



August National News



Disability Awareness

Volunteering

Events

Disability Awareness Month

“People with disabilities represent the largest minority group in the world.

About 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability,
of whom 2-4% experience significant difficulties in functioning.”

— World Health Organization, 2017

LGBT Deaf Resources in Japan

It can be very difficult to connect with LGBT people in Japan because of the language barrier. Above this, when verbal language is not an option either, communication can be very difficult. However, around Japan, there are resources to learn sign language and connect with people who are both LGBT+ and part of the Deaf community:-

Deaf LGBT Center (Osaka): deaf-lgbt-center.jimdo.com

Deaf LGBT Tohoku: deaflgbttohoku.grupo.jp / E: d.l.tohoku@gmail.com

BOND (Tokyo): tokyodeaflgbtbond.jimdo.com / E: kotobasomuriekaede@gmail.com

手話教室@rise (Nagoya): aln.sakura.ne.jp/rise.htm

There is also an English guide made by the Deaf LGBT Center in Osaka (pic right).



Type of Disabilities

For more information, please visit the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) website. We thank them for the information they have provided: <http://www.neads.ca/en/about/>

Physical Disabilities

A physical disability is one that affects a person's mobility or dexterity. A person with a physical disability may need to use some sort of equipment for assistance with mobility. It also includes people who have lost limbs or who, because of the shape of their body, require slight adaptations to be made to enable them to participate fully in society.

Paraplegia and Quadriplegia are what many people first identify with a physical disability. Paraplegia results from injury to the spinal cord, occurring below the neck, while quadriplegia refers to damage to the spinal cord in the neck. Varying degrees of loss of limb and other mobility may result from either condition. Other forms of physical disability, such as polio (an acquired disease), cerebral palsy (damage to brain tissue during fetal stages) and some genetic conditions can result in loss of mobility.

Intellectual or Learning Disabilities

People with an intellectual, learning, or cognitive disability have a reduced capacity to learn tasks or process information. A learning disability may make it difficult for a person to take in information and communicate what they know. Learning difficulties can cause difficulties in reading, writing, or mathematics. Learning disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorder together affect between 3% and 10% of the population. As students, people with these disabilities are often intelligent, creative, and productive. **A common misconception is that medication will 'solve' ADD, however, while medication can help towards decreasing the hindering symptoms, they do not necessarily 'solve' the underlying condition.** Also, they are more effective in combination with behavioral and cognitive behavioral therapy.



Psychiatric Disabilities

A psychiatric disability (or mental illness) can develop at any age and is often not apparent to other people. Psychiatric disabilities are often the most misunderstood disabilities in the community, and peoples' attitudes may be based on prejudice and myth (e.g. schizophrenics are potentially violent).

Mental illnesses can include stress-related conditions, major depression, bipolar disorder (formally called manic-depressive illness), anxiety, and schizophrenia. **Depression is the most common non-psychotic mental illness** (psychosis being a disorder which features the loss of contact with reality).

Visual Impairments

Only 5% of 'blind' people can't see anything. Visual impairments can be caused by a multitude of factors, including disease, accidents, and congenital illnesses. There is a difference between the needs of visually impaired individuals and blind people.

Hearing Impairments

Deafness and hearing loss can be caused by a wide range of factors, including physical damage, disease during pregnancy, or exposure to very loud noises. **There is a distinction between people who are deaf and those who have a hearing impairment.** Those hearing up to three years of age (when language begins to develop) often have comparatively good speech and lip-reading ability.

Neurological Disabilities

A neurological disability is associated with damage to the nervous system that results in the loss of some physical or mental functions. A neurological disability may affect a person's capacity to move or manipulate things or the way they act or express their feelings. The way they think and process information may also be significantly influenced. The brain and the spine are the areas of the body most closely associated with neurology. **Heart attacks, serious infections, and lack of oxygen to the brain may also result in a neurological disability.**

Language

Identity-first language versus people-first language

Identity-first language refers to when an identity is given weight when talking about a person/group. For example, “a trans, disabled person” or “the Deaf community”. It is often used to empower an identity which is at the core of a person’s being. It can also be used to pigeon-hole people into labeled identities which people feel are not core to their being.

People-first language on the contrary gives weight to the person/group first then acknowledges their identity such as “ a person who has gained deafness” or “a person who is attracted to the same sex and has a hearing impairment”. It can be used to express that people are not only a specific ‘labeled’ identity and a person first. This can be problematic as some find people-first language cold, and formal. Further to this, people-first language can imply that the label is removable or negative. For more of this discussion, I recommend Cara Liebowitz’s [I am Disabled](#) and Jim Sinclairs’ [Why I dislike “person first” language](#). Clara writes:

“Neither identity-first nor people-first language approaches should be applied broadly. There are some communities that strongly prefer people-first language. Those with intellectual disabilities usually prefer people-first language[...]. Conversely, the Autistic and Deaf communities both strongly prefer identity-first language[...].”

The best advice to give is, if you are speaking about someone’s disability, ask what language is appropriate.

Discrimination

Only in 2016 did Japan ban “unjust discrimination” against people with disabilities. It also started to ask government agencies and private businesses to take “reasonable accommodation” to remove social barriers for such individuals. For more info about this law, check out the Japan Times article: [New Law on Disabilities](#)

Safety

People with disabilities are 1.7x more likely to be the victim of a violent crime. More than 70 per cent of women with disability have been victims of violent sexual encounters at some time in their lives and a staggering 90 percent of women with an intellectual disability have been subjected to sexual abuse.

Employment and Income

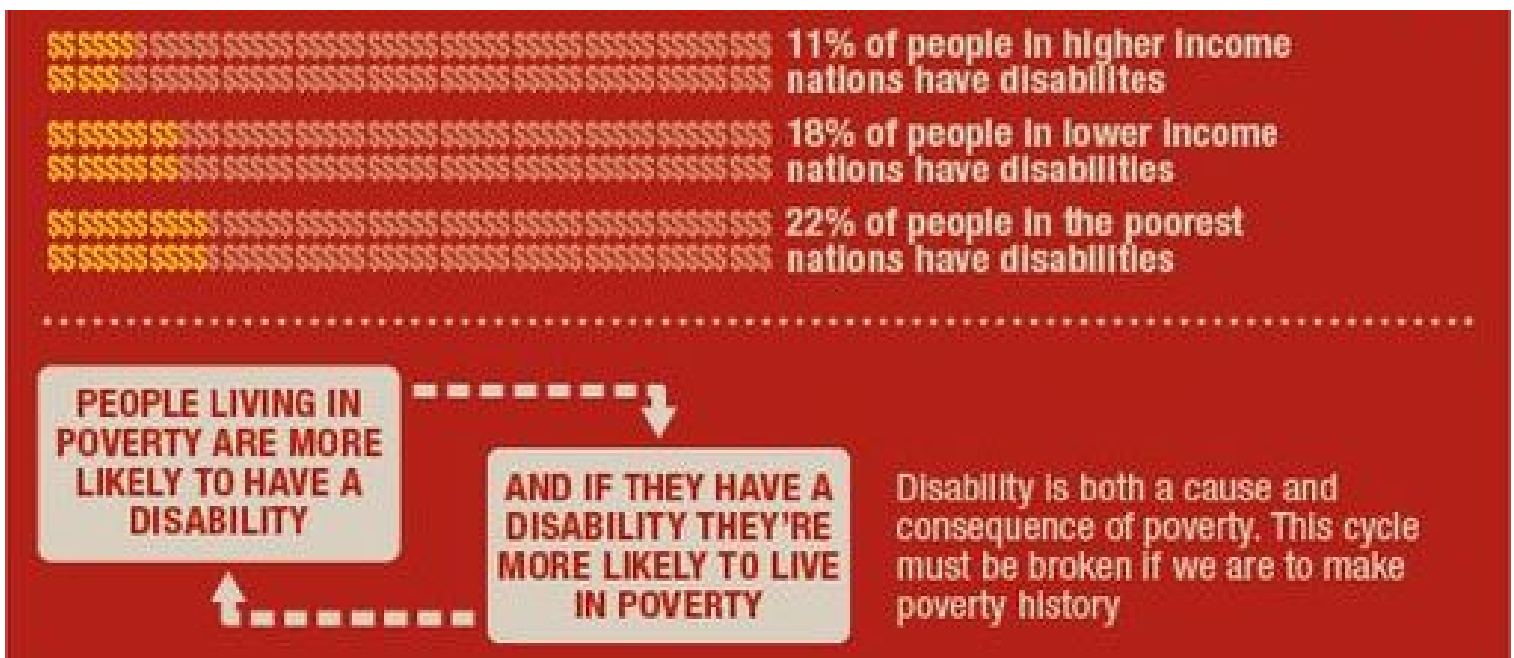
People with disability have nearly twice the unemployment rate of those without disability. The relative income of people with disability in Australia is approximately 70 per cent of those without disability. As a result, people with disability are more likely to live in poverty.

Education

36 percent of people with disability of working age have completed high school, compared with 60 percent of people without disability.¹ 90% of children who have a disability to not attend school²

Health

35 percent of people with disability report poor or fair health compared with 5 percent of people without disability.



¹ <http://www.daru.org.au/what-is-advocacy/why-we-need-disability-advocacy>

² <https://brandongaille.com/20-amazing-disability-discrimination-statistics/>

Discrimination

Advocate! Barriers that PWD (people with disabilities) face like: financial barriers, structural barriers, and transport need local and national governmental policy change. Be conscious of physical access and mobility barriers and work/advocate to make community events such as pride etc. accessible to all. Here are a few things you can do...



Visual Disability Communication Barriers:

Identify yourself. Speak naturally and clearly. Use everyday language.
Never channel conversation through a third person.
Don't leave a conversation without saying so.
Introduce the other people present in a group.
Use accurate and specific language when giving directions.
Always ask first to check if help is needed.

Hearing Disability Communication Barriers:

Speak naturally and clearly. Use an expressive face.
Keep your mouth visible. Speak one at a time.
Use pencil and paper if you get stuck.
Make eye contact.
Talk to the person not to the interpreter.
Eliminate background noise where possible.
Position yourself to be best heard/seen.



Learning Disability Communication Barriers:

Follow their lead. Go at their pace. Face-to-face and one-to-one is often best. Don't overuse color in text.
Speak slowly and clearly if on the phone. Quiet location is best. Ask open questions. Check understanding.
Watch their body language. Don't rush. Be expressive. Using realia and photos can help.

Attitudinal Barriers:

Stereotyping: People sometimes stereotype those with disabilities, assuming their quality of life is poor or that they are unhealthy because of their impairments. Stigma, prejudice, and discrimination: [...] People may see disability as a personal tragedy, as something that needs to be cured or prevented, as a punishment for wrongdoing, or as an indication of the lack of ability to behave as expected in society.

Thank you to the following resources...

1. <https://www.visionaustralia.org/information/family-friends-carers/communicating-effectively>
2. <https://www.deaf-first.org.uk/comm-tips.html> 5. <http://www.pwd.org.au/training/disability-awareness.html>
3. https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2016-12/Communicating%20with%20people_updated%20%281%29.pdf
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/disability-barriers.html>

