

Disability Etiquette

The Golden Rule is 'treat others as you would like to be treated'. This is a powerful motto to live by - but at times, it doesn't always go far enough to foster a respectful, inclusive environment for people with disabilities. After all, it can be hard to understand how another person may want to be treated if they have a very different lived experience than you do.

Disability etiquette broadly refers to guidelines and practices that promote inclusivity and accessibility. It goes beyond politeness to help create a welcoming environment and enable independence. Increased understanding can reduce awkwardness, promote respect and make interactions more enjoyable for all.

Disability etiquette is built on the concept of dignity. Individuals with disabilities know themselves, their abilities and their preferences better than anyone. Listening to the experts and having some basic knowledge about disabilities prevents individuals with disabilities from having to correct or deal with exclusionary behaviour, even if it's accidental or unintentional.

Individuals with disabilities face many barriers to full participation. Some of those barriers are physical or institutional but many are social and behaviour-based. Practicing positive disability etiquette helps to reduce barriers and ensure everyone can feel valued and respected.



MONTHLY RESOURCE

Respect in Action

Help students to learn some important 'disability etiquette' tips and practice demonstrating 'positive disability etiquette' through classroom discussions, some group activities and role play opportunities.

Guide Dog Etiquette 101

A simple hand out to spark discussion around proper etiquette when interacting with guide dogs and other 'working dogs'.

MAY IS COMMUNITY LIVING MONTH

**COMMUNITY
LIVING MONTH
2026**

Community Living Month is a province-wide awareness campaign to celebrate the Community Living movement. The movement began over 70 years ago and strives to promote authentic community inclusion for the more than 250,000 Ontarians with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Community Living Kincardine & District was established in 1963. Beginning as a school for 6 children with disabilities, it has grown to serve more than 150 individuals and their families.