

Facing the Challenge

Time: 45-60 minutes

Audience: This experiential learning activity is appropriate for both youth and adult audiences. Activities can be easily adapted to be age appropriate for the audience.

Objectives:

- To enable participants to experience what it is like to have a visual, hearing and/or physical impairment.
- To increase participants sensitivity of challenges in everyday life that a person with special needs might experience.

Supplies needed for 40 participants:

2 Wheelchairs (*not in kit*)
2 Walkers (*not in kit*)
Wooden paint sticks or rulers
Bandages
Squares of fabric to make slings
Medical tape (*check amount in kit*)
Gloves
Sunglasses
Masking tape (*check amount in kit*)
Earplugs (*check amount in kit*)
Scissors

See list below for additional supplies that are needed in setting up the various stations.

Description of how to equip participants for various impairments:

Visual Impairments:

Partially blind – The lenses of dark sunglasses are taped with opaque tape leaving only limited areas to see through.

Totally blind in one eye – One lens of dark sunglasses is completely covered with tape or eye is patched, other lens is taped with opaque tape leaving only limited areas to see through.

Hearing Impairments:

Hearing Impairments – Participants are asked to put in a set of earplugs.

Physical Impairments:

Cerebral Palsy – Arm is in a sling as specified. To restrict movement of wrist and reduce grip, paint stick or rulers are secured by tape or elastic bandage to both sides of the forearm to center of hand/palm. To restrict range of motion in lower extremities, legs are tied together just below the knees or paint stick or rulers are secured by bandage to both sides of the knee to center of leg.

Arthritis – Fingers are taped at the knuckles with medical tape. Gloves are then worn over the tape. Several fingers can be taped together.

Paraplegic – Participants are supplied with wheelchair and instructed not to use lower extremities.

No use of one leg – Participants are supplied with a walker and instructed not to put any weight on that leg. The participant can be discouraged from using leg by straightened and secured with strips of heavy cardboard tied to each side of the leg and tied by strips of cloth.

Activity:

The session is opened with participants sharing their name and what their experience is with working with people with disabilities. Various stations are set up throughout the room as specified below. Each participant is given a challenge card that explains their impairment and lists challenges for them to complete. The participants are equipped by the facilitators as necessary and instructed to begin facing the challenges. Depending on time, participants can receive and new challenge card with a different type of impairment. Upon completion of the challenges, the group is gathered for discussion of the experience. Handouts on working with different disabilities are available on our website under the workshop section (4h.missouri.edu/getinvolved/mizzou4h/).

Stations: (Supplies needed as listed below.)

- Station 1 – Phone book and telephone (doesn't have to be a functioning phone), paper and pencils
- Station 2 – Basket of laundry with blue, green, and red clothes (*not in kit*), washing machine replica.
- Station 3 – Chairs, laptop (*not in kit*), movie (blurred slightly if possible), paper and pencils
- Station 4 – Verbal directions given to participant (at a very soft volume), paper and pencils
- Station 5 – Chairs, laptop with no or little sound (*not in kit*), movie, paper and pencils
- Station 6 – A shoe to tie
- Station 7 – Candy to be opened by participant (*check amount in kit*)
- Station 8 – Dominoes to match
- Station 9 – Deck of cards to shuffle and deal
- Station 10 – Beads, string
- Station 11 – Pill bottles
- Station 12 – Shirt to button and unbutton (*not in kit*)
- Station 13 – Pile of books to be carried to Station 14 (*not in kit*)
- Station 14 – Area to drop off books from Station 13
- Station 15 – Tray with plate, cup and silverware to carry to station 16
- Station 16 – Area to drop off tray from Station 15
- Station 17 – Puzzle with pieces to assemble
- Station 18 – Chairs, laptop (*not in kit*), hearing test CD, answer card, paper and pencils.

In order to conduct the “unfair hearing test” in Station 18, leaders will want to use the cassette tape called “*Getting Through*”, released in 1988 by Starkey Labs, World Headquarters, 6700 Washington Ave., Eden Prairie, NM. 55344. Call 1-800-3328-8602. This may no longer be available from Starkey Labs but many Extension offices should have a copy in the “Walk in My Shoes” Aging Kits. If the “hearing test” tape is not available, delete Station 18 from the activity.

Discussion Questions:

- How did you feel with your impairments?
- What things were harder for you to do?
- Did you find ways to overcome your challenges?
- How do you think someone with this impairment feels?
- How will you use what you learned in this activity?

Materials developed by:

Johnna B. Jennings, Extension Educator, 4-H, Youth Development, University of Illinois Extension, DeKalb County

Sandra L. Stiles, Extension Educator, 4-H, Youth Development and Family Life, University of Illinois Extension, Lee County

Revised: 12/99

References:

Hanson, S., Lesmeister, M., & Toermohlen, R.L. Perfect Fit [Facilitator’s Guide] (Draft Form). North Dakota State University Extension Service.

Morita, Y. (1994). Take a Walk in My Shoes: Guide Book for Youth on Diversity Awareness Activities. Oakland, CA: University of California.

Schnepf, G. W., Toermohlen, R. L., & Field, W. E. (1994). A Perfect Fit [Leader’s Guide], Lafayette, IN: Purdue University.



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences •
United States Department of Agriculture • Local Extension Councils Cooperating
University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.