

# Disability Inclusion: Student Perspectives

A resource for parents and carers

**Amaze asked a group of students with a disability about their experiences at school and about disability inclusion.**

They told us that knowledge of disability among their classmates varied. The students commented that whether disability is seen as the norm depends on whether students with disabilities form part of the minority at school. If there are fewer students with disabilities and they form part of a minority, disability isn't likely to be perceived as the norm.

Parents and carers can play an important role in supporting their child to understand disability and how to be inclusive. Parents and carers can start with conversations with their child about disability at home.



## Explaining differences with your child

A good place to start the conversation is a discussion about individual differences. This may be quite general.

Examples could include:

- people are of different heights,
- people have different coloured eyes
- hair colour and styles can be different.

Diversity makes society stronger, as people all have different strengths and talents.

## Introducing disability to conversation

By framing individual differences as a normal part of human diversity, parents and carers can start introducing disability into the conversation. If you're unsure where to begin, start by doing some research. There are some great resources written by disability advocates for parents and carers, including:

- [ABC News](#)
- Podcast 'ListenAble' - Dylan Alcott interviews a range of people from the disability community about their lives and the barriers they have faced in the community.

These resources give advice on how to encourage your child's curiosity in a respectful manner. There are tips on how to respond to your child's questions about disability in public.

## Resources for children and young people

Many children and young people will recognise that some students in their class need different types of support to play and learn. Reframing the conversation to centre on needs and supports can be helpful.

Depending on the age of your child or young person, you could discuss the following:

- Some people wear glasses to see, and hearing aids to hear.
- Some people use a cane and/or an assistance dog to guide them in the community.
- Some people use wheelchairs to move around.

You may have other examples of disability support from people in your family, school, or broader community that you can discuss with your child.

Books are another way to introduce the topic of disability. [Children and Young People with a Disability \(CYDA\)](#) has a list of books rated by young people with disability.

Some young adult books explore disability or feature characters with disabilities:

- Sinead Burke – Break the Mould
- Dylan Alcott and Fiona Regan – Dylan Alcott Game On
- Leigh Bardugo – Six of Crows (Book 1)
- Asphyxia – Future Girl
- Cece Bell – El Deafo



## What about invisible disabilities?

Not all disabilities are visible to others. Your child most likely shares a classroom with other students with an invisible disability. Your child may question the types of support other students receive in class or differences in behaviours. A good place to start is to focus on supports, such as:

- Some students may use sensory tools to stay focused.
- Detailed timetables help some students plan and manage their day.
- Some students may need their friends to ask them to play.

There is a range of children's books available that explain autism and neurodivergence, many of which have been written by neurodivergent authors. Altogether Autism Takiwātanga has a list of [Children's books about autism](#). For young adult readers, Australian Autistic authors are writing Autistic characters. They include:

- Kay Kerr - Please Don't Hug Me
- Anna Whateley - Peta Lyre's Rating Normal

## Acknowledgements

This resource was developed with input from Autistic young people. The creation of these resources were proudly funded by the Victorian Department of Education.

## Summary:

- Parents and carers play a vital role in educating their children about disability inclusion.
- There are resources available for parents and carers to learn about disability.
- There are many resources created by authors with a disability to educate children and young people.

## Amaze © 2025

Permission is granted for the content of this information sheet to be reproduced in its entirety, provided Amaze is acknowledged as the source. Content is provided for educational and information purposes only. Information about a therapy, service, product or treatment does not imply endorsement and is not intended to replace advice from your doctor or other registered health professional.