

Awareness  
Understanding  
Acceptance  
Participation

= Inclusion



# Interchange Activities

creating opportunities

2012

Promoting more inclusive communities for people with a disability

## Partners & Supporters





**Our formal education cannot be confined to facts and figures - it must extend to values. And, importantly, that we value the contribution that each of us can make, if allowed to live out our full potential.**

Simon McKeon  
Interchange Victoria Patron  
Australian Of The Year 2011

#### **INTERCHANGE VICTORIA**

Interchange Activities is an initiative of Interchange Victoria to create greater awareness about disability and promote more inclusive communities. Interchange Victoria supports its member programs to provide family support and social opportunities for children and young people with a disability.

#### **OUR VISION**

To be part of a community that shares the responsibility for the wellbeing of all, celebrates and promotes difference and strives for inclusiveness. We want a community where all are treated with dignity and respect and have the opportunity to access and participate in activities of their own choice.

#### **OUR MISSION**

Interchange supports and enhances all its members to deliver effective, high quality respite and related services to families of people with a disability.

#### **OUR VALUES**

Integrity - We are open, honest and accountable in all our practices.

Social Justice - We contribute to and work with the broader community to bring about positive changes for individuals and society. We recognise that a fair community means that all people have the right to opportunity and justice and can participate fully in their communities.

Quality - We create the environment for the Board, Staff, Volunteers and Partners to excel in the provision of services with standards and systems that support and build on strengths of Interchange.

Positive work environment - We value and promote a positive and safe work environment that supports diversity and values individual abilities and contribution.

Sustainability - We will aim to maximize our enterprise opportunities and undertake responsible financial management.

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**“ Until the concept of disability disappears and is replaced by a society that is structured to support everyone’s life relatedness and contribution - until that day my life and opportunities and lives of every other person who carries the label ‘disabled’ depends on the goodwill of people in the human service system. Goodwill is no substitute for freedom.**

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

## CONTENTS

## Page

FOREWORD	01
INTERCHANGE ACTIVITIES	
About Interchange Activities	02
Who can do Interchange Activities	02
How best to run Interchange Activities	02
Pre and Post Assessment	03
Hearing Impairment	04
Vision Impairment	05
Intellectual Disability	06 - 07
Physical Disability	08
Autism Spectrum Disorders	09
DID YOU KNOW	
Famous people	10
Fast facts for chats	11
Quotes from people	12
Meet some people	13
How much do you know	14 - 15

To download Interchange Activities visit: <http://www.interchange.org.au/school-activities.php>

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- Dr. Astrid Birgden PhD for her assistance and input.
- People and organisations who will conduct these activities in their schools, home, work or out in the community.

### CONTACT

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Interchange Victoria  
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### DISCLAIMER

Interchange Victoria accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of any material contained in this booklet. Additionally, Interchange Victoria disclaims all liability to any person in respect of anything, and the consequences of anything, done or omitted to be done by any such person in reliance, whether wholly or partially, upon any information contained in this booklet.

Please note that some information and direct quotes in this booklet are excerpts from third party material.

## FOREWORD

**“ People with a disability want to live in a society where they are treated with respect, dignity and importantly with equality, and not as ‘poor things’ nor merely as recipients of services. Additionally they do not want to be segregated as ‘people with disabilities’.**

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

Many of us take for granted the things we are able to do. However everyday activities like catching public transport, working, learning a new skill or going to a local café may be challenging for a person with a disability not so much because of their disability, but because of the attitudes and barriers that make access and inclusion difficult.

Most disabilities are acquired and so a disability may touch us or someone we care about at any time. Having an understanding of what disability might mean and appreciating the contribution people with a disability make to the community helps all of us to accept and appreciate diversity and adapt to change if and when it happens.

Interchange Activities are aimed at creating greater awareness, understanding and acceptance by promoting discussion and involvement. Its also about celebrating diversity and creating more inclusive and accessibly communities for people with a disability. The activities will also give participants an opportunity to experience diversity in their own abilities.

Interchange programs have a long history of providing family support and social opportunities for children and young people with a disability and their families. Interchange programs include host care, youth groups, school holiday programs, camps and sibling and family activities. These activities would not happen without the support and commitment of volunteers who in turn benefit from being connected to new social networks.

The activities contained in this booklet are an extension of the work already done by Interchange. We believe that learning about disability can and should happen throughout a person's life and perceptions and attitudes to disability are important.

Interchange Activities are interactive, fun and simple to ensure anyone from school children to adults can participate. They are part of an everyday campaign and hence can be run throughout the year. We encourage you to run all five activities during the year to ensure participants maximise their understanding. The activities are not meant to cover all the challenges people with a disability face, but give a better understanding of what it might be like to have a disability. The activities will also allow people to discover ways and opportunities to overcome the difficulties during the activity. Discussing people's thoughts and feelings after the activity is an important part in recognising the challenges, and valuing the contributions made by people with a disability.

We have included a pre and post assessment form to help us to continually improve Interchange Activities. The Interchange Cards included in the booklet are to be handed out to the participants after the activity. They give participants the opportunity to access the activities online and find ways of getting involved in broader Interchange programs.

I sincerely hope that the Interchange Activities will help to grow your understanding of what having a disability means and how you can better support people to be included and involved in our community.



**Jetha Devapura**  
CEO, Interchange Victoria

# Interchange Activities

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Promoting more inclusive communities for people with a disability

## ABOUT INTERCHANGE ACTIVITIES

“ **Real understanding comes not from what you hear or read, but by the amount of time you invest in experiencing it.** ”

Interchange Activities promote the need for greater discussion, understanding, acceptance and involvement with the aim to create more inclusive communities for people with a disability.

Interchange Activities are not meant to cover all the challenges people with a disability face, but give a greater understanding for what it might be like to have a disability. Interchange Activities also give participants an opportunity to experience diversity in their own abilities.

### **Interchange Activities are aimed at:**

- Increasing awareness and understanding about disability
- Recognising that people with a disability deserve the same opportunities as everyone else
- Encouraging involvement and volunteering to support people with a disability and their families

## WHO CAN DO INTERCHANGE ACTIVITIES

“ **If you feel that you are part of the community, then most probably you are accepted as you are.** ”

Interchange Activities are for everyone who would like to be part of making our community more inclusive and accessible for people with all abilities.

We encourage people of all ages, beliefs and backgrounds to take part and have a go. You will be surprised by the simplicity and effectiveness of the Interchange Activities in making you realise the challenges and opportunities faced by people with a disability and their families.

## HOW BEST TO RUN INTERCHANGE ACTIVITIES

“ **What we learn alone stays with us for life, what we learn together stays with us forever.** ”

Interchange Activities are best conducted in small groups to ensure there is good interaction and open discussions afterwards. Learning can be enriched by sharing other people's thoughts and experiences which will add more meaning to the activities.

### **Interchange Activities can be run in:**

- Schools – In the classroom, in the playground or at events
- Businesses – In the office, during tea or lunch breaks, during team meetings or after hours
- At Home – In the family room or the backyard
- Community – In the park, community hall or sporting/social events

# Interchange Activities

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## Pre & Post Assessment Form

### The purpose of the Pre & Post Assessment is to measure whether:

- There is increased awareness and understanding about disability
- There is increased recognition that people with a disability deserve the same opportunities as everyone else
- There is increased willingness to volunteer or support people with a disability and their carers

### Instructions to the facilitator:

Please conduct the Pre-Assessment before any of the activities commence and then the Post-Assessment after all the activities have been completed. Place 5 chairs around the room and place numbers 1 to 5 in each chair. Each number represents the following:

- 1. I agree 100%**    **2. I agree 50%**    **3. I am not sure**    **4. I don't agree 50%**    **5. I don't agree 100%**

Please ensure the participants understand the meaning of the numbers. As you read each statement below, please record the number of participants that stand at each chair (1 - 5) in the boxes below.

**PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM** each time you run an Activity. You can download or fillout the online form at <http://www.interchange.org.au/school-activities.php>

### PRE-ASSESSMENT

(Before commencing the Activity)

1 2 3 4 5  
agree 100% don't agree 100%

### POST-ASSESSMENT

(After completing the Activity)

1 2 3 4 5  
agree 100% don't agree 100%

A person with a disability can have the same choices as me

A person with a disability can be included in everyday activities

I can talk/communicate with a person with a disability

A person with a disability can work, study and play sport

I can support a person with a disability to do things



**General feedback about the Activities:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*If you have suggestions for improvements, please contact Interchange on 1300 300 436 or email [enquiries@interchange.org.au](mailto:enquiries@interchange.org.au)*

**Name of Activity(ies):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of School/Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Facilitator:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Number of Participants:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

### PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM to Interchange Victoria:

- Online - visit [www.interchange.org.au](http://www.interchange.org.au) and click on School Activities
- By Email - Scan and email to [enquiries@interchange.org.au](mailto:enquiries@interchange.org.au)
- By Fax - Interchange Victoria, Fax: (03) 9396 1613
- By Mail - Interchange Victoria, Suite 6, 75 Ashley Street, Braybrook VIC 3019



## Hearing Impairment

“ In this day and age, imagine if a person was told that they could only go to ten cinemas in Australia and to one of three sessions a week because of their gender, cultural background or religious beliefs. But as a deaf person, that is what I face. I am very limited in where I can go and when, to access things that other people take for granted.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

### Background

It is estimated that approximately 1 in 10 people in Australia have a significant hearing loss. Hearing impairments include everything from not being able to hear certain sounds to being totally deaf. In most cases, a hearing loss doesn't simply mean that sounds are not loud enough. It usually means that sounds are garbled or unclear. A hearing aid may make speech louder, but usually will not make speech clearer.

### Aim of the Activity

To develop the understanding about hearing impairment, by conducting an activity without speaking. Following the activities to have a discussion on the challenges faced and also the discovery of ways and means to overcome the imposed hearing impairment to complete the activity.

**Participants:** Group

**Place:** Indoors or Outdoors

**Time:** 20 min + 15 min Discussion

**Important:** No one speaks during this activity

This is an activity where you get the participants to line up (or group up) into some kind of chronological order (or different categories). Once you explain the activity to the group, there needs to be a code of silence.

### Level of Activity: Easy

For younger groups, the challenge of being silent will be hard enough. With these groups, start them out by grouping them together in some of the following categories. You can give the participants a time limit to group together. Try and cover two categories in the 10 min. Remember they cannot speak during this activity.

#### Categories:

Same birthday month; Same size shoe; Same favourite footy team; Same favourite ice cream; Same number of siblings. Feel free to add your own categories.

### Level of Activity: Intermediate/Hard

For groups that are ready for more of a challenge, have them line up in chronological order for the following:

According to their first name or According to their last name (go to 2nd letter if same first letter)

According to their birthday (just month and day). These can get harder with bigger groups.

You will find the participants may resort to sign language, nudges, someone might try to start directing, etc. With a younger group, you can let them lip sync and add in the challenge of not lip syncing, as they get further with the challenge.

### Discussion

The aim is to let the participants express their thoughts and feelings and get a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities one faces when they are not able to hear or speak. Some sample discussion questions:

- ❑ Who found trying to complete the task without hearing and speaking hard and what was most hard about it?
- ❑ What ways and opportunities did you discover to complete the task?
- ❑ Did you find that the way you were communicating was effective?
- ❑ Did you have to repeat yourself to get your information across? How did that make you feel?
- ❑ What have you learnt about not being able to hear or speak?
- ❑ How do you feel about someone with a hearing impairment? Is it different from before the activity?
- ❑ How can you support a person who is deaf or have a hearing impairment?
- ❑ Feel free to add your own thoughts, observations and questions.

# Interchange Activities

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## Vision Impairment

“ A recent study by Vision Australia found 63 per cent of people who are blind or vision impaired are underemployed or unemployed.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

### Background

Currently it is estimated that in Australia there are about 300,000 people who are blind or vision impaired. Vision impairments include things like being short-sighted or far-sighted that can be corrected with glasses. When one or more parts of the eye or brain that are needed to process images become diseased or damaged, severe or total loss of vision can occur. In these cases, vision can't be fully restored with medical treatment, surgery, or corrective lenses like glasses or contacts.

### Aim of the Activity

To develop an understanding about vision impairment by conducting an activity with blindfolds. Following the activity to have a discussion on the challenges faced and also the discovery of ways and means to overcome the imposed vision impairment to complete the activity.

**Participants:** Group

**Time:** 20 min + 15 min Discussion

**Place:** Indoors or Outdoors

**Important:** No one is able to see during this activity.

### Blind Shapes (Activity 1)

Blindfold each participant or ask everyone to close their eyes. Let them know peeking will only reduce the effectiveness of the activity and they will be only cheating themselves. Ideally you will need 8 – 10 participants in a group for this activity. Have the group hold hands (rope is optional) and ask them to form shapes like a square, circle, triangle, rectangle etc without being able to see. Once the group feels they have achieved the shape, ask them to see their result. Try different shapes and see if they improve their coordination and communication.

### Blindfold Trust Walk (Activity 2)

Explain that you will need two people, a guide and a blind person. You can run this activity in an indoor or outdoor area. Set up chairs with several occupied and one vacant chair. Place obstacles on the way to the chair, and/or face the chair in an unexpected direction. The guide and blind person should not see the set up of the chairs until the activity begins. The guide's role is to help the blind person come into the room/area and direct them to the chair without running into anything. The group will need to rearrange the chairs for each two new people to try and find the empty chair. The guide can use verbal cues and touch to help them guide their way. Make sure the blindfold is on and foolproof.

Some common observations are that guides may grab the blind person and lead or push them around. Guides may not necessarily describe the path, and say “look out” instead of “stop” at obstacles. When the chair is reached, guides usually tend to spin the blind person around and push them into the seat.

### Discussion

The aim is to let the participants express their thoughts and feelings and get a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities one faces when they are not able to see clearly or at all. Some sample discussion questions:

- How did the guide and blind person feel?
- How did the others watching feel? Were there ways the guide could have done things differently?
- What was the communication between the guide and blind person like?
- When you are blindfolded, you know that it is only for a short time and you can remove the blindfold. A person who is blind does not have this option. How would you feel if your blindfold was permanent?
- When sighted people are blindfolded, they keep the mental picture of what things look like. Some people who are partially or totally blind do not have mental pictures and therefore have a more difficult time doing certain tasks. Imagine never having seen a koala and having someone describe it to you. Have a discussion on this.
- How do you feel about someone with a vision impairment? Is it different from before the activity?
- How can you support a person who is blind or has a vision impairment?
- Feel free to add your own thoughts, observations and questions.

## Intellectual Disability

“ **The greatest barrier facing people with Down Syndrome is not their intellectual disability but the confronting negative attitudes, overcoming outdated stereotypes & challenging the limitations placed on them by others**

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

### Background

A person with an intellectual disability can learn but may have some difficulty in understanding and analysing things. They may have difficulty: understanding what other people say or mean; saying what they mean or how they feel; reading social cues in others; not knowing when someone is making fun of them; and concentrating and learning new skills.

### Aim of the Activity

To develop understanding about some of the aspects of intellectual disability through a series of activities. Following the activities to have a discussion on the challenges faced and feelings experienced.

**Participants:** Group or individual

**Time:** 20 min + 15 min Discussion

**Place:** Indoors or Outdoors

**Important:** Facilitator to work quickly through the activities

**Note:** all three activities are on the next page. Hand the participants a copy and follow instructions set out below.

### Is it English?: (Activity A)

Give participants 5 minutes to read the paragraph and answer the questions. Tell them it is an easy test and all the answers are right there in the paragraph. When participants complain they can't do it, tell them to "try harder." As soon as the time is up, go to the Activity B.

### Finding the Letters: (Activity B)

Tell participants this test should be very easy because it is in English and should only take 1 minute. The challenge is to see how many times the letter 'F' appears in the paragraph. When they are finished, have the participants raise their hands to show how many found 3 Fs, 4 Fs, 5 Fs or if anyone found any more than 5 Fs. The correct answer is 6. Most people miss the Fs in the word 'OF'. This is because we pronounce this as 'ov' so our brain skips right over this when we are looking for 'F'. Proceed to Activity C.

### Colour Confusion: (Activity C)

Have the participants get into pairs and read quickly the COLOUR the word is written in, not the word itself, out loud. Afterward, discuss how your brain wants to read the actual word and therefore you have to read much slower than normal. Not being able to do this activity correctly or at normal speed doesn't mean you are not smart. It just means that you need to focus harder as your brain wants to do something different.

### Discussion

The aim is to let the participants express their thoughts and feelings and get a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities one faces when they have an intellectual disability. Some sample discussion questions:

- How did it feel having someone tell you it was an "easy" test, and told you to just "try harder"?
- What do you think you would feel like if every book, newspaper, etc you opened looked like this?
- How many people stopped trying when they saw what the test was? Why?
- How did it feel to realise you didn't count all the F letters?
- How did it feel to have your brain "trick" you on the last two tests?
- How would it feel if this happened to you all the time, every day?
- How do you feel about someone with an intellectual disability? Is it different from before the activity?
- How can you support a person with an intellectual disability?
- Feel free to add your own thoughts, observations and questions

## Intellectual Disability

### HANDOUT

#### Is it English: (Activity A)

Please read the paragraph and fill in the blanks in the 3 questions below.

**Duration:** 5 Minutes

egnahcretnl seitivitca era demia ta gnitaerc retaerg ssenerawa, gnidnatsrednu dna echnatpecca yb gnitomorp noissucsid dna tnemevlovni. ehT seitivitca era evitcaretni, nuf dna elpmis ot erusne enoyna morf loohcs nerdlihc ot stluda nac etapicitrap. egnahcretnl seitivitca nac eb nur emityna dna nac eb ta loohcs, emoh ro krow.

gnissucsiD s'elpoep sthguoht dna sgnileef retfa eht ytitvitca si na tnatropmi trap ni gnisingocer eht segnellahc, dna gniulav eht snoitubirtnoc edam yb elpoep htiw a ytilibasiD.

egnahcretnl seitivitca si na evitaitini yb egnahcretnl airotciv a ton rof tiforp noitasinagro taht stropplus sti rebmem egnahcretnl smargorP ot edivorp etipser dna lanoitaercer seitinutroppo ot nerdlihc dna gnuoy elpoep htiw a ytilibasiD dna rieht seilimaf.

1. tahW si eht mia fo eht egnahcretnl seitivitca?
2. ohW nac od eht seitivitca, nehW dna erehw?
3. tahW seod egnahcretnl airotciv od?

#### Finding the Letters: (Activity B)

Please determine how many times the letter 'F' appears in the paragraph below.

**Duration:** 1 Minutes

**“FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF MANY YEARS”**

#### Colour Confusion: (Activity C)

Please get into pairs and read the COLOUR the word is written in, not the word itself, out loud quickly.

**Duration:** 2 Minutes

**YELLOW BLUE ORANGE**  
**BLACK RED GREEN**  
**PURPLE YELLOW RED**  
**ORANGE GREEN BLACK**  
**BLUE RED PURPLE**  
**GREEN BLUE ORANGE**

## Physical Disability

“ If I lived in a society where being in a wheelchair was no more remarkable than wearing glasses, and if the community was completely accepting and accessible, my disability would be an inconvenience and not much more than that. It is society that handicaps me, far more seriously and completely than the fact that I have Spina bifida.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

### Background

There are a large of range of physical disabilities or mobility impairments, all of which can range from a mild to complete immobility. Some of these disabilities are from birth, like Cerebral Palsy, and others are acquired like Spinal Cord Injuries.

### Aim of the Activity

To develop an understanding about physical disability by conducting activities where you pretend you are in a wheelchair or have no use of a limb. Following the activities to have a discussion on the challenges faced and also the discovery of ways and means to overcome the difficulties.

**Participants:** Group or individual

**Time:** 20 min + 15 min Discussion

**Place:** Indoors and Outdoors

**Important:** Explore all physical and mental capabilities to reach your goal

### Stop at Steps: (Activity A)

Ideally this activity needs to be done in a wheelchair, however as a wheelchair may not be readily accessible, participants can pretend they are in a wheelchair. The aim of this activity is for the participants to realise how easy or difficult it is to get their destination if they were in a wheelchair. Give participants 10 minutes to get to their destination and back. If they arrive at steps or a narrow passage not accessible by a wheelchair, then ask them to find an alternative route. Try to get to the following places without accessing any steps:

- If you are at school, try to get to the playground / toilet / assembly hall / canteen etc.
- If you are at work, try to go out to the car park / tearoom / meeting room / toilet / get a file from a cabinet etc.
- If you are at home, try and go out to the garage / toilet / back yard / neighbours / get a glass from a cupboard etc.
- If you are out in the community, observe accessibility to supermarkets / parks / buildings etc.

Remember wheelchairs do not go up or down steps, therefore find alternative routes to get to where you're going

### Using One Hand: (Activity B)

Ask the participants to do the following tasks with one hand. Let the participants try to complete the tasks on their own first, then pair them up, so they can help each other to complete the task. Please add tasks to suit.

- Tying their shoes; Getting a meal at lunchtime; Opening a screw-on lid; Playing a sport

### Discussion

The aim is to let the participants express their thoughts and feelings and get a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities one faces when they have a physical disability. Some sample discussion questions:

- Discuss how the participants went in reaching their destination without accessing steps.
- How did it feel when you reached a step and had to find an alternative path?
- Did any of the participants not reach their destination? Discuss.
- What were the main frustrations?
- Do you think the places you go to on a normal day are accessible to someone in a wheelchair?
- Discuss how the participants went in completing their tasks with one hand.
- How difficult or easy was it to complete the task?
- Was pairing with someone else helpful?
- How would it feel if you had a physical disability all the time, every day?
- How do you feel about someone with a disability? Is it different from before the activity?
- How can you support a person with a physical disability?
- Feel free to add your own thoughts, observations and questions.

## Autism Spectrum Disorders

“ **Research demonstrates that autistic traits are distributed into the non-autistic population; some people have more of them, some have fewer. History suggests that many individuals whom we would today diagnose as autistic - some severely so - contributed profoundly to our art, our math, our science, and our literature.**

*Morton Gernsbacher, parent of an autistic child.*

### Background

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a developmental disability that usually appears during the first three years of life. The cause is unknown. It affects how a person's brain works, but not all people with Autism Spectrum Disorder are affected the same way. When a person has Autism Spectrum Disorder, they may have difficulty: letting you know what they want; understanding what other people say or want; ignoring sounds; ignoring things or people that are moving; ignoring lights; being touched; understanding social rules; showing affection; controlling their feelings; knowing how to play with other kids; and dealing with changes. Autism Spectrum Disorder is a 'spectrum disorder', which means that there are varying degrees of Autism Spectrum Disorder that range from mild to severe.

### Aim of the Activity

To develop some understanding about how a person with Autism Spectrum Disorder might experience the world. Try conducting the following activity where there is much disruption and you are expected to focus on a task. Following the activity have a discussion on the challenges faced and feelings about the experience.

**Participants:** Group      **Time:** 20 min + 15 min Discussion  
**Place:** Indoors and Outdoors      **Important:** Observe the person playing the part of the person with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

This activity shows how people with Autism Spectrum Disorder can be bothered by things most people don't notice. People with Autism Spectrum Disorder can often be extra sensitive to noise, movement and even things like background noises. Remember, not everyone with Autism Spectrum Disorder has this difficulty.

Divide the participants into groups of 5. Explain that they will each have a job to do as follows:

**Person 1** - Your job is to try and listen to what Person 5 is reading to you so you can take a test on the material. Try to ignore everyone else.

*Note: Person 1 will play the part of a person with Autism Spectrum Disorder. They will however be addressed as Person 1 and learn what it means in the post activity discussion. Have all participants take a turn being Person 1.*

**Person 2** - Stand behind Person 1. Take a piece of paper and rub it on the back of their neck gently, but keep doing it over and over.

**Person 3** - Grab a book (any book will do), lean close to Person 1 and read in a loud voice the entire time.

**Person 4** - Pat Person 1 gently on the head and shoulder the entire time.

**Person 5** - Using a normal voice, read a paragraph to Person 1 then ask them questions about what you read. Do not try to drown out the other noises.

### Discussion

The aim is to let the participants express their thoughts and feelings and get a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities one faces when they have Autism Spectrum Disorder. Some sample discussion questions:

- ❑ How did it feel to have so much commotion going on?
- ❑ Did it make them want to scream or get away?
- ❑ Were they able to concentrate on the paragraph being read? What might have helped?
- ❑ How would it feel if you had Autism Spectrum Disorder all the time, every day?
- ❑ How do you feel about someone with Autism Spectrum Disorder? Is it different from before the activity?
- ❑ How can you support a person with Autism Spectrum Disorder?
- ❑ Feel free to add your own thoughts, observations and questions

## Famous People

### FAMOUS PEOPLE

Following is a list of famous people thought to have disabilities for general discussion. What effect did the disability have on these people and their way of life? (This may require some research). Do participants personally know anyone with a disability? Does it keep them from doing what they want to do?

Name	Occupation	Disability
Richard Branson	Entrepreneur	Dyslexia
Stephan Hawking	Physicist	Motor Neurone Disease
Magic Johnson	NBA Basketball Player	Dyslexia
Anne McDonald	Author & Activist	Cerebral Palsy
Julia Roberts	Actress	Speech Impairment
Agatha Christie	Mystery writer	Epilepsy
Richard Pryor	Actor	Multiple Sclerosis
Katrina Webb	Paralympian, Track & Field	Cerebral Palsy - Mild
Thomas Edison	Inventor	Hearing Impairment
Claude Monet	Painter	Vision Impairment
Rowan Atkinson	Comedian	Speech Impairment
Satishi Tajiri	Creator/Designer of Pokemon	Autism Spectrum Disorder
Cher	Singer	Dyslexia
Dan Ackroyd	Actor	Tourettes & Autism Spectrum Disorder
Beethoven	Composer	Deaf
Christopher Reeves	Actor	Quadriplegia
Ithzak Perlman	Violinist	Polio
Douglas Bader	Fighter Pilot	Physical disability (amputee)
Handel	Composer	Epilepsy
Franklin Roosevelt	US President	Polio
Tiger Woods	Professional Golfer	Speech Impairment
Tim Ellis	Magician & Author	Autism Spectrum Disorder
Howard Hughes	Entrepreneur	Tourettes Syndrome
Leonardo Da Vinci	Inventor	Dyslexia
Bryce Alnan	Paralympian, Wheelchair Rugby	Paraplegia
Albert Einstein	Inventor	Autism Spectrum Disorder
Helen Keller	Teacher	Blind and deaf
Jacqueline Du Pre	Cellist	Multiple Sclerosis
Julius Caesar	Roman Emperor	Epilepsy
Louis Braille	Inventor	Vision impairment
Marli Matlin	Actress	Deaf
Napoleon	General	Epilepsy
Ray Charles	Singer	Blind
Steady Eddie	Comedian	Cerebral Palsy
Louise Sauvage	Paralympian, Wheelchair Racing	Myelodysplasia
Stevie Wonder	Singer	Blind
Tom Cruise	Actor	Dyslexia

**“ Virtually every Australian with a disability encounters human rights violations at some point in their lives and very many experience it every day of their lives.**

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

## Fast Facts for Chats

### FAST FACTS FOR CHATS

Increase your knowledge and understanding by hearing or reading these fast facts and then using one or more as a point of discussion with another person or in a group.

Each person's experience with disability is different.

In Australia, there are 3.9 million people with a disability.

Disability can occur at any time in life. Some disabilities are present from birth, but a large percentage of people are an adult age when they acquire a disability.

The largest barrier that people with a disability face is the attitude of others.

37% of people with a disability who are employed hold professional, management and administrative roles.

Expressions such as 'mental retardation' are not appropriate or accurate.

Individuals with an intellectual disability often learn slowly, but can adapt to new situations and enjoy usual life experiences and milestones.

Disability arises when an individual cannot do everyday tasks because their social and physical environment does not account for their impairment.

How we write and speak about disability can have a profound effect on the way people with a disability are viewed by the community.

In Australia there are over 20,000 people with cerebral palsy.

Put the person first, not their disability. For example, use the term 'a person with a disability' rather than 'a disabled person.'

People with a disability are individuals first, with the same variety of desires, interests, problems, talents and faults as any other member of the community.

Intellectual disability is not the same as mental illness or an acquired brain injury.

Down Syndrome is not an illness or a disease; it is caused by the presence of an extra chromosome at conception.

Please note some of this information was sourced from the Department of Planning and Community Development [www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au/bar\\_none\\_kit\\_for\\_schools.htm](http://www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au/bar_none_kit_for_schools.htm)

## Quotes from People

### QUOTES FROM PEOPLE

Increase your knowledge and understanding by hearing or reading these real life quotes and stories from people with a disability and their families and carers, and then using one or more as a point of discussion with another person or in a group.

“ In this day and age, imagine if a person was told that they could only go to ten cinemas in Australia and to one of three sessions a week because of their gender, cultural background or religious beliefs. But as a deaf person, that is what I face. I am very limited in where I can go and when, to access things that other people take for granted.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

“ People with a disability want to live in a society where they are treated with respect, dignity and importantly with equality, and not as ‘poor things’ nor merely as recipients of services. Additionally they do not want to be segregated as ‘people with disabilities’.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

“ The gym offered a separate class for kids with disabilities. I asked one of the teachers whether it would be possible for my daughter to attend one of the other mainstream classes. She frowned and looked concerned, and said that was why they had created the separate class. I said she was perfectly capable of joining in with other girls. She said ‘Well that’s ok for your daughter but if we let her in we will have to let everyone else in’. These are not elite gymnasts. They are little girls jumping around in leotards having fun on a Saturday morning.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

“ There are a number of so-called ‘wheelchair accessible’ toilets on my campus, but there is only one on the entire campus that I can fit in with my motorized scooter.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

“ I remember my Year 8 science teacher said she couldn’t wear my Microphone because it put holes in her clothes. I couldn’t do anything about it...she was the teacher-I was the student. For the record- I failed Year 8 science- and it had nothing to do with my ability because in Year 9 science, I had a teacher who wore the Mic and I topped the class.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

“ I sometimes feel so guilty because mum and dad have given their lives to support me and without much government funding. Over the years they have faced discrimination and not much support from our local community. I can’t remember when they had a holiday. People just do not understand. Now I see them getting older and I wonder what will happen to them and to me.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

“ I have had a boss in the past who don’t understand that I need an interpreter and they go ahead without one. It really puts me in a difficult situation to try to keep up with what is being said. Usually I end up just sitting there and can’t say anything, and don’t really follow. It makes me feel embarrassed and angry.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

“ I do not expect to get access to the pyramids or Uluru but I do want to get into all of the library and all of the community centre.

*Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, 2009*

## Meet Some People

### MEET SOME PEOPLE

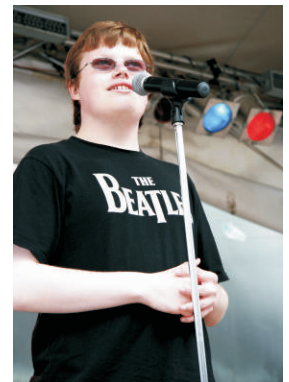


**Deanna Hay**

Affectionately known as Dee to her family and friends, Deanna loves rocking out to Pink and has been told that she says “yep” too much. She also has a smile that lights up a room. And that’s just a little about Dee! After completing her VCAL studies, Dee went on to obtain a TAFE Certificate in Business Administration, which she puts to good use during her days volunteering at the Interchange office. There is always room for fun too! Recounted as one of the highlights of her life, Dee has great memories of her trip to Vanuatu in 2007 with Interchange. She also regularly goes on camps and enjoys the nights her group goes out to sing karaoke.

**Thomas Glenn**

As a 19 year old who describes himself as intelligent, talented and sweet around girls, Thomas has a keen sense of humour. Thomas has attended several Interchange Youth Group Programs and many social day trips, family camps and disco nights. It’s hard for Thomas to know when to slow down. Thomas sings and plays harmonica in the Glenn Family Band, alongside his father Andrew, brother Jackson and friend Marty. They occasionally rock out an inner Melbourne pub and are crowd favourites at Interchange past events at Federation Square.



**Tori Marshall**

Tori leaps out of bed every morning embracing each day with great delight. She looks out of the window and says: “It’s a wonderful day isn’t it, Mummy?” With her innate zest for life, Tori enjoys cooking, reading and writing notes. Tori is supported to pursue all of her interests and takes swimming and karate lessons with all five members of her family. Tori is part of the Host Program at Interchange and has a wonderful rapport with her Host Family. They have introduced her to ballet, in which Tori has developed a great passion. Together they also share in other activities such as going to the beach, parks and the movies.



**Tim Curwood**

Meet Tim, a keen sports fan who follows the AFL, basketball, horse racing and the cricket in summer. And that’s just on weekends! Tim volunteers at a local community organisation four days a week and, amongst other responsibilities, he assists with the gardening; rain, hail or shine. He is also a friendly face around the Interchange office on Fridays, supporting the office staff and undertaking various duties. Tim’s interests don’t stop there. An active participant on the Interchange Recreation Program, Tim enjoys the day trips to different parts of the State and hanging out with his friends.



## How Much Do You Know?

### HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW

There are a variety of impairments that individuals may have one or more of. Here is a brief discussion of several impairment types to assist with building your knowledge and understanding. It's important to keep in mind that people with a disability are individuals first with the same hopes, dream, aspirations, flaws and problems as the next person.

#### Autism Spectrum Disorders

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are neurodevelopment disorders that cause significant impairments in areas of social interaction and communication and are often associated with unusual behaviours and interests. The common term Autism Spectrum Disorder is used to encompass Autistic Disorders, Asperger's Syndrome and pervasive developmental disorder - not otherwise specified (pdd-nos). ASD's are described according to a spectrum, with a range of degrees from mild to severe. Although the cause is not known, ASD continues to affect an individual throughout their whole life. An individual with an ASD may exhibit social and communication impairment, they can also display measurable and admirable differences in perception, attention, memory and intelligence.

#### Cerebral Palsy

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is a broad term used for a range of physical impairments caused by damage to the parts of the brain that control movement, coordination and posture. CP affects the messages sent between the brain and the muscles. The damage is permanent and non-progressive, but the effect of the damage change over time as the individual grows. No two people with CP are affected in the same way. An Individual with mild CP may have difficulties with body movements that require a greater degree of control, such as doing up buttons. An Individual with severe CP may have many difficulties and require support with a variety or all aspects of daily life.

#### Down Syndrome

Down Syndrome is brought on by the presence of an extra chromosome, chromosome 21 that occurs at conception. An individual with Down Syndrome therefore have 47 chromosomes in their cell instead of 46. This results in a range of physical characteristics, health and development indications and a degree of intellectual disability. As Down Syndrome only affects development rather than determine it, each individual with Down Syndrome is unique. Each individual will have their own talents, abilities, and thoughts and interests shaped and influenced by their environment and upbringing.

#### Intellectual Disability

Intellectual disability is a broad term used to describe any disability that greatly affects an individual's learning ability and development. Although the extent and nature of this disability varies between individuals, people who have intellectual disability will have difficulties in learning, understanding, analysing or thinking things out. Intellectual disability is life-long and can affect many areas of an individual's life. Varying degrees of intellectual disability can be described as mild, moderate, severe or profound. Having an intellectual disability does not mean an individual cannot learn. The right support and training can assist an individual with intellectual disability to develop skills that enable them to participate in daily life. Many factors can cause intellectual disability but to date, no identifiable cause has been found.

## How Much Do You Know?

### HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW

#### Muscular dystrophy

Muscular dystrophy is the term given to a group of hereditary, progressive diseases that cause the breakdown of muscle fibres leading to weak and wasted muscles. It is a genetic defect that is present from conception. There are different types of dystrophies, which affect different muscles and other body systems and progress at varying rates. The most common form is Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) in which the lack of protein dystrophin causes the muscles to deteriorate and break down over time, leading to progressive impairment to walking and general mobility.

#### Spina bifida

Spina bifida occurs when the formation of the spine and spinal cord is incomplete leaving nerves exposed and subject to damage. It is a common form of a neural tube defect (NTD) and occurs during the first month of pregnancy. Individuals with spina bifida have varying degrees of permanent disability including paralysis or weakness in the legs, bowel and bladder incontinence, hydrocephalus and specific learning difficulties. Some individuals with spina bifida require assistive devices such as crutches, braces or wheelchairs. The specific causes of spina bifida are as yet, not known. However it is thought to result from a combination of both genetic and environmental factors.

#### Vision impairment

Vision impairment is a degree of sight loss or reduced vision caused by a number of different eye diseases, conditions and accidents. Some eye conditions are congenital meaning they are present at birth. Vision impairment can be partial or total loss of vision. An individual is considered legally blind when they cannot see at 6 metres what a sighted person can see at 60 metres. Most individuals with vision impairment will have some degree of sight and may be assisted by a white cane or guide dog to help maintain independence in the community. A large amount of our human learning is done using the visual sense. Therefore vision impairment has the potential to affect many aspects of an individual's life including social interaction, communication and language, fine motor skills, leisure, mobility and cognitive development.

#### Deafness and hearing impairment

Hearing loss may occur as a result of congenital or hereditary factors, infection, trauma, ageing or exposure to excessive and prolonged noise.

Deaf is a medical term describing severe hearing loss. Individuals who are Deaf may identify as being part of the Deaf community and communicate in Auslan (Australian Sign Language).

Hearing impairment is a generic term used to describe individuals with a hearing loss that can range from mild to profound. Some people are able to hear certain frequencies but not others; others find it difficult to distinguish between different sound levels or to work out where the sound is coming from. Other terms used to describe hearing impairment include; hard of hearing, conductive hearing loss and sensorineural hearing loss.

Please note information from 'How much do you know?' was sourced from the Department of Planning and Community Development. For more information on different types of disabilities please refer to the Teacher Information Booklet in the Bar None Community Awareness Kit which can be found at:  
[www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au/bar\\_none\\_kit\\_for\\_schools.htm](http://www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au/bar_none_kit_for_schools.htm)

# “ Focus on the Ability, not the Disability.

Bryce Alman  
Interchange Ambassador  
Australian Wheelchair Rugby Player

## VOLUNTEERING WITH INTERCHANGE

Interchange Programs work with volunteers to provide family support and social opportunities for children and young people with a disability through their Host and Recreation programs. Host program volunteers are matched with a family who has a child or young person with a disability and Recreation program volunteers get involved in weekend and school holiday programs. Volunteering is a great way to give back as well as receive the satisfaction and experience of getting involved and making a difference. To find more about volunteering opportunities at Interchange Programs, visit our website [www.interchange.org.au](http://www.interchange.org.au).

## INTERCHANGE VICTORIA MEMBERS

Interchange Inner East  
Canterbury  
Ph: 9836 9811  
[www.iie.org.au](http://www.iie.org.au)

Interchange Northern  
Reservoir  
Ph: 9462 1011  
[www.interchangenorthern.org.au](http://www.interchangenorthern.org.au)

Interchange North West  
(Merri Community Health Services)  
Pascoe Vale  
Ph: 9350 4600  
[www.merrichs.org.au](http://www.merrichs.org.au)

Interchange Western  
Braybrook  
Ph: 9396 1111  
[www.interchangewestern.org.au](http://www.interchangewestern.org.au)

Interchange Outer East  
Ferntree Gully  
Ph: 9758 5522  
[www.ioe.org.au](http://www.ioe.org.au)

Interchange Southern  
(Moirra)  
Hampton East  
Ph: 8552 2222  
[www.moirra.org.au](http://www.moirra.org.au)

OZ Child  
Mornington  
Ph: 5975 7644  
[www.ozchild.org.au](http://www.ozchild.org.au)

Interchange Barwon  
(Gateway Support Services)  
Geelong West / Colac  
Ph: 5221 2984  
[www.gateways.com.au](http://www.gateways.com.au)

Interchange Central Gippsland  
Newborough / Leongatha  
Ph: 5127 7979  
[www.icg.asn.au](http://www.icg.asn.au)

Interchange Loddon Mallee  
Bendigo / Swan Hill / Mildura  
Ph: 5441 1599  
[www.interchangelm.org.au](http://www.interchangelm.org.au)

Interchange Central Highlands  
(Pinarc Disability Support)  
Ballarat / Ararat  
Ph: 5329 1350  
[www.pinarc.org.au](http://www.pinarc.org.au)

Interchange Upper Murray  
(Upper Murray Family Care)  
Wodonga / Wangaratta  
Ph: 02 6057 8400  
[www.umfc.com.au](http://www.umfc.com.au)

Interchange South West  
(Community Connections)  
Portland / Warrnambool  
Ph: 1300 361 680  
[www.comconnect.com.au](http://www.comconnect.com.au)

Interchange East Gippsland  
(Uniting Care Gippsland)  
Sale / Bairnsdale  
Ph: 5152 9600  
[www.ucgipps.org.au](http://www.ucgipps.org.au)

Wimmera Uniting Care  
Horsham  
Ph: 5382 6789  
[www.wuc.org.au](http://www.wuc.org.au)

## INTERCHANGE VICTORIA LICENSEES

Interchange South Australia  
Norwood, South Australia  
Ph: 08 8132 5300  
[www.interchange.org.au](http://www.interchange.org.au)

Langford Support Services  
Moonah, Tasmania  
Ph: 03 6228 9099  
[www.langford.org.au](http://www.langford.org.au)

## PARTNERS OF INTERCHANGE ACTIVITIES

Bluearth Foundation  
[www.bluearth.org](http://www.bluearth.org)

Camp Australia  
[www.campaustalia.com.au](http://www.campaustalia.com.au)

Disability Sport & Recreation  
[www.dsr.org.au](http://www.dsr.org.au)

To find out how you can get involved and volunteer  
[www.interchange.org.au](http://www.interchange.org.au) / 1300 300 436

Real understanding comes not from what you hear or read,  
but by the amount of time you invest in experiencing it.

Changing Attitudes  
Equal Opportunity  
A Fair Go to all  
Breaking Down Barriers  
Understanding Understanding  
Volunteering Volunteering



Interchange Activities is an initiative of Interchange Victoria to create greater awareness about disability and promote more inclusive communities.

Interchange Programs provide family support and social opportunities for children and young people with a disability.

To find out how you can get involved and volunteer

[www.interchange.org.au](http://www.interchange.org.au)