MERIT BADGE SERIES

# DISABILITIES AWARENESS

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

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*"Enhancing our youths' competitive edge through merit badges"*

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# Requirements

1. Discuss with your counselor proper disability etiquette and person-first language. Explain why these are important.

2. Visit an agency that works with people with physical, mental, emotional, or educational disabilities. Collect and read information about the agency's activities. Learn about opportunities its members have for training, employment, and education. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.

3. Do TWO of the following:

   a. Talk to a Scout who has a disability and learn about his experiences taking part in Scouting activities and earning different merit badges. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.

   b. Talk to an individual who has a disability and learn about this person's experiences and the activities in which this person likes to participate. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.

   c. Learn how people with disabilities take part in a particular adaptive sport or recreational activity. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.

   d. Learn about independent living aids such as service animals, canes, and augmentative communication devices such as teletypewriters (TTYs). Discuss with your counselor how people use such aids.

4. Visit TWO of the following locations and take notes about the accessibility to people with disabilities. In your notes, give examples of five things that could be done to improve upon the site and five things about the site that make it friendly to people with disabilities.

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Discuss your observations with your counselor.

a. Your school

b. Your place of worship

c. Your Scout camping site

d. A public exhibit or attraction (such as a theater, museum, or park)

5. Explain what advocacy is. Do ONE of the following advocacy activities:

   a. Present a counselor-approved disabilities awareness program to a Cub Scout pack or other group. During your presentation, explain and use person-first language.

   b. Find out about disability awareness education programs in your school or school system, or contact a disability advocacy agency. Volunteer with a program or agency for eight hours.

   c. Using resources such as disability advocacy agencies, government agencies, the Internet (with your parent's permission), and news magazines, learn about myths and misconceptions that influence the general public's understanding of people with disabilities. List 10 myths and misconceptions about people with disabilities and learn the facts about each myth. Share your list with your counselor, then use it to make a presentation to a Cub Scout pack or other group.

6. Make a commitment to your merit badge counselor describing what you will do to show a positive attitude about people with disabilities and to encourage positive attitudes among others. Discuss how your awareness has changed as a result of what you have learned.

7. Name five professions that provide services to people with disabilities. Pick one that interests you and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss what you learn with your counselor, and tell why this profession interests you.

# Disabilities Awareness Resources

## Scouting Literature

*Architecture, Athletics, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communication, Computers, Engineering, First Aid, Medicine, Public Speaking,* and *Sports* merit badge pamphlets

Visit the Boy Scouts of America's official retail website at http://www.scoutstuff.org for a complete listing of all merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.

*Boys' Life* magazine in Braille. National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington DC.
Telephone: 202-707-5104

Recordings of the *Boy Scout Handbook* and various merit badge pamphlets.
Learning Ally.
Toll-free telephone: 800-221-4792

*Boy Scout Handbook* in large print.
Program Impact Department,
Boy Scouts of America.
Telephone: 972-580-2441

The following materials are available at www.scouting.org/specialneeds:

- Scouting With Special Needs and Disabilities, an information sheet
- Guide to Working With Scouts With Special Needs and Disabilities, No. 510-071
- *Scouting for Youth With Disabilities Manual,* No. 34059

## Books

### Fiction

Many of these novels are classics available in several editions and formats including audio, and some are available in large print.

Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *The Secret Garden.* HarperCollins, 2010. Colin behaves like a spoiled and incurable invalid until his orphaned cousin Mary comes to live in their lonely house on the Yorkshire moors. The two discover the mysteries and magic of a locked garden, and gradually transform the garden and themselves.

Byars, Betsy. *The Summer of the Swans.* Puffin Books, 2004. A teenager gains new insight into herself and her family when her brother with cognitive disabilities goes missing.

De Angeli, Marguerite. *The Door in the Wall.* Yearling Books, 1997. In 14th-century England, a boy with physical disabilities proves his courage.

Dorris, Michael. *Sees Behind Trees.* Disney-Hyperion, 1997. An American Indian boy with a special gift to "see" beyond his limited eyesight journeys with an old warrior to a land of mystery and beauty.

Draper, Sharon. *Out of My Mind.* Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2012. When a girl with cerebral palsy who cannot walk or talk is given a device that lets her "speak," she surprises everyone around her.

Flegg, Aubrey. *The Cinnamon Tree.* O'Brien Press, 2000. When a land mine explodes beneath her, Yola Abonda is thrown violently into a new life. She must learn to walk again after the amputation of her leg.

Konigsburg, E.L. *The View from Saturday.* Aladdin Paperbacks, 1998. Four students with their own individual stories develop a special bond and attract the attention of their teacher, a paraplegic, who chooses them to represent their sixth-grade class in the Academic Bowl competition.

Martin, Ann M. *A Corner of the Universe.* Scholastic, 2002. Now that Uncle Adam's school—an institution for people with developmental disabilities—is closing, 12-year-old Hattie's family must deal with a childlike young man whose existence they have denied for years.

Philbrick, Rodman. *Freak the Mighty.* Scholastic Paperbacks, 2001. At the beginning of eighth grade, Max, who has learning disabilities and a mighty physique, and his new friend Freak, who was born with a condition that affects his body but not his brilliant mind, find that when they unite to become "Freak the Mighty" they make a powerful team.

Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay.* Yearling Books, 2002. When the freighter on which they are traveling is torpedoed by a German submarine during World War II, an adolescent white boy, blinded by a blow on the head, and an old African American man are stranded on a tiny island where the boy gains a new kind of vision.

Winkler, Henry. *Niagara Falls, or Does It?* Turtleback Books, 2003. Inspired by his own experiences with undiagnosed dyslexia, actor/director Henry Winkler presents "Hank Zipzer: The Mostly True Confessions of the World's Best Underachiever," a series about the adventures of a fourth-grader with learning differences. In this first book of the series, Hank is supposed to write an essay on how he spent the summer, but decides instead to "show" what he did.

**Nonfiction**

Abramovitz, Melissa. *Multiple Sclerosis.* Lucent Books, 2010. Offers insights into the neurological disease known as MS, what causes it, and how people live with the disease.

Corman, Richard. *I Am Proud: The Athletes of Special Olympics.* Barnes & Noble Books, 2003. Portrays the athletes' dignity, grace, and joy in competition and brings fresh perspective to a group of people too often defined by their perceived disabilities.

Cummings, Rhoda Woods, and Gary L. Fisher. *The Survival Guide for Teenagers With LD: Learning Differences.* Free Spirit Publishing, 1993. A handbook with a positive outlook for teenagers who have learning differences on how to make friends, set goals, start a career, and manage other day-to-day pursuits.

Dougherty, Terri. *Epilepsy.* Lucent Books, 2009. Explains different types of seizures and their triggers, provides a historical perspective on treatment, and tells the stories of those who have epilepsy.

Flodin, Mickey. *Signing for Kids: The Fun Way for Anyone to Learn American Sign Language.* Perigee Books, 2007. An introduction to the expressive language used by many deaf people to speak with their hands.

Freedman, Russell. *Out of Darkness: The Story of Louis Braille.* Clarion Books, 1999. A biography of the 19th-century Frenchman who, having himself been blinded at age 3, developed a system of raised dots on paper that enabled those who are blind to read and write.

Kent, Deborah, and Kathryn A. Quinlan. *Extraordinary People With Disabilities.* Children's Press, 1997. Collection of biographies of 48 famous people who have made great accomplishments despite their disability.

Kling, Andrew A. *Cerebral Palsy.* Lucent Books, 2012. Discusses the incurable disorder that strikes about two in 1,000 infants yearly in the United States.

Meyer, Donald, ed. *Views From Our Shoes: Growing Up With a Brother or Sister With Special Needs.* Woodbine House, 1997. Kids ranging in age from 4 to 18 share their experiences as the brother or sister of someone with a disability, including autism, cerebral palsy, development delays, attention deficit disorder, hydrocephalus, visual and hearing impairments, and Down and Tourette syndromes.

Naff, Clayton Farris, ed. *Muscular Dystrophy.* Greenhaven Press, 2011. Explains the causes and treatments of muscular dystrophy and includes stories of people who have MD.

Oleksy, Walter G. *Christopher Reeve.* Greenhaven Press, 1999. Discusses the personal life, acting career, and life-altering accident of the actor known for his role as Superman and for his efforts on behalf of people with spinal cord injuries.

Paquette, Penny Hutchins, and Cheryl Gerson Tuttle. *Learning Disabilities: The Ultimate Teen Guide.* Scarecrow Press, 2006. Gives teenagers dealing with learning disabilities tools for understanding and overcoming the obstacles they face.

Rogers, Dale Evans. *Angel Unaware.* Revell, 1992. The story of a child born with Down syndrome—Robin Elizabeth Rogers, daughter of celebrities Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. This book sold more than 500,000 copies when first published in 1953.

Stern, Judith, and Uzi Ben-Ami. *Many Ways to Learn: A Kid's Guide to LD.* Magination Press, 2010. Describes different kinds of learning disabilities, explains that children with learning disabilities have average (if not above-average) intelligence, and discusses the many things they can do to reach their goals.

Verdick, Elizabeth, and Elizabeth Reeve, M.D. *The Survival Guide for Kids With Autism Spectrum Disorder (and Their Parents).* Free Spirit Publishing, 2012. A positive book that helps young people with autism spectrum disorders understand their condition.

Warner, Penny. *Learn to Sign the Fun Way!* Three Rivers Press, 2001. Provides games and other activities that help the reader learn to sign.

Weihenmayer, Erik. *Touch the Top of the World: A Blind Man's Journey to Climb Farther Than the Eye Can See.* Plume Books, 2002. An adventure-packed memoir in which the author recalls rebelling against becoming blind by age 13, acquiring a passion for mountain climbing, and developing the character traits that enabled him to succeed. His experiences remind readers of what the blind and the sighted have in common.

Williams, Donna. *Nobody Nowhere: The Remarkable Autobiography of an Autistic Girl.* Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1998. Takes readers on a journey into the mind of a person who has autism, giving an insider's view of a little-understood condition and destroying many myths and misconceptions.

Woodyard, Shawn, John Bradford, and Elizabeth Oakes. *Resources for People With Disabilities: A National Directory,* 2nd ed. Ferguson Publishing Company, 2001. The "yellow pages" for people with disabilities, this two-volume set provides information about resources pertaining to advocacy, assistive technology, organizations and associations, rehabilitation, and state programs, to name just a few.

## Organizations and Websites

**AbleData**
103 W. Broad Street, Suite 400
Falls Church, VA 22046
Toll-free telephone: 800-227-0216
TTY: 301-608-8912
Website: http://www.abledata.com

**American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation**
9700 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Suite 200
Rosemont, IL 60018
Telephone: 847-737-6000
Website: http://www.aapmr.org

**American Association of People With Disabilities**
2013 H St., NW, Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20006
Toll-free telephone (voice and TTY): 800-840-8844
Website: http://www.aapd.com

**American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**
501 Third St. NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20001
Telephone: 202-387-1968
Website: http://aaidd.org

**American Council of the Blind**
2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 650
Arlington, VA 22201-3354
Toll-free telephone: 800-424-8666
Website: http://acb.org

**American Foundation for the Blind**
2 Penn Plaza, Suite 1102
New York, NY 10121
Telephone: 212-502-7600
Website: http://afb.org

**American Printing House for the Blind Inc.**
1839 Frankfort Ave.
Louisville, KY 40206-0085
Telephone: 502-895-2405
Toll-free telephone: 800-223-1839
Website: http://www.aph.org

**American Speech-Language-Hearing Association**
2200 Research Blvd.
Rockville, MD 20850-3289
Toll-free telephone: 800-638-8255
Website: http://www.asha.org

**The Arc**
1825 K Street NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: 202-534-3700
Toll-free telephone: 800-433-5255
Website: http://www.thearc.org

**Attention Deficit Disorder Association**
P.O. Box 7557
Wilmington, DE 19803-9997
Toll-free telephone: 800-939-1019
Website: http://www.add.org

**Autism Society**
4340 East-West Highway, Suite 350
Bethesda, MD 20814
Toll-free telephone: 800-328-8476
Website: http://www.autism-society.org

**Autism Speaks**
1 E. 33rd S., Fourth Floor
New York, NY 10016
Telephone: 212-252-8584
Website: http://www.autismspeaks.org

**BlazeSports America**
535 N. McDonough St.
Decatur, GA 30030
Telephone: 404-270-2000
Website: http://blazesports.org

**Bookshare**
Website: https://www.bookshare.org

**Brain Injury Association of America**
1608 Spring Hill Road, Suite 110
Vienna, VA 22182
Telephone: 703-761-0750
Website: http://www.biausa.org

**Children and Adults With Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder**
4601 Presidents Dr., Suite 300
Lanham, MD 20706
National Resource Center on ADHD,
toll-free telephone: 800-233-4050
Website: http://www.chadd.org

**Disability.gov**
Website: http://www.disability.gov

**Disability Is Natural**
BraveHeart Press
P.O. Box 7245
Woodland Park, CO 80863
Toll-free telephone: 866-948-2222
Website: http://www.
disabilityisnatural.com

**Disabled American Veterans**
3725 Alexandria Pike
Cold Spring, KY 41076
Toll-free telephone: 877-426-2838
Website: http://www.dav.org

**Disabled Sports USA**
451 Hungerford Drive, Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20850
Telephone: 301-217-0960
Website: http://www.dsusa.org

**Easter Seals**
233 S. Wacker, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60606
Toll-free telephone: 800-221-6827
Website: http://www.easterseals.com

**Goodwill Industries International Inc.**
15810 Indianola Drive
Rockville, MD 20855
Toll-free telephone: 800-466-3945
Website: http://www.goodwill.org

**Guide Dogs for the Blind**
P.O. Box 151200
San Rafael, CA 94915-1200
Toll-free telephone: 800-295-4050
Website: http://www.guidedogs.com

**Helping Hands**
541 Cambridge St.
Boston, MA 02134
Telephone: 617-787-4419
Website: http://monkeyhelpers.org/

**International Dyslexia Association**
40 York Road, Fourth Floor
Baltimore, MD 21204
Telephone: 410-296-0232
Website: http://www.interdys.org

**Kids on the Block Inc.**
9 Westminster S/C No. 344
Westminster, MD 21157
Toll-free telephone: 800-368-5437
Website: http://www.kotb.com

**Learning Disabilities Association of America**
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1349
Telephone: 412-341-1515
Website: http://ldanatl.org

**Mental Health America**
2000 N. Beauregard St., Sixth Floor
Alexandria, VA 22311
Toll-free telephone: 800-969-6642
TTY: 800-433-5959
Website:
http://mentalhealthamerica.net

**Muscular Dystrophy Association—USA**
National Headquarters
3300 E. Sunrise Drive
Tucson, AZ 85718
Toll-free telephone: 800-572-1717
Website: http://mdausa.org

**National Association of the Deaf**
8630 Fenton St., Suite 820
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3819
Telephone: 301-587-1788
TTY: 301-587-1789
Website: http://www.nad.org

**National Center for Learning Disabilities**
381 Park Ave. South, Suite 1401
New York, NY 10016
Toll-free telephone: 888-575-7373
Website: http://www.ncld.org

**National Center on Health, Physical Activity, and Disability**
4000 Ridgeway Drive
Birmingham, AL 35209
Toll-free telephone (voice and TTY): 800-900-8086
Website: http://www.nchpad.org

**National Dissemination Center for Children With Disabilities (NICHCY)**
Website: http://nichcy.org

**National Down Syndrome Congress**
30 Mansell Court, Suite 108
Roswell, GA 30076
Telephone: 800-232-6372
Website: http://ndsccenter.org

**National Down Syndrome Society**
666 Broadway, Eighth Floor
New York, NY 10012
Toll-free telephone: 800-221-4602
Website: http://www.ndss.org

**National Federation of the Blind**
200 E. Wells St.
Baltimore, MD 21230
Telephone: 410-659-9314
Website: http://nfb.org

**National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped**
1291 Taylor St. NW
Washington, DC 20011
Toll-free telephone: 888-657-7323
TDD: 202-707-0744
Website: http://www.loc.gov/nls

**National Multiple Sclerosis Society**
733 Third Ave., Third Floor
New York, NY 10017
Toll-free telephone: 800-344-4867
Website:
http://www.nationalmssociety.org

**National Organization on Disability**
77 Water St., Suite 204
New York, NY 10005
Telephone: 646-505-1191
Website: http://www.nod.org

**National Rehabilitation Information Center**
8400 Corporate Drive, Suite 500
Landover, MD 20785
Toll-free telephone: 800-346-2742
TTY: 301-459-5984
Website: http://www.naric.com

**Special Olympics International**
1133 19th St. NW
Washington, DC 20036-3604
Telephone: 202-628-3630
Toll-free telephone: 800-700-8585
Website: http://specialolympics.org

**TASH**
(Equity, Opportunity, and Inclusion for People with Disabilities)
1001 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 235
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-540-9020
Website: http://tash.org

**United Cerebral Palsy**
1825 K Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006
Toll-free telephone: 800-872-5827
Website: http://ucp.org

**United States Association of Blind Athletes**
1 Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
Telephone: 719-630-0422
Website: http://usaba.org

**USA Deaf Sports Federation**
P.O. Box 910338
Lexington, KY 40591-0338
Telephone: 605-367-5760
TTY: 605-367-5761
Website: http://www.usdeafsports.org

**U.S. Paralympics**
1 Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5760
Telephone: 719-866-2030
Website: http://www.teamusa.org/US-Paralympics

**Wheelchair & Ambulatory Sports USA**
P.O. Box 5266
Kendall Park, NJ 08824-5266
Telephone: 732-266-2634
Website: http://www.wasusa.org

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