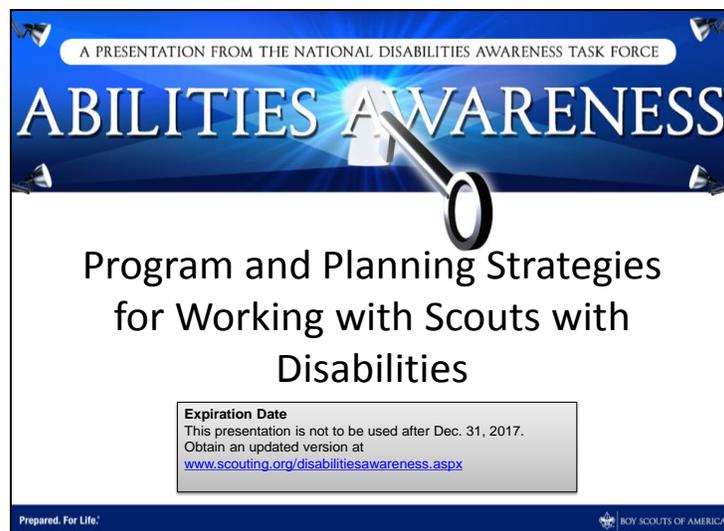


Presenter's Notes

Program and Planning Strategies for Working with Scouts with Disabilities



A PRESENTATION FROM THE NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

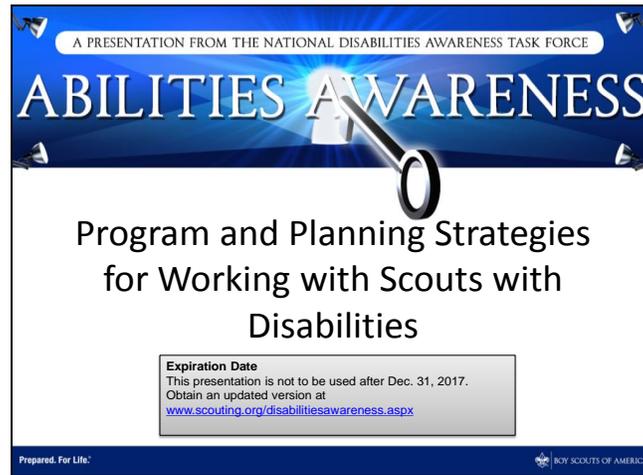
ABILITIES AWARENESS

Program and Planning Strategies
for Working with Scouts with
Disabilities

Expiration Date
This presentation is not to be used after Dec. 31, 2017.
Obtain an updated version at
www.scouting.org/disabilitiesawareness.aspx

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The slide features a blue header with a key graphic. The main title 'ABILITIES AWARENESS' is in large white letters. Below it, the subtitle 'Program and Planning Strategies for Working with Scouts with Disabilities' is centered. A box contains the expiration date and a URL. The footer includes the Scout motto and logo.



Presenter Notes: Begin with a simple opening ceremony using the Pledge of Allegiance and the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Then state: *“Virtually every Scouting unit at one time or another will have the opportunity to serve youth with special needs. In fact, in a recent study in the Midwest, we found that 15 percent of the membership has some sort of disability requiring special attention or consideration from leaders.”* Then welcome and thank everyone for attending. State their presence here speaks of their dedication. [Presenter should limit the number of questions asked and control discussions.]

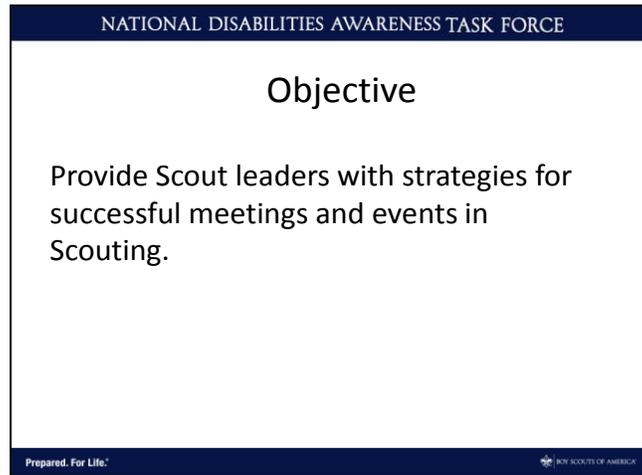
This presentation provides leaders, parents, and Scouts with planning and program strategies needed to create a positive experience for all Scouts, including those with disabilities. The session takes 60 - 90 minutes, and has an expiration date, after which it is not to be used. A replacement session will be available at the URL shown above.

Presenters may want to have a flip chart, and should have at least one copy of the following publications for use during the presentation:

- *Guide to Working with Scouts with Special Needs and Disabilities*, No. 510-071,
- *Scouting for Youth with Disabilities* manual, No.34059
- *Guide To Advancement*, No. 33088
- Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, No. 512-730),
- Individual Scout Advancement Plan (ISAP) No. 512-936
- Request for Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility , No. 512-935

The National Disabilities Awareness Task Force welcomes any and all feedback at disabilities.awareness@scouting.org, but would ask that questions and concerns first be shared with local district and council volunteers or professional administrators.

Slide 2



NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Objective

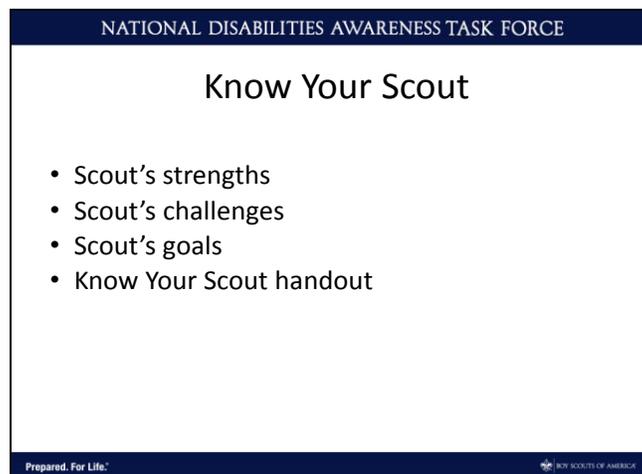
Provide Scout leaders with strategies for successful meetings and events in Scouting.

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This slide features a dark blue header with the text 'NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE'. The main content area is white with the title 'Objective' centered at the top. Below the title, the objective text is left-aligned. At the bottom, there is a dark blue footer containing the slogan 'Prepared. For Life.™' and the BSA logo.

Tools and resources will be provided for planning Scout meetings, preparing for attendance at large Scout events, and how to provide access to programs and events for each Scout.

Slide 3



NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Know Your Scout

- Scout's strengths
- Scout's challenges
- Scout's goals
- Know Your Scout handout

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This slide features a dark blue header with the text 'NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE'. The main content area is white with the title 'Know Your Scout' centered at the top. Below the title, there is a bulleted list of four items. At the bottom, there is a dark blue footer containing the slogan 'Prepared. For Life.™' and the BSA logo.

Leader: Please see the "Know Your Scout" handout

Find out what the Scout's strengths are from the parent and the Scout himself or herself.

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Know Your Unit

- What are the Scout's disabilities?
- Medications
- Safety considerations
- Size of the group
- Unit experiences

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Leader Notes:

It is important to know the Scout's disabilities and behaviors he may be displaying. The categories for disabilities are: Physical, Learning, Cognitive, Emotional, and Social. How many Scouts in your unit have disabilities?

Are there medications leaders will need to be aware of? Is the medicine long acting or time released (wears off at a particular time)? This will be important to know for planning purposes. Check with your state laws and council policies for dispensing medications.

The Scout's safety is key at all times. Are there any situations where he or she may be a runner or act out when frustrated? Find out from parents what has worked for them.

How large is the group you are working with? It may determine how meetings and events are planned.

What types of experiences has your unit had? When planning for an activity or event, look at the youths' ages and the amount of experiences they have had.

Slide 5

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Communicating With Your Scout

- Avoid a lot of noise and distractions.
- Reword your questions.
- Break your directions into smaller steps.
- Allow the Scout enough time to answer your questions.
- Get to the point!
- If you did not understand his response, ask him to repeat it.

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Avoid a lot of noise and distractions around the Scout, especially when giving him directions. For example, say to the group: “One person talks at a time.”

Reword the question by phrasing it to allow yes or no responses.

Break your directions into smaller steps. For example, give the Scout a first-then direction and then let him do that before the next direction.

Allow the Scout time to respond to the question. He may need up to 30 seconds to process your question and then give an answer.

If he asks you a question that you do not understand, ask him to repeat it.

Slide 6

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Challenges You May Experience

- Sensory issues
- Managing your meeting
- Social integration
- Adaptations and modifications
- Accessibility

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Leader: This slide is an introduction of what the next five slides will cover.



TASTE - There could be issues with food textures and some food allergies.

SOUND - Loud noises may be frightening and painful for the Scout and he may cover his ears. Tell the Scout ahead of time what to expect. He may need earplugs or headphones. Have the Scout stay for a short time in the activity and increase the amount of time to participate.

SIGHT - Scout peers need to be good role models so they can understand expected behavior. Be concise and clear. They may not pick up on social cues so state the obvious. Give the Scout a visual cue of where and when to stand or sit.

TOUCH - Scouts may have more sensitivity to touch or sense the environment (ex: wind, temperature, water, etc.) A Scout with sensory issues may need deep pressure activities to help them organize their thoughts and regulate emotion.

SMELL - A Scout may react to different smells.

Overall, it is important to acknowledge the sensory needs of the Scout in order to help him remain focused and on task.

Presenter's Note: Discuss the different ways to intervene with a Scout when they are struggling with sensory issues. Refer to and discuss:

- Calming Strategies handout
- Tantrums versus Meltdowns handout

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Managing your Meeting

- Schedule the meeting using pictures or words
- Use stations with hands-on activities
- Use multiple speakers
- Give a time warning
- Have a break card available

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Draw a picture or word schedule for the meeting or activity. It can be on a monitor, large board or index cards for the Scout's benefit. (Ex: flag, announcements, activity, circle up, SM minute, flag.)

Use stations to break up the meeting or activity into smaller segments. Use hands-on activities to engage the Scouts. Also, use multiple speakers or youth leaders when communicating in order to keep the attention of everyone.

Give verbal or visual warning five or 10 minutes prior to the end of the meeting or event. This helps to prepare the Scout what is expected of him when the activity or event is over. Tell him to have a task completed at a given time and do not repeat the assignment. Once an assignment has been given, the Scout may need time to process the information and then begin to follow through on what is expected. It may appear he is waiting until the last minute to complete the task.

In order to lessen frustration, give the Scout a cue to take a break using a break card. The length of time may vary depending on the situation.

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Social Integration

- Peer Buddy
- Adult Scouter as mentor
- Assign an area for participation
- May have to increase participation time

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Peer Buddy needs to be a shared position so that no one Scout is always with the same person.

The peer buddy will:

- Assist at the meeting or activity.
- Stand next to the Scout during circle up or activity
- Offer breaks when Scout feels stressed or anxious
- Re-explain directions, break down into smaller steps
- Keep the Scout actively engaged
- Not to be confused with the term buddy system.

Assign an adult Scouter as a “go to” person if there are issues too great for the Scouts to handle or there needs to be clarification. This volunteer will mentor the Scout and support or guide the peer buddy.

Assist the peer buddy in locating an area to participate in close to where the Scout is interacting in the activity. For example, an area close to his patrol, tent, or even near his car assignment.

Some Scouts may not be able to participate during the entire time. Start out five minutes prior to the activity and then offer a break, then increase the time to 10 minutes and then take another break, and so forth.

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

When There Are Issues

- Managing behaviors
- Parent participation
- Shorten meetings
- Inability to participate

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Have alternate activities available when one notices the Scout is struggling. All Scouts should be treated the same when managing behaviors. Some adaptations may need to be tailored according to what works best for the Scout, and these should be planned out in advance. Offer choices of activities that are calming or less stressful.

There should be a place set aside where Scouts can go to “chill out” and afterwards re-join the group at the appropriate time.

Consider asking a parent or caregiver to participate during the meeting or activity, especially if there are personal health issues involved. Some Scouts may have to attend for a shorter time depending on his disabilities. If one notices the Scout’s behavior escalating, give him a break before he loses control.

There may be some activities where accommodations simply cannot be made to ensure the Scout’s safety. In such cases, the adult leader cannot allow the Scout to participate in the activity.

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Accommodations and Modifications

- Understanding the Terms
- Timing
- Scheduling
- Setting
- Presentation
- Response

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Presenter's Note: Understanding terms: Explain the difference between accommodation and modification. Accommodations provide additional supports that help the Scout achieve his goal. Modifications involve changing a requirement by reducing the challenge level or substituting it for something else. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** One cannot change merit badges requirements. The Scout **MUST** apply for an alternate merit badge.

Guiding principles: Prior to explaining the accommodations, provide guidelines to determine the best accommodation or modification to use. Include Scouts in the decision-making process. One accommodation may require another support that may not work for all Scouts with disabilities. Remember that an accommodation may not necessarily eliminate frustration for the Scout.

1. Use a **Timing** accommodation **WHEN** the Scout requires extra time to read text, write responses, use equipment (IPAD, Communication devices), or requires assistance to stay on track. If more time is needed to complete a specific task, small time block accommodations are allowed.

2. Use a **Scheduling** accommodation **WHEN** the effects of the Scout's medication need to be considered or for Scouts who have a low frustration tolerance. Accommodate the Scout by scheduling a task when medication is most effective, or utilize active participation during times when the Scouts is most likely to move around and remember to provide frequent breaks.

3. Use a **Setting** accommodation **WHEN** a Scout has difficulty focusing attention in a group. Seating the Scout in a different location where lighting and other environmental factors are beneficial and providing cues are good examples of setting accommodations with minimal distraction to others.

4. Use a **Presentation** accommodation **WHEN** a Scout has specific sensory needs, difficulty reading, or understanding the assignment or directions. Accommodate him by changing the size of the group and determining whether a demonstration when introducing a new skill is ideal. Adapt existing materials by adding prerequisite skills, providing visual or auditory cues, or using BookShare or Braille. Other examples include games, simulations, role playing, or activity-based lessons.

5. Use **Response** accommodation **WHEN** the Scout's physical or sensory disability limits his ability to respond. Challenges such as memory, sequencing, directionality, alignment, organization, and other similar problems may interfere with successful performance. Allow the Scout to record answers by using electronic devices such as a computer or respond orally where projects require written work. Other examples include shortening assignments, using reminder prompts, scribe answers, or adapted materials such as colored ropes or lighter weight equipment. Allow the Scout to point to answers or give multiple choices instead of open-ended assignments.

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Physical and Medical Accessibility

- Facility and building
- Routes, pathways, doorways
- Access to medical personnel & facilities

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Presenter's Note: Refer to the Accessible Facilities Checklist for Scouts and Scouters with Special Needs handout. Use it as a discussion starting point.

Physical barriers:

- Is the building or facility easily accessible to individuals with physical disabilities so as to not require the use of stairs (i.e.. ramp, lift, or elevator?)
- Routes, pathways and doorways should also be accessible width-wise. Check for smooth terrain. Check with your state department of natural resources to get a listing of trails and parks in your state that provide information on terrain, distance, and trail accessibility.
- Are medical personnel and facilities readily available?

One should ask these questions prior to planning an event or activity.

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Language Accessibility

- Allow the Scout to choose the answer to your question
- Use photos
- Creative ways to “explain”
- Use a speaker or scribe
- Use assistive technology

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When working with a Scout with disabilities, ask him to show you the answer to your question. For example, have picture cards for CPR available and ask him to put the cards in the correct sequence.

Another consideration is to let him choose from three options for the correct answer. Have a Velcro board available and ask him to match knots, knot names and purposes.

During a board of review, use photos in place of words from campouts and activities and have him show you his favorite. If appropriate, have the Scout act out what the Scout Oath and Scout Law means.

Still other tactics include: creating a PowerPoint for the Scout to “explain” a skill, and making cards and hang them on a clothesline with clothespins. One can also use a speaker to tell what the cards say after he puts them in sequence. Have a scribe assist in writing the report the Scout narrates.

Lastly, electronic devices like computers, iPads, and iPhones can be used to help the Scout with his advancement.

(Presenter’s note: Brainstorm other creative ways on how the Scout can “explain” something without words.)

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Small Group Event Strategies

Areas to address:

- Mobility needs
- Program accessibility needs
- Sensory needs
- Personal care needs
- Resources available

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Leader: refer to Small Group Event Plan

When asking about mobility issues, ask if the Scout uses crutches, a walker, or a wheelchair. An outing with no inclines should be considered. When asking about personal needs, ask if the Scout can use a portable toilet. Another consideration: does he need to lay down to be changed?

Some resources to consider include: more people to access the program, scheduling breaks, reducing the instruction time, locating a quiet area for sensory breaks.

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Large Group Event Strategies

Areas to address:

- Transportation needs
- Camping needs
- Program accessibility needs
- Sensory needs
- Personal care needs
- Resources available

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Leader:

Transportation needs include how to get to and from the event beginning with the distance from the parking lot, how long the Scout is in the vehicle, how loud the vehicle is, and so forth.

Determine the Scouts' camping needs if going on an overnight event, whether the ground is level, access to the tent and vehicle, and other considerations. The last four areas to consider in a large group scenario are similar to small group event strategies.

NATIONAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS TASK FORCE

Resources

Scout Leaders:

- Leaders in your unit, district, and council with knowledge of working with disabilities
- District and council disabilities awareness committees
- disabilities.awareness@scouting.org

Scouting.org:

- *Guide to Working with Scouts with Special Needs and Disabilities* <http://scouting.org/filestore/pdf/510-071.pdf>
- *Individual Scout Achievement Plan*, No. 512-936
- BSA Disabilities Awareness web page: <http://scouting.org/disabilitiesawareness.aspx>

Books:

- *The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome* by Tony Attwood
- *It's So Much Work to Be Your Friend: Helping the Child with Learning Disabilities Find Social Success* by Richard Lavoie
- *101 Games for Groups* by Maxie Ashton B.Sc. (OT) & Lana Varga RN, RPN

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Scout Leaders:

Leaders in your unit, district, and council with knowledge of working with disabilities
District and Council Disabilities Awareness committees.

disabilities.awareness@scouting.org is a chat site where there are people that serve on the National Disabilities Awareness Task Force who will answer your questions.

Scouting.org:

A Guide to working with Scouts with Special Needs and Disabilities, No 510-071

www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/510-071.pdf

Individual Scout Achievement Plan No. 512-936

BSA Disabilities Awareness web page's full address:

www.scouting.org/disabilitiesawareness.aspx

Books:

The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome by Tony Attwood (This is an excellent resource with strategies for communication and social integration useful with any Scout with these challenges regardless of diagnosis)

It's So Much Work to Be Your Friend: Helping the Child with Learning Disabilities Find Social Success by Richard Lavoie

101 Games for Groups by Maxie Ashton B.Sc. (OT) & Lana Varga RN, RPN

This book contains games that energize, develop language and listening skills, encourage social interaction & promote teamwork. Many Games can be adapted for Scouts with Special Needs.