



October is Disability History and Awareness Month

October 1, 2014

Resources to help raise awareness of disability:

- **Resources You Can Use**
<http://www.nichcy.org/InformationResources/Documents/NICHCY%20PBS/bib13.pdf>
- **Primer on People First Language** <http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/C-SAL/downloadables/PDF/APrimeronPeopleFirstLanguage.pdf>
- **Virginia Center for Self- Advocacy Leadership**
Click on the link for *Disability Awareness* for ideas on activities.
<http://www.virginiasefadvocacy.org/>
- **Building Disability Awareness and Inclusion Resources for schools.**
[http://kcsos.kern.org/SpecialEd/stories/storyReader\\$263](http://kcsos.kern.org/SpecialEd/stories/storyReader$263)
<http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/C-SAL/topicsandresources.html>

Promotional Ideas

1. Use school marquees to recognize Disability History and Awareness Month.
2. Allow students to design posters related to Disability History and Awareness. Post student- designed posters and fliers in the school.
3. Utilize school Web sites to promote disability history and awareness.
4. Include biographical information on famous people with disabilities in morning announcements.
5. Ask teachers to incorporate into their lesson plans information about disabilities history and awareness. The www.virginiasefadvocacy.org has resources.
6. Ask teachers to have students research various disabilities for greater understanding of their fellow students and the characteristics they may exhibit.
7. Encourage school libraries to do a book exhibit to expand students' understanding and awareness of individuals with disabilities and related history and on the disability rights movement.

Without the contributions of individuals with disabilities, what would our world be like today?

Alexander Graham Bell. The inventor of the telephone was hard of hearing and had a learning disability.

Harriet Tubman. The woman who was called “the Moses of her people” led many slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad. At the age of twelve, she was seriously injured by a blow to the head for refusing to assist in tying up a man who had attempted escape. The injury caused her to have seizures throughout the rest of her life.

Helen Keller. She became the first deaf and blind person to earn a college degree. She went on to become an author, political activist and public speaker.

Annie Sullivan. Helen Keller’s teacher and lifelong friend was herself nearly blind due to a childhood illness.

Thomas Edison. Teachers told him he was too stupid to learn anything but in spite of his learning disability, considered to be Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), he went on to patent over 1000 inventions, including the light bulb and phonograph (record player).

Itzhak Perlman. The world’s greatest living violinist walks with the help of crutches and leg braces. He contracted polio when he was four years old.

Tom Cruise. Tom Cruise is one of the world's most popular movie star, with films grossing nearly three billion dollars. Cruise says he was diagnosed as dyslexic at seven but learned to get directors and producers to discuss characters and films in order to make good impressions at early auditions.

Vincent van Gogh. Various biographies describe this artist as having episodes of epilepsy, depression, psychotic attacks, delusions, and bipolar disorder.

Sir Winston Churchill. The prime minister of Great Britain through World War II stuttered and worked hard all of his life to overcome a speech impediment.

Stephen Hawking. He has come to be thought of as the greatest mind in physics since Albert Einstein. He uses a wheelchair and speaks through a computer and voice synthesizer, due to Lou Gehrig's disease (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a disease that affects muscle control). a tireless social reformer and activist with what we now call attention deficit disorder (ADD).

You can make a difference, too!