



2018 National Order of the Arrow Conference

Accessibility in the OA: Is it a special need or a handicap?

Session Length: 45 Minutes

Required Materials: [tailor specifically for this session after the syllabus is done, e.g. handouts, flipcharts, projector, screen]

- PowerPoint presentation file
- Tool Kit
- Handouts
- Computer/laptop
- projector

Slide 1

Through this session, you will:

Explain Different Abilities, not disAbilities

Demonstrate Special Need Scouts and Normal Scouts are more alike than different

Guide Participants to share things they want to try to create an acceptance of special scouts

Enable and Challenge Participants to use what they learned in this session back in their Chapters/Lodges/Sections

Slide 2

Learning Outcomes: [create a brief list of what participants should take away with them]

- Outcome 1: Participants will gain knowledge about the nature and various types of disabilities that may be encountered in the Order of the Arrow
- Outcome 2: Participants will become acquainted with relevant law and Boy Scout policies regarding disabilities, gender, culture, income, and other challenges

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- Outcome 3: Participants will be informed about the opportunities and responsibilities involved in providing program and logistical support to Arrowmen that have different disabilities, gender, race, income, and other challenges
- Outcome 4: Participants will take program ideas for challenged Arrowmen with them, and commit to implementing some of the ideas back in their home lodges/chapters.

Slide 3

Theme Connection:

The theme of NOAC 2018 is “Decide Your Destiny,” emphasizing the message that today’s decisions shape tomorrow’s reality. This session will relay this theme in the following ways:

- Arrowmen with Challenges are Arrowmen with possibilities
- Are you going to ignore these Arrowmen or have faith in what the Arrowmen can become
- Arrowmen who have disabilities/challenges want the same personal growth opportunities that any Arrowman does .It is our challenge to provide them the opportunity.
- It is up to us to help them create their own success story.

Slide 4

This session will help the **Lodge/Chapter/Section** with the Journey to Excellence Requirement(s):

- Membership Impact: experience positive growth in membership in the chapter over the previous year, OA can be adapted to include everyone
- Communications: Maintain active communications within the chapter
- Short-term camping
- Long-term camping
- Service projects



TRAINER PREPARATION

The trainer should prepare for this training session by becoming familiar with ways to make OA accessible to all Scouts and Scouters. Reading literature published by the Boy Scouts of America relating to accessibility is a good place to start. Personal interviews with Scouting and Order of the Arrow leaders, who have worked extensively with Scouts with challenges may be helpful. Consultation with non-BSA people, such as local school personnel, who work regularly with disabilities, gender, race, income, and other challenges, would also be a good idea. Relying on my experience - 30 years teaching special education and working with special need Scouts, two trips with Special Need Scouts to Philmont and one trip to Boundary Water with Special Need Scouts and Scouters.

Prepare the training venue well ahead of time. Make sure that all participants will be able to freely converse with the group with no impeded view due to audio visual equipment, etc.

Prepare all visual aids, including the Power Point presentation equipment with care to avoid last minute panic and problems. Have handouts ready.

Session Narrative

Slide 5

Intoduction

5 minutes

(Welcome everyone and thank them for attending. State that you know they could be doing something else with their time, but that they chose to be at this presentation speaks to their dedication. Challenge participants to ask questions and encourage them to join in the discussions.)

(Budget the amount of time spent for each participant on the number of participants in the class and available time.)

(Brenden will briefly introduce himself by name and past experience in working with disabilities. Then go around the room and have participants share)



Now it's your time to share with the group your name, lodge, and past experience in working with disabilities.

First topic

10 minutes

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As one of America's leading youth-serving organizations, we aim to bring the benefits of Scouting to the greatest number of youth possible — all while remaining true to our purpose.

The purpose of the Order of the Arrow is fourfold:

1. To recognize those Scout campers who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives
2. To develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit
3. To promote Scout camping
4. To crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others

The Order of the Arrow is committed to including Scouts and Scouters who have special needs because of a disability. In the case of special-needs troops, election teams should follow the same procedures, keeping in mind that any Scout who is classified as a youth member of a troop, regardless of age, will be considered a youth (voting) member. All other membership requirements remain the same. (See the appendix for Guidelines for Assisting Scouts and Scouters With Special Needs.)

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Disability vs Handicap

Slide 8

What is a special need?

It can be a disability, gender need, race, income, other challenges (maybe health)



Slide 9

What is a disability?

A disability is a real and long-term condition that impairs functioning in one or more of the following areas: physical, learning, cognitive, emotional, and social. Not all parents see their Scout as having a disability.

Disability is the inability to see Ability

This naturally leads to the next question: We have defined special needs and disability so

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What is a handicap?

A handicap is a restriction or a disadvantage that is placed on a person – stairs, curbs, uneven sidewalks, narrow paths, etc. People with special needs are not handicapped unless barriers are placed in their way. An example would be a barrier to wheelchair access, such as a curb blocking a sidewalk.

Second topic

10 minutes

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How do you talk about people with special needs?

Special Needs Etiquette: Person-First and Identity-First Language

When talking about people with special needs, it is important that we focus on the person first—not the disability. An example would be talking of someone as being “a Scout with diabetes” instead of “a diabetic”, or “an Arrowman with asthma” instead of “an asthmatic”.



Words matter. They affect expectations, perceptions and feelings. People-first language is a more respectful, accurate way of communicating. People with disabilities are not their diagnoses or disabilities; they are people, first.

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What are some common things to remember when talking with someone with a special need?

Here are some common rules to remember when talking about disabilities:

- Make reference to the person first, then the disability. A person isn't a condition, so avoid describing a person as such.
- A person with a disability is more like people without disabilities than different.
- If the disability isn't germane to the story or conversation, don't mention it.

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Use	Avoid
People with disabilities	The handicapped or disabled
Person who has/person with (a disability)	Victim/afflicted with/suffering from (a disability)
She has autism (or a diagnosis of autism).	She's autistic.
He has a cognitive disability/diagnosis.	He is mentally retarded.
She uses a wheelchair.	She is confined to/is wheelchair bound.
He has a physical disability/diagnosis.	He is a quadriplegic/is crippled.
He receives special education services.	He's in special education.



Disabled since birth/born with	Birth defect
He has a mental health condition/diagnosis.	He's emotionally disturbed/ mentally ill.
Children without disabilities	Normal or healthy kids
She has a medical disability (diabetes, etc)	She is diabetic

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Categories of Special Needs:

- Learning Disabilities
- Physical Disabilities
- Cognitive Disabilities
- Developmental disabilities
- Emotional Disabilities

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Types of disabilities/special needs include but are not limited to the following:

- AD/HD
- Autism
- Cerebral Palsy
- Intellectual Disabled or Developmentally Disabled (formerly called Mental Retardation)
- Downs Syndrome
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment/Deafness
- Language Impairment
- Medical Issues – diabetes, allergies, etc
- Multiple Disabilities
- Muscular Dystrophies
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Seizure Disorder
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech Impairment
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Traumatic Brain Injury



- Visual Impairment/Blindness
- Young Child with a Developmental Delay
- Race
- Religion
- Income
- Gender
-

Respect Scouts/Scouters as people and let them show you how they wish to define themselves. We need to look at Scouts and Scouters individual needs/abilities, not their labels. Be explicit and blunt with your expectations but not rude.

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Are there famous Arrowmen with disabilities?

Absolutely!

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was one of two U.S. Presidents, who were members of the Order of the Arrow. The other one was Dwight David Eisenhower. Franklin D. Roosevelt contracted polio early in the twentieth century, and never walked again without some form of assistance—leg braces, wheelchair, or personal assistance. Prior to becoming the President of the United States, Roosevelt was inducted at the Ten Mile Scout Reservation as a member of what is now the Suanhacky Lodge, and he reportedly wore his sash with great pride for an entire day at the Scout camp.

James E. West was the first Chief Scout Executive of the Boy Scouts of America. A disease in one of his legs gave him a permanent physical disability. West played a key role in the Order of The Arrow adoption into the program of the Boy Scouts of America. (The **James E. West Fellowship Award** is a national recognition for individuals who contribute \$1,000 or more in cash or securities to their local council endowment trust fund. This contribution is in addition to, and does not diminish or replace, the donor's annual gift to the council's Sustaining Membership Enrollment or Friends of Scouting Campaign. Organizations or individuals may contribute an award in honor of someone--an Eagle Scout, a Silver Beaver recipient, council president, or district chairman, or in memory of a departed loved one, business associate, Scout or Scouter.) 

Third Topic

10 minutes

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What are we, as Order of the Arrow leaders, required to do for Arrowmen with special needs?

Essentially, we need to treat Scouts/Scouters like any other Arrowman. We should give them the same opportunities, privileges, and responsibilities as far as possible. Arrowman with special needs have the same needs to be successful, and to be accepted, both socially and emotionally as others do. We must work with all Arrowmen to put success within reach. We need to change the resources but not the objectives.

Some of our requirements are due to federal (and local) laws, and the violation of them could lead to substantial penalties. Others come from policies of the Boy Scouts of America.

Realize that the Boy Scouts of America allows older people with certain disabilities, as verified by qualified medical personnel, to be allowed to continue as youth members of the Boy Scouts of America, and still work on advancements well after the maximum age of eighteen years of age.

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The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 mandates that all public facilities need to be accessible for those with disabilities. We need to make sure that all of our meeting and activity facilities meet ADA standards, including chapter meeting venues, Scout offices, other meeting locations, and camp facilities. (Accessible Facilities Checklist for Scouts and Scouters with Special Needs)

The key to it all is to make sure that all chapter and lodge activities are special need friendly and accessible, with appropriate accommodations and adaptations made available as needed.

Historically, people with special needs were kept from being participants in society, which was certainly a handicap for them, but modern society focuses on inclusion, and the elimination of handicaps so that they can be full participants in society as much as possible. In other words, the disabilities have always been with us, and unless specific cures are discovered, they will generally continue to be with us, but the handicaps are being eliminated every day. We are a better society because of it.

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Private clubs are one of the few groups that have exemptions. Scout facilities such as camps and offices used exclusively by Scouts (or at least 90% by Scouts only) qualify as private club facilities and are exempt from the federal law. However, if Scout offices are leased to other organizations, or

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meeting rooms are rented out to the public, or the Scout shop sells a significant portion of camping supplies to non-Scouts, then these facilities may be considered “public accommodations

If in doubt, or if there are any questions, consult with your council’s legal counsel, or other legal authorities.

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Keep in mind that the induction principles of the Order of the Arrow allow for discretion in the conduct of inductions. When inducting candidates with disabilities, the use of discretion is an important part of the overall program. We only share needs with those who need to know.

Slide 21

Conclusion

2 minutes

The Order of the Arrow is a wonderful program that can be enjoyed by all. It is important to learn how to assist and involve all Scouts and Scouters in the program. It is also imperative that when dealing with Arrowmen with special needs - disabilities, gender, culture, income, or other challenges - the confidentiality and safety of all involved must be maintained and respected. Every individual, regardless of ability or disability, can have a rewarding experience as a member of the Order. As we include Arrowmen into the Order of the Arrow, the Order will be strengthened greatly.

Slide 22

Takeaway Challenge

3 minutes

Please take out your notebook and pen. For the final three minutes, think about the role that you will be playing next year in the OA, or the role you hope to play. Write down three key ideas related to how you could assist your chapter or lodge to better understand and accept Arrowmen with special needs. During your break time later today, share these with others in your chapter or lodge.

One idea might be something as simple as becoming better friends with someone and asking to join you in an activity.

[Give the participants some time to develop and record their key ideas. As time allows, let the participants share their goals with the entire group.]



Appendix: Resources and Source Material

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- 2016 Guide to Unit Elections, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/guide-to-unit-elections>
- 2012 Guide for Officers and Advisers, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#goa>
- Chapter Journey to Excellence Workbook, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/printable-forms>
- A Guide to Working With Scouts With Disabilities
- Abilities Digest
- Scouting Magazine
- Council Special Needs Committee
- Parents, Scouts, and leaders in your unit, district, and council with experience in working with Scouts with disabilities
- The National Organization on Disability has a section on their website www.nod.org that lists Disability Etiquette Tips.
- The iCan Disability Community website has a library explaining different medical conditions and disabilities that can be found at www.ican.com
- The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago has a glossary of terms that could be helpful and is available at www.rehabchicago.org/community/glossary.php
- The United Cerebral Palsy Association has a section on their website that deals with Assisting People with Disabilities in a Disaster or Emergency Situation that can be found at www.ucpa.org
- The Americans with Disabilities Act and other disabilities can be researched by using website search engines.

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Let all Scouts experience the promises, fun, fellowship, and adventure of OA.