



# Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities

## A to Z of Disability Etiquette

Visit [www.acdd.org](http://www.acdd.org) or call 1-800-232-2158 for more information.



**ASK** before you help; it may not always be wanted.



**BE** patient and allow others to communicate without interruption. Ask questions if you do not fully understand.



**COMMUNICATE** as you normally would, using natural expressions and volume level.



Give specific **DIRECTIONS** considering distance, weather and obstacles, such as steps.



Get down to **EYE** level during longer conversations by sitting or kneeling.



**FOCUS** on the person, not the disability. Don't bring it up unless it is relevant.



Avoid patronizing **GESTURES** like patting a head of shoulder and back slapping.



A wheelchair is not a place to **HOLD** your bags without permission.



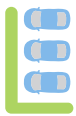
Always respect a person's dignity, individuality, and desire for **INDEPENDENCE**.



**JOIN** the conversation and talk as you would with anyone else.



**KNOW** that most people with a disability can make their own decisions.



**LEAVE** accessible parking spots for people with a disability.



Never **MOVE** a wheelchair without permission; it is personal property.



Speak **NORMALLY**; don't shout or raise your voice unless asked to do so.



Avoid **OUTDATED** terms like "handicapped," "crippled," and "wheelchair-bound."



Don't **PAT** an assistance or guide dog if they're in working mode with their owner.



Increase **QUALITY** of life with a donation to disability support services.



**REARRANGE** furniture to create a clear path for wheelchairs.



**SPEAK** directly to the person with the disability and not to their companion.



Offer a seat to people with limited mobility on public **TRANSPORT**.



**UNLOCK** and **UNBLOCK** all ramps and wheelchair-accessible doors.



**VIEW** a wheelchair as freedom to move about independently.



Only push or lean on a **WHEELCHAIR** with permission.



See every person's **X-FACTOR** and not their limitations.



**YIELD** and give way to wheelchairs on the move.



**ZIP** it! Not everyone wants to talk about why they use a wheelchair.