

DISABILITY CARD

WHAT IS DISABILITY The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines disabled people as those who "have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may prevent their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

NO TWO PEOPLE ARE THE SAME. EVERYONE HAS 'SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS' Each of us has our own characteristics and we are all different. In some people these characteristics are more visible: there are people who may need a wheelchair because their legs don't work as they should, or have to use gestures to express themselves instead of words. In other cases, the difficulties may not be so obvious and therefore need other tools.

A person is not identified by their disability but by the characteristics they have, some of which are similar to ours, others different. It is important to learn to accept them. This attitude is the best weapon against all forms of bullying. Giving the right value to the differences that each of us has is the most important lesson, not only when it involves disabilities.



DISABILITY IS JUST WHAT DIFFERS US FROM OTHER PEOPLE: We all have many characteristics. There are activities in which we succeed effortlessly and others in which we need help. Each of us has our own strengths and weaknesses. But surely we all want to have friends, to be respected, to be part of a group and to stay with each other....



DISABILITY IS NOT CONTAGIOUS. One should not be afraid to approach and talk to a person with a disability. Even worse is to ignore them! You can safely ask questions without feeling that you are being intrusive or insensitive. The fact that a person has a difficulty in one part of his/her body does not mean that he/she has problems everywhere: he/she can do many things just like the rest of us.

DISABILITY IS NOT A TABOO. The starting point, when confronted with something you do not know, is to talk about it. Pretending not to see or changing the subject would send the message that disability is taboo or something to be ashamed of.

LA DISABILITÀ NON È UN INSULTO!

"Mongoloide!"
"Spastico!"
"Handicappato!"
"Cerebroleso!"
"Hai la 104???"
"Il vero disabile sei te..."



THE RIGHT WORDS. There are some rather ugly terms which, thank goodness, are hardly used anymore, such as paralysed, mentally retarded, handicapped or mongoloid, but which could still be used (perhaps by some older or less sensitive people).

"We need to use the precise words if we want people to stop treating someone with a physical or mental disability only as a poor person to be pitied and not a person with a life to live." Bebe Vio

"The life of a disabled person is ten times more complicated. You have to face many difficulties that get you down, they are the insults of everyday life." Mario Calabresi

RESPECT. Mocking, name-calling, taunting, isolating, insulting or worse bullying is not acceptable behaviour. **NEVER.**

CHANGE THE POINT OF VIEW: a person may have a disability, a deficit, a deficiency that prevents him or her from carrying out certain activities in the same way as others, but the effects on his or her life can be minimal if you look at this person as a whole and not just focus on the weak point.



NORMALISE DIVERSITY. It must be understood that diversities exist. Their existence is a 'normal' thing. We all have difficulty in doing something and some need more time to do it or to learn.