



SARTAC
Self Advocacy and Beyond

SARTAC Zoom Meetings

A National Connection for Self-Advocates



<https://selfadvocacyinfo.org/>



**Links to Videos and Resources
Shared During SARTAC Zoom
Meetings**

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- The recordings and resources

July 15th

Today we talk about Ableism!

We have a new booklet that explains Ableism. We are going to share one part of it today.

It could bring up bad memories of a time when you were treated unfairly.

What can you do if you feel upset?



There is a new booklet written for people with disabilities to understand ableism.

Ableism may be a new word to many people. Often we hear people use academic words to describe ableism. It is important for people with disabilities to be able to explain ableism.

We hope advocacy groups will read and discuss this booklet. Let us know what you think. If you are an ally, please share this information with people with and without disabilities. We want to lift up the voices of people with disabilities.





People with disabilities are people.

Everyone has rights.

Everyone has the right to control their own lives.

This is called **self-determination**.

Everyone has human rights like:

- Choosing where to live.
- Going to school and choosing where to go to school.
- Working and choosing what work to do.
- Marrying and having children.
- Voting.

Human rights are what everyone needs to be free.

- People with disabilities have all these rights. No one should take our rights away. People need to respect our rights and choices.
- People do not always respect our rights and choices. Our **society** is set up to make it hard for people with disabilities to use their rights. This is called **ableism**.





The world is not built for disabled people.

The world we live in is built for people who do not have disabilities.

We assume that everyone can see, walk, and hear.

Everyone uses **accommodations**.

But, we might not think about them as accommodations, because they meet most people's needs.



We put up streetlights, because sighted people cannot see in the dark.

We have shoe stores, because people who walk need shoes to keep their feet safe.

We put speakers in cars, so that the radio will be loud enough.

But, if we lived in a world where most people were blind, we would not need streetlights.

If more people used wheelchairs, we would have more stores for wheelchairs than shoes.

If most people were Deaf, we might not use radios at all.

Our world is built for a certain set of abilities that most people share.

But, it does not have to be.

The world is built this way because of *ableism*.



**DIFFERING
ABILITY**

WHAT IS ABLEISM?

Ableism is **discrimination** against people with disabilities.

Ableism is like sexism, racism, and other forms of discrimination.

Ableism means that people with disabilities as a group are treated unfairly because of our disabilities.

Just like sexism means that women as a group are treated unfairly because they are women.



Ableism is wrong. No one should discriminate against disabled people or anyone else.

Often, people with disabilities are left out. We are left out because the world is not built with us in mind. This is ableism.



- A lot of buildings are built so wheelchair users can't get in.
- Newspapers are printed too small for people with low vision to read.
- When people make videos without captions, Deaf people cannot understand them.

It is so common for us to be left out that you might not even notice it is happening.

People without disabilities might think badly about people with disabilities.

They might treat us unfairly because of our disabilities. This is ableism.

- A boss might not hire someone for a job because of a disability.





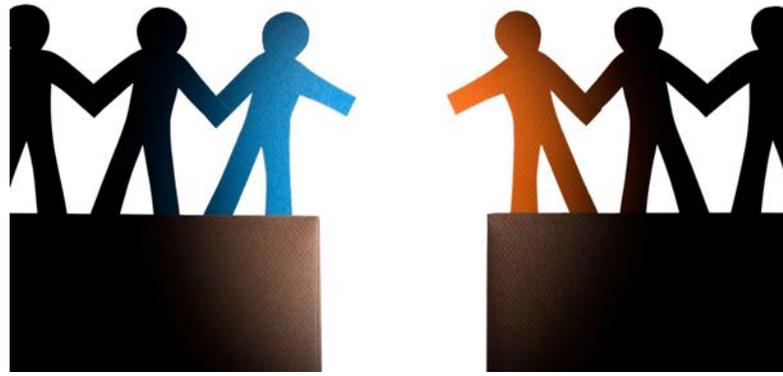
- Schools might not teach disabled students. Schools might keep disabled students away from other students.
 - Some people make fun of people with disabilities or call us names.
 - People are more likely to hurt or abuse people with disabilities. Some people think our disabilities make it okay to hurt us. If someone hurts us, people might not do anything about it.
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- People might think we cannot make our own choices. They might treat us like kids even when we are adults. They might try to control our lives.

Ableism is not just about how one person treats another person.

Being polite to people with disabilities will not fix ableism

Ableism affects decisions people make about our lives. These decisions add up. Sometimes they turn into laws or programs that treat disabled people unfairly, like institutions and sheltered workshops.

Ableism is built into our society. Disabled people don't have the same chances in life. They might be kept apart from other people.



Ableism can make disabled people feel bad about ourselves. This is called **internalized ableism**.

- Example: People might start calling themselves the names other people call them.

Ableism can make us think we deserve to be treated badly.

- Example: A boss decides not to hire someone because of their disability.

That person might think, “I did not get the job because I am not good enough.”

They might decide there is no point to trying to have a job.



People with disabilities can also discriminate against each other.

Example: Aaron is trying to explain why disabled people should not have to live in institutions.

He says, “Just because I need help with some things does not mean I am crazy. I don’t need to be locked up.”

But, people with mental health disabilities should not be locked up either.

Aaron is saying it is okay to keep people in institutions if they have different disabilities than him.

Small Group Discussions

Does your self-advocacy group talk about Ableism?

Have you ever taken a class on Ableism?

What are ways we can use this new booklet that explains Ableism?

