



Disability Support Services Quarterly Newsletter

Please visit our website: www.ctcd.edu/disability-support

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Contact Information

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DSS CST Office Hours:

Mon. - Thurs. 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Friday - 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

DSS Team:

Dr. Christy Shank
DSS Director

Wilma Brown-Smith
DSS Coordinator

Ron Porter
DSS Coordinator

Important Dates:

Welcome Back Bash: Sept. 1

Labor Day Holiday: Sept. 5

Columbus Day Holiday: Oct. 10

Veterans Day Holiday: Nov. 11

For this edition of the DSS Quarterly Newsletter, DSS would like to share information about etiquette when interacting with people with disabilities to help educate others about this topic.

Our DSS staff is available to service our students, faculty, and staff during business hours.

To schedule a phone, virtual or in person appointment or for assistance with accommodations, please contact one of the following DSS Coordinators:

*Wilma Brown Smith: wbrown@ctcd.edu or 254-526-1863

*Ron Porter: ron.porter@ctcd.edu or 254-526-1822

Any questions, comments, and suggestions can be sent to:

DSS@ctcd.edu

DSS Mission Statement

DSS is committed to assisting the college so that individuals with disabilities are assured an equal opportunity to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from all college programs, services, and activities. DSS supports individuals with disabilities by coordinating reasonable accommodations and services. We are committed to providing equal access to higher education for academically qualified individuals with disabilities.

Quote of the Quarter

*"It does not matter how slowly you go
as long as you do not stop."*

~ Confucius ~

Etiquette: Interacting with People with Disabilities

- *People with disabilities are human - Acknowledge their differences as you would acknowledge anyone else's uniqueness and treat them "as normal." Do not talk down to them literally or figuratively.
- *Person-First vs. Identity First: Ask The Person - Person-first language puts the person before the disability (i.e. person who has cerebral palsy). Identity-first language puts the disability before the person (i.e. autistic woman). People with disabilities have different preferences on which language they use. Ask the person how they would like to be referred to. Additionally, avoid outdated terms like "handicapped" or "crippled".
- *Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their companion or sign language interpreter - A lack of immediate response does not indicate that the person can't or won't respond.
- *Adults with disabilities are adults and deserve to be treated and spoken to as adults - Do not make decisions for them. Provide them with every option you provide those without disabilities (if the option they choose presents a difficulty concerning their disability, discuss ways you could modify the choice.)
- *If you are unsure of how you should interact with a person with a disability, just ask them - Just because someone has a disability, do not assume they need help. Do not give assistance without asking first if they want it. You can ask if the person would like help, but don't ask repeatedly or qualify their response with "are you sure?" Respect someone's choice even if it looks like they're struggling. If there is a dangerous situation, help just as you would help someone without a disability.
- *A person's mobility equipment, such as a wheelchair, scooter or cane, is part of their personal space - Do not touch or move it without permission.
- *Listen attentively when you are talking with a person who has difficulty speaking - Be patient and wait for the person to finish, rather than correcting or speaking for the person. If necessary, ask short or close-ended questions that require short answers, a nod or shake of the head. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond. The response will clue you in and guide your understanding.
- *People who have psychiatric disabilities may have varying personalities and different ways of coping with their disability - Some may have trouble picking up on social cues; others may be supersensitive. Ask what will make them most comfortable and respect their needs to the maximum extent possible.
- *There are visible disabilities as well as non-visible disabilities, meaning not all disabilities are apparent - A person may make a request or act in a way that seems strange to you. That request or behavior may be disability-related. For example, you may give seemingly simple verbal directions to someone, but the person asks you to write the information down. He or she may have a learning disability that makes written communication easier. Even though these disabilities are hidden, they are real.

Source: <https://www.respectability.org/inclusion-toolkits/etiquette-interacting-with-people-with-disabilities/>

Please visit the DSS website for detailed information on services: www.ctcd.edu/disability-support