

## DISABILITY AWARENESS



Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago  
and Northwest Indiana

[www.girlscoutsgcnwi.org](http://www.girlscoutsgcnwi.org)

### TRY-IT • BADGE • INTEREST PROJECT

(Council's Own) BR • JR • CAD • SR • AM



*Have you ever wondered how it would feel to be blind, or deaf, or spend your waking hours in a wheelchair? Maybe you know someone with a disability. Maybe you will someday consider a career working with disabled people to find ways to make a disabled person's life easier.*

The **Disability Awareness** program provides an opportunity for girls to experience the daily life of the disabled as well as explore careers associated with the disabled. This experience may lead to a rewarding career.

Brownie and Junior Girl Scouts can earn the *Disability Awareness Try-it or Badge* by completing the number of activities indicated in each section. Cadette, Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts must complete at least eight of the activities listed in addition to the four required (starred ★) activities marked as required to earn the *Disability Awareness Interest Project Patch*.

**PURPOSE:** *To provide Girl Scouts with awareness, career opportunities to better understand the world of the disabled.*

**KNOWLEDGE:** *Brownie and Junior Girl Scouts - choose three activities, including at least one of the required items*

- ★ Learn the characteristics of disabling conditions (Brownies-2; Juniors 4). The activity should be age/level appropriate. Share the information as a troop.
  - Physical, mental or emotional impairments
  - Autism
  - Seizure disorders
  - Learning disabilities
  - visual impairment
  - Hearing impairment
  - Speech and language impairments
- For each of the disabling conditions you learned about in activity one, list at least two things which would be helpful to remember when interacting with a person who has that condition.
- For each of the disabling conditions learned about in #1, list the adaptations you might

make in your regular troop surroundings to include a girl with that condition.

4. Read a book about a person with a disability. How did he/she deal with his/her disability? Share what you read with your troop.
5. Learn how to identify a car driven by a person with a disability. Learn about the law that provides parking privileges for the disabled.
6. ★ Required. For one hour, perform your normal routines (study, make a sandwich, television, cleaning your room) under each of the following conditions. Document your limitations and how you adjusted your activity. Share your responses and reactions with your troop.
  - a. Muffle your ears with bandages or ear plugs
  - b. Blindfold your eyes
  - c. Immobilize your writing arm so it can't be used normally.
  - d. Immobilize one leg so it can't be used normally.
7. ★ Required. Visit an agency that works with the physically, sensory, or mentally disabled. Collect their publications about their activities
8. ★ Required. Volunteer with an agency working with disabled youth, or help with a program for a Girl Scout troop that has disabled girl members.

9. Make up an appropriate activity.

**AWARENESS: (Brownie and Junior Girl Scouts - choose two)**

1. With a partner, take a "trust walk."
  - Put on a blindfold, and let your partner lead you on a walk. Have your partner talk to you, telling you where you are, describe the landscape, what obstacles may be in your way, etc.
  - Have your partner walk a few steps behind you, and guide you with only verbal clues.
  - Have your partner lead you by the hand without speaking
  - Change places and repeat the three steps above.
  - Discuss your feelings and experiences with the troop
2. Watch a television program with the sound off.
  - How much of the television show were you able to understand?
  - Wear earplugs, but do not let people know you are wearing them. How did people react to you?
  - Discuss your feelings and experiences with the troop.
3. Find literature for public and private places. Does the literature discuss accessibility or non-accessibility? Observe the accessibility or non-accessibility to the disabled in the following places:
  - Five places with good accessibility
  - Five places with poor accessibility
  - Your school or church
  - Your camp site
4. Make up an appropriate activity.

***SERVICE: (Brownie and Junior Girl Scouts - choose one)***

1. Make a developmental toy or book that can be used by a child with a disability. Donate your toy or book to an agency or child.
2. Volunteer for an organization that teaches and cares for disabled children. Work with a Girl Scout troop with disabled girl members in your area.
3. Identify and discuss handicapped parking areas. Develop community awareness program posters.
4. Take part in a disability awareness program or present a display or program concerning disability awareness.
5. Learn sign language and/or to read Braille.
6. Be a true friend with a disabled person. Exchange letters or communicate regularly with him or her.
7. JUNIORS ONLY: Learn how to care for a wheelchair. Create an obstacle course. Using the wheelchair time each girl as she goes through the obstacle course.
8. JUNIORS ONLY: Learn skills needed to baby-sit for a child with a disability.
9. JUNIORS ONLY: Teach a group of younger girls the skills needed for baby-sitting a child with a disability.

***CAREER EDUCATION: (Junior Girl Scouts- choose one – not for Brownie Girl Scouts)***

1. Visit an agency that works with people who are physically, developmentally disabled, emotionally, sensory or mentally handicapped.
2. Find out what kind of education is required for people who work with the disabled and where they received their education. Write to a college or university to get information about this course of study.
3. Interview a person who works in treating and preventing disabilities. Suggestions are: Orthopedic surgeon, geneticist, prosthesis technician, prosthesis engineer, orthopedic appliance manufacturer, pediatrician, obstetrician, neonatal care nurse, and ophthalmologist. Record what this person does and how it helps the disabled.
4. Make up an appropriate activity.

## **RESOURCES & LINKS**

Check out your Community Library or go on-line.  
Check the web links for more volunteer opportunities. Topics to get you started:

Disability	Respite Care
Handicap	Exceptional Children
Special Needs	

Web Links: (www.

ray-graham.org	marklund.org
nichcy.org	ldonline.org
irsc.org	cec.sped.org
seriweb.com	ldaamerica.org
nectas.unc.edu	nod.org
thearc.org	kidstogether.org
schoolnet.ca	ndss.org
ericec.org	nfb.org
fcsn.org	

## **CONTACTS FOR VOLUNTEER WORK:**

Marklund Homes  
(630) 529-2871

Ray Graham Association  
Consumer Advocacy  
(630) 620-2222