



Stop The Silence Patch Program

The Stop The Silence patch program will help girls understand invisible disabilities. Through a series of steps, girls will learn what invisible “silent” disabilities are, how they affect people, and what they can do to help others. Girls will also learn how to be more considerate and caring Girl Scouts as they explore inclusion and accessibility when it comes to invisible disabilities.

The Stop The Silence patch program is for all Girl Scout levels, Daisy through Ambassador, and can be worked on as a troop or individually. Activities are organized by the 3 Keys of Leadership (what girls do in Girl Scouts) - Discover, Connect and Take Action. If you are working as a troop, you will know your girls best. So work with and have them choose the activities that interest them and are relevant to them.

Curious why there's a sunflower on the patch?

Hidden Disabilities Program chose it because, "Without a visual cue, it can be difficult for others to identify, acknowledge, or understand the daily barriers faced by people living with an invisible disability. We searched for a discreet sign that is clearly visible from a distance as well as being distinctive, joyful, and dynamic. We chose a sunflower as it suggests happiness, positivity, strength as well as growth and confidence and is universally known."

To order your patch visit: [HERE](#)

To give feedback on this patch program visit: [HERE](#)

Girl Scout Level Requirements:

Daisies – 1 Discover, 1 Connect, 1 Taken Action

Brownies – 1 Discover, 2 Connect, 1 Take Action

Juniors – 2 Discover, 2 Connect, 1 Take Action

Cadettes – 2 Discover, 3 Connect, 1 Take Action

Seniors/Ambassadors – 3 Discover, 3 Connect, 1 Take Action

ALL- 1 Before quiz, 1 After quiz

Reflection/Sharing (Optional)

Steps:

1) Before:

- ALL** Complete the Disability Awareness quiz.

2) Discover: Girls will learn about Invisible Disabilities.

- ALL** Learn about disabilities, inclusion, and accessibility.

- i) Look up the words Invisible Disability. What does it mean to you? Have you or a family member ever dealt with an invisible disability?
- ii) Define Inclusion. How is Girl Scouts an inclusive organization?
- iii) Learn the term Accessibility. What does it mean? Think about your troop's current meeting place and determine if it is an accessible location and if not, what could be done to make it one?

- Word Searches

- i) **D/B** After completing [the word search](#), define 1-2 of the different words and how they work/affect people.
- ii) **J/C** After completing [the word search](#), define 2- 3 of the different words and how they work/affect people.
- iii) **S/A** After completing [the word search](#), define 3-4 of the different words and how they work/affect people.

- Coloring Activity

- i) **D/B/J** - pick one of the following coloring sheets
 - (1) Feeling Inside-- Discuss why it is important to always be kind to others.
 - (2) Breathe-- Define anxiety and describe how it affects people.
 - (3) Warrior-- Color in and explain what a warrior is and means to you.
- ii) **C/S/A**
 - (1) Create your own coloring page to bring awareness to invisible disabilities and encourage others. For example, check out this picture.

- ALL** The Girl Scout Law: Its True Meaning

- i) Recite the Girl Scout Law. Talk about what inclusion means and go over each section of the Law and discuss how it applies to inclusion.

Focus on the last line of the Law and talk about what it means to be a sister to every fellow Girl Scout.

- **ALL** Walt Disney--Have girls talk about their favorite Disney show, movie, or ride at Disneyland. Explain that all these exist because of Walt Disney, who lived with dyslexia, a learning disability where an individual has trouble processing written language. As a child, Walt Disney was called slow and as a young adult, he was fired from a newspaper job for not being creative enough!
 - i) **D/B/J** Discussion: Share a time when you were told that you weren't capable of doing something.
 - ii) **C/S/A** Discussion: How did Disney refuse to let others put limitations on him just because he lived with a disability? What other famous people do you know who live with a disability (think about musicians, presidents, actors, and people on TV)? How does the media represent and talk about them? How do they represent and talk about themselves?
- Juliette Gordon Low
 - i) Materials: books about Juliette Gordon Low, and/or internet access
 - ii) Girl Scout founder, Juliette Gordon Low, lived with a disability from the time she was 25. Juliette knew she was no less capable because of her disability and worked to ensure that every girl, regardless of her abilities, was included in this movement, which is how it remains today.
 - (1) **D/B** Research as a group what her disability was and how it happened, using the internet or books as resources. Act out the situations that led to Juliette's disability and imagine what her responses would have been to the community, her doctors, etc. Why is it important that Girl Scouts in the 21st century still welcomes every girl, everywhere?
 - (2) **J/C/S/A** Research as a group what her disability was and how it happened, using the internet or books as resources. As a troop, locate further information on the first Girl Scout troop just for girls living with physical disabilities (hint: it formed in New York). What were some obstacles that Girl Scouts living with disabilities faced in the early 20th century that they don't face today? What are some obstacles that Girl Scouts with disabilities still face? How can we change that?
 - (3) **ALL** Additional Option: Learn about any women who have overcome disabilities and made a difference in the world. Some suggestions are Helen Keller, Marlee Matlin, Marla Runyan, and Sudha Chandran. Share what you discovered with other Girl Scouts through your troop or a video post online.

- 3) **Connect:** Girls will gain confidence when learning and talking about Invisible Disabilities by connecting with their community.
- ALL** Learn the alphabet in American Sign Language (ASL) so you can communicate with those who are hearing impaired/unable to talk.
 - i) [ASL Alphabet Photo](#)
 - ALL** Girl Scout Law + Inclusion - Review the Girl Scout Law, and discuss how inclusion can be incorporated into each part of the law. Why is inclusion important? Draw a picture or write a paragraph of what inclusion means to you.
 - ALL** Service animals - Do some research on the internet and discuss with your troop about how service animals are trained, what they can do, and how the public should interact with them. If possible, arrange for someone who trains or uses a service dog to come and speak to your troop about these topics.
 - i) **C/S/A** You could even look into possibly training a service animal yourself. *Training a service animal is not required.*
 - ALL** Interview a person with a disability. If you know a person with a disability, ask her/him if she/he will do an informational interview. Ask about her/his hobbies, family, dreams, what she/he wants people to know about her/his disability, or if she/he uses any accommodations. Go over the interview and what you have learned from it with your troop.
 - i) You can also share your interview with [Stop The Silence: Support Resources For Everyone!](#) *Not required to complete the patch.*
 - D/B/J** Troop Led-- Famous people who have a disability
 - i) Play a portion of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, or a song by Ray Charles or Stevie Wonder. Tell the girls that Beethoven wrote this symphony when he was deaf and Wonder and Charles play(ed) the piano without being able to see the keys.
 - ii) Discussion: How does this music make you feel? Can you imagine writing the music if you couldn't hear what it would sound like, or playing the music without being able to see your instrument? How do you think these musicians adapted to their circumstances to continue writing and playing music that's now famous?
 - J/C/S/A** Talk about a trip that your troop would like to do (a nature hike, a trip to a museum, a community event, etc.) and think about what you would need to do to make sure that any girl with differing abilities in your troop would be able to participate in. How would you support girls with vision, hearing, physical, or mental challenges to be able to join in the activity?

- 4) Take Action: Share what you have learned with others.
- For any of these Take Actions, you can take a video/photo and submit it to [Stop The Silence: Support Resources For Everyone!](#) *Not a requirement to complete this patch!* (Need parent permission!)
 - ALL** AD Campaign/Presentation-- Create an ad campaign with your troop to educate your community on inclusion. What would you include? If you have a video camera, (using the parent permission form below), film your ad or you can create it on paper! Share what you have learned about different abilities with other Girl Scout troops or classmates. Create a presentation that can be used at a school or Girl Scout community event about what others can do to make a difference.
 - i) You can also share your campaign/presentation to:
personal/community social media pages, coffee shop bulletin boards, schools or [Stop The Silence: Support Resources For Everyone!](#)
 - (1) The more people who are aware, the more inclusive our society can become.
 - ii) Other Ideas: Create a painting, sculpture, mural, poem, short story, or play to share what you've learned with your friends, family members, and Girl Scout sisters.
 - ALL** Modifications -- what are your favorite Girl Scout activities? Camping, hiking, swimming, crafts? Lego League? Are they inclusive? How would you adapt or modify them to make them entirely inclusive?
 - ALL (Troop Act.)** Volunteer-- Arrange for your troop to volunteer with an organization that works with adults and/or children with disabilities. Learn/See firsthand how people with disabilities adapt to everyday activities.
 - D/B/J** Start a Collection – Contact a local organization or center serving people with disabilities to see if there are any supplies they need donated (eyeglasses, toys, etc.). Then work with your troop, family, or school to start a collection of the donated items and drop them off to the organization afterward.
 - i) Every item makes a difference!
 - ii) Remember, Girl Scouts cannot raise money for other organizations, but there are plenty of other ways you can help! Please consult Safety-Wise with any questions on working with other organizations.
 - C/S/A** Be a Buddy--Form a “buddy system” with a girl of the same age with disabilities. Go to <http://www.bestbuddies.org> for more information on which schools in your area participate in the “Best Buddies” program.
 - i) If your school is not listed, learn more on how to start a chapter.

- 5) After:
- ALL** Complete the Disability Awareness quiz. Talk about what you learned with your troop and/or family.
- 6) Optional Feedback and Additional Reflection: Review what you have learned by choosing one of the options.
- You can also share your reflection with [Stop The Silence: Support Resources For Everyone!](#) *Not required to complete the patch.*
 - Talk with a parent, adult family member, or friend (any adult who didn't work with you on earning this patch) about what you've learned about Invisible Disabilities. What was your favorite activity? What knowledge will you bring with you throughout your life? If you could express one thing to others about invisible disabilities, what would it be? Choose a way to express your reflections, such as a paragraph, a poem, music, or a drawing/painting/collage, and share it with your troop.
 - Pick an invisible disability and write a letter to an anonymous person with your chosen disability and explain how you will make the world a more inclusive place using the knowledge you have learned through this patch program.

Daisy/Brownie/Junior Level Ability Awareness Quiz

1. You can “catch” a disability from someone else.
2. People in wheelchairs cannot play sports.
3. People who talk slowly or have a learning disability are not smart.
4. People who are blind can read.
5. People with disabilities don't have the same feelings as people without disabilities.
6. People with disabilities cannot live by themselves.
7. Everyone who uses a wheelchair is unable to walk.
8. A person with a disability can get a job.

Answers

1. You can “catch” a disability from someone else.
 - a. False: A disability is not something that you can catch.
2. People in wheelchairs cannot play sports.
 - a. False: Almost every sport you can think of has been adapted so that people in wheelchairs can play! From wheelchair basketball to sled hockey, to rugby!
3. People who talk slowly or have a learning disability are not smart.
 - a. False: Just because somebody has problems vocalizing their thoughts or processing certain kinds of information does not mean that they are not smart.
4. People who are blind can read.
 - a. True: People who are blind may be able to read with a special kind of alphabet: Braille.
5. People with disabilities do not have the same feelings as people without disabilities.
 - a. False: Everyone has feelings.
6. People with disabilities cannot live by themselves.
 - a. False: Many people with disabilities live independently. Many people live by themselves but may have someone help them with more difficult tasks.
7. Everyone who uses a wheelchair is unable to walk.
 - a. False: Many people are in wheelchairs because their legs are too weak to carry them long distances. They may walk for short distances or just for exercise, while some people who use wheelchairs are unable to walk.
8. A person with a disability can get a job.
 - a. True: A person with a disability can work just as hard as anyone else to get their job done.

Cadette/Senior/Ambassador Ability Awareness Quiz

1. Only people who can't walk use wheelchairs.
2. You have a friend who has a speech impairment and sometimes you're not sure what he said. To make things easier, you should pretend that you understand.
3. When you meet someone who is blind or visually impaired, you should introduce yourself to that person.
4. When communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing, it is necessary to speak through an interpreter.
5. It's safe to assume that people with disabilities usually need help.
6. It's okay to gossip about people who are deaf or hard of hearing because they can't hear you anyway.
7. People who use wheelchairs can't go anywhere for fun.
8. People with cerebral palsy usually have a cognitive disability, too.
9. People with disabilities want to be treated just like everyone else.
10. When you meet someone with a guide or companion dog, you should make friends with the dog first so that the dog is comfortable with you being nearby.
11. Among other professions, people with disabilities work as stockbrokers, lawyers, doctors, and teachers.
12. People with disabilities prefer to hang out with others who have disabilities.
13. Most public places such as movie theatres, restaurants, and ballparks are easy for people who use wheelchairs to enjoy.
14. People with disabilities can't dance.
15. It's okay to ask people with disabilities about their disabilities.
16. People with disabilities can participate in competitive sports.
17. People with disabilities can't live on their own when they grow up.

18. Disabilities are illnesses to be treated by medical professionals in the hope of a cure.
19. People can become disabled at any point in their lives.
20. Many people with disabilities feel their real disability involves problems with the environment rather than problems with their bodies.

Answers

1. Only people who can't walk use wheelchairs.
 - a. False: While it is true that many people who use wheelchairs can't walk, many can. People with disabilities who can walk independently or with the aid of braces or a walker may tire easily and choose to use a wheelchair because it gives them more independence.
2. You have a friend who has a speech impairment and sometimes you're not sure what he said. To make things easier, you should pretend that you understand.
 - a. False: Never pretend you understand what someone is saying if you don't. Instead, ask your friend to repeat himself. If you're still having trouble, make your best guess about what the person is saying and ask if you heard correctly. Occasionally, your friend may need to write something down for clarity.
3. When you meet someone who is blind or visually impaired, you should introduce yourself to that person.
 - a. True: Introductions are always appropriate when meeting new people. When you have a friend or acquaintance with vision loss, it is appropriate to simply state your name whenever you see or greet him/her. "Hi Michelle, it's Jane Anderson."
4. When communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing, it is necessary to speak through an interpreter.
 - a. False: Because some people who are deaf or hard of hearing use sign language, others read lips and still others use a combination of both, you need to find out how you can best communicate with them. If he or she has an interpreter, it's perfectly fine to use this person, but look at and speak directly to the person with the disability, not to the interpreter. The interpreter will stand beside you and interpret as necessary.
5. It's safe to assume that people with disabilities usually need help.
 - a. False: Most people with disabilities prefer to be independent. When offering help to someone with a disability, always ask first, wait for their response, and then ask them about the best way to provide the help they need. Don't feel bad if your help is turned down.
6. It's okay to gossip about people who are deaf or hard of hearing because they can't hear you anyway.
 - a. False: People who are deaf or hard of hearing are just as likely to know they are being talked about as other people would be. Even if they do not hear exactly what's being said, they will notice. Why be rude?

7. People who use wheelchairs can't go anywhere for fun.
 - a. False: People who use wheelchairs may face some architectural barriers when going out into the community, but this doesn't mean they can't go anywhere fun. Instead, it's a reason to check out the places you plan to go ahead of time to see if there are potential problems. Decisions can then be made to work around barriers or to choose another location. Knowing what to expect ahead of time will make planned activities more enjoyable for everyone.
8. People with cerebral palsy usually have a cognitive disability, too.
 - a. False: Cerebral palsy is a disability affecting movement. Although cerebral palsy affects the motor control center of the brain, it does not affect one's natural intelligence.
9. People with disabilities very much want to be treated just like everyone else.
 - a. True: People with disabilities have said that this, more than anything, is what they want—to be included and treated just like everyone else.
10. When you meet someone with a guide or companion dog, you should make friends with the dog first so that the dog is comfortable with you being nearby.
 - a. False: You should always meet the person before their dog. Guide and companion dogs are working and should not be disturbed. As you are getting to know the person, you can ask about the dog, and ask to be introduced.
11. Among other professions, people with disabilities work as stockbrokers, athletes, teachers, and doctors.
 - a. True: People with disabilities are involved in a full range of professions.
12. People with disabilities prefer to hang out with others who have disabilities.
 - a. False: Friendship is usually based on common interests and activities, not on whether or not a person has a disability.
13. Public places such as movie theatres, restaurants, and ballparks are easy for people who use wheelchairs to enjoy.
 - a. False: Although the Americans with Disabilities Act calls for public places to be accessible to people who use wheelchairs, the fact is that there are still many places that are difficult for people who use wheelchairs to navigate. When you make plans with someone with a disability, possible architectural barriers should be considered.
14. People with disabilities can't dance.
 - a. False: Most people have their own styles of dancing, and people with disabilities are no different.

15. It's okay to ask people with disabilities about their disabilities.
 - a. True: What's important is how you ask. Don't ask, "What's wrong with you?" Instead, learning more about a person's disability should be a part of getting to know each other. Even then, some people may be willing to answer questions, while others may choose not to. Be sensitive to and respect their wishes.

16. People with disabilities can participate in competitive sports.
 - a. True: Competitive sports are as important to people with disabilities as they are to those without. Having a physical, sensory, or cognitive disability does not necessarily preclude involvement in individual or team sports. People with disabilities ski, play tennis and racquetball, race in 10Ks and marathons, and participate in dozens of other sports. Keep in mind, though, that just like everyone else, some people with disabilities love sports, while others just aren't interested.

17. People with physical disabilities can't live on their own when they grow up.
 - a. False: With adapted housing, personal assistants, accessible transportation, and available employment, most people with physical disabilities can and do choose to live independently.

18. Disabilities are illnesses to be treated by medical professionals in the hope of a cure.
 - a. False: Disabilities are not the same as illnesses. People with disabilities are not sick, and most are seeking acceptance and inclusion rather than a 'cure'.

19. People can become disabled at any time in their lives.
 - a. True: People can be born with a disability or the disability may come after birth, the result of illness, age or an accident. Statistics show that during their lifetime, 50 % of people will experience a disability.

20. Many people with disabilities feel their real disability involves problems with the environment rather than problems with their bodies.
 - a. True: Architectural barriers limit participation, productivity, and independence. For instance, if a person who uses a wheelchair is offered a job that they cannot accept because it is located on the second floor of a building without an elevator, the real problem and obstacle is that there is no elevator.

