

DISABILITY AWARENESS

NEWSLETTER

Disability Pride

... Is a public expression of our belief that our disabilities are a natural part of human diversity, a celebration of our heritage and culture, and a validation of our experience.

INTERESTING FACTS:

- About 20% of people in the US are living with a disability.
- Some disabilities are visual to the eye and some are not.
- People with disabilities are considered handicapped when environmental or physical barriers or people's attitudes interfere with or prevent them from performing certain activities.
- Non-verbal people can communicate in different ways such as sign language or communication device.

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

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Welcome to the first Rockwell PTA disability awareness newsletter! The goal of these newsletters is to learn facts about disability equality and inclusion and provide conversation topics and activities you can do with your family and friends to promote disability acceptance.

I'm kicking off this first issue to talk about identity-first language and how having a disability is completely acceptable.

THE TERM "DISABLED" IS ACCEPTABLE

Identity-first language is a linguistic concept embraced and actually preferred by many people within the disability community. In the ideology of identity-first, "disabled" is a perfectly acceptable way for a person to identify.

We want to drive the message to the community that having a disability is not a negative thing and so we should not shy away from calling someone a disabled person if they indeed have a disability.

Instead, we should view the word "disabled" as more than a descriptor. It is identity and culture of a person and it is a source of pride. If you have a disability, it is part of you and who you are. It is our job in society to accept and embrace disabled people living in our communities.

Note: identity-first language does not apply when it comes to a term used only for medical definitions or when it comes to mobility equipment.

For more information on identity-first language, see this link:

www.thinkinclusive.us/why-person-first-language-doesnt-always-put-the-person-first/

CONVERSATIONAL ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Discuss with your family the importance of using respectful and kind language to describe or address people.

Now think of a trait you have yourself (ex: I have long legs, I have brown eyes, etc). Now think if someone thought those were negative attributes. Discuss how that would make you feel if someone thought something that was part of you, was shameful or bad.

Now think of someone you may know that is disabled. Have a conversation of how you think they would feel if their disability was something to be proud of instead of embarrassed about.