Your BSA Committee, ...Your school presents dAC

The purpose of the Boy Scouts of America is to provide an educational program for boys and young adults to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop personal fitness.

The mission of the disAbilities Awareness Challenge is to instill in participants knowledge and sensitivity to various types of disabilities that impact the human race. The vehicle to instill that knowledge and sensitivity is a collection of experience based exercises designed to simulate, as closely as possible, some of the challenges to everyday living created by various disabilities. The simulations are presented in the form of activities typically encountered by Scouts in unit, school and community settings. Included is information and the opportunity for reflective reactions to the simulations.

This program presents the opportunity to complete requirements 3b, 3c and 3d for the Disabilities Awareness Merit Badge.

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The vehicle to instill that knowledge and sensitivity is a collection of experience based exercises designed to simulate, as closely as possible, some of the challenges to everyday living created by various disabilities. The simulations are presented in the form of activities typically encountered by Scouts in unit, school and community settings. Included is information and the opportunity for reflective reactions to the simulations. The success of the dAC is based on first hand experience in a group setting: That a Scout/Scouter learns, feels, is sensitized to, and leaves with a more tolerant attitude for those with disAbilities. This program also presents the opportunity to complete requirements 3b, 3c and 3d for the Disabilities Awareness Merit Badge.

The nature of the program is a series of event stations, each comprised of a specific disAbility challenge. Each participant receives a program card or paper sheet listing all events. He can choose to complete any number of the challenges. The event presenter will hole punch out that challenge on the scout’s card upon successful completion of that particular task. Scouts do love competition and this tactile record has proven effective time and again.

First introduced as the Handicapped Awareness Trail at the 1977 Boy Scout Jamboree held at Moraine State Park, Pa. the basis for dAC was a program developed by Dr. Jack C. Dinger, a professor of Special Education at Slippery Rock State College in Slippery Rock, Pa. From his initial 6 trek event, dAC has grown to a 20+ station event at the Jamboree level. Credit for most of this program belongs to two gentlemen who, in 1989, introduced the redesigned disAbilities Awareness Challenge to the National Jamboree. Their staff of 12 attracted just over 4000 participants. Through the persistent efforts of David Davies (d. 2009) Professional Scout of Virginia Beach, Va. and volunteer Fred “Chief” Hampton of Albuquerque, NM, the Challenge has grown to be one of the premier events of the National Jamboree. In 2005, chair Fred Hampton supervised the staff of 47 who introduced the 16 station disAbilities Awareness Challenge to just over 14,000 participants. Jamboree 2010, chaired by Sonya Whitehead, had a signed staff of 50 but continued to deliver dAC to Scouters from all over with an on-site staff of 39. More than 15,300 visits averaging 6-7 events yielded 99,450 scout events. At the Summit in 2013 the disAbility Awareness Challenge, chaired by Tony Mei, became one of “must do venues” of the Jamboree. Never turning away any of its participants, the Challenge earned its reputation as one of the top program choices. Tony Mei will continue as chair of dAC at the 2017 National Jamboree and is soliciting staff (up to 100) for that event. It is in that spirit that this program is recommended at the Council and local levels. It is true that the possibilities are endless and it is up to individuals to make the difference.

Participant: Attempt the challenge of all tasks. You need a minimum of 15 events completed to brag that “to finish is to win”.

**Meet the Voice**

An excellent entry event: Upon entering the enclosed Challenge Area, the participant(s) are given a 5-8 minute overview by a disAbled person or a staff member who brings to the conversation a definition of ability; Examples (Running, speaking, seeing, hearing, (the 5 or 6 senses); Introduce a disAbility: 1. Through birth; 2. By accident; 3. Through disease or age The Voice sets the tone of the event; He/she creates a “can-do” attitude towards the Challenge when a given ability is taken away...

THE MOST IMPORTANT VENUE!!!
Beep Baseball

**Equipment Needed:** Beep Ball bases, base controller, power supply and electrical hook-up; BeepBalls & chargers, bats (various sizes), blindfolds (optional)

**Procedure:** Each team is made up of 7 “blind” and 2 sighted participants, who will rotate through each position. Explain that though the basics of the game are similar to baseball, there are some significant differences. First, the batter and fielders are all blind – either blindfolded or on “Scout’s Honor” to keep eyes closed. Only the pitcher and catcher are sighted – they are also on the same team as the batter. Next, there is no second base but, rather, bases only at the first and third positions. The batter slowly swings the bat so the pitcher knows where to aim his pitch. The pitcher holds the ball with the beeper toward the batter and must clearly say “READY” before starting his pitch and “PITCH” as the ball is released. If the batter hits the ball, one of the two bases is activated by an impartial staffer. The batter must determine which base is buzzing and run to it. If he reaches base before a fielder secures the ball, a run is scored. The fielders locate the ball by its beeping sound. If they can secure the ball and hold it above their head before the batter reaches base, the batter is out. A batter is allowed four strikes and only one passed ball. A hit ball must travel at least 40 feet to be considered fair; A hit ball that does not reach the 40 ft line is a foul ball.

**Scenario:** There is a National Beepball Association with traveling teams who play a regular season and a tournament for a national championship. They are die-hard players who aren’t afraid to dive for a ball or go all-out to score a run. OK, it’s the bottom of the last inning, there are two outs, the score is tied and you’re up with the chance to win the game. PLAY BALL!

Bowling

**Loss of use of legs**

**Equipment Needed:** Bowling alley, wheelchair, pins, bowling balls (various sizes), ball launching ramp

**Procedure:** Run activity on buddy system – one pin spotter and one bowler. Pin spotter waits at end of alley, removes fallen pins, returns ball and resets pins. Bowler sits in wheelchair. Be sure feet are on foot rests and the brakes are set. He takes the ball, lines up his shot and releases, either freehand or using ramp. Then, switch roles.

**Scenario:** Living your life in a wheelchair won’t slow you down! In fact, you’re thinking of joining the new wheelchair bowling league that’s forming in your community. It’s off to the bowling alley with friends – after all, practice makes perfect!

Cane Maze

**Blindness**

**Equipment Needed:** Tapping cane (or Fiberglass wand), course constructed of PVC tubing, blindfolds

**Procedure:** Blindfold participant or put on “Scout’s Honor” to keep eyes closed. Walk him to one end of maze and guide him to move cane back and forth to stay on the pathway. Cautions: There may be other obstacles in his path and send him on his way. You may use other Scouts (standing still) as obstacles.

**Scenario:** An independent blind person can be easily recognized in the community by his white cane with a red end. The individual uses the cane by positioning it in front of himself and making sweeping back and forth tapping strokes. He can feel and hear obstacles and changes of the surface to safely navigate. So, how important is your eyesight? Take this challenge to find out.

Compass

**Vision impairment**

**Equipment Needed:** Standard compass, Braille compass, blindfold (optional)

**Procedure:** Tell Scouts that, even with the increasing use of GPS, most Scouts still learn the basics of map and compass to navigate. Ask who can use a compass to find NORTH and select a volunteer. Give him the standard compass and have him find NORTH. Now ask, “What if you couldn’t see the compass?” Wait for answers . . . hand him the Braille compass and tell him to CAREFULLY open it and find NORTH. Then explain how to use the Braille compass, pointing out the differences. Explain that most sighted people use too much pressure as they try Braille – when they do so, they can’t really feel the dots; an extremely light touch is needed (just barely brushing the dots’ surface). Be sure to emphasize the care and light touch needed as compass is very expensive (about $100 to replace). Point out also that most blind people don’t read Braille, it must be learned, just like a foreign language. Now, blindfold him or put him on “Scout’s Honor” to keep eyes closed, turn him several times (switching direction and turning with him) and have him find NORTH while blind. Tactile Compass BRUNTON BRAILLE COMPASS (MODEL 16B) or an electronic version can be had for @$100. on internet:

**Scenario:** Did you ever say something like, “I can find my way with my eyes closed”? Well, here’s your chance to find out if that’s true.
Golf

**Loss of use of arm**

**Equipment Needed:** Golf clubs (various – irons, drivers, putters), tees, whiffle & standard golf balls, net w/supports, putting green (outdoor carpeting w/hole, flag w/cricket attached)

**Procedure:** Driving - Have Scout tuck his dominant hand behind his back. Explain that if he were to lose an arm due to injury, it would most likely be his dominant one. Have him tee up a ball and drive it into the net while holding the club with his other hand. Putting – Scouts pair up as buddies; one “blind” one sighted. Explain that the sighted buddy will assist in aligning their friend to make the putt but that they need to listen and aim for the cricket to make an accurate shot. Blindfold the putter or put him on “Scout’s Honor” to keep eyes closed. Activate the cricket and let the team take to the green. Switch roles.

**Scenario:** Any golfer will tell you it’s not really as easy as it seems. What if you had the extra challenge of dealing with a disability? Step right up and try your hand (pun intended).

**Home Front Challenge**

**Various Situations**

**Equipment Needed:** Mini-kitchen, household products, gloves, everyday use items, clothing, adaptive equipment, wheelchair, crutches

**Procedure:** Participants will cope with daily living conditions through a series of problems which mimic the loss of various senses or body functions. Challenges include grasping out of reach items, wearing gloves to simulate numbness (unwrapping candy, count coins, writing a note), using a gripper to reach items on high shelving, dressing with one hand, overcome problems in the kitchen – cabinet doors and drawers, reaching, grasping and pouring, etc.

Clothing: Oversized pants, shirts, tie, belts;

**Scenario:** Every day we do hundreds of tasks easily without really thinking about them. What if those tasks weren’t so easy? How would you cope? Get dressed using one arm; thread belt through loops of pants using one arm; Wear gloves to create a 10 paper clip chain, etc. Presenter can alternate or create new “scenarios” as fits the challenge group.

**Mind Bender**

**Dysgraphia/dyslexia**

**Equipment Needed:** Mirror tracing boxes w/mirrors, pencils, “star” forms, text examples

**Procedure:** Dysgraphia - Have participants take seats at each mirror tracing box, explain activity and distribute tracing patterns. Be sure to play the “teacher role” – hover over tracers, insist in neatness, no cheating, do not turn your paper, finish on time, etc. When patterns are completed, give “dictation” instructions, then discuss their perceptions of the activity. Dyslexia – distribute example sets. Select a Scout to read each example. Instruct Scouts to read their example AS THEY SEE IT. Let them struggle and allow others to react as they may. Resist the temptation to correct the readers or the reactions of the rest of the Scouts. After each reading, explain that type of Dyslexia as shown on the key.

**Scenario:** Today I have a very simple task for each of you. Here is a simple pattern made with two concentric shapes. Your assignment is to draw a third pattern by following inside the parallel lines – just like driving down the road. Oh . . . but you have a perceptual disability. While doing this assignment, you must look over the box apparatus and see what you are doing in the mirror – no looking at your hand or under the box. Be prepared . . . your hand will be receiving mixed messages from your brain. You may begin. “teacher role” here - - - then, when all have finished: Alright, let’s try some writing. Once again, you will have a perceptual disability, this time specifically in writing. This is called Dysgraphia. You must write what I say so it looks correct in the mirror. Try (suggestions) the number “2”, lower case “g”, lower case “e”, “Z”, capital “R”, lower case “d”. Now, be sure to write your name on your paper. What would your reaction be if I told you your homework assignment is to write a list of ten spelling words ten times each and you have this disability? This is one reason some special education students have reduced assignments. It is also an example how the computer has come to be a vital tool for disabled people to do homework or write papers.

**Crutch Obstacle Course • Injury requiring use of crutches**

**Equipment Needed:** Crutches, various obstacles – stairs, balance beam w/alligators, barrel (or hurdle), chair

**Procedure:** With one leg incapacitated, participants will use crutches to
navigate through an obstacle course – climbing and descending steps, clearing a hurdle, negotiating tires, completing a balance beam, sitting down and rising from a chair.

**Scenario:** You’ve all seen it – a fellow Scout comes to a troop meeting or classmate shows up at school on crutches. Usually the conversation centers around something like, “Man, what happened to you?” Only rarely does someone ask, “What’s it like to have to cope with crutches?” Well, here’s your chance to find out. Be sure to keep your foot up!

**Volleyball**

**Loss of use of arm**

**Equipment Needed:** Volleyball court w/net (each side 20’ x 20’), volleyball

**Procedure:** Have Scouts tuck their dominant hands behind their backs (or inside shirts) and explain why. Divide the group into two teams and send them on to the court. Toss the volleyball into play and have them volley to see how long they can keep it going using maximum of three hits per side.

If time and traffic permits, have them then play a game up to a score of 7. Seek feedback.

**Scenario:** Raise the hand you write with. Now tuck it into your belt behind your back or into your shirt. Count off. All even numbers go to this side, all odd numbers on that side. OK, let’s see how long you can keep a volley going. . . no more than three hits on each side of the net. With only one hand each, teamwork will be even more important. . . So, how did that feel to you? What was the hardest part?

**Wheelchair Basketball**

**Loss of use of legs**

**Equipment Needed:** Basketball court (preferably shaded), two basketball goals, basketball, wheelchairs (10), whistle

**Procedure:** First . . . NO ONE SITS IN CHAIRS UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO! Violators may not be allowed to play. Explain the rules of the game and emphasize the safety aspect. We’re not here for cut-throat competition, but to get an idea of the game. Divide into teams of 4 or 5 and allow play for 8 minutes. Seek feedback at end of play.

**Scenario:** Wheelchair Basketball is a form of basketball usually played by the physically impaired. Participants play on specially designed wheelchairs, built specifically for the sport. The chairs we are using aren’t competition chairs. Wheelchair basketball retains most major rules and scoring of basketball, and maintains a 10-foot basketball hoop and standard basketball court. The exceptions are rules which have been modified with consideration for the wheelchair. For example, “travelling” in wheelchair basketball occurs when the athlete touches his wheels more than twice after receiving or dribbling the ball. The individual must pass, bounce or shoot the ball before he or she can touch their wheels again. A player, may, however, wheel the chair and bounce the ball simultaneously just as an able-bodied player runs and bounces the ball simultaneously in regular basketball.

**Contact with Players** - The chair is considered a part of the player. Rules of contact in regular basketball (charging, blocking, etc.) apply to wheelchair basketball rules.

**Time Limits** - An offensive player cannot remain more than 4 seconds in the free throw lane while the player’s team is in possession of the ball.

**Loss of the Ball** - If a player in possession of the ball makes any physical contact with the floor or tilts the chair so far backward that the anti-tip (safety) casters touch the floor, it is a violation and the ball is awarded to the other team.

**Out-of-Bounds** - A player is considered out-of-bounds when any part of the player’s body or wheelchair touches the floor on or outside the boundary.

**Physical Advantage Foul** - Because of the varying causes and manifestations (degrees) of disability among participants, a basic rule of keeping firmly seated in the wheelchair at all times and not using a functional leg or leg stump for physical advantage over an opponent is strictly enforced. An infraction of wheelchair basketball rules (rebound, jump ball, etc.) constitutes a physical advantage foul. Three such fouls disqualify a player from the game, according to wheelchair basketball rules. Two free throws are awarded and the ball is given to the opposing team, out of bounds.

**Falling** - If a player falls out of the chair during play, the officials will immediately suspend play if there is any chance of danger to the fallen player. If not, the officials will withhold their whistles until the particular play in progress has been completed. If a player falls out of the chair to gain possession of the ball or by falling keeps opponents from gaining possession of the ball, the ball is awarded to the opposing team.

**Peripheral Neuropathy**

**Loss of feeling of fingers**

**Equipment Needed:** (6) Plastic Dish pans; 8” Oval plastic containers with lids filled with 2 lbs of uncooked white rice; (or similar food storage container); Box of paper clips per container; Various closed safety pins-20-30 per container; 6 Bandanas; 12 large spring clamps; One rectangular milk container to house equipment;
6.

**Scenario:** Begin discussion with the fact that eye-hand coordination was automatic and not at all “challenging”; Participant gladly found and displayed paper clip; Covering the container caused participant to rely solely on “feel” of fingers and the rice caused interruption of feeling; Discussion as to how Peripheral Neuropathy can cause various symptoms. In fact, this is one of the common neurological causes of numbness in fingers, hands and feet

**Tent of Possibilities**

The Tent of Possibilities is an awareness display using many devices that have been developed by individuals and companies to aid those who have disabilities in their daily life. Scouts and their leaders will learn through a variety of hands-on demonstrations and video tapes that the needs of the visually, mentally, hearing, speech and physically challenged have successfully been addressed by the dedication and inventiveness of others. A number of the devices can be made by Scouts when they return home. Participants will be encouraged to think of and share additional "possibilities" that come to mind while they are in the tent.

**Equipment Needed:** Various props, posters, devices, etc.

**Procedure:**

**Scenario:** Begin discussion with the fact that there are many devices and industries dedicated to assisting and aiding the disabled (Wheelchairs, Cars with driver assistance, Hearing Aides, Hospital Beds, etc.); Use cartoon based tent to generate discussion and conversation leading to the possible development of an Eagle Project or Com-

**Signing**

Each group will be divided in half. Using sign language posters, each group will “send” a message to the other group which will comprehend the message. Using a series of large letters, each person will be expected to read the instructor’s lips and spell out the word that has been conveyed to them in silence;

**Your task:** To participate in these alternative methods of communication. Combine this challenge with the conversation with Neil, “the voice”. How are they similar? Different?

**An Alternative to Speaking**

Your task: To participate in these alternative methods of communication.

**Depth Perception**

Earn points by throwing bolo balls at different colored rung targets. This is a fun backyard game for all ages or throw it in the car for tailgating. Set includes (2) 1”D plastic ladders, 6 bolos and a carry case

39”H x 22”W with a 33” deep base

Weighted PU sponge golf balls

**Your task:** Participants in this “fishing” game are asked to hook the fish using only one eye. Without the advantage of dual vision, it is most difficult to focus hook and “ring” to make the successful catch...

Enjoy the adventure!

**One eyed fishing and Ladder Ball Toss Game**

**Finger and Hand Tactile Test**

The participant places hands in a rice bowl and using eyes and fingers picks out 10 small safety pins in under 30 seconds. The follow up is to put hands under a shelf and search for 10 small safety pins out of a bowl containing 25 or more. The bowl also contains 10 each of medium, large, and extra large safety pins as well as a handful of paper clips. The task is to use fingers to touch and separate and find as many small pins as possible in one minute. Don’t remove hands until the task is finished. This challenge begins with an awareness of eye-hand coordination and ends by mimicking nerve loss sensation (neuropathy) in hands and fingers.

...as written by Sonya Whitehead, Jim Whitehead; Edited by Jim Africano - August, 2010; Revised by Jim Africano August 2014; August 14, 2015; August 19, 2015