NATIONAL SPORTS CENTER FOR THE DISABLED

Common Disabilities

NSCD 2025

#RethinkAbility

nscd.org

Intellectual vs Developmental Disability

- **Intellectual:** more severe affecting cognitive functioning, adaptive functioning, ADL's

1. below average IQ

- **Developmental:** lifelong disability, affect both cognitive and physical disability
- Impairments in learning, language, and behavior
- Can affect executive functioning

Autism

- **Level 1**: difficulty initiating social interactions and conversations, difficulty with executive functioning
- **Level 2**: limited social interaction, deficits in social skills even with support, inflexibility to change and routine
- **Level 3:** severe deficits in social interaction-verbal and nonverbal communication, inflexibility in routine, distress in changing routine or focus, repetitive behavior
- **Spectrum-everyone varies who has autism**

Down Syndrome

- Low muscle tone-hypotonia
- Short attention span
- Poor judgment
- Impulsive behavior
- Slow learning
- Delayed language and speech development
- “stubborn” behavior
- Affectionate

Spinal Cord Injuries

- **Cervical 1-8**-head, neck, shoulders, arms and hands
- **Thoracic1-12**-chest muscles, back muscles, organ systems
- **Lumbar 1-5**-abdomen, back, buttocks, external organs, legs
- **Sacrum 1-4**- legs, feet, external organs
- Complete or Incomplete
- Paraplegic, quadriplegia
- **Spinda bifida-from birth**

Cerebral Palsy

- **Causes: brain damage during birth, lack of oxygen, infection**
- **Can affect information processing**
- **Spastic:** most common; stiff, jerky muscles
- **Dyskinetic**: slow and uncontrollable jerky movements of muscles
- **Ataxic**: balance and depth perception
- **Hypotonic**: low muscle tone, poor balance
- **Mixed CP**: mixed characteristics of above

Common Visual Impairments

- Cataracts
- Diabetic retinopathy
- Detached retina
- Glaucoma
- Do a vision test/ask what they can/cannot see
- Ask how your students how they like to be guided (skiing and/or walking around if needed)

Learning Disabilities/other

- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Language
- Processing disorders: auditory, visual and sensory
- Executive functioning
- ADHD

Stroke/TBI

- Different forms of brain damage
- **Stroke**: birth/prenatal or at any age after
- Affects one side of body, speech, brain development
- **TBI**: brain damage caused from concussions, falling, car crash, etc.
- Brain moving back and forth too quickly
- Affects learning, memory, communicating