



How to be a Good Influence to People  
with Disabilities

By Tim Rohrer

## What is a Disability?

A disability is a condition that makes things harder for people. There are 2 kinds of disabilities. There are physical disabilities and there are mental disabilities. Physical disabilities makes it harder for people to walk, run, stand, balance, open the door, climb stairs, or even wake up on their own. A lot of people with physical disabilities use wheelchairs to get around. Mental disabilities makes it harder for people to learn, read, think, communicate, hear clearly, see clearly, sit still, or even controlling their emotions. Some disabilities can even affect the way someone looks. Some disabilities are easy to overcome, but other disabilities are hard to overcome.

People with disabilities go through social isolation. Social isolation means when someone struggles to fit in with other people, which means that they also often face loneliness. It is never okay to exclude someone because they have a disability. Excluding someone with a disability is just as hurtful as bullying. Social isolation makes people with disabilities sad. Here is what you should do when you see someone with a disability.

People have disabilities because they were either born with it or because they got it from a certain disease or accident. Disabilities can't be cured, but you can provide them treatment and you can also provide them with support, friendship, and love.

1. If you see someone who is different from you, that means that they might have a disability. Don't be afraid of them. They just want to be like everyone else. Be nice and introduce yourself to them. Start to talk to them.



2. If you see someone sitting or playing alone. Offer them to talk with you or play with you. They would be happy if they had someone to play with. But if they don't want to play or talk, don't force them to talk or play with you.



3. Invite them to join your group of friends. People with disabilities want to have fun too. Invite them to sit with you at lunch or snack time. Even invite them to play with you on the playground during recess.



4. Share your toys and play games with them. Remember to take turns with them.



5. If they have a hard time learning or doing their work, try to help them if you can. Helping them out can get their work done faster.



6. If they are having a hard time doing something like tying their shoes or opening their snack. Offer to help them with it.



7. If someone is in a wheelchair and they need help getting around, offer to move them. Ask permission first before you move them.



8. Give them compliments. Tell them things like "I like your clothes today." or "You are such a great friend.". Compliments can brighten up their day.



9. Be sure to spend time with them outside of school. Invite them to come over for a playdate or for a party. Try inviting them to spend time with you and your group of friends to the park, movies, bowling, mini golf, library, or the museum.



10. Be sure to ask your parents, grandparents, or your teachers about different kinds of disabilities. They would be able to help you be more aware of disabilities that people have. They can give you more tips of how to help them feel better.

