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Cultivating an Inclusive Mindset in your Jewish Community: Turning Good Intentions into Tangible Outcomes

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Cultivating an Inclusive Mindset in your Jewish Community:

Turning Good Intentions into Tangible Outcomes

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Abstract

Cultivating an Inclusive Mindset in your Jewish Community:

Turning Good Intentions into Tangible Outcomes

By Tali Cohen

This curriculum provides training and resources to Jewish day schools, synagogues, summer camps, and other organizations seeking to better embrace all members of their community and foster full and meaningful integration and participation. Focused primarily on youth with developmental and learning disabilities, though with definite implications for other populations, this curriculum provides a first-step for a community seeking to become more inclusive. Beginning with developing a commitment to inclusion and a common mindset among the staff that will be charged with implementing the programming, the curriculum strives to ensure collaboration from every stakeholder and community member. The second section is focused on children, providing a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence in order to scaffold children's understanding of difference and disability. By focusing on the overall culture and mindset of the community towards difference and disability, the curriculum stands in contrast to traditional approaches to disability awareness and sensitivity trainings, seeking to shift understandings of what it truly means to embrace and include people with a variety of developmental variations.

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Rationale

Theoretical Framework

We live in a society built by and for neurotypical and able-bodied people. As a result, people with disabilities are systematically marginalized. Physical access to public spaces is limited, and one's ability to succeed is often stymied by social norms that place value on certain human traits over others. As Thomas Hehir (2007) writes, "From an early age, many people with disabilities encounter the view that disability is negative and 'tragic' and that 'overcoming' disability is the only valued result" (p. 10). The disability rights community has come to refer to the systematic discrimination of people with disabilities as ableism, and for decades has been advocating for change at a societal level to address this injustice.

One important conversation related to societal perceptions of disability is the debate around using a social model to understand disability rather than a medical model. Disability advocates have encouraged a movement away from seeing disability solely as a medical condition caused by a physical abnormality, moving towards an understanding that disability is a socially determined condition resulting from people's interactions with their environments. Mike Oliver (1990), who coined the term "social model of disability," argues that it is society that disables an individual as a result of structural barriers, rather than the individual who is disabled due to internal limitations. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) provides the following definition of disability: "Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal

basis with others” (The United Nations, 2006, art. 1). It is the interaction between an individual and the environment that results in a person becoming disabled.

Recently, the social model has been criticized for failing to take into account the particular challenges faced by people with disabilities. In addition, this model does not recognize that for many people their disability is a source of pride and identity. Finally, at times the social model has been used to justify cuts to much needed social services (Oliver, 2013). The take away from this debate is that disability is complex, and experienced differently by unique individuals in different circumstances. Any conversation about disability should take steps to embrace this diversity of perspective and include a range of voices.

The deficit model of disability, that views a person with a disability as inherently lacking in skills or abilities, continues to pervade our society’s schools. In order for a student to receive special education services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (2004), there must be “proof of intrinsic deficit” (Harry & Klingner, 2007, p. 16). This approach fails to take into account the social model and environmental barriers that may be contributing to a child’s challenges, such as a lack of access to high quality instruction. Ableism plays out in schools as certain skills and behaviors are valued and taught above others. Students are told to speak rather than sign or use alternative and augmentative communication, told to sit still rather than rock, and told to write with a pen and paper rather than use a computer with spellcheck. Some have even argued that the emphasis on inclusion contains ableist undertones, insinuating that it is better to be friends with typically developing children than children with disabilities (Hehir, 2002). Furthermore, our society continues to place emphasis on curing and

overcoming disability, rather than accepting, supporting, and embracing variation as a natural part of human existence.

Inclusion is now commonly referred to as best practice in special education. IDEA (2004) mandates that students be educated in the least restrictive environment, spending as much of the day as is deemed appropriate with their typically developing peers. However, often inclusion only addresses the physical location of students, with teachers struggling to find ways for students with more significant cognitive and developmental disabilities to participate fully in the community. Furthermore, as students with developmental variations are integrated into general education settings, they are often asked to make accommodation to fit into the community, rather than the community and environment adapting to fit the needs of the individual with a disability. For example, students with autism are taught “appropriate social skills” (Kluth, 2003, p. 106) and told to sit still and make eye contact. Asking students with autism to conform to neurotypical patterns of behavior, rather than allowing students to act in ways that feel comfortable and natural to them, reinforces ableist norms that devalue disability. As our school systems and society as a whole continue to advocate for inclusion, we must be intentional in creating environments that value human variation and address the ableist attitudes that continue to pervade our culture.

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological systems theory (1979) offers a valuable framework from which to approach changing attitudes about disability as we strive to build inclusive communities. According to Ecological systems theory, in order to understand individuals and their interactions, one must take into account the context in any given moment, including family, peers, school, neighborhood, media, political environment, religion,

class, culture, and more (Kamenopoulou, 2016). Thus, we must consider factors such as institutional culture, societal attitudes, and language in order to address how our communities perceive and interact with disability. Any attempt to address disability attitudes must take into account the environmental context of the community. If the community does not value diversity and appreciate difference, it is going to be very challenging for a person with a disability to find acceptance and meaningfully participate in community activities. For this reason, the following curriculum begins by addressing attitudes and understandings of difference in general, developing what I refer to as an “inclusive mindset,” rather than focusing on increasing awareness of specific disabilities.

Changing the attitudes of adults is quite challenging, but we have a wonderful opportunity to work with children to shape their attitudes early in life. When children have the opportunity to interact with a range of individuals with various abilities, challenges, and perspectives, they learn to appreciate difference and see children with disabilities as peers and equals. In her 1998 study of friendships between children with and without disabilities, Debbie Staub found that settings that fostered meaningful peer relationships were characterized by mutuality, equality, respect, valuing diverse learners, and opportunities for positive interactions. The context is of integral importance in fostering true inclusion and breaking down, or preventing, ableist attitudes.

Due to the pervasiveness of ableist attitudes in our culture, it is not easy to establish an environment that supports the development of meaningful, reciprocal relationships between children with and without disabilities. However, there are many steps that educators can take to explore the value of differences with children. As our schools and communities become increasingly diverse, educators have a unique

opportunity to establish environments that value diversity and foster friendship. The Roman philosopher, Lucius Annaeus Seneca once said, “One of the most beautiful qualities of true friendship is to understand and to be understood.” It is the role of inclusive educators to help children understand each other in order to foster meaningful participation and relationship building within inclusive environments. The following curriculum provides an introductory set of programs to begin to establish an environment that celebrates difference and supports developmental variations.

Additionally, while respecting differences is an important first step, children will inevitably have questions about individual variations, and benefit from the opportunity to ask questions and receive guidance to support their interactions with peers who are different from them. As Staub (1998) writes, “If they are to act naturally and comfortably within the presence of their classmate who has a disability, they should be prepared for things that may come up that will be new to them” (p. 201). Adults should be prepared to facilitate respectful, nonjudgmental conversations about communication differences, strengths and challenges, and unexpected behaviors. Children need a space to discuss the challenges that come up in inclusive settings, and receive guidance in order to develop strategies to overcome these challenges. These conversations should include the child with a disability whenever appropriate, and always maintain respect and confidentiality. When children understand their peers, they are able to support each other in reciprocal, nonjudgmental ways, allowing them to develop meaningful relationships.

Existing Disability Awareness Training Resources

Most of the existing curricular materials related to disability awareness training focus on giving the participants a glimpse into what it might feel like to have a specific disability through simulations. These trainings are rooted in the medial and deficit models of disability. For example, Cynthis Costello's (2000) curriculum includes activities where students are blindfolded and given canes in order to experience blindness (p. 15), asked to identify things around their homes that might make a child with autism uncomfortable (p. 21), and practice using a wheelchair and discuss the experience. Similarly, in their *Disability Awareness Activity Packet*, Adcock and Remus (2006) break up their activities based on various disability categories, and provide a variety of simulation-based activities designed to teach people about learning disabilities, physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, and more. A Google search for disability awareness trainings brings up many of these types of simulations as well.

The existing curricular materials are problematic for several reasons. First, these approaches to teaching about disability perpetuate the idea that disability is a deficit that individuals must struggle to overcome, rather than a complex interaction between individuals and their environments that comes with challenges as well as joys. When workshop participants engage in a simulation, they experience limited mobility or limited sight for a finite period of time, focusing on all of the things they cannot do as a result of their new limitation. Rather than walking away with a true feeling of empathy and understanding, it is more likely that the participants will walk away with a false understanding of the experience of disability. In addition, simulations perpetuate an "othering" of people with disabilities, causing people to walk away feeling pity for

people with disabilities, and relief that they are not themselves disabled (Lalvani and Broderick, 2013).

Toby Olson (2014), who has a neurological disorder that affects his vision and hearing, worries that simulation participants might walk away from the experience “imagining life with a disability as an endlessly shrinking spiral of frustration and loss,” and as a result “might be even less comfortable associating with people who have disabilities than they were before.” In contrast to the experience of a disability simulation, Olson writes:

The long term experience of living with a disability is more aptly characterized as adapting, adjusting, and developing new ways to do things when the usual ways don't work. It is more commonly the active pursuit of an expanding life, not mourning for a contracting one.

This process of learning to adapt and adjust simply is not possible within the framework of a disability simulation. Although the literature criticizing simulation-based trainings is prolific, curricular materials that provide alternative approaches to disability awareness training are hard to find.

In the context of schools, afterschool, and summer programs for children, I believe we must address the fact that it is not possible to intimately understand the experiences of everyone in our community. Rather, we must develop an awareness that we all experience the world differently, and that building an inclusive, understanding, and supportive community requires hard work. This is what I seek to do in the following curriculum. Many of the activities included in the curriculum consist of adaptations of existing materials. Some were originally designed without disability training purposes in

mind, and other were designed for that purpose. In compiling and adapting the materials, I paid particular attention to avoiding the medical and deficit models of disability, working to cultivate a mindset that difference is valuable, and that it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that all members of the community are heard, respected, and meaningfully included. The focus is not on overcoming disability, but rather on mitigating the negative impact a disability might have, shifting outdated attitudes towards disabilities, and increasing opportunities for people with disabilities to participate fully and meaningfully in all aspects of life in the community.

Developmental Scope and Sequence

As is clear from the above discussion, disability awareness and inclusion is a complicated topic with many divergent perspectives. In thinking about how to tackle this complex topic with children, I took into account the particular ages and developmental stages of the children participating in each program. What follows is a curriculum that begins by introducing young children to conversations about differences, affinities, and challenges and progresses in complexity as the children develop. Of course, it is important to note that not all children develop at the same pace; therefore, educators, particularly those working in inclusive environments, must take into account the particular group of children they are working with and consider the developmental appropriateness of the material before facilitating an activity.

Piaget's stages of cognitive development provide a useful framework through which to consider children's developmental ability to engage in various types of activities and conversations related to disability and inclusion. When children are younger than two

and in the sensorimotor stage of development, they are still developing their awareness of self and the world around them. They may not yet understand that they are distinct individuals with differences and similarities to the people around them. They have not yet developed a “theory of mind” and will therefore likely have difficulty taking the perspectives of people around them (Lightfoot, Cole, and Cole, 2009). For this reason, my curricular materials begin with children ages 2 and older, once they have developed a sense of self to allow them to engage in conversations related to personal identity, similarities, and differences.

As children move into the preoperational stage of development, which typically occurs between the ages of 2 and 6, they begin to develop a sense of personal identity, but remain largely egocentric until the age of 4 or 5. Furthermore, their self-concept at this stage is very concrete, based in observable characteristics, and does not include comparisons to those around them (Lightfoot, Cole, and Cole, 2009). For children in this age range, I have designed a series of read alouds, using storybooks as a jumping off point for discussions about topics related to difference, disability, and inclusion. The reader will notice that the topics and discussion questions for the read alouds begin by focusing on the children themselves and gradually ask them to begin thinking about their peers. As the children develop perspective-taking abilities, they can begin to discuss the experiences of the characters in the stories and apply those experiences to their own lives. Eventually, as children move into the subsequent developmental stages, these conversations can lead to broader discussions of how these topics might impact the children’s wider communities.

Between the ages of 6 and 12, children enter the concrete operational stage of development. Their ability to take the perspective of others is now more fully developed, and they are beginning to define themselves in comparison to those around them. Their thinking becomes more flexible as they are able to consider multiple approaches to a single issue. Furthermore, research has shown that at this stage of development, the context in which social interactions are taking place is key. Adults can play an important role in setting up environments that foster cooperation rather than competition, as “cooperation nurtures relationships and children’s sense of belonging” (Lightfoot, Cole, and Cole, 2009, p. 474). The activities in the forthcoming curriculum for children in this age range remain largely concrete, and are targeted at setting up cooperative environments. They are asked to consider their own personal characteristics, develop an appreciation for the individual differences that exist within their community, and brainstorm ways to ensure that all individuals are supported and included.

When children become adolescents, typically between the ages of 12 and 19, they fall within the formal operational stage of development. At this stage of development, adolescents’ metacognitive abilities develop, and they are able to think more abstractly. They can hold multiple and conflicting perspectives in their minds with increasing complexity. In addition, their sense of identity continues to mature, becoming more stable and coherent (Lightfoot, Cole, and Cole, 2009). The programs for adolescents included in this curriculum explore more abstract topics such as internal and invisible differences, addressing societal biases, and confronting stigma and bullying. These programs offer opportunities for adolescents to reflect on their life experiences and think critically about their own role in creating an inclusive community. The materials for adults that proceed

the children's programming are intended to provide the adults in the community with a framework and orientation, as well as concrete tools to utilize as they participate in the process of developing an inclusive community.

My Process and Vision

My inspiration for this curriculum, and decision to pursue a career in special education and work within the Jewish community, is directly tied to my years at Camp Ramah, a network of Jewish summer camps in North America. I grew up attending Camp Ramah in Canada as a camper, and later worked at Camp Ramah in Canada, California, and New England as a staff member. All three of these camps integrate campers and staff with a wide range of developmental disabilities through the Tikvah programs. As a camper, I sought out opportunities to spend time with participants of the Tikvah program, and when I returned to camp as a counselor, I knew I wanted to work in that program. After working as a counselor for several summers, I took on leadership roles, working as a supervisor and facilitating staff trainings and inclusion initiatives for the general camp community. The forthcoming programs were initially developed and implemented during my time working at these camps.

Some of the participants of the Tikvah programs at these three camps live in bunks with typically developing campers, and other live in bunks with other campers with disabilities in order to get additional support from specially trained counselors. All campers participate in integrated activities together throughout the day. Due to the structure of the program, and the high level of integration, campers grow up seeing children with developmental variations as natural members of their community. This natural integration is

an important first step to establish an inclusive mindset. Of course, children often wonder about things they see or hear around camp related to the Tikvah program. They might see a camper having a hard time due to sensory overload in the loud dining hall, they might notice a camper receiving personal care support that they are not used to seeing, or they might wonder how to communicate with a nonverbal camper. The first step to addressing these wonderings in a natural and respectful way is to establish a mindset that embraces difference, as the following programs seek to do. Then, experienced staff can facilitate conversations with children as questions arise, helping promote understanding and prevent stigmatization.

In collaboration with many talented staff members, I designed and implemented the programs contained in this curriculum as staff trainings, evening activities, bunk programs, and more. Following the initial implementation, I gathered feedback from the participating staff and campers. Many of these programs have been tweaked and implemented several times, at several camps, and for campers and staff of different ages. Once I was satisfied with the structure and content of the programs, I wrote up the curriculum in a way that would be adaptable to various settings, including other camps, schools, synagogues, youth groups, and beyond.

My career path is driven by a deep commitment to increase opportunities for children with disabilities in the Jewish community. The Camp Ramah experience is valued so highly by the Tikvah participants and their parents; I have often heard them comment that no experience during the year is able to parallel their time at camp. While it is wonderful that they are able to have a meaningful Jewish experience during the summer, it is extremely disappointing that the Jewish community lacks inclusive opportunities on a year-round basis. Through my conversations with families over the

years, as well as my direct work in the Jewish community, I began to notice a serious lack of inclusive educational and communal programming.

While conversations about disability inclusion have been on the rise in Jewish communities over the past few years, there remains a significant gap between expressed sentiments and meaningful, inclusive outcomes. Many synagogue congregational schools where I have worked, for example, say they are committed to including and supporting students with diverse needs, however they often fail to meet the needs of these students. While limited expertise related to disability and special education is one factor that leads to poor outcomes, I believe that the more significant factor that hinders disability inclusion is misguided mindsets around what true, meaningful inclusion really means. Including children and young adults with disabilities is often framed as a “leadership” or “volunteer” opportunity for their typically developing peers. This framing prohibits the formation of reciprocal relationships between children with and without identified disabilities.

Furthermore, while most staff say that they are open to supporting children with disabilities, when challenging situations arise they are quick to call in the learning or inclusion specialist, rather than working to meet the needs of the child in a natural, integrated way. Often, shadows are hired to work directly with students with disabilities, and as a result the students spend most of their time on the sidelines, and their peers fail to see them as integrated members of the classroom community. My intention is not to place blame. The majority of Rabbis, administrators, teachers, lay leaders, and other stakeholders have good intentions, and are trying to make the best decisions they can, based on their current understandings and resources.

For this reason, I have chosen to focus my inclusion trainings on helping community members develop an inclusive mindset. I strongly believe that necessary structural changes are much easier to achieve once a community has established a mindset that respects and values difference, is open to providing modifications and accommodations as needed, and sees every individual as a full and equal participant in the community. A ramp that allows a wheelchair user to enter a building is only useful if once inside, the person can meaningfully participate in communal programming. Noise canceling headphones or earplugs provided at a service may allow children with sensory differences to enter the room, but to me, what is more important is how they are perceived by those around them. Are they shushed and stared at if they make noises or movements that are out of the ordinary, or has the community learned to view these differences as a natural variation of human existence? Ramps, headphones, and other practical tools are extremely important, but of equal importance is the mindset to respect and embrace the individuals who use these tools.

Curriculum Introduction

Dear Educator,

I am thrilled that you have made the decision to embark on the journey towards creating an inclusive community. Currently, the Jewish community at large is engaged in many conversations about the need to become more inclusive; however, there is a significant mismatch between desires and outcomes. While Jewish leaders are recognizing that they must “talk the talk” of inclusion, many lack the commitment, tools, and/or knowledge to “walk the walk.” Over the course of my years working on inclusion initiatives within the Jewish community, I have learned that in order to turn good intentions into tangible outcomes, one must address the overall orientation of a community related to disabilities and inclusion. Whether you work in the context of a Jewish day school, summer camp, congregational school, youth group, or beyond, in this curriculum you will find a plethora of useful resources, games, and activities designed to cultivate inclusive mindsets. Ultimately, you will find that by targeting culture and mindsets, you will implement real change that will allow your community to better embrace all of its members and foster full and meaningful integration and participation.

Curricular Content and Goals

In this curriculum you will find activities for adults, teens, and children, all centered on themes of difference, disability, and inclusion. Focused primarily on including and understanding youth with learning, intellectual, and developmental disabilities--though with definite implications for other populations--this curriculum provides a first-step for a community seeking to become more inclusive. We cannot

expect children to shift their attitudes and thinking without addressing the overall attitudes of the community; therefore, the curriculum begins with programming designed to inspire a commitment to inclusion and a common mindset among the staff, lay leaders, and other adults in the community (see page 29). In this way, the curriculum strives to ensure collaboration and buy-in from every stakeholder and community member. Furthermore, the curriculum includes capacity-building tip sheets (see pages 31-34) to provide teachers, counselors, and other educators with the tools and resources to effectively support all children under their care. I have also included a variety of Jewish texts along with discussion questions related to disability and difference (see page 35) that can be utilized to begin conversations with adults and older children. The second section of the curriculum is focused on children (see page 40), providing a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence in order to scaffold children's understanding of difference and disability.

The overarching goals of the curriculum are less about a concrete set of skills, and more about developing an attitude that embraces differences, destigmatizes disability, and confronts societal biases. The goal is for adults and children to develop sensitivity to the fact that we all exist in different places along multiple continua of development: cognitively, physically, emotionally, and so on. Individual variation is a natural, valuable aspect of human existence that should be embraced and celebrated. Some of these differences may require the community to learn to adapt to and accommodate a specific set of needs. This is the responsibility of any community that seeks to be inclusive as far too often people with certain types of differences are stigmatized, excluded, or forced to adapt themselves if they want to be members of the community.

Implementing the Curriculum

Over the course of the last 8 years I have spent countless hours planning, implementing, and tweaking the content you will find in this curriculum. I have collaborated with many talented staff members, and adapted games and activities that you have probably seen before in different contexts, likely as part of community building activities. I have gathered these activities, adapted and expanded on them, and carefully curated the sequence of the activities and discussion questions in order to use them for the purpose of cultivating an inclusion mindset.

Each set of activities notes a suggested age group. The activities can be adapted and used for children at different developmental stages, but if you plan to do so, I recommend reading the section entitled Developmental Scope and Sequence (on page 13), in order to help you think about developmentally appropriate changes. It is also important to note that while I provided suggested discussion questions for each set of activities, these questions are not intended to be prescriptive, nor do they need to be asked in the specific format and sequence outlined. The questions are designed as a resource for the facilitator, a guide to show you how I envisioned the conversation when I designed the materials. Each group of children is unique and may need a different approach. Follow the children's lead and ensure that the discussion format is not always the facilitator asking, a child answering, and then moving on to the next question. If the children are taking the conversation in a different direction, it is likely because that direction feels more relevant to them. Feel free to employ a variety of pedagogical approaches such as turn and talks and student-facilitated discussions. Use the activities

and questions as a guide, but implement adaptations to ensure the curriculum is relevant and appropriate for your setting.

There are times when children will have questions about specific things they see or hear in an inclusive community. Children might ask why someone uses a wheelchair, why someone does not communicate in traditional ways, or why they rock their body back and forth. Some differences might at first feel scary to children. It is important to encourage these questions and have open conversations to avoid stigmatization and help children understand that differences are a natural part of human existence. The children's books (see page 40) provide a wonderful jumping off point for these conversations. When a specific question or issue came up at camp, I would select a children's book that addressed a similar theme, and use the book as an entry point into a conversation in order to address the children's questions in a way that respects the privacy of the person who sparked the question. In most of these cases, due simply to context, the person who sparked the question was not part of the book discussion; however, in other settings, such as an inclusive classroom, children can be given an opportunity to share about their specific differences, if they are comfortable and willing. Providing opportunities for open conversation are vital for fostering the type of mindset the curriculum seeks to cultivate.

Additional Considerations

As I prepare to share the curriculum with the world, with the hope that it will help communities on the path to becoming inclusive, I feel both pride and trepidation. The curriculum was originally designed and implemented in the context of Camp Ramah, a network of overnight summer camps that includes programming for campers with

developmental disabilities. In this context, I have seen these activities lead to wonderful, important conversations, and help children and adults develop a mindset that embraces and respects individual differences. However, without thoughtful planning and implementation, these conversations have the potential to create a paradigm where people with disabilities are seen as “the other.”

In the context of camp, there were times when children walked away with the message that it is important to respect the campers who attend camp with the support of the Tikvah programs for campers with identified disabilities, but failed to transfer their learning to their understanding of their bunkmate with slight social or communication differences. As a result, the campers with identified disabilities were understood through a paradigm of “us versus them,” and the general camp community remained wary of the continuum of individual differences. For this reason, I rarely introduce an activity explicitly as a “disability awareness activity” as that tends to perpetuate the notion that the participants will be learning about an outside “other.” Rather, before beginning an activity I tell the children that today we will be exploring difference, and leave it at that. The activities are intentionally planned so that conversations about disability come up naturally later on in the activity so that participants first have an opportunity to see how these ideas apply to all aspects of individual difference before considering developmental and other specific disability categories.

Before implementing the curriculum, I ask that you carefully consider your goals in using the curriculum, as well as the particularities of the community that will be participating in the programming. These issues are complex, and are not about two distinct groups of neurotypical and able-bodied people versus people with disabilities.

We all exist along a continuum, and all types and degrees of difference deserve to be respected and accommodated.

One important way to avoid problematic outcomes is to set norms before beginning an activity. University of Michigan's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (n.d.) provides a helpful list of guidelines and recommendations to ensure discussions are safe for all involved. Ground rules such as "criticize ideas, not individuals," "allow everyone the chance to speak," and "avoid assumptions about any member of the class or generalizations about social groups," help create a safe space for participants to share their thoughts, perspectives, and ideas. You may want to implement the ouch/oops protocol, where anyone in the conversation can say ouch if someone's comment is hurtful, or oops if someone inadvertently says something offensive. This protocol sends the message that it is safe to make mistakes, as long as you are able to recognize your mistake, apologize, and make a change for the future.

Never expect someone with identified disabilities to speak on behalf of all disabled people, and only ask someone to share personal experiences if the person is comfortable. Remember that even if there are no participants with visible or identified disabilities in attendance, there is a high likelihood that there are people with invisible disabilities, or family members of people with disabilities participating in the activity. The language of the questions is carefully crafted to avoid assumptions and allow for a range of perspectives, but specific norms should be put in place in accordance with the needs of the group. For older children, adolescents, and adults, I recommend involving the participants in the norm setting process, giving them a chance to share what norms are

important to them in order to feel safe in the conversation. For additional ideas related to norm setting, follow the link in the resource list on page 27.

In addition, the language we use to talk about disability and difference is incredibly important in cultivating mindsets that embrace human diversity. This curriculum is designed through the lens of the social model of disability, taking care to avoid the ableist assumptions that pervade our culture. To learn more about the social model of disability and ableism see the Theoretical Framework section in the preceding rationale. Within the disability community, there is a debate between person first language and identity first language. Person first language asserts that when talking about a person with a disability, the person should always come first, as a disability need not define the person. Person first language proponents prefer “person with a disability” over “disabled person” and “person with autism” over “autistic person” (Snow, 2001). Identity first language advocates, however, feel that person first language implies that disability is inherently negative. People who prefer identity first language view their disability as an integral aspect of their identity that should be embraced, and prefer to be called “disabled” or autistic,” for example (Brown, n.d.). Since there are a range of perspectives, defer to the preferences of each individual person. Always consider whether it is necessary to refer to a person’s disability. In many cases it is probably not necessary at all. In cases where it is necessary, default to person first language unless you know what language the person prefers. When possible, it is always a good idea to ask a person or their family what language they prefer to use when talking about that aspect of the person’s identity.

You will also note that throughout the curriculum I refrain from discussing differences in terms of static strengths and weaknesses. Rather, there are things that each of us struggles with in different contexts and at different times, and other things at which we excel. We are always changing, developing, and growing. Avoid language that perpetuates “us versus them” thinking, or that implies that one quality is normal, while another is abnormal. Use language and promote conversations that focus on embracing, rather than overcoming or pitying disability. The language is nuanced, and can at times feel overwhelming, especially if you are just starting out on the journey towards inclusion. All I ask is that you be open to learning, growing, and changing. Ultimately, I hope that you, and all those who participate in the curricular activities, will walk away with increased knowledge about human variation, and greater skills related to talking about, and interacting with, difference and disability.

Best of luck!

Tali Cohen

Suggested Resources and Further Reading:

- Social Model of Disability: <https://www.scope.org.uk/about-us/our-brand/social-model-of-disability>
- Ableism: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb07/vol64/num05/Confronting-Ableism.aspx>
- Identity-First Language: <http://autisticadvocacy.org/about-asan/identity-first-language/>

- Person-First Language:
<https://nebula.wsimg.com/1c1af57f9319dbf909ec52462367fa88?AccessKeyId=9D6F6082FE5EE52C3DC6&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>
- Attitudinal Barriers for People with Disabilities: <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/attitudinal-barriers-for-people-with-disabilities>
- Norm Setting: <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/generalguidelines>
- Brief History of the Disability Rights Movement:
<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/backgrounders/disability-rights-movement>
- Universal Design for Learning: <http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.WX9R51qGNsN>
- Howard Garner's Multiple Intelligences: <https://www.edutopia.org/your-multiple-intelligences>
- Modifications versus Accommodations: <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/treatments-approaches/educational-strategies/the-difference-between-accommodations-and-modifications>
- Logical Consequences: <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/punishment-vs-logical-consequences/>
- Jewish Disability and Inclusion Organizations:
 - Tikvah Programs at Camp Ramah:
<http://www.campramah.org/content/specialneeds.php>
 - Matan: <https://matankids.org/>
 - Gateways: Access to Jewish Education: <https://www.jgateways.org/>

- Rosh Pina: <https://www.rpcornerstone.org/>
- Hidden Sparks: <http://www.hiddensparks.org/>
- Recommended TED/ELI Talks:
 - The Danger of a Single Story, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9Ihs241zeg>
 - Isn't it a pity? The real problem with special needs, by Torrie Dunlap:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJ7QaCFbizo&t=2s>
 - I'm not your inspiration, thank you very much, by Stella Young:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8K9Gg164Bsw&list=PLJ3FchixeUUzfA-KF27eC4vw2RzDd9qNx&index=35>
 - The two little words that can change a life, by Pamela Schuller:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=COJvIrVoD-4&list=PLJ3FchixeUUzfA-KF27eC4vw2RzDd9qNx&index=51&t=15s>

Section 1: Staff Training

Establishing an Inclusive Mindset

Duration: 1 hour

Materials:

- Large sticky pad
- Markers
- Objects for “See, Run, Build” activity
- Copies of Inclusive Mindset Tip Sheet

Introduction: What is Inclusion? (10 minutes)

- Facilitate a conversation about inclusion to get a sense of where people are coming from and explore their prior knowledge
- What comes to mind when you hear the word inclusion?
 - Write down responses, which should be just a word or a few words, on chart paper. The facilitator should keep the participants’ responses in mind throughout the training to ensure that the training feels relevant and builds on, changes, or expands participants’ existing understandings of inclusion.

See, Run, Build (25 minutes)

Materials Needed: An assortment of objects such as blocks, cardboard boxes, cups, fabric, empty recycled food containers, art supplies, and other miscellaneous building supplies.

Description:

- Set up: The group is broken up into two teams. On each team, there are four to six roles: Two builders (If you have more people, this role can be done by 4-6 people working together in groups of 2-3), one seer, and one runner. The builders should be on opposite sides of a large space, or around a corner where they cannot see each other. The builders should have identical building supplies.
- Step 1: Builder #1 on each team should use the materials to build some sort of sculpture/structure.
- Step 2: The seer should take a close look at the structure, for about 30 seconds, and then go describe what they saw to the runner. This step can be repeated multiple times, as needed.
- Step 3: The runner should communicate what they were told by the seer to builder #2, whose task is to try and replicate the sculpture created by builder #1.
- Step 4: Facilitate a conversation about the activity:
 - What did it feel like for each person in the different roles?
 - How successful were you at replicating the sculpture?
 - What strategies were helpful?
 - What was difficult?
- Takeaways:
 - We all communicate in different ways. What might make perfect sense to one person can be totally confusing to another person.

- We all have strengths and challenges. One person might be great at memorizing visual stimuli (seer), another person might have great spatial awareness (builder), and another person might be a great oral communicator (runner).
- In order to build a strong, vibrant community, we need all members to be able to participate to their fullest potential. How can we make this happen in our community?

Videos (10 minutes)

- Dunlap, Torrie. [TEDx Talks]. (2015, January 12). *Isn't it a pity? The real problem with special needs*. [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJ7QaCFbizo&index=49&list=PLJ3FchixeUUzfA-KF27eC4vw2RzDd9qNx>. (Watch from 0:27-2:45 and 14:45-end)
- After showing the clip, facilitate a short discussion about possible takeaways.

Tip Sheet (10 minutes)

- Review tip sheet (on the following page) together, discussing each item and answering questions as you go. Some terms, such as accommodations, identity-first, and person-first language will need to be defined and explained. Consult the suggested resources on page 27 to learn more about the nuances of these terms.

Questions? (5 minutes)

Inclusive Mindset Tip Sheet

1. Inclusion is a right, not a privilege. We are not doing acts of *chesed* (charity) when we include people with disabilities; it is part of our mission as a community.
2. According to the social model of disability, it is society, not physical impairments, that disables people. It is our responsibility to ensure that everyone is meaningfully included, rather than disabled, by the community.
3. Words matter – both yours and your students'. Be a *dugma* (positive role model) by using identity-first (Deaf person) and person-first (person with a disability) language that is respectful to everyone.
4. When planning programs and activities, ensure that everyone can participate fully. Some participants might need accommodations in order to participate successfully.
5. When participants are having a hard time, remember that it is your role to be a detective and think creatively in order to figure out the root of the problem and address it effectively.
6. We are all here to learn and grow together. Don't be afraid to ask questions and make mistakes – that's how we will work together to create a strong, inclusive community.



WE ARE ALL WONDERWOMEN!



Questions to ask yourself while planning inclusive programs:

1. Have I utilized the theory of universal design to create a program that will accommodate a wide variety of individual needs and preferences?









Universal design, the architectural concept that brought us curb cuts, has been applied to teaching and learning. Universal design for learning (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014) is a framework that encourages teachers to design learning tasks that will support a



broad range of students by mixing up the ways in which we engage learners (the why), present information (the what), and ask learners to demonstrate their knowledge (the how).

2. Have I considered my students' specific readiness, interests, and learning styles? Have I incorporated a variety of types of activities to support this range?

Remember, we all have different strengths and learning profiles. Howard Garner (2006) proposed that people possess multiple intelligences in the following areas:

Bodily-Kinesthetic 	Interpersonal 	Visual-Linguistic 	Musical 	Visual-Spatial 	Logical-Mathematical 	Intrapersonal 	Naturalistic 
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3. Have I incorporated multisensory components into my activity?

Increase engagement by providing opportunities for kids to touch and feel, taste, smell, move, and see, engaging with the materials and concepts in multiple ways.

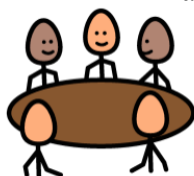


4. Have I thought about my students' particular needs and made adaptations accordingly?

*You can make adaptations in the form of **modifications** (changing up the learning goal) and/or by making **accommodations** (the goal stays the same, but you change how the student will reach that goal). Adaptations can be made for students who might have difficulty with the original activity, or students who need an extra challenge.*

FAIR ISN'T everybody getting the *same thing*. FAIR IS everybody getting what they *need* in order to be **SUCCESSFUL.**

5. How am I grouping the students for this activity? Am I grouping homogeneously by common areas of readiness or interest, or heterogeneously so that each student brings something different to the group?



Be strategic based on the goals of the activity and ensure that over the course of a longer period of time you mix up the groupings so that at times they are homogenous, and other times they are heterogeneous.

Communication Differences Tip Sheet

1. **Get to know the children you are working with.** All children are different, so resist making assumptions based on diagnoses. Knowing a child's areas of strengths and challenges will improve your communication. Children may or may not have difficulties in any or all of the following areas of language:



a. **expressive language:** expressing thoughts orally or in writing



b. **receptive language:** processing and understanding spoken or written information



c. **language pragmatics:** the social nuances of language, such as body language, tone of voice, or idioms

2. **Be a detective.** Children communicate in many different ways beyond traditional language, such as through behavior, echolalia, or gestures. Children with communication differences are constantly struggling to make themselves understood, so meet them halfway.



3. **Use visuals** in the form of words, images, and gestures to scaffold and differentiate the ways in which you communicate with children.



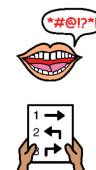
4. **Use positive language.** Tell the child exactly what you want the child to do, rather than saying “stop,” or “don’t.” For example, “Please stay with the group,” rather than “Don’t wander off.” This sets the child up for success by letting the child know what the expected behavior is.



5. **Provide a few seconds of processing time, or “wait time” after asking a question or giving a verbal direction.** This gives children a chance to process information. Resist the urge to repeat yourself or assume that the child is ignoring you or unable to answer your question. The child might simply need a few extra seconds to process your directions.





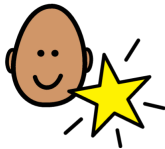


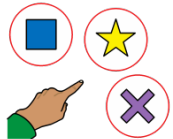
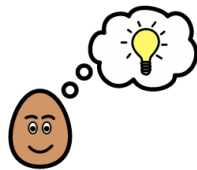



6. **Limit the number of words you use and give complex directions in chunks** especially when giving information or directions verbally. For example, rather than saying, “Sam, please go and pick up all of those toys so that the rug area is cleaned up, and then come have a seat in the meeting area” say, “Sam, please clean up the toys.” Wait until the child is finished with the first step before giving the next direction.



7. **Limit sarcasm and idioms.** Many children with communication differences are literal thinkers and might get confused if you use an expression they do not understand.

Behavior Tip Sheet

1. **Behavior = Communication.** Ask yourself, “What is the child trying to tell me by acting this way?” Be a detective and address the root of the behavior rather than reacting to the behavior itself. 
2. Beware of unstructured time. Many children have trouble figuring out what to do, and this may result in challenging behaviors. 
3. Don't take behaviors personally. This can sometimes be hard, but remember, the child is not acting out because the child doesn't like you, or because the child wants to make you mad. There is something else going on, even if it may not seem that way. 
4. Ensure that expectations are clear and understood. State expectations positively, telling children what you want them to do, not what you don't want them to do. 
5. Get to know your students well and **focus on strengths** and interests rather than areas of difficulty. 
6. Know when you need support and ask for help! There will be times when you need to “tag out.” 
7. Utilize **logical** and **natural consequences**, not vengeful punishments, to help children change their behavior for the future. 
8. If a child does not want to participate, **provide choices**, ensuring that all options are acceptable. 
9. Be flexible! Find creative solutions to children's challenges. 
10. The best way to limit challenging behaviors is to ensure that activities are well planned and engaging! 

Jewish Texts about Differences

Breishit (Genesis) 1:26

And God created man in God's image; in the image of God, God created him. וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים | אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַלְמֵם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think it means to be created *betzelem elohim*/in the image of God?
2. Why do you think this *Betzelem Elohim*, being created in the image of God, is such an important Jewish value?
3. How can we find new ways to see God in ourselves and in others?

Shemot (Exodus) 4:10-11

But Moses said to God, "Please, God, I am not a man of words, not yesterday, or the day before, or now that you are speaking to me. I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." And God said to him, "Who gives man speech? Who makes man mute, or deaf, or hearing, or blind? Is it not I, God?" וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-יְהוָה בִּי אֲדֹנָי לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנֹכִי גַם מִתְמוּל גַּם מִשְׁלֵשָׁם גַּם מֵאָז דִּבַּרְתָּ אֶל-עַבְדֶּךָ כִּי כְבֹד-פֶּה וְכִבְד לְשׁוֹן אֲנֹכִי: וּמִי שָׁם פֶּה לְאָדָם אוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי מִי־יִשְׁוֶם אֵלֶם אוֹ חֲרָשׁ אוֹ פֶקַח אוֹ עִוֵּר הֲלֹא אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה:

Discussion Questions:

1. According to this line from the Torah, God gives people disabilities on purpose, and does not see them as something bad. Why do you think so many people see disability as something bad? How can we learn to see disability differently?
2. Instead of taking away Moses' speech difficulties, God tells Moses that Aaron will help him lead the Jewish people. This is called an accommodation. How can we all work together and help each other overcome difficulties and celebrate differences?

Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) 4:3

Ben Azzai would say, "Do not scorn any person, and do not underrate the importance of any thing—for there is no one who does not have their hour, and no thing without its place." הוּא הֵיזָה אוֹמֵר, אַל תְּהִי בֹז לְכָל אָדָם, וְאַל תְּהִי מִפְּלִיג לְכָל דְּבָר, שְׂאִין לֶה אָדָם שְׂאִין לוֹ שְׁעָה וְאִין לֶה דְּבָר שְׂאִין לוֹ מְקוֹם

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever felt unimportant or devalued? What was that experience like?
2. What steps can we take to make sure that every individual in our community feels important, respected, and valued?

Mishneh Torah, Talmud Torah (Torah Study) 1:8

Every Jew is obligated to study Torah, כָּל אִישׁ מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל חַיֵּב בְּתִלְמוּד תּוֹרָה בֵּין

whether rich or poor, healthy or suffering with ailments, young or very old. Even the poor man who supports himself from charity and knocking on doors, whether married with children, or not, is obligated to establish set times for the study of Torah either day or night as it says, “and you shall meditate on it day and night” (Joshua 1:8).

עֲנִי בֵּין עֲשִׂיר בֵּין שְׁלֹם בְּגוֹפוֹ בֵּין בְּעַל
 חוֹר בֵּין שְׁהִיָּה זָקֵן גְּדוֹל יְסוּרִין בֵּין בְּ
 שְׁתַּשְׁשׁ כַּחוֹ אֶפְלוֹ הָיָה עֲנִי הַמְתַּפְרִיֵּס מִן
 הַצְּדָקָה וּמְחַזֵּר עַל הַפְּתוּחִים וְאֶפְלוֹ בְּעַל
 אִשָּׁה וּבָנִים חֵיב לְקַבֵּעַ לוֹ זְמַן לְתַלְמוּד
 א (יהושע) תוֹרָה בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר
 ה: "וְהִגִּיתָ בוֹ יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה" ה)

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think about the mitzvah, or requirement, that every Jewish person must study Torah?
2. Do you feel this is an important commandment to ensure that everyone had equal access to Torah study?
3. Do you think Torah study is accessible for everybody?
4. What steps might we need to take to ensure that every member of our community has an opportunity to fulfill this mitzvah, or commandment?

Bava Mezi'a 58B

A tanna recited before R. Nahman b. Yitzchak: **He who shames his neighbor in public, it is as if he shed his blood.** Whereupon he remarked to him, 'You've spoken well, because I have seen it, the redness departing and paleness coming in.'

Abaye asked R. Dimi: What do people [most] carefully avoid in the West [sc. palestine]? - He replied: putting others to shame. For R. Hanina said: All descend into Gehenna with the exception of three. 'All' - can you really think so! But say thus: All who descend into Gehenna [subsequently] reascend, excepting three, who descend but do not reascend: One who commits adultery with a married woman, one who publicly shames a neighbor, or one who gives a neighbor an evil nickname. 'Giving a nickname' - but that is putting to shame! - [It means], **Even when one is accustomed to the name.**

תני תנא קמיה דרב נחמן בר יצחק כל
 המלבין פני חבריו ברבים כאילו שופך
 דמים א"ל שפיר קא אמרת דחזינא ליה
 דאזיל סומקא ואתי חוורא

אמר ליה אביי לרב דימי במערבא במאי
 זהירי א"ל באחוורי אפי דאמר רבי
 חנינא הכל יורדין לגיהנם חוץ משלשה
 הכל ס"ד אלא אימא כל היורדין לגיהנם
 עולים חוץ משלשה שיורדין ואין עולין
 ואלו הן הבא על אשת איש והמלבין פני
 חבריו ברבים והמכנה שם רע לחבירו
 מכנה היינו מלבין אע"ג דדש ביה
 בשמיה

*Adapted from the Soncino English Translation of the Babylonian Talmud

Discussion Questions:

1. According to the above text, embarrassing someone in public is considered one of the worst human actions. Why might the Rabbis have considered this action such a horrendous offence?
2. Why do you think Rabbi Hanina felt it was necessary to list both publicly shaming a neighbor and giving someone an evil nickname? What is the difference between these two actions?
3. What is the significance of saying that even evil nicknames that people are accustomed to, and therefore no longer experience shame from, are considered among the worst possible human actions?
4. Can you think of a time when someone was made fun of, and wasn't in on the joke? What was that experience like?
5. What can we do in our own community to ensure that people are not embarrassed and shamed, even if/when they are unaware that they are being made fun of?

Mishneh Torah, Brachot (Blessings) 10:12

A person who sees a “kushi” (a dark-skinned person)¹, or a person with a strange-looking face or abnormal limb (or any kind of a physical deformity) should recite the following blessing: *Blessed are you...who has altered his creations/made his creations different*. A person who sees a blind man, a one-legged person, a person with skin boils or white blotches, or the like, should recite the following blessing: *Blessed are you...the true judge*. If he was born this way, recite: *who has altered his creations*. When one sees an elephant, monkey, or owl, he should recite: *who has altered his creations*.

הַרְוֵאָה אֶת הַכּוּשִׁי וְאֶת הַמְשׁוּנֵי בְצוּרַת
פְּנֵיהֶן אוֹ בְּאֵיבְרֵיהֶם מִבְּרַךְ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי'
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם מְשַׁנֵּה אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת
הַרְוֵאָה סוּמָא אוֹ קִיטֵעַ וּמוֹכָה שְׁחִין
וּבֹהֶקֶנִין וְכִיּוֹצֵא בֵּהֶן מִבְּרַךְ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יי' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם דֵּיין הָאֱמֶת וְאִם
נּוֹלְדוּ כֵּן מִמְעַי אִמֵּן מִבְּרַךְ מְשַׁנֵּה אֶת
הַקּוֹף וְאֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת הַרְוֵאָה אֶת הַפִּיל וְאֶת
הַקִּיפּוֹף אוֹמֵר בְּרוּךְ מְשַׁנֵּה אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is your initial reaction to reading this text?
2. Have you ever before learned about the bracha, or blessing “משנה את הבריות”, praising God for making his creations different? What are your thoughts about this bracha?
3. How might the context of the bracha in the above text complicate our understanding of the bracha?

¹ The term “kushi” is problematic, as it has often been used as a derogatory word for black people. Originally, it was used to describe people who came from the land of Kush, which is believed to include parts of modern-day Sudan, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. In biblical texts, this term was used to describe any dark-skinned person from Africa (Kaplan, 1999). It is intentionally included in this translation so that the discussion may include conversations about the challenging nature of this text.

4. Do you think there is value to continuing to include this bracha in modern liturgy? Why or why not?
5. How might we grapple with what many believe to be a problematic historical and textual context of the bracha?

Megillah 24b

As it has been taught: R. Jose said: ... All my life I was troubled by this verse, “And you shall grope at noonday as the blind gropes in darkness” (**Deuteronomy 28:29**). Now why should a blind person care whether it is dark or light? And then the following incident occurred. I was once walking on a pitch black night when I saw a blind man walking in the road with a torch in his hand. I said to him, My son, why do you carry this torch? He replied: As long as I have this torch in my hand, people see me and save me from the holes and the thorns and briars.

דתניא א"ר יוסי כל ימי הייתי מצטער
מקרא זה (דברים כח, כט) והיית על
ממשש בצהרים כאשר ימשש העור
באפלה וכי מה אכפת ליה לעור בין
אפילה לאורה
עד שבא מעשה לידי פעם אחת הייתי
באישון לילה ואפלה וראיתי מהלך
בידו סומא שהיה מהלך בדרך ואבוקה
אבוקה זו למה לך אמר אמרתי לו בני
לי כל זמן שאבוקה בידי בני אדם רואין
אותי ומצילין אותי מן הפחתין ומן
הקוצין ומן הברקנין:

Discussion questions:

1. What stands out at you from the above text? Why was someone who could not see carrying a torch?
2. The above story is included in a discussion the Rabbis are having about whether or not someone who is blind should recite the blessing over light. Do you think someone who is blind should thank God for creating light? Why or why not?
3. Similarly, what meaning do you think the Shema, which literally means listen or hear, has for a Deaf person?
4. What lessons can we learn from the above text? What are the applications of this lesson outside of the literal example of a person who cannot see carrying a torch?

“Imagine a World...”

By Diana Pastora Carson (2006)

Imagine a world where everyone is special.

Imagine a world where respect for all exists.

Imagine people of all races, colors, and abilities valued and loved the same.

Imagine people of all appearances, beliefs, and backgrounds esteemed and honored each day.

Imagine a world where differences are like instruments, bringing unique sounds to a symphony.

Imagine humanity generously dancing and singing along in harmony.

Imagine seeing others’ “differentness” with appreciation and with grace.

Imagine recognizing creation’s ingenious way of designing the human race,

Where everyone is great as they are and no one is better or less;

Where every person has her place in making the world its best.
 Imagine us making a difference in the lives of our fellow men
 By letting them be who they are and supporting them how we can.
 Imagine a world where everyone is special.
 Imagine a world where respect for all exists.
 Imagine this world and create it now.
 Imagine it.
 Be it.

Discussion questions:

1. What images come to mind when you read this poem?
2. Is there a specific line from the poem that stands out to you?
3. Are you able to easily imagine the world as the Carson describes? Why or why not?
4. What steps can we take to make this imagined world a reality?

“Sometimes”

From *Jackson Whole Wyoming*, by Joan Clarke (2005)

My friend lives in a world by himself.
 Sometimes, he lets me join him.
 Sometimes, he doesn't.
 My friend is like the sun.
 Sometimes, he shines.
 Sometimes, he disappears to a place I can't see.
 My friend is like a puppy dog.
 Sometimes, he listens to what I say.
 Sometimes, he just doesn't understand.
 My friend is like Abraham Lincoln.
 Sometimes, people are amazed by his honesty.
 Sometimes, they are angered by it.
 My friend is like an encyclopedia.
 Sometimes, all his knowledge is very impressive.
 Sometimes, I get bored and want to put him aside.
 My friend lives in a world by himself.
 Sometimes, I invite him to join my world.
 Sometimes, he joins for a while.

Discussion questions:

1. Pick one or two lines from the poem that stand out to you. Explain why.
2. Does this poem make you think of anyone you know? Share why without naming the person.
3. Re-read the first two lines and the last three lines of the poem. What is the significance of beginning and ending the poem in this way?
4. When do we decide to join the world of a person who understands the world in a different way, and when do we expect them to join our world? How might we reconsider these expectations?

Section 2—Children’s Programming

Read Alouds for All Ages

***It’s Okay to be Different* by Todd Parr**

- *Summary:* This lovely book uses simple language and bright illustrations to demonstrate that, “it’s okay to be different.” Children of all ages are able to connect to this book, whether they wear glasses, are missing a tooth, look different from others in one way or another, or know someone who is different in some visible way. Through his book, Parr encourages children to embrace and celebrate difference.
- Recommended for ages 2 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 - Questions to ask during reading:
 1. First Green Page: What is something you need help to do?
 2. First Purple Page: Do you know someone who wears glasses?
 3. Second Purple Page: When do you feel proud of yourself?
 4. Fourth Yellow Page: Do you have any friends who are different from you? How are they different? Are you different from any of your friends? How?
 - Questions to ask after reading:
 1. What is something different about you that makes you unique and/or special?
 2. Have you ever seen someone who looked different from what you are used to? How did you feel? Sometimes people feel nervous, confused or excited. Why do you think we feel this way when we see things that are new to us?
 3. At first differences can seem scary, but they are what makes each person special and unique. What are some things that you can do when you see something or someone who seems different in some way? Encourage children to ask questions, but in ways that respect individuals’ privacy and personal space. For suggestions on establishing norms to ensure a safe and respectful conversation, please consult the recommended resource listed on page 27.

***Beautiful Oops* by Barney Saltzberg**

- *Summary:* In this interactive pop-up book, Saltzberg encourages readers to reimagine a mistake as a possibility for creativity. Mistakes are a part of everyone’s lives. Use this book to spark a conversation about ways to see our mistakes, as well as the mistakes of our friends, in new ways.
- Recommended for ages 3 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. Think of a time when you or one of your friends made a mistake. What happened?
 2. Everyone makes mistakes; they help us learn. When a friend makes a mistake or does something you feel uncomfortable about, what can we do?

Amelia Bedelia by Peggy Parish

- *Summary:* Amelia Bedelia is a VERY literal thinker, so on her first day of work as a housekeeper, Amelia Bedelia puts the lights out by hanging them outside, dusts the furniture by putting dusting powder all over it, draws the curtains by drawing a picture, and much more. So, why doesn't she get fired? Because she makes an amazing pie, and Mrs. Rogers learns to write her to-do lists differently so that Amelia Bedelia will understand. The book sends a great message about learning to respect and value everyone, embracing their differences.
- Recommended for ages 4 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. Why does Amelia Bedelia misunderstand the directions?
 2. Why didn't Mr. and Mrs. Rogers fire Amelia Bedelia?
 3. What did Mrs. Rogers do to avoid future misunderstandings?
 4. Do you have any friends who understand things differently?
 5. In Judaism there is a blessing that praises God for making people different: ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם משנה את הבריות . Why do you think we would want to thank God for making his creations diverse and different from one another?

The Story of Ferdinand by Monroe Leaf

- *Summary:* Ferdinand is not like the other bulls. He does not enjoy the same activities as the other bulls, instead preferring to relax under a tree and smell the flowers. This book is great for starting a discussion about different preferences, likes, and dislikes among children, and how we can learn to appreciate these differences rather than viewing them as "weird."
- Recommended for ages 4 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. What made Ferdinand different from the other bulls?
 2. Why do you think Ferdinand's mom worried about him?
 3. Does Ferdinand feel bad about being different? Why or why not?
 4. Do you have any friends like Ferdinand who enjoy different activities than most of your other friends?
 5. What happens when someone wants to do something different? How is that person treated by their friends?

King Bidgood's in the Bathtub by Audrey Wood

- *Summary:* Sometimes it is the most unlikely character that becomes the hero in the story. In this humorous book about King Bidgood, many powerful and important characters are unable to convince the king to get out of the bathtub. Will anyone be able to solve this problem? In the end, the person who you would least expect, the page, saves the day with his creative solution. This story provides an important reminder to value the contributions of every person, no matter how small or powerless the person may seem at first.
- Recommended for ages 4 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*

1. A lot of important people try to get the King out of the tub: the Knight, the Queen, the Duke, and the King's whole court! Who is the one who finally gets the King out of the tub? (Explain that a Page is a King's young servant.)
2. How was the Page able to solve the problem and get King Bidgood out of the bathtub?
3. Why was it a big deal that a young servant outsmarted all the other people?
4. How can we learn to respect the ideas and opinions of everyone in our community, no matter how old the person is or what the person's job is?

Can I Play Too? By Mo Willems

- *Summary:* In his characteristic style, Willems uses simple illustrations and sparse language to ask the following question: What does it take to include a snake in a game of catch? The overarching message in this story is that creative thinking and a commitment to including everyone allows us to find ways to include people in activities that might at first seem completely inaccessible to them.
- Recommended for ages 5 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. P. 10-11: What do you think Gerald and Piggie are thinking?
 2. P. 15: What is the problem? Why can't Snake play catch?
 3. P. 38-39: What do you think they should do? Brainstorm ideas about how they can include Snake.
 4. P. 49: It looks like they are going to give up. How do you think Snake is feeling?
 5. After reading: How were Piggie and Gerald able to include Snake at the end of the story?
 6. Have you ever been left out, or left a friend out, because they had a hard time with a game?
 7. How can we think creatively so that everyone is included in our community?

Ish by Peter H. Reynolds

- *Summary:* Ramon loves to draw, but when his brother tells him that he is bad at drawing, his joy is lost. It is not until his sister helps him see things differently that Ramon rediscovers his love of drawing. This book asks children to consider the impact of their comments, as well as whether getting something "right" is what is really most important.
- Recommended for ages 5 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. What is something that you love to do?
 2. Have you ever felt sad because you didn't think you were good at something?
 3. How does his brother's comment affect Ramon? How does it make him feel?
 4. How does Ramon's sister make him feel better about his drawings?
 5. Does everyone have to do things the same way for it to be "good" or "right"?
 6. How do you feel when you are doing something you love in your own special way?

The Dot by Peter H. Reynolds

- *Summary:* It does not feel good when you think you are bad at something. But perhaps all we need is to reframe what we consider “good” and “bad.” Vashti’s teacher helps spark her creativity by demonstrating that she values her artwork, and as a result Vashti adopts a whole new mentality. This book asks us to consider how we can make sure that everyone feels valuable and capable in our communities.
- Recommended for ages 5 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. What is something you feel you are really good at?
 2. What is something that you feel you are not so good at, or something that is hard for you?
 3. Have you ever had a friend or teacher help you see things differently, like Vashti’s teacher did?
 4. Have you every helped any of your friends feel better about something they felt they weren’t very good at?
 5. How can we make sure that all people feel good about themselves, no matter their strengths and struggles?

The Prince Who Was Just Himself by Silke Schnee

- *Summary:* Prince Noah looks and acts a bit different from the other children in the kingdom, but his family loves him just the same. When the evil knight, Scarface, threatens the kingdom, it is the prince’s unique approach that saves the day. Featuring a character with Down syndrome, Schnee reminds us of the value of differences.
- Recommended for ages 6 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. P. 6: What is something you do that makes your parents feel proud?
 2. P. 12: How do you think the royal family felt when people laughed and said mean things?
 3. P. 20: Why was Scarface so surprised by Prince Noah’s actions?
 4. After reading: At the beginning of the story, people thought Prince Noah’s differences were a bad thing. How did they feel at the end of the story?
 5. What is something different about you that makes you unique? What is something different about one of your friends that makes them unique?
 6. Have you ever seen something or someone who looked different? How did you feel? Sometimes people feel nervous or confused or excited. Why do you think we feel this way when we see things that are new to us?
 7. At first differences can seem scary, but they are what makes each person special and unique. What are some things that you can do when you see something or someone who seems different in some way? Encourage children to ask questions, but in ways that respect individuals’ privacy and personal space.

The Boy Who Grew Flowers by Jen Wojtowicz

- *Summary:* The kids at school all think Rink and his family are strange. His teacher seats him in the back of the room, and he has no friends. That is until a new student, Angelina, joins Rink's class. Angelina is intrigued by Rink, and they end up finding out that they have a lot in common! Often we view unexpected differences as something strange, but it just takes a new perspective to view these differences as something wonderful that brings uniqueness and beauty to our world.
- Recommended for ages 7 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. Why was Rink all alone at school?
 2. How do you think Rink felt about not having friends?
 3. What do you think Rink liked about Angelina?
 4. Have you ever felt embarrassed to share something unique about yourself?
 5. What do you think would help people feel less nervous about difference?
 6. What do you think we can do to help all people in our community feel valued, respected, and safe to share what makes them unique and different?

The Cracked Pot by Jun Matsumoto

- *Summary:* What might at first appear to be a flaw might actually bring a great deal of beauty into the world. In this beautifully illustrated children's book, Matsumoto retells the classic story of the cracked pot. At first ashamed that he is not able to bring a full bucket of water home, the pot ultimately discovers that the water bearer turned this flaw into an asset by planting flower seeds along the pot's path. Each one of us has strengths, as well as struggles. Rather than trying to use our strengths to compensate for our struggles, perhaps we can rethink the way we view our challenges.
- Recommended for ages 7 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. How did the cracked pot feel in the beginning of the story?
 2. How did the water carrier turn the cracked bucket's challenge into something beautiful and useful?
 3. Can you think of anything about yourself that you have every felt ashamed or embarrassed about? How can you find a way to embrace that part of yourself?
 4. What is a unique quality of yours that you feel enhances our community and brings beauty to the world?

The Heart's Language by Lois-Ann Yamanaka

- *Summary:* This beautiful, poetic book tells the story of a nonverbal boy who is very connected to the natural environment around him, but the people around him have trouble connecting with him despite deep feelings of love. Eventually, the boy and his parents are able to connect by learning to communicate in new ways that make sense to one another. The book leaves its readers with the important message that it should not be solely up to people with disabilities to make themselves understood, but that neurotypical people also have a responsibility to

learn to see the world through different perspectives and communicate in different ways.

- Recommended for ages 8 and older.
- *Suggested Discussion Questions:*
 1. Have you ever known someone who did not communicate in the way most people communicate? What was that experience like for you?
 2. How did the boy in the story feel about not being able to communicate with other people?
 3. Why do you think the other people in the story were so uncomfortable with how the boy acted and communicated?
 4. What do the boy's parents do at the end of the story that allows the boy to finally communicate with them?
 5. What do you think we can do make sure that everyone in our community is able to share their thoughts and ideas and be fully included?

We are All Superheros (Ages 8-10)

Goal: After completing this activity each child should leave embracing what makes each of them unique, and think about ways to accept and appreciate everyone for their unique qualities. Children will learn to appreciate difference and realize that we all have areas in which we excel, and other areas in which we struggle. As a community we should support each other in our areas of difficulty so that we can shine in our areas of strength.

Materials:

- The Amazing Spider-Man: An Origin Story, by Rich Thomas
- Copies of “I Am a Superhero” worksheet
- Blank Superhero Masks (Cut out from fabric with elastic bands)
- Fabric markers

Description: Before the activity, staff should get the children excited about the superhero theme and, if appropriate for the setting, encourage them to dress up as superheroes or other powerful/magical/mythical figures that they like. Children will then be split up into groups of about 10.

Part 1: Read-Aloud (20 minutes)

In each group, a facilitator will read *The Amazing Spider-Man: An Origin Story*, by Rich Thomas (2011). After reading the book, facilitate the following discussion:

Discussion Questions:

- How was spider-man treated at the beginning of the story?
- How did that make him feel?
- What did Spider-Man do when he first got his powers? Was that the right way to use his power?
- What does Spider-Man learn by the end of the story? (With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility)
- Talk with the children about how we all have strengths and challenges. It is all of our responsibilities to be nice to everyone and ensure that people help each other out and are able to shine with their strengths.

Part 2: Design your own Superhero! (15 minutes)

- Children should be given the worksheet to fill out with their superpowers, areas for improvement, and how they are going to change the world.
- Prompt children to really think about what some of their own strengths and difficulties are, and what they can contribute to the community.
- When children finish their worksheets, have them design their masks, with their strengths depicted on the front, and their challenges on the back.
- Give time for children to share their superheroes with each other.

Part 3: Closing

- Come back together as a large group and have some children share what their groups talked about.

- Depending on the setting where this program is being run, you have some options at this point.
 - In a school or camp setting with a program for children with disabilities that the children may have questions about, have a senior staff member from that program come and talk about how the children that they work with have strengths and challenges like all children, but some of their strengths and some of their challenges might stand out more than other people's. Provide time for the children to ask any questions they might have about the program or disabilities in general, reminding the children that it is important to respect individual privacy so we will not be discussing or answering questions about any specific child.
 - In a setting where children with disabilities are integrated into group, or in a setting that does not yet support children with disabilities, a staff member should share some closing thoughts about how the community supports people with many different strengths and challenges, some more obvious than others, and how we must work together to ensure that everyone is supported in their areas of difficulty and has opportunities to shine with their strengths. If the setting is integrated, you may want to think about finding an appropriate time for children to ask any questions they may have in a safe space. The read alouds provide a great jumping off point for follow up conversations from this activity.

I AM A SUPERHERO!

MY SUPERHERO NAME: _____

SECRET IDENTITY (MY REAL NAME): _____

MY SUPERHERO COSTUME:
SKETCH A PICTURE OF YOUR SUPERHERO DISGUISE



MY SUPERPOWER

(ONE THING I AM REALLY GOOD AT):

MY KRYPTONITE

(ONE THING THAT IS HARD FOR ME):

HOW WILL I USE MY SUPERPOWERS FOR GOOD?:

(HOW AM I GOING TO HELP MY COMMUNITY?)

Embracing Differences (Ages 10-11)

Goal: Through this activity, children will develop an appreciation of the fact that we are all different, and that these differences make our community great. We are all imperfect, and we all bring beauty to the world in different ways.

Materials:

- Four Corners Statements
 - I love chocolate.
 - I love animals.
 - I hate broccoli.
 - I love reading.
 - I love math.
 - Art class is my favorite.
 - I love building things.
 - I love playing organized sports.
 - I hate bugs.
 - I love dancing.
 - I need some alone time every day.
 - I am very comfortable speaking in front of large groups of people.
 - I am very musical.
- Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree signs for each group.
- Copy of Story of the Cracked Pot (Note: Depending on the group, you may choose to read the illustrated children's book by Jun Matsumoto, or tell the story using the attached text)
- 6 inch Terra Cotta Pots (1 per group)
- Potting soil
- Flower cuttings or nursery flowers
- Acrylic paints
- Paintbrushes

Description:

Four Corners Activity (20 min): Children will be split up into groups of 10-15 people per group. Group leaders will begin by reading the four corners statements, above. The statements intentionally hit on all seven of Howard Garner's multiple intelligences to show a range of human preferences and abilities. Children will be instructed to go to the sign (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree) that corresponds to how they feel about the statement that is read. Periodically remind students that everyone is different and that we must respect everyone's preferences and ensure that they feel comfortable sharing. After all the statements are read, each group will have a short discussion:

1. What did you notice during the activity? Are the people in our group very different from each other, very similar, or both?
2. How did it feel when there weren't many people that went to the same corner as you?
3. Did you always feel comfortable sharing your feelings? Why or why not?

4. How can we be more respectful of differences within our bunk/classroom and in the general community?

Flower Pot Activity (20 min): Each group leader will read the story of the cracked pot, attached, followed by a short discussion:

1. How did the cracked pot feel in the beginning of the story?
2. How did the water carrier turn the cracked bucket's challenge into something beautiful and useful?
3. Can you think of anything about yourself that you have ever felt ashamed or embarrassed about?
4. How can you find a way to embrace that part of yourself?
5. What is a unique quality of yours that you feel enhances our community and brings beauty to the world?

After the discussion, the group leader will explain that each group will be decorating a flowerpot and planting a flower. The group should decide how it wants to decorate its pot so that it shows each group members' unique qualities that bring beauty to the community. Once everyone is in agreement, the group should paint the pot, fill it with soil, and plant their flower.

Closing (10 min): Each group will present their pot, and talk about how their group members' unique qualities bring beauty to the world.

Story of the Cracked Pot

Author Unknown

A water-bearer in India had two large pots, one hung on each end of a pole, which she carried across her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it. While the other pot was perfect, and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the mistress's house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to her master's house. The perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect to the end for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream: "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you." "Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?" "I have been able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your mistress's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The water bearer felt sorry for the old cracked pot, and in her compassion she said, "As we return to the mistress's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path." Indeed, as they went up the hill, the old cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path, and this cheered it some.

But at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because it had leaked out half its load, and so again it apologized to the bearer for its failure. The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back from the stream, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my mistress's table. Without you being just the way you are, she would not have this beauty to grace her house."

Moral: Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. We've just got to take each person for what they are, and look for the good in them. There's a lot of good out there.

Reprinted from Amazing Women Rock. (n.d.). THE CRACKED POT: A STORY FOR ANYONE WHO'S NOT QUITE PERFECT [Web log post]. Retrieved July 5, 2017, from <https://amazingwomenrock.com/the-story-of-the-cracked-pot-for-anyone-whos-not-quite-perfect>

Understanding Differences (Ages 11-12)

Goals: Through this activity, children will develop sensitivity to the fact that we all exist in different places along multiple continua of development. For some of us, these developmental and learning differences require that the community learn to adapt and accommodate for a specific set of needs. Through the activities, children will develop an increased awareness of their own strengths and challenges, and how their strengths and challenges might differ from those of their friends and others in the community. Our differences allow each of us to bring something different to the table, and together we form a strong community.

Materials:

- Activity descriptions for each station
- Print outs of abstract shape (attached), half as many as the total number of participants
- Wright Family Story (attached)
- Individually wrapped small objects, such as Hershey kisses or Laffy Taffy, one for every participant
- Peanut butter or peanut butter alternative, jelly, bread, knife, plate, napkins
- Poster board
- 2 different colors of post-its, enough for each participant to get one of each color

Description: Children will be split up into six groups and rotate between four different stations of activities (each station will be duplicated to allow for smaller group sizes). At each station, the children will participate in each activity and have a short discussion. Following the rotations, each group will have a summary discussion and then write their strengths and challenges on Post-It Notes that will be placed on one big poster board. We will then all come together and discuss what we learned about ourselves by participating in these activities, as well as how we can support each other in areas of difficulty, and find ways to shine and contribute to the community through our areas of strength.

Station 1: Charades (10 min)

This activity is adapted from Adcock and Remis (2006).

Act out sentences without speaking or using sign language:

- I need to go to the bathroom.
- I feel itchy.
- I want a lemonade.
- I lost my bicycle.
- I hate mustard.
- My throat hurts.
- I want a tuna sandwich for lunch.
- I am allergic to mango and kiwi.

Discuss:

1. Was it hard to act out a whole sentence without using words?

2. Was it hard to understand what the person acting was trying to say?
3. Raise your hand if you ever felt frustrated during this activity. Why do you think you felt frustrated?
4. Take away: People communicate in many different ways. Sometimes it can be hard for one person to understand what another person is trying to communicate. We must be patient and work together to make sure that everyone's thoughts and ideas can be shared and valued.

Station 2: Abstract Shape (10 min)

This activity is adapted from Adcock and Remis (2006).

Break the group up into partners, and have them sit back to back. One partner will get a picture of the shape, and the other partner will get a blank piece of paper and a marker. The person with the picture will describe the abstract shape verbally for the other partner to draw.

Discuss:

1. How similar is your drawing to the original?
2. Was it hard to explain the shape using just your words?
3. Was it hard to understand the directions your partner was giving you?
4. What were the problems and what would have helped?
5. Take away: Something that might be clear to one person may be very difficult to understand for someone else. We must be thoughtful in the way that we communicate with our peers to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Station 3: Peanut Butter and Jelly (10 min)

Have one person act as the sandwich maker, and one person act as the sandwich instructor. The maker must follow the instructor's instructions exactly and literally, without making any interpretations. For example, if the instructor says "put the peanut butter on the bread," the maker should pick up the jar of peanut butter and put it on top of the loaf of bread. Continue until the sandwich resembles a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Discuss:

1. What went wrong?
2. What would have helped?
3. For who was the task more challenging, the person making the sandwich or the person giving the directions? Why?
4. Which job do you think would have been easier for you, making the sandwich or teaching someone to make a sandwich? Why?
5. Take away: Everyone understands things differently. For some people, hearing something verbally can be a lot harder for someone than seeing someone make a sandwich and copying their actions. Other people are really good at following verbal directions. When you are talking to someone, or helping someone with something, it is important to think about how that person works best so that everyone can be successful.

Station 4: Wright Family Story (10 min)

Have the group stand or sit in a circle. Give each person in the circle a small item (you can use candy, but make sure it is individually wrapped). Tell the group that you are going to read a story and that every time they hear a word that sounds like “right” or “left” they pass the item in their hand to the person directly to their right or left, depending on what they heard. Start reading the story slowly, to give them a chance to catch on to what you want them to do. After a few passes, stop the story and ask how they are doing. Check to see that everyone has one item in their hands. If your group is typical, some will have 2-3 items, and other will not have any. Have them redistribute the items again so that each participant again has just one. Continue to read the story through to the end, proceeding faster as you go.

Discuss:

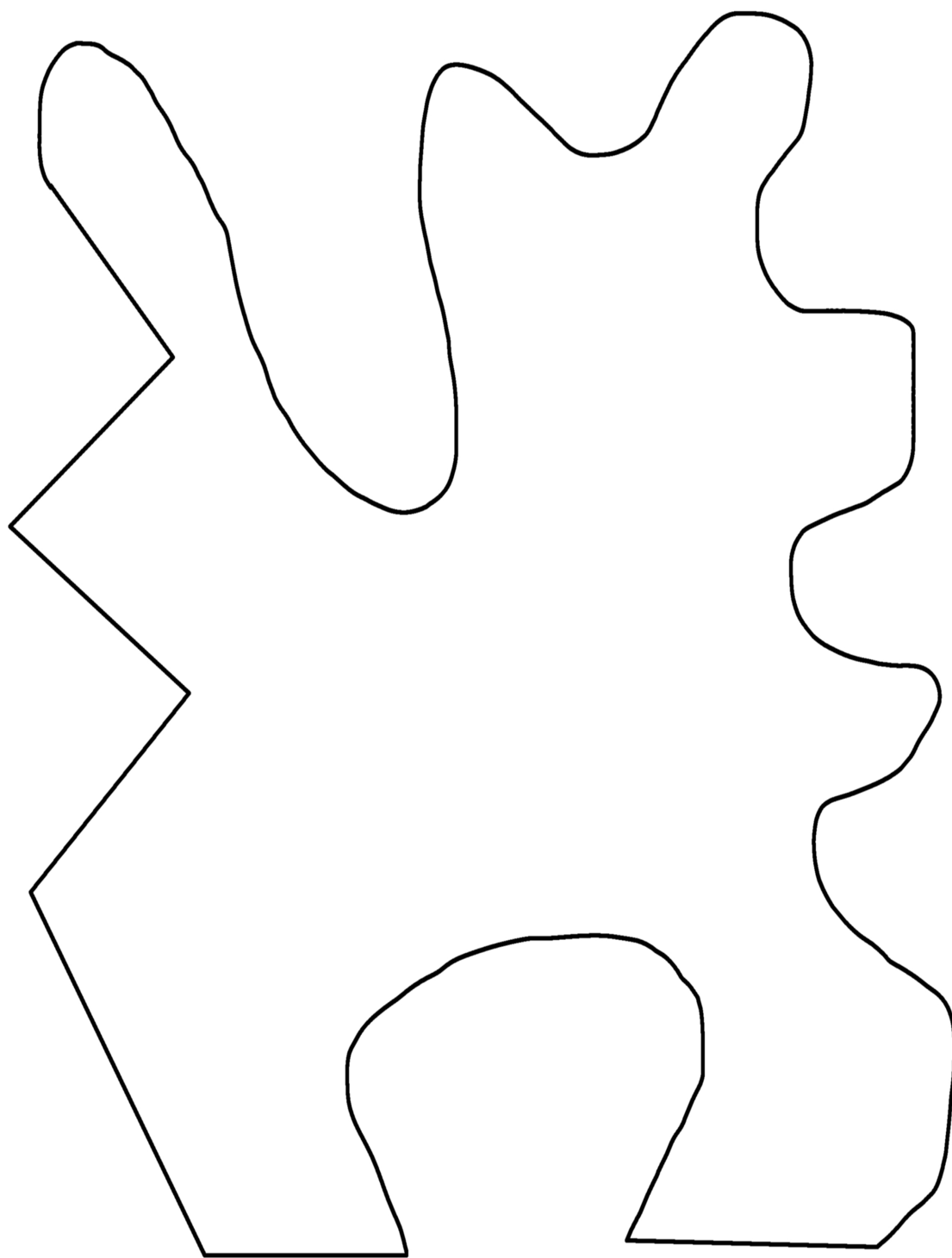
1. Check in with the group. How did they do? Were they able to keep up with passing the items?
2. Ask someone to retell the story in their own words. Were they able to focus on the content of the story while also concentrating on passing the items?
3. What made this activity challenging?
4. What can we learn from this activity?
5. Take away: It can be very challenging to listen and understand when you are distracted and engaged elsewhere. This can be even harder for some people than others, based upon individual strengths and challenges.

Summary Station: Post-Its (10 min)

In the groups that went through the rotations together, have a summary discussion:

1. What was your favorite activity and why?
2. Which activity was hardest for you?
3. Which was easiest?
4. What did you learn about yourself from all of these activities?
5. Draw attention to the fact that people enjoyed different aspects of the program because we all have different strengths and challenges. Ask children to share, more generally, what they think their own personal strengths and challenges are. What comes easy to them? What is more difficult?
6. Hand out two different colored Post-It Notes, and ask the children to write a strength in one color, and a challenge on the other. Tell the children that it will be anonymous, and they won't have to share if they don't want to.

Everyone will place their Post-It Notes on one big poster that will hang in a central space as a reminder that together we can support each other in our areas of difficulty and shine in our areas of strength! We will then all come back together for a final conversation. Have the children share some of their takeaways from the activity, and conclude by having a staff member share some concluding thoughts related to the overall goal and message of the activity.

Abstract Shape

Wright Family Story

One day the Wright family decided to take a vacation. The first thing they had to decide was who would be left at home since there was not enough room in the Wright family car for all of them. Mr. Wright decided that Aunt Linda Wright would be the one left at home. Of course, this made Aunt Linda Wright so mad that she left the house immediately yelling "It will be a right cold day before I return."

The Wright family now bundled up the children, Tommy Wright, Susan Wright, Timmy Wright and Shelly Wright and got in the car and left. Unfortunately, as they turned out of the driveway someone had left a trash can in the street so they had to turn right around and stop the car. They told Tommy Wright to get out of the car and move the trash can so they could get going. Tommy took so long that they almost left him in the street. Once the Wright family got on the road, Mother Wright wondered if she had left the stove on. Father Wright told her not to worry, as he had checked the stove and she had not left it on. As they turned right at the corner, everyone started to think about other things that they might have left undone.

No need to worry now, they were off on a right fine vacation. When they arrived at the gas station, Father Wright put gas in the car and then discovered that he had left his wallet at home. So Timmy Wright ran home to get the money that was left behind. After Timmy had left, Susan Wright started to feel sick. She left the car saying that she had to throw up. This of course got Mother Wright's attention and she left the car in a hurry. Shelly Wright wanted to watch Susan get sick, so she left the car too. Father Wright was left with Tommy Wright who was playing a game in the backseat.

With all of this going on Father Wright decided that this was not the right time to take a vacation, so he gathered up all of the family and left the gas station as quickly as he could. When he arrived home, he turned left into the driveway and said "I wish the Wright family had never left the house today! Right?"

Reprinted from The Origins Program. (n.d.). The Wright Family [Web log post]. Retrieved July 5, 2017, from <https://originsonline.org/educator-help/wright-family>

Team Work Makes the Dream Work (Ages 12-13)

Goal: Through this activity, children will learn to recognize that the people around us are always dealing with things that we may not initially be able to see or understand, and that can affect how they act. Each and every one of us has moments when we need support. Ultimately, we must learn to have patience with one another, work together as a group, and lean on each other so that we can all be successful and fully participate in the community.

Materials:

- Index cards, half of which are blank, and half of which have special instructions. There will be enough for each participant to get one.
 - *Special Instructions:*
 - Don't do anything unless you are told to do so by a teammate three times
 - Only move when someone is cheering your name
 - Only move when a teammate is holding your hand
 - Say no unless someone gives you a hug first
 - You must do each obstacle twice
- Supplies for obstacles (per team): 1 hoola-hoop, 1 bat, 2 benches, 5 cones
 - *Obstacles:*
 - Hoola-hoop 3 times
 - Spin with your head on a bat 4 times
 - Weave through cones
 - Do ten jumping jacks
 - Army crawl under the benches
- Copies of discussion questions for discussion leaders

Description:

1. Set up 10 stations for the relay race, using the above obstacles or any other creative obstacles you choose.
2. Split participants into groups of 10, and have each group line up in a single file line in front of one of the relay race stations.
3. Explain the relay race obstacles step by step. It is helpful to have someone demonstrate.
4. Tell the children that you will now hand out index cards to each person. Some index cards will have special instructions on them, and some will be blank. If they get a blank index card, they will complete the relay race as you previously described. If their index card has special instructions, they must do their best to complete the relay race while following the instructions on the card. They may not show their card to anyone else, or tell anyone what was written on their card. (**Facilitator's Tip:* Make sure the first 2 or 3 people in the line get blank index cards so that the team gets the hang of the obstacle course).
5. Emphasize that the entire team must complete the race in order to win, and to do so they must work together and help each other. Some members on the team

might need more help than others to complete the race. The race is over when the first team gets all their members across the finish line.

**Facilitator's Tip:* Most members of the team will rush through the obstacles, but on the turn of someone with special instructions, the team will have to problem solve to figure out what is going on. Encourage them when you see someone who is stuck. Offer them suggestions like “ask your team-mate why they aren’t moving” or “ask them if there is something they would like your help with.”

Relay Race (20 min):

Teams will complete the relay race, following the above directions. When all teams complete the race, they should have a discussion by team.

Discussion (15 min):

1. Raise your hand if your card had special instructions.
 - a. Ask that person to read their card and talk about their experience with the relay race.
 - b. What did it feel like to not be able to rush through the race?
2. Ask the team members with blank cards what it was like to have a teammate who wasn't able to complete the race independently.
3. Have you ever had an experience where you needed help to complete a task? What did that feel like? Did you get the help you needed?
4. Have you ever seen someone who needed help with something? How did you figure out the best way to help that person?
5. How might this all apply to people who have identified disabilities?
6. How can we, as a community, support each other and ensure that everyone is able to fully and meaningfully participate?
7. Takeaway: There are moments when each one of us is struggling with something that other people don't see or understand. For example, a lot of people are sensitive to loud noises, so they might have a hard time getting their work done in a noisy classroom. It is our responsibility as members of a community to take the time to discover why a person might be struggling with a specific situation, and find ways to support each other. By working together, we can utilize each other's strengths and strategize to overcome difficult moments. Together we can create a strong, reliable, and supportive community where everyone will be able to successfully cross the finish line!

Examining Our Biases and Assumptions (Ages 13-14)

Goal: During this activity, participants will examine their existing understanding of what it means to have a developmental or physical disability. Through this activity, teens will have an opportunity to examine their feelings about difference and disability, and develop a new, more nuanced understanding of what it means to have a disability. They will begin to develop an awareness that society shapes our understandings and misinterpretations of individuals and their abilities. Participants will be able to describe their appreciation for individual differences, and learn to see difference as a desirable trait.

Materials:

- *A Man with a Task* story (directly following this activity description).
- Positive Exposure Photos retrieved from <http://positiveexposure.org/gallery/>
- Description of Positive Exposure photo project (directly following this activity description).
- Rick Guidott’s TED Talk, From Stigma to Supermodel:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I4PU2JlhO80>
- Excerpt from *Out of My Mind* by Sharon M. Draper (p. 6-8, beginning with “When I was really little, I remember...”)
- Excerpt from *The Reason I Jump* by Naoki Higashida (Preface, p. 3-4)

Description: The activity will begin by reading “A Man with a Task” to the whole group. After reading the text, ask the participants to consider how this story changes their perception of Moses. The participants will then be split up into groups of 10-15 participants. Half of the groups will begin with Station 1, and the other half will begin with Station 2, and then they will switch.

Station 1: Positive Exposure Photos (20 min)

- Look at a gallery of photos of people with disabilities. Give the participants time to walk around and look at each photo carefully and then ask them a few questions and facilitate an open discussion.
 - What do you see when you first look at the photo?
 - What is the first thing that comes to mind when you see the photos?
 - Why do you think that is the case?
- Read the description of the Positive Exposure Photo Project and/or watch an excerpt from Rick Guidott’s TED Talk.
- Facilitate a conversation:
 - How do we define beauty in our community?
 - What are ways we can redefine beauty in our own community?
 - Are there other examples you can think of when people are negatively judged for their appearance?
 - What can we do to change assumptions and biases based solely on external appearance?
 - How can we help ensure that everyone has an opportunity to share their own unique beauty with the world?

Station 2: Personal Accounts (20 min)

- Read the three excerpts that give first-hand accounts of the experiences of people with disabilities.
- Use the following questions to guide a discussion:
 - What surprised you from the story?
 - What is one new thing you learned from these stories?
 - How do these stories change the way that you perceive people with disabilities?

Conclusion (15 min):

- Facilitators will pass out paper and pencils to each participant, who will be asked to respond to the following prompts:
 - What qualities do you possess that make you stand out from other people?
 - What do these qualities allow you to contribute to the enhancement of the community?
- Everyone will come back together, and participants will be invited to share their takeaways from the activity with the full group.
- If possible, invite someone from the community to speak about their experiences as a person with a disability and as a member of the community. Provide time for questions.

A Man with a Task

There was a young man who lived a long time ago. He grew up with a disability. Mostly he kept quiet, because his disability was that he had a speech impairment. If he didn't talk much, then people wouldn't make fun of him, so he mostly kept to himself. That is, until one day, he saw someone in a powerful position hurt another person. This young man couldn't stand by while someone else was being hurt, so he stopped the attack. The young man, afraid of the consequences, fled to a place where he would not be noticed.

One day he was working at his job when he heard a voice from afar calling his name. The young man did not fear the voice for he knew it belonged to someone important. The young man was not embarrassed to speak to him for he knew that this person would not laugh at him. In fact, the famous person asked him to do something very special, something that only the young man could do. But, the young man, realizing that he would have to speak as part of this arrangement, said no.

The young man argued that he could not do what was asked of him because he had a disability, a speech impairment. The young man did not have the confidence and faith in himself to do it, but the person asking knew differently.

God said to the young man, "Who do you suppose made you this way? It is I, God."

It was then that the young man realized that having a disability should not stand in the way of doing what God asked of him, to lead God's people out of Egypt.

God did not see Moses as a person with a disability. God knew that Moses possessed the gifts and the heart that was needed to become a great leader of the Jewish people.

God provided an accommodation for Moses. Moses' brother Aaron became that accommodation, and Aaron spoke for Moses.

We have a heritage and a history of including people with disabilities. Let us ensure that we continue that heritage in our own lives through understanding, awareness and respect.

Adapted from the Disability Awareness Training Workshop compiled by the Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis.

Positive Exposure: The Spirit of Difference

“It's about reinterpreting beauty. It's about having an opportunity to see beyond what you're told and what we're forced to believe that that's beauty" (NBC News, 2013).
–Rick Guidotti

“Positive Exposure was founded in 1998 by award winning fashion photographer, Rick Guidotti. Rick worked in NYC, Milan and Paris for a variety of high profile clients including Yves St Laurent, Revlon, L’Oreal, Elle, Harpers Bazaar and GQ. He took photographs of what were considered the world’s most beautiful people. But one day, on a break from a photo shoot, a chance encounter on a Manhattan street changed everything. Rick saw a stunning girl at the bus stop – a girl with pale skin and white hair, a girl with albinism. Upon returning home Rick began a process of discovery – about albinism, about people with genetic differences and about himself. What he found was startling and upsetting. The images that he saw were sad and dehumanizing. In medical textbooks children with a difference were seen as a disease, a diagnosis first, not as people.

So, Rick turned his world upside down – he stopped working in the fashion industry and created a not-for-profit organization that he named Positive Exposure.

It has always been about beauty for Rick. “In fashion I was always frustrated because I was told who I had to photograph. I was always told who was beautiful.” It became clear to him that it was essential for people to understand and see the beauty in our shared humanity. But how? How do you lead people down a different path? How do you get people to see those with differences not as victims, but kids and people first and foremost? The pity has to disappear. The fear has to disappear. Behavior has to change. These kids need to be seen as their parents see them, as their friends see them, as valuable and positive parts of society, as beautiful.

The photos give people the permission to see beauty and interpret beauty in their own right. Not to see beauty that is dictated by industry’s ideas of what is acceptable. What started with photographs, has grown into a wide variety of programs created to empower people living with difference – and to educate the world around them.”

Source: Guidotti, R. (2016). Positive Exposure: The Spirit of Difference. Retrieved November 22, 2016, from <http://www.positiveexposure.org/>

Excerpt from *Out Of My Mind* by Sharon M. Draper, pages 6-8:

When I was really little, I remember sitting in our kitchen, being fed breakfast by Mom, and a song came on the radio that made me screech with joy.

*So I'm singin'
Elvira, Elvira
My heart's on fire, Elvira
Giddy up oom poppa oom poppa mow mow
Giddy up oom poppa oom poppa mow mow
High-ho Silver, away*

How did I already know the words and the rhythms to that song? I have no idea. It must have seeped into my memory somehow—maybe from a radio or TV program. Anyway, I almost fell out of my chair. I scrunched up my face and jerked and twitched as I tried to point to the radio. I wanted to hear the song again. But Mom just looked at me like I was nuts.

How could she understand that I loved the song “Elvira” by the Oak Ridge Boys when I barely understood it myself? I had no way to explain how I could smell freshly sliced lemons and see citrus-toned musical notes in my mind as it played.

If I had a paintbrush...wow! What a painting that would be!

But Mom just shook her head and kept on spooning applesauce into my mouth. There's so much my mother doesn't know.

I suppose it's a good thing to be unable to forget anything—being able to keep every instant of my life crammed inside my head. But it's also very frustrating. I can't share any of it, and none of it ever goes away.

I remember stupid stuff, like the feel of a lump of oatmeal stuck on the roof of my mouth or the taste of toothpaste not rinsed off my teeth.

The smell of early-morning coffee is a permanent memory, mixed up with the smell of bacon and the background yakking of the morning news people.

Mostly, though, I remember words. Very early I figured out there were millions of words in the world. Everyone around me was able to bring them out with no effort.

The salespeople on television: *Buy one and get two free! For a limited time only.*

The mailman who came to the door: *Mornin', Mrs. Brooks. How's the baby?*

The choir at church: *Hallelujah, hallelujah, amen.*

The checkout clerk at the grocery store: *Thanks for shopping with us today.*

Everybody uses words to express themselves. Except me. And I bet most people don't realize the real power of words. But I do.

Thoughts need words. Words need a voice.

I love the smell of my mother's hair after she washes it.

I love the feel of the scratchy stubble on my father's face before he shaves.

But I've never been able to tell them.

Excerpt from *The Reason I Jump* by Naoki Higashida, pages 3-4:

When I was small, I didn't even know that I was a kid with special needs. How did I find out? By other people telling me that I was different from everyone else, and that this was a problem. True enough. It was very hard for me to act like a normal person, and even now I still can't "do" a real conversation. I have no problem reading books aloud and singing, but as soon as I try to speak with someone, my words just vanish. Sure, sometimes I manage a few words—but even these can come out the complete opposite of what I want to say! I can't respond appropriately when I'm told to do something, and whenever I get nervous, I run off from wherever I happen to be. SO even a straightforward activity like shopping can be really challenging if I'm tackling it on my own.

So *why* can't I do these things? During my frustrating, miserable, helpless days, I've started imagining what it would be like if everyone was autistic. If autism was regarded simply as a personality type, things would be so much easier and happier for us than they are now. For sure, there are bad times when we cause a lot of hassle for other people, but what we really want is to be able to look toward a brighter future.

Thanks to training I've had with Ms. Suzuki at Hagukumi School, and my mom, I've learned a method of communication via writing. Now I can even write on my computer. Problem is, many children with autism don't have the means to express themselves, and often even their own parents don't have a clue what they might be thinking. So my big hope is that I can help a bit by explaining, in my own way, what's going on in the minds of people with autism. I also hope that, by reading this book, you might become a better friend of someone with autism.

You can't judge a person by their looks. But once you know the other person's inner self, both of you can be that much closer. From your point of view, the world of autism must look like a deeply mysterious place. So please, spare a little time to listen to what I have to say.

And have a nice trip through our world.

Naoki Higashida
Japan, 2006

Recognizing the Stigma of Labels (Ages 14-15)

Goal: In this activity, participants will explore examples of people being treated differently based on ability, disability, or perceived differences. They will explore examples of TV show characters being treated poorly based on external differences, and unpack why the way these characters were treated was hurtful and problematic. They will then explore the things that make themselves and their friends unique, and begin to understand and embrace difference and treat everyone with respect.

Materials:

- Labels: 1 per child printed with one of the prompts below (return address size, 2.625" x 1") + 2 per child blank (larger, 2"x4")
 - Talk to me very loudly
 - Talk to me like you can't understand a word I am saying
 - Talk to me with hand motions
 - Don't look at me while you talk to me
 - Constantly reassure me that everything I am saying and doing is great
 - Every time I say something change the topic and talk about something else
 - Treat me like you are afraid of me
 - Always touch my shoulder when you are talking to me
 - Every time you talk to me come very close to my face
 - Repeat everything 2 times to me
 - Talk to me REALLY slowly
- Markers
- Movie clips (see below)
- Projector + Screen + Speakers
- Computer

Labels (20 minutes):

This activity has been adapted from Yachad, The National Jewish Council for Disabilities.

Participants will get a label on their forehead. The labels will tell everyone who looks at them how to treat them. Do not provide an explanation; simply say that everyone must follow the prompts on the labels. Give participants 5 minutes to mingle.

Break up into small groups to discuss:

1. How did it feel to be treated based on your assigned label?
2. Was it frustrating? Did it feel unfair?
3. How did it feel to have to treat other people according to their assigned label?
4. How would it feel if you could never take the label off and had to be treated that way all the time?
5. Can you think of anyone in your lives who are treated differently based on something external to themselves, or out of their control?
6. For some people, disability is an incredibly meaningful aspect of their identity, just as religion, sexual orientation, and gender are often important aspects of an

individual's identity. For others, disability is just one small aspect of who they are as a person, and they do not want it to define them. What do you think we can do to ensure that people aren't labeled and treated differently based on something that isn't a meaningful part of who they are as a person while embracing the parts of their identity that are meaningful to them?

Movie Clips (10-15 minutes)

The participants will come together as one group and watch clips depicting people with disabilities from various popular TV shows. Pre-watch the clips and select the ones that you feel will be the most effective for your group in the time you have. Take 2-3 short reactions after each clip, and then show the next one. After watching all the clips the participants will break into the same groups they were previously in to discuss.

- Parenthood, Season 3, Episode 9 (00:35-01:33): Max's mom watches as kids make fun of him at school.
 - Source: Carpenter, B. (Writer), & Trilling, L. (Director). (2011). Sore Loser [Television series episode]. In J. Katims (Executive producer), *Parenthood*. Universal City, CA: National Broadcasting Company (NBC).
- Parenthood, Season 5, Episode 18 (32:15-34:25): On a car ride, Max talks to his parents about being bullied.
 - Source: Watson, S. (Writer), & Trilling, L. (Director). (2014). The Offer [Television series episode]. In J. Katims (Executive producer), *Parenthood*. Universal City, CA: National Broadcasting Company (NBC).
- Glee, Season 1, Episode 9 (27:58-29:15): Coach drills Becky, and Mr. Schue tells Coach that Becky is "not like the other kids".
 - Source: Murphy, R. (Writer), & Barclay, P. (Director). (2009). Wheels [Television series episode]. In R. Murphy, B. Falchuck, & I. Brennan (Executive producers), *Glee*. Hollywood, CA: 20th Century Fox Television.
- Breaking Bad, Season 1, Episode 1 (28:26-30:05): Kids mock Walt Jr. in a clothing store.
 - Source: Gilligan, G. (Writer), & Gilligan, G. (Director). (2008). Pilot [Television series episode]. In G. Gilligan & M. Johnson (Executive producers), *Breaking Bad*. Albuquerque, NM: AMC Networks.
- Grey's Anatomy, Season 5, Episode 8 (34:59-35:11): Bailey talks down to Dr. Dixon in the elevator, and Dr. Dixon gets upset.
 - Source: McKee, S. (Writer), & Stoltz, E. (Director). (2008). These Ties That Bind [Television series episode]. In S. Rhimes (Executive producer), *Grey's Anatomy*. Los Angeles, CA: American Broadcasting Company (ABC).
- Speechless, Season 1, Episode 12 (8:11-8:56): The characters discuss "inspiration porn," the "portrayal of people with disabilities as one dimensional saints who only exist to warm the hearts and open the minds of able-bodied people," after JJ finds out that a classmate of his is giving a speech about JJ being his hero, even though they aren't even friends.

- Source: Rosen, C. (Writer), & Nelli Jr., V. (Director). (2017). H-E-R—HERO [Television series episode]. In S. Silveri (Executive producer), *Speechless*. Los Angeles, CA: American Broadcasting Company (ABC).

Clip Discussion (10 minutes)

Break up into small groups to debrief the clips.

- How did you feel while watching the clips? What stood out to you?
- Did you think that the clips realistically depicted how people with disabilities are treated?
- Can you think of a time where you saw a similar situation take place? What happened?
- What are some things that we could do to ensure that people aren't bullied and treated disrespectfully because of their disability?

Personal Labels (10 minutes)

- Pass out two labels to each participant.
- On the first label, they should write a way that they feel they have been treated differently that is not reflective of who they truly are as an individual. For example, have they been treated differently based on skin color, weight, braces or glasses, wealth, grades, etc.
- On the second label, they should write something unique and special about themselves of which they are proud.
- Give all the participants the opportunity to share their labels. After participants read the first, stigmatizing, negative label, have them rip it up. After participants read the second label, have them display it proudly on their shirt.
- Explain that the goal of this activity is to break down assumptions and bring awareness to the fact that often people are treated differently and unfairly based on an external, meaningless label. We want to flip this around and celebrate the meaningful differences and uniqueness that each one of us brings to the community.

Closing (10 minutes)

- Show Max's speech about having Asperger syndrome from *Parenthood*, Season 4, Episode 6 (32:33-34:35).
 - Source: Goldfinger, S. (Writer), & Trilling, L. (Director). (2012). I'll Be Right Here [Television series episode]. In J. Katims (Executive producer), *Parenthood*. Universal City, CA: National Broadcasting Company (NBC).
- If possible, invite someone from the community to describe their experiences as a person who has a disability and how they have been treated as a member of the community.
- Time for questions.

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Permission Letters

“We Are All Wonderwomen!” Art by Catherine and Sarah Saturn,

www.sketchyduo.com

tcohen28

Feb 14, 2017

Hi,

My name is Tali and I am a special education teacher. I love your "We are all Wonderwoman" image! I am working on putting together a curriculum with materials to train teachers on inclusion and teach concepts of difference and inclusion to children with and without disabilities. I would love to use your image on one of the handouts in my curriculum, which I may end up getting published. I would like to request your permission to print your image on one of my materials. Let me know if this is a possibility.

Thanks!
Tali Cohen

Satrun Twins

Feb 14, 2017

Hi Tali,

Thanks for asking! Yes, we would be happy to give you permission to use our illustration for your materials. Would this size work for you or do you need it larger? We can't give out the large file to protect our work, but we want to make sure it will print out on a handout okay.

Catherine & Sarah

“Imagine a World” Poem by Diana Pastora Carson

From: Diana Carson <diana@abilityawareness.com>
Subject: Re: Permission to reprint poem
Date: May 18, 2017 at 11:12:50 PM EDT
To: Talia Cohen <tcohen@bankstreet.edu>

Absolutely! Please just be sure to keep my name on it. :) I am publishing a book on how to teach about disability/diversity from the social model perspective. It should be published this summer. FYI. Take care and feel free to stay in touch.
Thank you,
Diana

Diana Pastora Carson, M.Ed.
www.AbilityAwareness.com

On May 18, 2017, at 10:39 AM, Talia Cohen <tcohen@bankstreet.edu> wrote:
Dear Diana,

I am a graduate student at Bank Street College of Education in NYC. I am currently working on my Master's Thesis, for which I am writing a curriculum with trainings/activities on disability and inclusion for children and adults. I love your poem, "Imagine a world" and would really like to include it in a program for older students/adults that includes discussions around several different disability-related texts. I am writing to request permission to include a copy of your poem in my curriculum, which, after it is completed, will be available through the Bank Street Library.

Thanks for your consideration,

Talia Cohen
M.S.Ed in Childhood General and Special Education, 2017
Bank Street Graduate School
Head Teacher at The Rebecca School
TCohen@BankStreet.edu

Permission to Reference Camp Ramah

From: Mitchell Cohen <mcohen@JTSA.EDU>
 Subject: Permission to reference Camp Ramah
 Date: July 31, 2017 at 5:47:43 PM EDT
 To: "Tali Cohen (tcohen28@gmail.com)" <tcohen28@gmail.com>

Dear Tali,

Given your years staffing our various Ramah camps and Tikvah programs, please feel free to make full reference to Camp Ramah and your experiences in your academic writing.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Mitchell Cohen, Director
 רמה מחנות
 National Ramah Commission, Inc.
 3080 Broadway, NY NY 10027
 212-678-8881
www.CampRamah.org<<http://www.CampRamah.org>>

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