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LABELLED DISABLED

In general there are three main categories of disability

- Sensory
- Physical
- Mental (Cognitive)

The important thing to remember is that a person can never be classified by a disability - whatever the 'label' of the illness or handicap, it is never a description of a person.

PHYSICAL DISABILITY, such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, paraplegia (both legs paralysed) and hemiplegia (one side paralysed), caused by for instance, birth injury, disease, e.g., polio, or accidents later in life. Those affected may benefit from extra personal help, and might need aids, such as wheelchairs, crutches or sticks. Remember that being physically disabled doesn't mean that a person's mental functions are impaired, and that it is totally inappropriate to treat a disabled person as retarded, just because he or she looks "handicapped". Be helpful, but not over-protective. Disabled people value their independence, even though it may be limited by circumstances. If you don't know how much (if any) help the person needs - try asking!



"I live in a body labelled 'second rate'.
Although I'm second to none
When the world knows the difference
Then my battle is won".

SENSORY DISABILITY, such as blindness and partial sight, deafness and partial hearing, and speech impairments. Many hearing impaired people suffer from unpleasant and often continuous noises in the ear known as "tinnitus". Remember that people with these disabilities are not necessarily impaired in any other way, that they are as quick to comprehend as you are. Try not to be embarrassed if communication is difficult. Say "I'm sorry I didn't understand that" rather than pretend you did. Don't "talk down" to blind people or shout at those who are hard of hearing - just speak clearly. Matter of fact acceptance of such a disability is more appreciated by the disabled person than over-eager and often unnecessary assistance.

COGNITIVE DISABILITY, is a permanent condition in which the intelligence is impaired to some degree, from very mildly to profoundly. It is not medically treatable or curable, although training can improve the level at which that person functions. Encourage mentally disabled people to learn as many new skills and do as much for themselves as possible. Give clear and simple instructions and check that they have been understood. don't over-protect, and allow them to enjoy their maximum possible independence and have pride in their own achievements.

HIDDEN DISABILITIES

Hidden disabilities may include such things as circulatory, and coronary disorders, diabetics, asthma, etc. Such disabilities are not immediately obvious but may constrain an individual's lifestyle, employment, etc.



WHAT WE'RE DOING!

ACCESS GUIDE

Unfortunately, easily accessible shops, banks, post offices, pubs, disco's, libraries, etc., etc., etc., are still the exception rather than the rule and many people with a disability experience real problems. Thus, Community Action are in the process of compiling a handbook indicating the degree of accessibility of all shops, public buildings and amenities within Loughborough.

CONCERT SCHEME

We take a couple of minibus loads full of mentally disabled people and student be-frienders free to L.S.U. concerts. We all have a great time, dancing, chatting, and generally mucking about. WatchFast Forward for details of future concerts.

NATIONAL DISABLED STUDENT GAMES

This is a unique event within the national student sporting calendar, welcoming physically disabled students from educational institutions the length and breadth of Britain.

This year's Games played host to 194 competitors. 122 student volunteers, volunteered their help over the weekend. It's a tremendous sporting and social occasion for all taking part, with the enthusiasm and enjoyment shown having to be experienced to be believed.

SUPERSTARS

Following on from last year's Special Olympics, this year's event takes place on 15 June, starting at 10.00 a.m. and finishing at approximately 3.00 p.m. The event plays host to over 100 mentally disabled people, drawn from day centres all over Leicestershire. Volunteers are needed, mainly on the day, so if interested pop up to the office; it will be a great day.

Disabled or Handicapped ?



The words 'handicap' and 'disability' are often used as if they are interchangeable. There is, however, a key difference in their definitions.

DISABILITY is a condition which to some extent impairs physical or mental function.

HANDICAP is a physical or social disadvantage arising from an **INDIVIDUAL'S ENVIRONMENT** or **CIRCUMSTANCES**.

