

25 Ways to Support People with Varying Abilities

- 1 Ask what people need and make accommodations as comfortable as possible.
- 2 Remember that communities maybe small so confidentiality is very important.
- 3 Acknowledge that people with disabilities or varying abilities are capable people.
- 4 If your facilities are ADA accessible, promote accessibility on program materials.
- 5 Create programs, shelters, and organizations that are fully accessible.
- 6 Know that trauma may manifest differently for people with disabilities.
- 7 Know that a person's disability or varying ability does not define them.
- 8 Affirm that people with disabilities or varying abilities are diverse.
- 9 Become more familiar with entitlements and disability benefits.
- 10 Hire & promote people who have disabilities or varying abilities.
- 11 Learn basic American Sign Language (ASL).
- 12 Learn how to assess & discuss traumatic brain injury.
- 13 Be aware & maintain respectful personal space when communicating.
- 14 Have your facilities evaluated for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.
- 15 Avoid outdated terms like "handicapped" & brush up on appropriate terminology.
- 16 Do cross training between domestic violence programs and disability organizations.
- 17 Develop positive working relationships with Deaf organizations in your area.
- 18 Acknowledge & learn about hidden disabilities like epilepsy or HIV/AIDS.
- 19 Look for ways to make cost efficient changes & updates for accessible facilities.
- 20 Remember that people with disabilities are capable people, don't make decisions for them.
- 21 Remember that people with disabilities or varying abilities are experts in their own lives.
- 22 Know that people with disabilities or varying abilities may be less likely to report abuse.
- 23 Know that people with mental health issues may not identify with having a disability.
- 24 Maintain a current list of ASL and other sign language interpreters for your community.
- 25 Increase your etiquette, knowledge of & interactions with people with disabilities.

