support they may need. Ask first before helping. Remember, not all disabilities are visible, and no one wants to be judged by their appearance.

3

Be Patient

Keep in mind that everyone does things in their own time. Don't rush through conversations or interactions without allowing time for response or providing the space needed for others to navigate at their own pace. When facing communication challenges, try phrasing things in a different way, writing it down or utilizing assistive technology or sign language to help.

4

Be Respectful

People with disabilities deserve the same respect as any of their peers. Include them in conversations, decisions and activities and treat them in an age-appropriate manner.

<#>

5

You Don't Have to Be An Expert to Be An Ally

You are not expected to know all there is to know about disabilities. In fact, the disability community is ever-evolving and not everyone within it shares the same views, so we all must continue to learn and engage. Being an ally means making space for people with disabilities to be included, feel valued, and have a sense of belonging. Never allow the fear of making a mistake prevent you from trying to achieve that.