

A BRIEF ETIQUETTE GUIDE RELATING TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR LINC_s
(Local Inclusion Collaborative Networks)
Materials also available at www.aia.hawaii.edu

Compiled by Alliance for Inclusion Advancement-HI

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Basic Etiquette: People with Disabilities

Based on Guidelines from a Handout by
United Cerebral Palsy (UCPA)/Access AmeriCorps

1. Any and all assistive devices (canes, wheelchairs, crutches, communication boards, etc.) should always be respected as personal property. Unless given specific and explicit permission, do not move, play with, or use them.
2. Always direct your communication to the individual with a disability. If they are accompanied, do not direct your comments to the companion.
3. Do not focus on the disability, but on the individual and the issue at hand.
4. If you are uncertain about what to do, ask. Most people would rather answer a question about protocol than be in an uncomfortable situation.
5. Don't worry about what to call someone. All people with disabilities have names.
6. Remember that people with disabilities are interested in the same topics of conversation as non-disabled people.
7. Use a normal speaking tone and style. If someone needs you to speak in a louder voice, he or she will ask you to do so.
8. Remember that people with disabilities, like all people, are experts on themselves. They know what they like, what they don't like, and what they can and cannot do.
9. People with disabilities who volunteer are there because they have a commitment to community service. Make sure your own attitudes do not prevent that from happening.
10. As with all other etiquette issues, when mistakes are made, apologize, correct the

problem, learn from the mistake, and move on.

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