



Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities

A to Z of Disability Etiquette

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Avoid **OUTDATED** terms like "handicapped," "crippled," and "wheelchair-bound."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