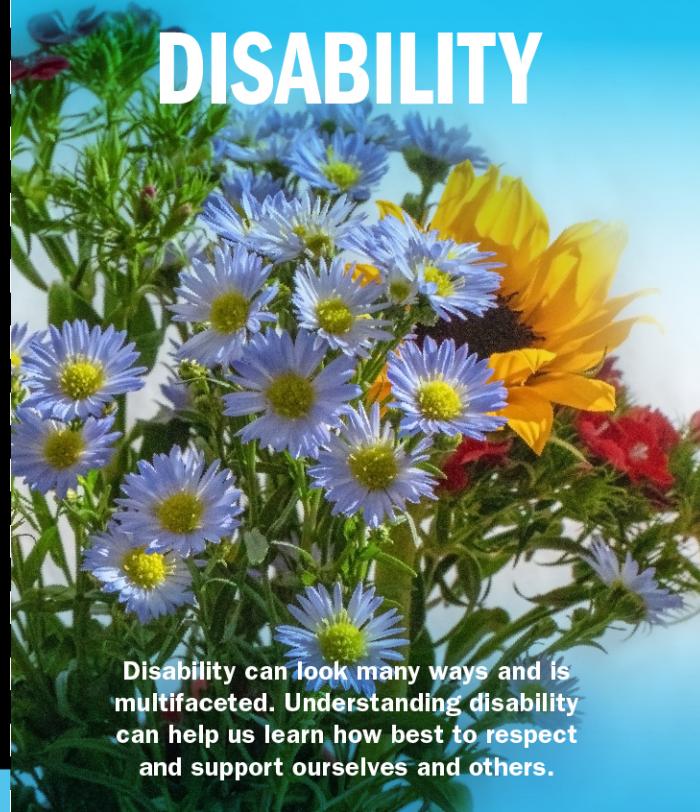




# UNDERSTANDING DISABILITY



## ACCESSIBILITY AND DISABILITY RESOURCES:

### Access And Disability Resources MacEwan (ADR)

7-166, City Centre Campus  
City Centre Campus, 10700 104 Ave  
Mon - Fri, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

[macewan.ca/adr](http://macewan.ca/adr)

780.497.5886

[myaccess@macewan.ca](mailto:myaccess@macewan.ca)

### City of Edmonton Resources

[edmonton.ca/programs\\_services/  
for\\_people\\_with\\_special\\_needs/  
people-with-disabilities-resources](http://edmonton.ca/programs_services/for_people_with_special_needs/people-with-disabilities-resources)

### Alberta Government Information

[alberta.ca/disability-supports.aspx](http://alberta.ca/disability-supports.aspx)

### 211

More information about Resources  
available in Edmonton and Alberta is  
accessible by calling 2-1-1

To access additional support resources or  
to book an appointment with a trained  
Peer Support volunteer visit:

[samu.ca/peersupport](http://samu.ca/peersupport)



[samu.ca/peersupport](http://samu.ca/peersupport)

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The Students' Association of  
MacEwan University (SAMU) is a  
non-profit organization working  
independently from MacEwan  
University to support students.

## PEER SUPPORT

**ACCOMMODATIONS** are measures that support individuals' access to performing tasks, participating in activities, and interacting with the world around them!

Disability impacts how people with disabilities/disabled people are treated.

**ABLEISM** is discrimination against disabled people/people with disabilities and the belief that they are less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and participate, or of less inherent value than others.

Ableism manifests in our language, how we approach discussions of disability, how we build our world without consideration for disabled people/people with disabilities, and more.

There are many types of disabilities, and disabilities can look different for different people. People with disabilities/disabled people are whole people with a broad spectrum of interests, emotions, and experiences. We can respect and support folks with disabilities by learning more about disability and checking our biases at the door.

## EXPLORING WHAT DISABILITY LOOKS LIKE

There are many definitions of disability. However, there are specific components present in current definitions:

- **Disability is a condition of the body and/or mind that results in impairment.**
- **This condition makes it more difficult for the person to do certain activities.**
- **This further limits persons with a condition from interacting with the world around them.**

A disability alters or impacts a person's ability to do certain things and /or interact with the world around them. There are many different types of disabilities that may impact people's mobility, learning, sensory perception, cognition/intellect, organ functioning, mental health, immune system, and more.

## PERCEPTIONS OF DISABLED PEOPLE/ PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES & SUPPORTING THE DISABLED COMMUNITY

### THINGS THE DISABLED COMMUNITY WANTS YOU TO KNOW:

- The hardest thing about being disabled isn't the disability itself but how others treat you.
- Disability isn't a dirty word. Don't be afraid to say it.
- A person's disability may not be visible. If someone tells you that they are disabled, believe them.
- People with disabilities are whole people and not just tragic stories. See them, not just their disability.
- Being disabled isn't a moral failing or character flaw. People don't choose to be disabled.
- Don't assume someone with disabilities needs your help because it takes them longer to do something or they need to do it differently. Ask.

## THINGS WE CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE DISABLED COMMUNITY:

- Some people prefer identity-first language (I'm blind), and others prefer person-first language (I am a person who is blind). This preference is up to the individual. Address them properly.
- Avoid using functioning labels (high or low) when discussing their abilities and disabilities. These labels can dismiss people's support needs or infantilize their abilities.
- Believe what someone is telling you about their disability and respect their choices for independence and/or needs for support. Let them tell you what their boundaries, limits, and needs are.
- Be aware of ableism within and around you: Don't use phrases like "I'm so OCD" about colour-coding your notes. Call yourself and your friends on it when you're using this language.
- Pay attention to your community. Are businesses and institutions accessible to disabled folks/folks with a disability? Do they have ramps or elevators? Do they have braille or auditory menu options? Advocate for accommodations and inclusivity.

