

Disabilities Awareness



for Leaders of Cub Scouts,
Scouts BSA, and Venture
Scouts, plus
Commissioners

Prepared. For Life.®



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®





National Numbers

There are approximately 327 million people in the U.S.

56 Million or 17% experience some impairment or limitation of abilities

In a Unit with 10 youths,
2 will likely have a special need

*How many “Special Needs” youths in your unit
are you personally aware of?*

Prepared. For I





Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best

Are you doing **YOUR BEST** to support these
Scouts with Special Needs?

To help other people at all times;

How are you **HELPING**?

Prepared. For I





- How can the Oath lead and assist us in our understanding of persons with different abilities?
- What types of “different abilities” are present in your unit?
- What are the impacts? Positive? Negative?
- Where do you get assistance/guidance?

Prepared. For I





Each Scout with Special Needs is treated like all other Scouts, that is, as a unique person.

Remember, we are different, just like you.





Scouts with Special Needs

The basic premise of Scouting for youth with special needs is that every boy wants to participate fully and be respected like every other member of the unit.

While there are, by necessity, units exclusively composed of Scouts with disabilities, such as Troop 5280, experience has shown that Scouting usually succeeds best when every boy is part of a patrol in a regular unit.

This allows each youth to contribute fully to their own experience and introduce other patrol members to learn, grow and experience together.

Prepared. For I





Why Scouting is a Great Program for Youths with Special Needs

Scouting is a well-thought-out, highly structured program that provides a step-by-step sequence of skills for Scouts to the Den Leader, Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, and Crew Advisor. For all levels of Scouting:

Scouting promises fun, friendship, and adventure.

Scouting offers frequent positive recognition.

Scouting develops social skills and leadership skills.

Through systematic, **EDGE**

- **E**xplanation,
- Interactive **D**emonstration,
- And **G**uided practice,
- Scouting **E**nables youth of all abilities to discover and develop their unique strengths and interests.

Prepared. For I





Behaviors You Might Observe

with Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, & Venture Scouts:

- Knowing it all
- Learned helplessness
- Lack of eye contact
- Restlessness
- Interrupting
- Ability to focus on 1 activity but not others
- Unresponsive to orders
- Repeating language or gestures
- Seemingly unwarranted fears
- Lack of understanding about safety
- Scout may have excessively loud voice
- Difficulty expressing thoughts, feelings
- Being disruptive to the group
- Sensory or dexterity issues
- Ability to speak but not hear
- Ability to hear, but not speak
- Not able to hear or see clearly
- Not able to sit still for long
- Hypersensitive to stimuli
- Unable to follow directions
- Hyper-emotional
- Socially inappropriate

Prepared. For Life.®





What is a disability?

A **disability** is any condition that makes it more difficult for a person to do certain activities or interact with the world around them.

- Learning
- Physical
- Emotional

Not all disabilities are visible.

Prepared. For I





Learning Disabilities

- A learning disability is a disorder that inhibits the ability to process and retain information.
 - **Dyslexia** - A learning disorder that impedes the Scout's ability to read and comprehend a text.
 - **ADHD** - Scouts who have ADHD have difficulty paying attention and staying on task. These Scouts can be easily distracted and often have difficulty in traditional school settings.
 - **Dyscalculia** - Dyscalculia can range from an inability to order numbers correctly and extend to limited strategies for problem solving. Scouts with math disorders may have trouble performing basic math calculations, or they may have difficulty with concepts like time, measurement or estimation.

Prepared. For I





Learning Disabilities

- **Dysgraphia**- Impairment of handwriting ability that is characterized chiefly by very poor or often illegible writing or writing that takes an unusually long time and great effort to complete. Dysgraphia can be related to the physical act of writing. These students often cannot hold a pencil correctly, and their posture may be tense while trying to write. With this type of disability, Scouts may have trouble organizing their thoughts coherently. Their writing may be redundant or have obvious omissions that affect the quality and readability of the text.
- **Processing Deficits** – Those with a processing deficit have trouble making sense of sensory data. These deficits are most often auditory or visual, and they can make it hard for students to distinguish and remember important information that is needed to succeed.

Prepared. For I





Physical Disabilities

- A **physical disability** is a **physical** condition that affects a person's mobility, **physical** capacity, stamina, or dexterity.
 - This can include brain or spinal cord injuries, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, respiratory disorders, epilepsy, hearing and visual impairments and more.

Prepared. For I





Emotional Disabilities

- An **emotional** or behavioral **disability** is a **disability** that impacts a person's ability to effectively recognize, interpret, control, and express fundamental **emotions**.
 - Scouts may exhibit an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and/or teachers.
 - Behaviors or emotional responses that are consistently inappropriate under normal conditions.

Prepared. For I





Accommodations

- Are alterations in the way tasks are presented that allow Scouts with learning disabilities to complete the same assignments as their peers.
- Accommodations do not alter the content of the tasks, give an unfair advantage or in the case of assessments, change what a test measures.

Prepared. For I





Presentation Accommodation

- Provide on audio tape
- Provide in large print
- Provide a designated reader
- Present instructions orally
- Pair written text with symbols, pictures, photographs or objects
- Reduce number of items per page or line
- **Integrate a multi-sensory** approach when leading a program
- Integrate sign language/body movements
- Read questions before reading a passage
- Find the text evidence in the body of the passage when seeking answers to questions (Have the Scouts go back and find in the answers in the text)

Prepared. For Life.®





Response Accommodation

Allow your Scouts to **demonstrate their knowledge** when completing assignments, assessments, and activities in different ways.

- Verbal Responses
- Drawings
- PowerPoint presentation
- Allow for answers to be dictated to a scribe
- Allow the use of a tape recorder to capture responses
- When asking a question provide wait time, silence is ok
- When working on activities chunk out questions only do odd numbers, reduce the number of items
- Ask questions to check for mastery not repetition

Prepared. For I





Time Accommodation

Reduce your Scouts frustration and fatigue, thereby allowing them the opportunity to access and demonstrate their learning.

- Extended time to complete task (generally 1.5 to 2 times the amount of time typically permitted)
- Break longer tasks into smaller pieces or chunks
- Timeline or checklist for completing assignment
- Frequent breaks
- Multiple sessions to complete tests or activities

Prepared. For I





Setting Accommodation

Setting accommodations change the location in which a Scout receives instruction or participates.

- Change the location in which an assignment or assessment is given
- Provide preferential seating, close to presenter or materials
- Provide special lighting or acoustics
- Provide a space with minimal distractions
- Draw closer. On-task behaviors and attentiveness often improve with an adult nearby.
- Allow modified sitting or standing
- Seat youth next to positive peer models
- Alternate between a sitting and active activity (preferred and non-preferred)

Prepared. For I





Modifications

- Are changes to what a Scout is taught or expected to do or perform.
- They are not the same as accommodations, which are changes to how a one learns.
- Generally, modification to Scouts BSA and Venture Crew requirements must be approved by the Council Advancement Committee through the use of a BSA Individual Scout Advancement Plan.
- For Cub Scouts, “Doing Your Best” with a modification is sufficient for completion of a requirement.

Prepared. For I





Where Do You Start

Build a Plan; Work the plan; Re-evaluate

- Conduct regular conferences with parents & the Scout
- Designate Scout as a Special Needs youth
- May need to keep written assessments of the Scout's progress, achievements, places of strength, points for help and improvements
- Write an action plan for outings, what is needed, where, when, why, how, and who
- Action plan for alterations/ accommodations planned, and as needed (Individual Scout Advancement Plan) for Scouts BSA and Venture Scouts.
- Submit an Altered Eagle Merit Badge Application as an option;

Prepared. For I





Building Strategies For Success

- We do not guess-diagnose nor ask for special medical or psychological records for scouts with special needs.
- We can ask parents, as key people in the Scout's life, about specific ways/ techniques they use effectively at home and school to help their child focus, hear, see, and proceed. Parents' participation can help greatly.
- How to ask questions:
 - Ask for strategies used at home
 - Explore insights and triggers
 - Develop plans for participation

Prepared. For I





What types of “different DisAbilities” are present?

- Are there parts of the Oath and Law that *don't apply* to persons with blindness, deafness, paralysis, Cerebral Palsy, Down's Syndrome, ADD?
- Scouts are assessed according to their **strengths** and **abilities**, and each Scout with special needs will receive effective and individualized **accommodations**.

Prepared. For I





What are the impacts? Positive? Negative?

Do Your Best

- Doing one's best is one of the most important things for the Scout to learn. Youth often become so interested in winning that they fail to see the importance of doing the best they can at everything.
- One's best might be quite different from another one's best.
- Scouting teaches that no one can find fault with them if they always do their best.

Prepared. For I





Reflection

Can you adapt & enhance your Leadership skills
and your unit to better include one or more
Scouts with special needs?



Prepared. For I





Reflection

- **Special Needs is an area that brings out some of the best of Scouting to those for whom the wonder of Scouting was once out of reach.**
- **Remember it's the dedication of Leaders like you, who can make a Scout's dream come true and really make a difference in their life.**

Prepared. For I





Special Needs District of the Denver Area Council

The goal of the Commissioners and members of the Special Needs District is to assist you in making reasonable accommodations so **all** Scouts can have a **positive** Scouting experience.





Special Needs Resources for Unit Leaders

Dori Hammer

Assistant Council Commissioner for Special Needs

720-878-4171 or dorisshammer@msn.com

Web Site/URL:

<https://www.denverboyscouts.org/resources/other-useful-resources/special-needs-scouting/>

Prepared. For I



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®



How Can We Help You?

The Special Needs District of the for the Denver Area Council was formed in 2006 purposes of:

HELP RESOLVE special needs issues by having the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively mediate solutions with a leader, parent, and/or Scout.

DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS with Scouts, parents, leaders, units, and advancement committees to answer questions, seek advice, and provide resources that provide the best relationship possible.

MAKE AWARE aspects of special needs that impact youth, as well as leadership through specialized training seminars at Special Needs District Roundtables, traditional district roundtables, and district and council training forums held by experts in related fields, and interactive websites.

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES to special needs youth in the Denver area to join and participate in Scouting programs.

Prepared. For Life.®



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®





Which Scout is having a Great Scouting experience?



Jack



Gordon

