



Someone Like Me

Disability Fact Sheet

The following list of disabilities is not exhaustive. This is to provide a list of examples of disabilities that might be helpful for children to know, name and understand.

Disability	Definition
ADHD– Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	ADHD is when someone has trouble paying attention and sitting still. They might have lots of energy and find it hard to focus on one thing for a long time.
Anxiety (GAD) – General Anxiety Disorder	Anxiety is a feeling of being worried or scared about things. Sometimes, people with GAD worry a lot even when there's no real danger.
Autism	Autism is when some people's brains work a little differently. They might find it hard to understand social cues or have special interests they really love.
Cerebral Palsy (CP)	CP is when someone's muscles and movements don't work the same way as others. It can affect how they walk, talk, or use their hands.
Deafness	Deafness means someone can't hear sounds. They might use sign language or special devices to communicate.
Down Syndrome	Down Syndrome is a condition when someone has an extra chromosome. It can affect how they look and learn, but they're just as wonderful as anyone else.
Dyscalculia	Dyscalculia is when maths can be a bit tricky for some people. They might find it harder to understand numbers and do maths problems.
Dysgraphia	Dysgraphia makes writing difficult for some people. Their handwriting might not be as neat, but their ideas are still super smart!
Dyslexia	Dyslexia is when reading can be a bit tough. Words might look jumbled, but with practice, reading gets easier.

Disability	Definition
Dyspraxia (DCD – Developmental Coordination Disorder)	Dyspraxia can make it harder to coordinate movements, like tying shoelaces or catching a ball. But with practice, they can improve their fine motor skills!
EBD (Emotional/ Behavioural Disorder/ Difficulties)	EBD means that someone might have strong feelings or behaviours that can be challenging to manage. They may need extra support to understand and control their emotions.
Genetic disorder	A genetic disorder means there's something different in a person's genes that can affect their health or how they grow. It's like having unique instructions for their body.
GLD/MGLD (General Learning Difficulty)/ (Mild General Learning Difficulty)	This means some people may find learning a bit harder than others, but with effort and support, they can do amazing things!
Health Disabilities	Health disabilities are when someone's body has a condition that affects their health. They might need medical care or special help.
Paralysis/ Immobility/ Wheelchair User	Sometimes, people can't move their bodies like most others can. They might use a wheelchair to help them get around.
Sensory Processing Disorders	Some people's senses (like touch, taste, or hearing) work differently. It can make the world feel overwhelming, but they find ways to cope.
Speech and Language difficulties	This means some people have trouble talking or understanding words. They might work with special speech therapists to get better at it.
William's Syndrome	William's Syndrome is a condition that can make someone super friendly and social. They might be really good at music and have a unique way of looking at the world.

Term	Meaning/Use
Impairment	<p>The term impairment is appropriate in some contexts, but not in others. It is used by some to describe a diagnosis or level of functioning. For example, a person may say they have a vision impairment, speech impairment, or physical impairment. The term 'disability' is then used to describe the social experience of having an impairment. For example, the social, environmental and attitudinal barriers which result in discrimination against a person with an impairment.</p> <p>The Deaf community, which identifies as a cultural and linguistic group, does not use the term 'impairment'. Therefore, the term 'hearing impairment' is not recommended in reference to this community. However, it may be acceptable to some deaf or hard-of-hearing people who do not identify culturally as Deaf.</p>
Non-visible disability/ hidden disability	<p>Non-visible or hidden disability refers to a disability which is not immediately obvious or visible to others. This can include, for example, epilepsy, some chronic illnesses, neurodiversity, and others. It is important to emphasise that although the disability isn't visible, it does not mean it doesn't exist.</p> <p>Some people don't like to use the term 'hidden disability' as it may imply that a disabled person is hiding their disability on purpose. Non-visible disability can be used as an alternative.</p>
Disclose or share	<p>'Disclose' is a term often used in the context of an individual telling an employer or educational provider about their disability.</p> <p>For some people, this term can suggest a person is revealing something secret or shameful. 'Share' is an alternative term that could be used which does not carry these potentially negative connotations.</p>
Neurodiversity	<p>Neurodiversity is a term which recognises neurodevelopmental differences as a natural part of human diversity. Autism as well as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Tourette's Syndrome, among other differences or disabilities, are examples of neurodiversity.</p>
Neurotypical	<p>Neurotypical is a term used to describe a person who thinks and experiences the world in ways that society considers to be typical.</p>
Deafblind	<p>Deafblindness is a combined vision and hearing impairment. The term can refer to people who may have some residual vision and/or hearing.</p>

Term	Meaning/Use
Irish Sign Language	Irish Sign Language is a visual and spatial language native to Ireland with its own linguistic and grammatical structure. It is not a signed version of English or Irish, but a separate language in its own right.
Signed English	Signed English is a language support system which uses English language grammar and not the grammar of Deaf sign languages. It consists of hand signs and fingerspelling. It is not the same as Irish Sign Language and is not preferred by, and may not be understood by, members of the Deaf community.
Lámh	Lámh is a manual sign system used by children and adults with intellectual disability and communication needs in Ireland. Lámh uses speech with signs in which key words in a sentence are signed.
Irish Sign Language interpreter	An Irish Sign Language interpreter is a hearing person who translates spoken or written information from English to ISL. The Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS) keeps a register of accredited ISL interpreters in Ireland.
Deaf interpreter	A Deaf interpreter (Deaf person) works in tandem with an ISL interpreter (hearing person). They have native proficiency in ISL and provide an in-depth knowledge of Deaf culture and the Deaf community which supports a hearing ISL interpreter to translate. For example, the skills of a Deaf interpreter may be required when working with Deaf foreign nationals or Deaf individuals who may not be familiar or comfortable working with ISL interpreters.
Blind person/ person with a vision impairment/ partially sighted person	<p>The term 'blind' can refer to a person with no vision or with some vision. The term 'person with a vision impairment' can also refer to someone with no vision or with some vision.</p> <p>The term 'partially sighted' refers to a person who has some vision.</p> <p>Therefore the phrase 'blind or partially sighted' is recommended instead of 'blind or visually impaired' as the terms 'blind' and 'visually impaired' are synonymous.</p>

Term	Meaning/Use
Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO)	<p>A Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) is a particular kind of civil society organisation which is distinct from a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) or a disability service provider. UNCRPD outlines specific criteria in order for an organisation to be considered a DPO. DPOs are organisations led by disabled people themselves, and with a clear majority of their membership made up of disabled people, and which are underpinned by a human rights approach to disability. Organisations which work on disability issues or provide disability services which are not led by persons with disabilities are not considered a DPO.</p>
Representative organisation	<p>When the term “representative organisation” is used in the UNCRPD it is used to refer to a DPO only, rather than an organisation providing services, or an organisation comprising a majority of non-disabled persons advocating for people with disabilities.</p>



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