**DISABILITY** ETIQUETTE AWARENESS

**BUILDING A FOUNDATION**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **~1B**  people with disabilities in the world | **~54M**  people with disabilities in the U.S. | **~5.5M**  veterans with disabilities in the U.S. |

* Disabilities come in many different forms and can be visible or invisible
* In general, treat and speak to others as you would like to be treated and spoken to:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Use people   first language | * Ask before  you try to help | * Idiomatic expressions  are ok to use | * Avoid phrases like “Inspirational” or “courageous” |

**MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS**

* People with mobility impairments are not   
  their equipment
* People may use wheelchairs, but they   
  are not wheelchair bound
* Be mindful of people’s differing mobility   
  and reach limits
* Some people who use wheelchairs may   
  be able to transfer from their chairs or   
  walk about

**DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

* American Sign Language (ASL) is different   
  from English and makes lip reading difficult   
  if ASL is one’s first language
* Less than 30% of people who are deaf   
  are able to lip read
* Face-to-face communication is best
* It is ok to get the attention of people who   
  are deaf by using your body or motion

**LEARNING DISABILITIES**

* Learning disabilities are lifelong disorders   
  that interfere with a person’s ability to   
  receive, express or process information
* Be flexible and accommodating with how information is presented

**MENTAL HEALTH**

* Talking about mental health is crucial to breaking down stigmas
* Small, everyday actions like spending time with people can help
* Avoid clichés like “cheer up” or “I’m sure   
  it’ll pass”

**BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

* People are legally blind when their vision   
  is 20/200 corrected
* Always identify yourself and ask and   
  offer to help as a guide if needed
* Offer your arm as guidance, but do not   
  take people’s arms or hands without asking
* Respect people’s equipment and canine companions

**AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER** (ASD)

* Autism is a wide-spectrum disorder,   
  meaning no two people with autism will   
  have the exact same symptoms
* Autism is not a learning disability
* Remove potential sources of stress when talking to people with autism
* Keep behaving consistently throughout interactions