

9th-12th Grade Down Syndrome Education Program

Adapted from program provided by Martine Boudreaux

An interactive discussion about stereotypes, disabilities, Down Syndrome and the Buddy Walk for students grades 9-12.

Contact Dawn Durante, 2008 Buddy Walk Education Chair, at dawnd@homesc.com with questions or comments.

Estimated length: 3 hours

To: Curriculum Specialists/Disability Advocates
From: Martine Boudreaux, Options Director at Bishop England High School
RE: Disability Awareness Unit

In an effort to create an effective inclusive BE community, I developed a Disability Awareness Unit that was taught in all of our 9th-12th grade Theology classes. The unit was taught school-wide during the first week of September to help students gain an understanding and appreciation for students that were enrolled in our new Options Program, a program designed to provide an inclusive education for students with special needs. To ease the process, I created a unit that is as teacher-friendly as possible with very little planning required from the Theology teachers. To assist the teachers with fielding questions that arose in their classes, I also put together a reference guide for their use. It consisted of specific information about a variety of disabilities and was intended to supplement the unit as they saw fit. In addition to the reference guide, all faculty members at Bishop England had access to the book Listening to the Experts which is a first-hand look at inclusion written by students with disabilities, students without disabilities, and teachers in inclusive settings.

As you read through the attached unit, you will notice that it is comprised of three lessons to be taught over a three-day period. However, in some instances, you may feel it is more appropriate to cover the material within a different time frame (two or four days) depending on the dynamics of your classroom. In addition, you may find that some of the activities may need to be adjusted to fit the levels and attitudes of your students. Since it is difficult to create a unit that would be appropriate for both freshman and seniors, I am hoping that you will take this unit and use your professional judgment in its implementation. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me either through email mboudreaux@behs.com or by calling (843) 849-9599 ext. 41.

The attached unit was comprised from activities and information from a variety of sources. Some of the activities were taken directly from a source, while others were modified and adjusted for our purpose and audience. The following is a list of the resources I used in the unit's development:

Free Publications for Download:

Hughes, C. (1999) Peer Buddy Manual: Metropolitan Nashville Peer Buddy Program
http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/17/a4/00.pdf
Special Olympics Get Into It: A free curriculum on disability awareness. www.specialolympics.org/getintoit
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. (2006). <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/questions.htm>
Exploring for People with Disabilities. <http://www.learning-for-life.org/exploring/resources/99-720/a01.pdf>

Books for Purchase:

Bauer, A. & Brown, G. (2001) Adolescents and Inclusion: Transforming Secondary Schools. Brookes Publishing Co.
Jorgensen, C., Schuh, M., & Nisbet, J. (2006) The Inclusion Facilitator's Guide. Brookes Publishing Co. Keefe, E., Moore, V., & Duff, F. (2006) Listening to the Experts: Students with Disabilities Speak Out. Brookes Publishing Co.

Disability Awareness Unit

Unit Objectives: Students will be able to

- Define and give examples of “stereotype”
- Identify problems arising from stereotyping others
- Understand a variety of disabilities and how barriers can hinder success
- Perceive things from another’s point of view
- Know the impact of physical, social, and psychological barriers
- Identify and respect differences in individuals’ talents, skills, and abilities
- Identify and practice ways to support diversity in the BE community

Lesson 1: “Down with Stereotypes”

Materials Needed:

- Several letter-sized sheets posted on the classroom walls, each one listing a category of stereotype (see Step 9)
- Sheets of blank letter-sized paper on which students can write additional categories of stereotypes
- Markers
- Tape to display paper on walls

Steps for Implementation:

1. Tell the students: **This unit is about understanding and accepting differences in others.**
2. Ask: **What are some examples of people being treated unfairly in history? Can you think of some examples of unfairness that is still happening today? Why is fairness important? Why is respect for others important? What would the world be like if no cared about fairness or respect for others? How do you think people feel when they are treated unfairly or when they are not respected?**
3. Explain: **The class will focus during this lesson on something most people agree can be extremely unfair and disrespectful: stereotypes. Sometimes we are powerless to change things that are unfair. But we aren’t powerless to change our own unfair and disrespectful stereotypes of others.**
4. Define stereotype: **A stereotype is a statement about someone or something based on a narrow and superficial idea. The word “stereotype” comes from a 19th-century form of printing in which a printer could create the same words or images over and over again without any variation. Like typewritten words on a printing press, a stereotype is an idea that is repeated over and over again to the point where people accept it as true, even if it has little or no connection to reality.**
5. Give one of the following examples of stereotype:
Stereotypes of people: Sometimes people judge other people on the basis of just one thing about them: for example, the way they look, the way they talk, where they live, or how they dress.

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Stereotypes of animals, e.g., wolves: The wolf is often viewed only as a vicious and fearsome animal (“the big, bad wolf who will blow your house down”). Wolves are animals that prey on other animals, but the stereotype ignores many other things about wolves: their high degree of intelligence and the way they live and hunt together in highly organized packs, for example. The stereotype of the big, bad wolf is narrow and superficial. It tells only part of the truth about wolves.

6. Ask the students to volunteer other examples of stereotypes.
7. Ask: **Where do stereotypes come from?** (They’re conveyed through stories, pictures, or the media; sometimes people judge other people unfairly just because they speak or look different.)

What are some reasons why stereotypes are unfair? (They may have little connection with the reality; they don’t take account of individual differences within groups; they’re often based on very little information or misinformation.)

8. Explain that it’s not uncommon for people to have stereotypes of other people and of groups. Ask: **What are some problems that stereotypes can lead to?**

Encourage a variety of answers such as:

- People judge others unfairly without getting to know what they’re really like.
- Stereotypes are often associated with prejudice and discrimination against others.
- Some people get excluded from groups because of stereotypes
- People may use the stereotype of a group as a reason for behaving in a mean and hateful way toward that group.

9. Point out the sheets you have posted on the walls and explain that each one describes a common category of stereotypes. Ask the students if they can think of any other categories that should be posted as well.

Possible categories include:

- Stereotypes about people who look different
- Stereotypes about countries
- Stereotypes about places
- Stereotypes about ethnic groups
- Stereotypes about teenagers
- Stereotypes about people with disabilities
- Stereotypes about the elderly

10. Say: **Look at all these different kinds of stereotypes. For every category of stereotype, there are people who believe the stereotype and who use it to justify unfair, disrespectful, insensitive, prejudiced, or hateful behavior.**
11. Explain: **You will now have an opportunity to tear down these stereotypes and make a commitment to avoid them in the future.**

Demonstrate by removing one of the sheets from the wall, tearing it into small pieces, and putting the pieces in the recycle bin. As you do so, offer a brief statement of your commitment to discard stereotypes and “recycle” them into more positive and accepting attitudes toward others.

12. Encourage student volunteers to remove the other sheets from the wall (one at a time), tear them into small pieces, and make a similar statement of commitment about avoiding stereotypes in the future.
13. Either as homework or in class, have each student write a paragraph describing the effects of stereotypes on our society and ways to avoid stereotypes.

Lesson 2: “Understanding Disabilities”

Materials Needed:

- 3” x 5” index cards
- Cotton balls
- Large gloves
- Name tags
- Pen, Pencil, or Marker

Steps for Implementation:

1. Define the following terms:
 - **Empathy** – seeing or understanding things from another person’s point of view; the capacity for participating in another’s feelings or ideas
 - **Simulation** – Under test conditions, reproducing phenomena likely to occur in actual situations; assuming the characteristics of something by imitating its symptoms
 - **Barrier** – A factor that restricts movement (physical barrier), impedes interaction with others (social barrier), or causes feelings of separation (psychological barrier)
 - **Disability** – A lack of ability to perform a function that most other people can do. Disabilities are caused by impairments that restrict normal functions.
 - **Handicap** – the result of a barrier; what a disability becomes when society’s attitudes and physical obstacles make it difficult to do what is expected in life. An impairment or disability need not become a handicap if the person can satisfy his or her needs and society’s expectations using alternative techniques.

2. Explain the interrelationship of these terms.

Imitating (through simulation) physical, learning, and speech impairments (disabilities) will permit you to see things from another person’s point of view (empathy). You will be incapable of participating (disabled) in some activities when environmental factors (barriers) interfere. Your disability will then become a handicap.

3. Cite examples:

Can everyone swim, use sign language, type 60 words per minute, ride a unicycle, and read Braille? No. We all have disabilities. Some of you require glasses to see properly. Your disability, impaired vision, will become a handicap if there is a barrier (ie. lack of corrective lenses). Similarly, someone who uses a wheelchair will be handicapped when entering a building only if there are no alternatives to stairs.

4. Definition of Down Syndrome. Ask student a volunteer to read the definition. Encourage questions and discussion. Ask students if they know anyone who has the Down Syndrome. ***See “Definitions of Disabilities” document for more information about different disabilities.*

- **Down Syndrome** – A genetic condition, caused by atypical cell division. In typical development, the baby grows, by cell division, from an embryo produced by the fusion of an egg and a sperm. Each of these sex cells normally contains 23 individual chromosomes, representing one half of those found in all other types of body cells. In the formation of the sex cells, each pair of chromosomes divides, providing the genetic material for two eggs or two sperm. However, occasionally, the two versions of chromosome 21 fail to separate and move together into the same sex cell. If fertilized, a baby with Down Syndrome will be conceived. Today, no one is clear what causes faulty cell division. Any couple, from any social, cultural or racial background, can produce a baby with Down Syndrome. Down Syndrome usually causes delays in physical and intellectual development. There is a wide variation in mental abilities, behavior, and physical development of individuals with Down Syndrome. Affected individuals have their own unique personalities, capabilities, and talents. Many people with Down Syndrome hold jobs, live independently, and enjoy recreational opportunities in their communities.

5. Disability Simulation Activity –

People with Down Syndrome may have difficulties with speech, motor activities and learning. This exercise is designed to help you experience the challenges people with Down Syndrome must overcome.

- Have each student select a partner.
- Give each team a kit of materials.
- Decide who will simulate and who will assist (reverse roles after completing tasks).
- Have each team simulate each of the listed disabilities.
- Do not let teams spend too much time on one task. Keep in mind, however, that some of the tasks will be difficult and may take longer than usual to perform. Partners should provide the minimum amount of help required for their “disabled” partner to complete the task.
- When finished, have partners reverse roles.

Speech Limitations

Activity: Have one student try to communicate messages to the other by using physical gestures or by talking without moving their tongues. Have them choose one of the following topics by asking the partner questions. The partner should then answer each question:

Ask your partner about his/her favorite things.

Ask questions about your partner’s family.

Ask your partner several questions about a topic of your choice.

Physical Limitations

Activity: Have one student put on a pair of gloves with cotton balls in the fingertips. Have them write his/her name on the name tag, pull the nametag off the backing & put it on.

Learning Limitations

Activity: Have one student read the following passage:

The phaonmneel pweor of the hmuan mnid: I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacilty uesdnatnrd waht I was rdgnieg. Aoccdnrig to a rscheearcr at Cmagbride Uinervtisy, it deosn’t mtttaer in waht oreldr the ltteers of a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mind does not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh?

6. Discussion – Discuss what happened during the simulation activity. Use the following questions to stimulate discussion:

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- What kinds of barriers did you encounter and how did they affect your performance?
 - Did any of you need your partner's help to perform the tasks?
 - How would you feel if these tasks were difficult all the time?
 - What was your partner's reaction when you were struggling?
7. Provide a final thought: **People with Down Syndrome have the same needs as other people. They all learn, but sometimes at a slower pace than most of us. Nevertheless, we all have a need to belong to a group. Next, we will discuss ways to help students with special needs become a part of our school community.**
 8. Either as homework or in class, have students make 2 lists – one labeled “similarities” and the other labeled “differences”. Have each student write at least 5 ways that they are similar and 5 ways that they are different from people with disabilities.

Lesson 3: “Establishing a Diverse Community”

Materials Needed:

- “Helpful Hints” Handout (see attached)
- Down Syndrome Education Week and Buddy Walk Announcement (see attached)

Steps for Implementation:

1. Review the concepts of stereotypes and their effects on society.
 2. Review what happened during the simulation activity and the impact of barriers on the student's ability to complete each task.
 3. Ask: **In what ways have your thoughts or feelings about people with Down Syndrome changed? How will your behavior be different the next time you interact with someone who has special needs?**
 4. Reiterate the need for students with disabilities to develop a sense of belonging and to become a valued member of the school community. Have the class brainstorm ways to help students with special needs become involved in the school community. Write their ideas on the board.
 5. Hypothetical Examples: Read and discuss each hypothetical example.
 - David is having a difficult time finding his next class. What could be done to help him?
 - As part of a class, students are required to take notes from lectures. Beth has difficulty taking notes. What could be done to help her?
 - Eric, who has difficulty making friends, has never been to a school football game and really wants to go to the big game. What could be done to help him?
 - Kristen has difficulty staying organized so she carries a large binder with all of her supplies that she will need. Since the binder and her textbooks are heavy and cumbersome, she has difficulty carrying them during class changes. In addition, she has difficulty opening her locker. What can be done to help her?
- Post “Helpful Hints” handout in classroom. Read each suggestion listed. Clarify as needed.
 - Include information from Down Syndrome Education Week/Buddy Walk Announcement in your communications to students' parents/caregivers.
 - Give each student a Buddy Walk Registration .

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HELPFUL HINTS

- ✓ USE "PEOPLE FIRST" LANGUAGE – "PERSON WITH A DISABILITY" NOT "DISABLED PERSON"
- ✓ IT'S OKAY TO OFFER YOUR HELP TO SOMEONE, BUT DON'T JUST GO AHEAD. ASK FIRST.
- ✓ IT'S OKAY TO ASK PEOPLE WHO HAVE SPEECH DIFFICULTIES TO REPEAT WHAT THEY SAID IF YOU DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE FIRST TIME.
- ✓ DON'T SPEAK LOUDLY WHEN TALKING TO SOMEONE WITH A VISUAL IMPAIRMENT. THEY HEAR AS WELL AS YOU DO.
- ✓ NEVER PET OR PLAY WITH SEEING EYE DOGS. THEY CAN'T BE DISTRACTED FROM THE JOB THEY ARE DOING.
- ✓ DON'T PARK IN PLACES RESERVED FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.
- ✓ TREAT A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY THE WAY YOU LIKE TO BE TREATED.
- ✓ INVITE FRIENDS WITH DISABILITIES TO HANG OUT, GO TO THE MALL, OR GO TO FOOTBALL GAMES. THINK ABOUT WAYS TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY CAN BE INCLUDED IN THE THINGS THAT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS DO.
- ✓ VIEW THE INDIVIDUAL AS A PERSON, NOT AS A DISABILITY.
- ✓ TALK USING LANGUAGE AND ABOUT TOPICS THAT ARE AGE-APPROPRIATE.
- ✓ REFRAIN FROM REPEATING YOURSELF. IF THE INDIVIDUAL DOESN'T UNDERSTAND, REPHRASE YOUR MESSAGE IN SIMPLER LANGUAGE OR SHORTER SENTENCES.
- ✓ BE PATIENT. ALLOW TIME FOR THE PERSON TO RESPOND.
- ♥ *A disability is an inability to do something. A handicap, on the other hand, is a disadvantage that is imposed on an individual. A disability may or may not be a handicap, depending on the circumstances. For example, an inability to walk is not a handicap in learning to read, but it can be a handicap in getting into the stands of a football game.*
- ♥ *First, no two people are exactly alike. People with disabilities, just like everyone else, are unique individuals. Most of their abilities are much like those of the "average" person who is not considered to have a disability. It is important that disabilities be recognized for what they are, but individuals with disabilities must be seen as having many abilities, talents, and interests – just like everyone else.*

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Definitions of Disabilities

- **Down Syndrome** – A genetic disorder that usually causes delays in physical and intellectual development. The exact cause and prevention of Down Syndrome are unknown. There is a wide variation in mental abilities, behavior, and physical development of individuals with Down Syndrome. Affected individuals have their own unique personalities, capabilities, and talents.

Many people with Down Syndrome hold jobs, live independently, and enjoy recreational opportunities in their communities.

- **Learning Disability** – A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding and in using spoken or written language. The disorder might appear as a deficient ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. Students with learning disabilities might be successful in one academic area but do poorly in another. Those who have learning disabilities tend to have normal or above normal intelligence.
- **Mental Retardation** – A limitation of intellectual functioning. It is important to realize that people with mental retardation have the same hopes and emotions as people without mental retardation. They are capable of abstract thinking and can do problem solving. The ability to follow and understand more complex directions varies with age levels and life experiences.
- **Autism** – A disorder in communication, social skills and behavior which usually appears within the first 2½ years of life. People with autism may show the following symptoms: sensory deficits, self-stimulation, oral language difficulties, learning problems, and an inability to understand social situations or perceive unstated social cues.
- **Cerebral Palsy** – A physical impairment that affects voluntary motor functions. People with cerebral palsy may perceptual difficulties, speech impairments, and/or an inability to use his arms and legs. People with cerebral palsy usually have normal levels of intelligence, but are mistakenly perceived to have mental retardation.
- **Visual Impairment** – This category includes people who partially see and people who are blind. Most people with visual impairments have IQ scores within the normal range. However, their cognitive and language development may be limited by their inability to obtain and understand abstract visual information from the environment.
- **Hearing Impairment** – This category includes people who are deaf and hard of hearing. A hearing loss can be unilateral (affecting one ear) or bilateral (affecting both ears). The intellectual abilities of students with hearing impairments parallel the intellectual capacity of students with hearing. However, the communication problems in learning an oral language system can create a deficit in experiences and obtaining information which can result in a lower academic performance.
- **Speech and Language Impairments** – A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a student's social and educational performance. People with speech and language impairments have receptive and/or expressive language disorders. Receptive language problems include difficulty following directions and understanding content presented orally. Expressive language problems include difficulty in speaking fluently.

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The phaonmneel pweor of the hmuan mnid: I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulaclyt yednatnrd waht I was rdgnieg. Aoccdrnig to a rscheearcr at Cmagbride Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttaer in waht oredr the ltteers of a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mind does not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh?

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2008 Buddy Walk

Down Syndrome Education Week September 8-12, 2008

An Educational Project presented by the Down Syndrome Association of the Lowcountry (DSAL)

The week of September 8-12 has been designated as **Down Syndrome Education Week** presented by the Down syndrome Association of the Lowcountry (DSAL). This is a week long educational project designed to promote acceptance and inclusion of all people with Down Syndrome. Students helping other students through education and support is the key to breaking barriers between people with disabilities and without. The Down Syndrome Education Week is one way of accomplishing this. This special week will culminate in an afternoon celebration known as the **Buddy Walk**. To learn more about this program and Down Syndrome, please visit <http://www.dsalowcountry.org/buddywalk/>.

2008 Lowcountry Buddy Walk Presented by the Down Syndrome Association of the Lowcountry

When: Sunday, October 5, 2008

Registration and festival 12:30

1 mile fun walk 3:00

Where: Etiwan Park, Daniel Island

Why: To celebrate people with Down syndrome

Cost: \$10 per person

Registration: <http://www.dsalowcountry.org/buddywalk/>

1. Pick a team name for your class or school.
2. Each individual/family in the class may go to <http://www.dsalowcountry.org/buddywalk/> and follow the Buddy Walk online registration prompts or download a form to mail to DSAL.
3. Enter your class/school's team name when prompted in order to be identified as a group. (This is optional, you do not have to be part of a group.)
4. Make signs for the Buddy Walk with your team's name so everyone can find each other and walk together.
5. Come to the Buddy Walk's pre-registration table to pick up your t-shirts.
6. Enjoy food, drink, jump castles, face painting and entertainment all included in your registration.

Questions: Dawn Durante, 2008 Buddy Walk Education Chair

dawnd@homesc.com

Proceeds from the Buddy Walk provide local programs such as baby packets for families of new babies with Down syndrome, education for families and professionals and self-advocacy programs.