MERIT BADGE SERIES

DISABILITIES AWARENESS

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
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“Enhancing our youths’ competitive edge through merit badges”
Requirements

1. Discuss with your counselor proper disability etiquette and person-first language. Explain why these are important.

2. Visit an agency that works with people with physical, mental, emotional, or educational disabilities. Collect and read information about the agency’s activities. Learn about opportunities its members have for training, employment, and education. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.

3. Do TWO of the following:
   a. Talk to a Scout who has a disability and learn about his experiences taking part in Scouting activities and earning different merit badges. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.
   b. Talk to an individual who has a disability and learn about this person’s experiences and the activities in which this person likes to participate. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.
   c. Learn how people with disabilities take part in a particular adaptive sport or recreational activity. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor.
   d. Learn about independent living aids such as service animals, canes, and augmentative communication devices such as teletypewriters (TTYs). Discuss with your counselor how people use such aids.

4. Visit TWO of the following locations and take notes about the accessibility to people with disabilities. In your notes, give examples of five things that could be done to improve upon the site and five things about the site that make it friendly to people with disabilities.
Discuss your observations with your counselor.

a. Your school
b. Your place of worship
c. Your Scout camping site
d. A public exhibit or attraction (such as a theater, museum, or park)

5. Explain what advocacy is. Do ONE of the following advocacy activities:

a. Present a counselor-approved disabilities awareness program to a Cub Scout pack or other group. During your presentation, explain and use person-first language.

b. Find out about disability awareness education programs in your school or school system, or contact a disability advocacy agency. Volunteer with a program or agency for eight hours.

c. Using resources such as disability advocacy agencies, government agencies, the Internet (with your parent’s permission), and news magazines, learn about myths and misconceptions that influence the general public’s understanding of people with disabilities. List 10 myths and misconceptions about people with disabilities and learn the facts about each myth. Share your list with your counselor, then use it to make a presentation to a Cub Scout pack or other group.

6. Make a commitment to your merit badge counselor describing what you will do to show a positive attitude about people with disabilities and to encourage positive attitudes among others. Discuss how your awareness has changed as a result of what you have learned.

7. Name five professions that provide services to people with disabilities. Pick one that interests you and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss what you learn with your counselor, and tell why this profession interests you.
Disabilities Awareness Resources

**Scouting Literature**

*Architecture, Athletics, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communication, Computers, Engineering, First Aid, Medicine, Public Speaking, and Sports* merit badge pamphlets

*Boy Scout Handbook* in large print.
Program Impact Department, Boy Scouts of America.
Telephone: 972-580-2441

The following materials are available at www.scouting.org/specialneeds:

- Scouting With Special Needs and Disabilities, an information sheet
- Guide to Working With Scouts With Special Needs and Disabilities, No. 510-071
- *Scouting for Youth With Disabilities Manual*, No. 34059

**Visit the Boy Scouts of America’s official retail website at http://www.scoutstuff.org for a complete listing of all merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.**

Telephone: 202-707-5104

Recordings of the *Boy Scout Handbook* and various merit badge pamphlets. Learning Ally.
Toll-free telephone: 800-221-4792
Books

Fiction

Many of these novels are classics available in several editions and formats including audio, and some are available in large print.


Draper, Sharon. *Out of My Mind*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2012. When a girl with cerebral palsy who cannot walk or talk is given a device that lets her “speak,” she surprises everyone around her.


Konigsburg, E.L. *The View from Saturday*. Aladdin Paperbacks, 1998. Four students with their own individual stories develop a special bond and attract the attention of their teacher, a paraplegic, who chooses them to represent their sixth-grade class in the Academic Bowl competition.

Martin, Ann M. *A Corner of the Universe*. Scholastic, 2002. Now that Uncle Adam’s school—an institution for people with developmental disabilities—is closing, 12-year-old Hattie’s family must deal with a childlike young man whose existence they have denied for years.

Philbrick, Rodman. *Freak the Mighty*. Scholastic Paperbacks, 2001. At the beginning of eighth grade, Max, who has learning disabilities and a mighty physique, and his new friend Freak, who was born with a condition that affects his body but not his brilliant mind, find that when they unite to become “Freak the Mighty” they make a powerful team.

Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay*. Yearling Books, 2002. When the freighter on which they are traveling is torpedoed by a German submarine during World War II, an adolescent white boy, blinded by a blow on the head, and an old African American man are stranded on a tiny island where the boy gains a new kind of vision.

**Nonfiction**


Corman, Richard. *I Am Proud: The Athletes of Special Olympics.* Barnes & Noble Books, 2003. Portrays the athletes’ dignity, grace, and joy in competition and brings fresh perspective to a group of people too often defined by their perceived disabilities.


Kling, Andrew A. *Cerebral Palsy.* Lucent Books, 2012. Discusses the incurable disorder that strikes about two in 1,000 infants yearly in the United States.

Meyer, Donald, ed. *Views From Our Shoes: Growing Up With a Brother or Sister With Special Needs.* Woodbine House, 1997. Kids ranging in age from 4 to 18 share their experiences as the brother or sister of someone with a disability, including autism, cerebral palsy, development delays, attention deficit disorder, hydrocephalus, visual and hearing impairments, and Down and Tourette syndromes.
Naff, Clayton Farris, ed. *Muscular Dystrophy*. Greenhaven Press, 2011. Explains the causes and treatments of muscular dystrophy and includes stories of people who have MD.

Oleksy, Walter G. *Christopher Reeve*. Greenhaven Press, 1999. Discusses the personal life, acting career, and life-altering accident of the actor known for his role as Superman and for his efforts on behalf of people with spinal cord injuries.


Weihenmayer, Erik. *Touch the Top of the World: A Blind Man’s Journey to Climb Farther Than the Eye Can See*. Plume Books, 2002. An adventure-packed memoir in which the author recalls rebelling against becoming blind by age 13, acquiring a passion for mountain climbing, and developing the character traits that enabled him to succeed. His experiences remind readers of what the blind and the sighted have in common.


Organizations and Websites

AbleData
103 W. Broad Street, Suite 400
Falls Church, VA 22046
Toll-free telephone: 800-227-0216
TTY: 301-608-8912
Website: http://www.abledata.com

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
9700 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Suite 200
Rosemont, IL 60018
Telephone: 847-737-6000
Website: http://www.aapmr.org

American Association of People With Disabilities
2013 H St., NW, Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20006
Toll-free telephone (voice and TTY): 800-840-8844
Website: http://www.aapd.com

American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
501 Third St. NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20001
Telephone: 202-387-1968
Website: http://aaidd.org

American Council of the Blind
2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 650
Arlington, VA 22201-3354
Toll-free telephone: 800-424-8666
Website: http://acb.org

American Foundation for the Blind
2 Penn Plaza, Suite 1102
New York, NY 10121
Telephone: 212-502-7600
Website: http://afb.org

American Printing House for the Blind Inc.
1839 Frankfort Ave.
Louisville, KY 40206-0085
Telephone: 502-895-2405
Toll-free telephone: 800-223-1839
Website: http://www.aph.org

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
2200 Research Blvd.
Rockville, MD 20850-3289
Toll-free telephone: 800-638-8255
Website: http://www.asha.org

The Arc
1825 K Street NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: 202-534-3700
Toll-free telephone: 800-433-5255
Website: http://www.thearc.org

Attention Deficit Disorder Association
P.O. Box 7557
Wilmington, DE 19803-9997
Toll-free telephone: 800-939-1019
Website: http://www.add.org

Autism Society
4340 East-West Highway, Suite 350
Bethesda, MD 20814
Toll-free telephone: 800-328-8476
Website: http://www.autism-society.org

Autism Speaks
1 E. 33rd S., Fourth Floor
New York, NY 10016
Telephone: 212-252-8584
Website: http://www.autismspeaks.org

BlazeSports America
535 N. McDonough St.
Decatur, GA 30030
Telephone: 404-270-2000
Website: http://blazesports.org
Disabilities Awareness Resources

**Bookshare**
Website: https://www.bookshare.org

**Brain Injury Association of America**
1608 Spring Hill Road, Suite 110
Vienna, VA 22182
Telephone: 703-761-0750
Website: http://www.biausa.org

**Children and Adults With Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder**
4601 Presidents Dr., Suite 300
Lanham, MD 20706
National Resource Center on ADHD,
toll-free telephone: 800-233-4050
Website: http://www.chadd.org

**Disability.gov**
Website: http://www.disability.gov

**Disability Is Natural**
BraveHeart Press
P.O. Box 7245
Woodland Park, CO 80863
Toll-free telephone: 866-948-2222
Website: http://www.disabilityisnatural.com

**Disabled American Veterans**
3725 Alexandria Pike
Cold Spring, KY 41076
Toll-free telephone: 877-426-2838
Website: http://www.dav.org

**Disabled Sports USA**
451 Hungerford Drive, Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20850
Telephone: 301-217-0960
Website: http://www.dsusa.org

**Easter Seals**
233 S. Wacker, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60606
Toll-free telephone: 800-221-6827
Website: http://www.easterseals.com

**Goodwill Industries International Inc.**
15810 Indianola Drive
Rockville, MD 20855
Toll-free telephone: 800-466-3945
Website: http://www.goodwill.org

**Guide Dogs for the Blind**
P.O. Box 151200
San Rafael, CA 94915-1200
Toll-free telephone: 800-295-4050
Website: http://www.guidedogs.com

**Helping Hands**
541 Cambridge St.
Boston, MA 02134
Telephone: 617-787-4419
Website: http://www.monkeyhelpers.org/

**International Dyslexia Association**
40 York Road, Fourth Floor
Baltimore, MD 21204
Telephone: 410-341-1515
Website: http://www.interdys.org

**Kids on the Block Inc.**
9 Westminster S/C No. 344
Westminster, MD 21157
Toll-free telephone: 800-368-5437
Website: http://www.kotb.com

**Learning Disabilities Association of America**
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1349
Telephone: 412-341-1515
Website: http://ldanatl.org

**Mental Health America**
2000 N. Beauregard St., Sixth Floor
Alexandria, VA 22311
Toll-free telephone: 800-969-6642
TTY: 800-433-5959
Website: http://mentalhealthamerica.net
**Muscular Dystrophy Association—USA**
National Headquarters
3300 E. Sunrise Drive
Tucson, AZ 85718
Toll-free telephone: 800-572-1717
Website: http://mdausa.org

**National Association of the Deaf**
8630 Fenton St., Suite 820
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3819
Telephone: 301-587-1788
TTY: 301-587-1789
Website: http://www.nad.org

**National Center for Learning Disabilities**
381 Park Ave. South, Suite 1401
New York, NY 10016
Toll-free telephone: 888-575-7373
Website: http://www.ncld.org

**National Center on Health, Physical Activity, and Disability**
4000 Ridgeway Drive
Birmingham, AL 35209
Toll-free telephone (voice and TTY): 800-900-8086
Website: http://www.nchpad.org

**National Dissemination Center for Children With Disabilities (NICHCY)**
Website: http://nichcy.org

**National Down Syndrome Congress**
30 Mansell Court, Suite 108
Roswell, GA 30076
Telephone: 800-232-6372
Website: http://ndsscenter.org

**National Down Syndrome Society**
666 Broadway, Eighth Floor
New York, NY 10012
Toll-free telephone: 800-221-4602
Website: http://www.ndss.org

**National Federation of the Blind**
200 E. Wells St.
Baltimore, MD 21230
Telephone: 410-659-9314
Website: http://nfb.org

**National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped**
1291 Taylor St. NW
Washington, DC 20011
Toll-free telephone: 888-657-7323
TDD: 202-707-0744
Website: http://www.loc.gov/nls

**National Multiple Sclerosis Society**
733 Third Ave., Third Floor
New York, NY 10017
Toll-free telephone: 800-344-4867
Website: http://www.nationalmssociety.org

**National Organization on Disability**
77 Water St., Suite 204
New York, NY 10005
Telephone: 646-505-1191
Website: http://www.nod.org

**National Rehabilitation Information Center**
8400 Corporate Drive, Suite 500
Landover, MD 20785
Toll-free telephone: 800-346-2742
TTY: 301-459-5984
Website: http://www.naric.com

**Special Olympics International**
1133 19th St. NW
Washington, DC 20036-3604
Telephone: 202-628-3630
Toll-free telephone: 800-700-8585
Website: http://specialolympics.org
TASH
(Equity, Opportunity, and Inclusion for People with Disabilities)
1001 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 235
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-540-9020
Website: http://tash.org

United Cerebral Palsy
1825 K Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006
Toll-free telephone: 800-872-5827
Website: http://ucp.org

United States Association of Blind Athletes
1 Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
Telephone: 719-630-0422
Website: http://usaba.org

USA Deaf Sports Federation
P.O. Box 910338
Lexington, KY 40591-0338
Telephone: 605-367-5760
TTY: 605-367-5761
Website: http://www.usdeafsports.org

U.S. Paralympics
1 Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5760
Telephone: 719-866-2030
TTY: 719-866-2029
Website: http://www.teamusa.org/

Wheelchair & Ambulatory Sports USA
P.O. Box 5266
Kendall Park, NJ 08824-5266
Telephone: 732-266-2634
Website: http://www.wasusa.org

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