

What Barriers do those with Special Needs Face?

"I think that people with People with special needs face so many adversities that they still continue to face, but I am proud of we as a nation have improved on helping those with special needs. They still face the challenges of staring down the face of adversity. I don't want to discredit the challenges that they face."

-Anita Casterline, Highschool Teacher

"When I was growing up I was bound to a wheelchair for a while and you would not believe how hard it was for that period of time. I have cerebral palsy which means sometimes my legs don't work that great. Not being able to walk for that period of time was challenging then you add the fact that my mom now had to drive me to school because the school I went to didn't have a wheelchair accessible bus."

-Robbie Irvine, Family Member with Cerebral Palsy

"It is important to remember there can be less visible barriers as well. Psychological Disorders (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder) and learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia) are examples of these less visible barriers. People experiencing these issues have to make the tough choice whether to publicly share their condition, and ask for the accommodations they deserve, while risking possible social stigma."

-Dr. Kristen Ritchey, Personal Communication

"Often these barriers are things overlooked by a more able population, such as lack of or broken and in-need-of-repair sidewalks, deciding on the small ramps from the street to sidewalk, or automatic elevators doors that close too quickly. For adults disabled by mental health conditions, other overlooked barriers still exist, such as lack of recognition of how loud noises (such as fireworks) negatively affect many with PTSD, or that spaces feel threatening when it is perceived there is no "escape" route."

-Victoria Sprague, LCSW VISN 10 Caregiver Support Program Lead, Personal Communication



"My disability is Cerebral Palsy (CP) who uses a wheelchair to get around. There are a lot of physical barriers for me such as buildings not being accessible or as I like to say not handy happy. Parking spaces are another barrier for me. Not enough of them or able-bodied people use them which really makes me mad and frustrates me. Some social barriers that I have encountered are people assuming that I am mentally challenged just because I'm in a wheelchair. That might be the case with some people w/ disabilities, but not all of us."

-Anna Plassman, BSU Project Coordinator, Special Education

"He explained that the social stereotypes are the worst because they make him feel like he is not equal. I asked him if he had a specific experience, he would like to talk about, but he said that it happens almost every time he goes into public. " Whenever I go out to the store or work I can tell people are staring at me

-Gavin Meier, interviewing Andrew Shank.

"A couple of examples are not having accessibility such as sidewalks and being able to drive vehicles that are not accessible which cause the person to depend on other types of equipment to rely on. Another example would be a person who could not feed themselves and is not aware that there is assistive technology available for the disabled."

-Dr. Norlinda Lacey, Therapist

I have observed disabilities that make it hard for our patients to receive the care that they need.

We have patients who have physical disabilities and lifts and other aids are not available to help the patient transition from a chair or bed onto the examination table. Most patients require assistance from care givers or loved ones, which in these times, other members are not allowed in the room during examinations

-Passion Gray, Radiology Scheduler.

"The one thing I hate is when people don't understand me..." -Anna Plassman

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