# Dismantling Ableism

Contents

[Dismantling Ableism 1](#_Toc142990050)

[Language 2](#_Toc142990051)

[Automatically Neutralizing Ableist Language in Text 2](#_Toc142990052)

[How To Avoid Ableist Language 2](#_Toc142990053)

[Ableist Language & Choosing Your Words More Intentionally 3](#_Toc142990054)

[Education 3](#_Toc142990055)

[The Canadian Teachers: The Problem with Ableism 3](#_Toc142990056)

[“This is NOT okay:” Building a creative collective against academic ableism 3](#_Toc142990057)

[Universal Design 4](#_Toc142990058)

[Reducing Ableism in Social Work Education Through Universal Design For Learning Aid Policy 4](#_Toc142990059)

[Universal design for people with psychosocial disabilities – The effect of COVID-19 4](#_Toc142990060)

[Workplace 5](#_Toc142990061)

[Ableism in Canadian Workplaces 5](#_Toc142990062)

[Standard on Employment: Public Review Draft 5](#_Toc142990063)

[Policy 6](#_Toc142990064)

[Ontario Human Rights Commission: Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability 6](#_Toc142990065)

[Ontario Human Rights Commission: Ableism and discrimination based on disability (Audiocast) 7](#_Toc142990066)

[The Accessible Canada Act (2019) 8](#_Toc142990067)

[The City of Vancouver’s Accessibility Strategy 9](#_Toc142990068)

[Dismantling Ableism in Your Everyday Life 10](#_Toc142990069)

[Why you need to stop using these words and phrases 10](#_Toc142990070)

[California Speech Language Hearing Association 10](#_Toc142990071)

[Stanford Student Affairs: Fighting Ableism 11](#_Toc142990072)

[Healthcare 12](#_Toc142990073)

[Conducting Accessible Research: Including People with Disabilities in Public Health, Epidemiological and Outcomes Studies 13](#_Toc142990074)

[Enabling our instruments: Accommodations, universal design, and access to participation in research 13](#_Toc142990075)

[Disablism 14](#_Toc142990076)

[Ableism and disablism – how to spot them and how we can do better 14](#_Toc142990077)

[Ontario Human Rights Commission: Preventing and responding to discrimination. 14](#_Toc142990078)

## Language

### [Automatically Neutralizing Ableist Language in Text](https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Automatically-Neutralizing-Ableist-Language-in-Text-Liu-Shibata/108c50d8375107cc40d79531d10cce6871ef9e4b)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Source | Target | Subcategory of ableism |
| “And I know about your experiments with the inmates of your **nut house**” | And I know about your experiments with the inmates of your **psychiatric hospital** | Derogatory depiction of disability |
| “We can no longer **turn a blind eye to** the damage done to our seas” | We can no longer **feign ignorance** about the damage done to our seas | Using disability as idiom |
| “Indeed, when communism constituted one of the two poles in the previous **bipolar** world order, terrorist acts were few and far between” | Indeed, when communism constituted one of the two poles in the previous **rapidly-changing** world order, terrorist acts were few and far between | Trivializing disability |
| “Apparently, she’s **confined to a wheelchair**” | Apparently, she **uses** a wheelchair. | Equating disability to pathology |
| “There may be a prophet hidden inside each of us, but we tend to be **deaf to** such warnings” | There may be a prophet hidden inside each of us, but we tend to **deliberately ignore** such warnings. | Using disability as a metaphor |
| “their son is a **special needs case**” | Their son is **disabled** | Euphemizing disability |
| “But neither of the victims, he concedes, were the most honest and **upstanding** of people” | But neither of the victims, he concedes, were the most honest and **respectable** of people | Using non-disability inclusive language |

### 

### [How To Avoid Ableist Language](http://deareverybody.hollandbloorview.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/DearEverybodyTipsonAbleistLanguage2018-19.pdf)

* Ableism isn’t simply a list of words we should not use, but paying attention to language can help us understand how embedded ableism is in our communities.
* Common examples of ableist language are words like: lame, dumb, retarded, blind, deaf, idiot, imbecile, nuts, psycho and spaz. These terms can be associated with a person’s identity or their challenges, and because of that, can be interpreted as insulting or hurtful. Every time people use these terms, it reinforces the idea that people with disabilities are somehow inferior.
* Many of these words and phrases are used so casually that most people do not consciously realize they’re associated with disability.
* Examples:
  + Some people use the word ‘retarded’ or ‘stupid’ when they mean: frustrating, irritating, annoying, obnoxious
  + Some people use the word ‘spaz’ or ‘retarded’ when they mean: silly, cheesy, dorky, nonsensical
  + Some people use ‘insane’ or ‘crazy’ when they mean: intense, amazing, really, wicked, awesome, wild, extremely
  + Some people use ‘lame’ when they man: bad, uncool, awful, unpleasant
  + Some people use ‘crazy’ when they mean: shocking, unbelievable, overwhelming, outrageous, ridiculous, bizarre
  + Some people use ‘psychopath’ or ‘sociopath’ when they mean: dangerous, threatening, menacing, frightening

### [Ableist Language & Choosing Your Words More Intentionally](https://throughisabelsglasses.blogspot.com/2020/09/ableist-language-choosing-your-words.html)

That's [**daft/dumb/idiotic/imbecilic/moronic/retarded/stupid**].

*annoying, asinine, careless, foolish, ill-advised, ill-conceived, irresponsible, irritating, meaningless, naive, nonsensical, pointless, reckless, senseless, silly, trivial, unimportant, unwise, useless, worthless*

They're (a) [**daft/dim/idiotic/insane/imbecillic/mongoloid/moronic/retarded/stupid**].

*careless, complacent, clueless, foolish, gullible, ignorant, inept, naive, silly, undiscerning, unskilled, unthinking, unwise, useless*

That's [**bonkers/crazy/insane/mad/maniacal/nuts/psychotic**].

*absurd, astonishing, confusing, ill-advised, ill-conceived, illogical, irrational, nonsensical, outlandish, preposterous, ridiculous, shocking, unbelievable, unfathomable, unimaginable, unprecedented, weird, wild*

They're [**bonkers/crazy/insane/maniacal, nuts, psychotic**].

*absurd, careless, cold, cruel, erratic, illogical, impulsive, inconsistent, irrational, out of control, reckless, self-centred, selfish, unconventional, unpredictable, weird, whimsical, wild*

[**Crazily/insanely/madly**] in love.

*absurdly, exceedingly, extremely, intensely, passionately*

In [**crippling**] debt.

*extreme, limiting, severe*

That's [**lame**].

*annoying, irritating, rubbish, uncool, unfair*

[**Blind/deaf**] to criticism.

*ignorant, oblivious, unaware, willfully ignorant*

[**Blinded**] by love.

*dazzled, giddy, hypnotised, naive, overwhelmed, undiscerning, unquestioning*

## Education

### [The Canadian Teachers: The Problem with Ableism](https://canadianteachermagazine.com/2022/09/26/11465/)

* Strategies for teachers to remove ableist barriers:
  + Avoid tokenistic inclusion of disabled student voices and experience
  + From the outset, ensure students with disabilities are included in the planning, development, and review of EDI initiatives
  + Ensure students with disabilities have equitable opportunities to hold leadership positions
  + Reconsider ideas of time, space, and participation, including methods of communication and written/oral output, as a measure of the legitimacy of student knowledge and experience
  + In surveys and feedback forms, include items that are relevant to students with disabilities
  + Consider the intersectionality of student experiences, including race, culture, gender and ability
  + Don’t speak on behalf of someone with a disability unless they ask you to

### [“This is NOT okay:” Building a creative collective against academic ableism](https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/%E2%80%9CThis-is-NOT-okay%3A%E2%80%9D-Building-a-creative-collective-Long-Stabler/70c27369a92b0199e0c454c35d866cca478173b3)

* Students, faculty and staff identify a greater need for community between disabled people on campus. After addressing physical and structural barriers the campus environment was still inhospitable for students, faculty and staff with disabilities due to ableist attitudes and policy barriers.
* A significant experience of being disabled on campus is isolation, therefore, building community which created a space for “access intimacy”
* Synchronous and asynchronous ways of interacting with other disabled people are important for building a community.
* By creating both physical and virtual space to provide stories about experiences of disability, across other aspects of identity, and representing multiple positions within the structure of the university, it cultivates a practice of access intimacy that also brings more attention to these issues from the university at large.

## Universal Design

### [Reducing Ableism in Social Work Education Through Universal Design For Learning Aid Policy](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10437797.2021.1997686)

* There are seven principles of universal design:
  + **Equitable use:** the design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities
  + **Flexibility in use:** the design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities
  + **Simple and intuitive use:** use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level
  + **Perceptible information:** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities
  + **Tolerance for error:** the design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions
  + **Low physical effort:** the design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with minimum fatigue
  + **Size and space for approach and use:** Appropriate size and space are provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user’s body size, posture, or mobility
* Universal design for learning (UDL): offers a more holistic framework for curriculum and instruction, benefiting institutions of higher education in the education and retention of individuals with disabilities, and more importantly, individuals with disabilities themselves.
  + UDL is proactive in that it assesses and addresses potential needs prior to students having to ask for any accommodation. As such, UDL avoids stereotyping, stigmatization, and shaming of students that may come from having to ask for accommodations. UDL is not an accommodation; rather, it is a mechanism to offer students more options for student, to increase motivation, and to add choices in their learning processes.
* Ways faculty can create more accessible classrooms:
  + Pay attention to different learning styles, offer assignments that engage students in different ways
  + Design PowerPoints and handouts with an easy-to-read font/style; use image descriptions on all PowerPoint
  + Use intentional language (moving away from assumptions like ‘as everyone can see’)
  + Using creating participation points that honour the fact that people participate in a myriad of ways
  + Implement flexible attendance policies

### [Universal design for people with psychosocial disabilities – The effect of COVID-19](https://www-sciencedirect-com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/science/article/pii/S0739885923000203?via%3Dihub)

* Universal design is defined as, “*the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. ‘Universal design’ shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.”*
* Universal design of transport systems has focused mostly on people with visible disabilities, hence also focusing on physical design
* Universal design in public transit should focus on:
  + The individual level
  + The social environment
  + The organizational environment
  + The physical transport environment
* The goal of universal design is the include all people in society.

## Workplace

### [Ableism in Canadian Workplaces](https://policycommons-net.proxy.library.carleton.ca/artifacts/4395841/research-report/5192461/)

* Workplaces and employees would benefit from education about disability and accommodations:
  + Employers need education about invisible disabilities
  + It is crucial that employers develop their understanding of disability from an intersectionality lens
  + Education could also help employers better understand the value of workers living with disabilities and the ways that work can be improved by the inclusion and support of those living with disabilities
* To improve the accommodations process in the workplace, employers can:
  + Provide education to all employees on accommodations and accessible procedures for requesting an accommodation
  + Communicate transparently with workers during the accommodation process
  + Understand that accommodations are not special treatment, but rather, opportunities to support employees living with disabilities.
* Develop strong policy and procedures to prevent ableism in the workplace and ensure that the policies and procedures are carefully followed:
  + Employers can review their internal processes such as those related to hiring, promotion, supervision, and evaluation to focus on making improvements and removing barriers for those living with disabilities. This is a process that can be done in partnership with advocates and those living with disabilities.

### [Standard on Employment: Public Review Draft](https://accessible.canada.ca/)

* Anti-ableism policies: effective implementation of anti-ableism policies ensures that organizational practices do not disadvantage persons with disabilities due to discriminatory behaviour
* The goals of anti-ableism policy are:
  + To ensure that organizational practices, systems, and communications do not reflect or perpetrate ableist exclusionary practices that may directly or indirectly promote, sustain, or entrench discrimination;
  + To establish and maintain hiring, promotion, and work-related policies that will build and support an inclusive employment environment where these individuals participate and contribute fully;
  + To ensure that services are provided in a fully respectful manner that addresses and removes any barriers to service and workplace including ableist practices and attitudes; and
  + To meet the requirement of the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Accessible Canada Act
* How to avoid casual ableism:
  + When communicating about disability, avoid casual ableism by:
    - Focusing on abilities, not limitations;
    - Remembering that people come first;
    - Asking about an individual’s language preferences;
    - Using neutral language;
    - Emphasizing the need for accessibility, not the presence of a disability; and
    - Avoiding condescending euphemisms

Policies within which accessibility considerations may be integrated include but are not limited to:

* + Anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies
  + Communication and information policies
  + Emergency preparedness policies
  + Human resource policies
  + Information and technology policies
  + Pay equity
  + Performance management
  + Policies on meetings and events
  + Procurement policies
  + Training and education policies for workers

## Policy

### [Ontario Human Rights Commission: Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability](https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-ableism-and-discrimination-based-disability)

* **A barrier removal process** should include reviewing an organization’s physical accessibility, policies, practices, decision-making processes and overall culture
  + When desiging inclusively and removing barriers, organizations should consult with people with disabilities to gain a greater understanding of people’s diverse needs, and how to most effectively meet them. It is important to that peopl with disabilities have the opportunity to provide input into information-gathering processes and are consulted about the barriers that affect them.
  + When identifying barriers, organizations should take into account that discrimination based on disability may intersect with discrimination based on other identities, such as race, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status etc.
* **Collecting data**: both quantitative and qualitative - can help an organization understand the barriers that exist, and identify and address concerns they may lead to systemic discrimination ie. surveying employees, service users or tenants
* **Developing human rights policies and procedures:** developing anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies, an internal human rights procedure, and an accommodation policy and procedure are part of an overall human rights strategy, but these should also be developed with the needs of people with disabilities in mind.
* **Education and training:** without an understanding of human rights issues relating to people with disabilities, and support for human rights principles, human rights policies and procedures will be less likely to succeed. Training should cover:
  + Types of barriers (ie housing, employment and services)
  + The rights of people with disabilities
  + The human rights system in Ontario
  + The organization’s human rights safety and human rights policies and procedures
  + How the organization accommodates people with disabilities
  + How the organization or its employees, customers, tenants and others can be part of a broader cultural shift to be more inclusive of people with disabilities

### [Ontario Human Rights Commission: Ableism and discrimination based on disability (Audiocast)](https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/ableism-and-discrimination-based-disability)

* This policy is based on the Commission’s 2001 Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate which guided employers, housing providers and service in the day-to-day operations of disability accommodation.
* The Policy sets out that the OHRC’s position that the ground of disability also includes anticipated disabilities, such as including discrimination based on a person’s genetic testing results. These are referred to as anticipated disabilities.
* The Policy makes it clear that the Code is contravened when stereotypes and stigma results in discrimination.
* The Policy recognizes intersectional discrimination as people’s lives involve multiple, interrelated identities.
* The Policy sets out 3 principles of accommodation: respect for dignity, individualization, and Integration and full participation.
  + The Policy says that forms of accommodation may include modifying or changing on organization’s buildings, facilities and services; its policies and processes; a procurement or third-party contracts; its performance standards, conditions and requirements; the decision-making practices/work, housing or service culture, or its methods of communication.
  + The Policy provides examples of accommodation.
    - **Employment**: modifying job duties or policies; making changes to the building like installing ramps or handrails; or additional training.
    - **Services**: modifying “no pets” to allow guide dogs or other service animals; or multiple ways of contacting a service including by phone, in person and by regular mail or email
    - **Housing:** the accommodation could be allowing transfers between units or helping someone fill out an application form.
* The Policy has a section called Medical Information to be Provided which addresses the type and scope of information that organizations can ask for. While an organization must have enough information to allow it to meet the duty to accommodate, it must also look at the privacy implications of providing this information.
* “Organizations have a responsibility to take steps to design their programs, policies and environments inclusively, to take into account the needs of people from diverse backgrounds, with a range of unique identities. This is part of the duty to maintain environments that are free from discrimination and harassment.”

### [The Accessible Canada Act](https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-canada.html) (2019)

* The goal of the Accessible Canada Act (ACA) is to realize a barrier-free Canada by 2040. The legislation benefits all Canadians, especially persons with disabilities, through the proactive identification, removal and prevention of barriers to accessibility in 7 priority areas:
  + Employment
  + The built environment
  + Information and communication technologies (ICT)
  + Communication other than ICT
  + The design and delivery of programs and services
  + The procurement of goods, services and facilities
  + Transportation
* The ACA applies to a wide range of federally regulated entities. This includes:
  + Industry sectors such as banking, telecommunications and transportation
  + Government of Canada departments and agencies
  + Parliament
  + Crown corporations
  + Canadian Armed Forces
  + Royal Canadian Mounted Police
  + First Nations band councils
* The ACA requires regulated entities to prepare and publish accessibility plans, set up feedback processes and report openly on progress.
* The ACA establishes a framework for advancing accessibility through a combination of new and existing organizations and positions which administer and enforce the ACA, and monitor outcomes
* The legislation established Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC) to develop national accessibility standards.

### [The City of Vancouver’s Accessibility Strategy](https://council.vancouver.ca/20220719/documents/ra-appendixa-plainlanguage.pdf#page=21%C2%A0)

* There is no “one size fits all” approach to creating an accessible city.
* The goals of the Accessibility Strategy are to:
  + Make it so all residents have fair access to the City’s services, programs and infrastructure.
  + Build an inclusive culture within the city
  + Support all city departments to use an accessible lens in daily activities
  + Be sure the City removes barriers to recruitment, hiring, retention, accommodation, and advancement of employees with disabilities
* Key focus areas & action plans:

1. **Built environment & public spaces:** the city will follow Universal Design Guidelines and a high level of accessibility guidelines. Everyone should be able to access all physical infrastructure in the city.
2. **Transportation services, policies and programs:** The City will use Universal Design principles for transportation planning. People should feel connected to their daily needs regardless of ability.
3. **Housing services, programs and design:** accessible, affordable, social and supportive housing is available for persons with disabilities.
4. **Information and communication services:** the City of Vancouver offers residents accessible communication and communication supports. ‘
5. **Employment:** an inclusive and accessible workplace for all in the City of Vancouver. Including more ways for persons with disabilities to contribute to the workforce.
6. **Governance and engagement:** make sure there is fair access to municipal programs and services in the City of Vancouver.
7. **Capacity and collaboration:** talk about accessibility challenges in the community with non-profit organizations and persons with disabilities so we can get more done together.
8. **Advocacy and working with other orders of government, along with other agencies:** work with all levels of government so persons with disabilities can move, lead, and take part in their communities.

* For each key focus area, the goal (written), what was heard from the community and stakeholders and community priorities were specified.
* Identifying stakeholders and their priorities and specific action plans make an effective knowledge translation plan which leads to change.
* Action Plans: City Staff will work with the Accessibility Committee to check on actions and report what happens. Each department needs to follow the Accessibility Strategy.
  + Implementation Team: communicating with staff, getting the Accessibility Committee team together, hosting knowledge sharing events, making sure actions get done
  + Staff will track department actions and how long things take.
  + Department leads: someone will lead Strategy activities in all City departments. Focusing on the 8 Focus Areas action items. The Departmental Leads report to the Equity Office.
  + Accessibility Committee: will help the City learn about barriers that stop people from being a part of the community. The Committee lets City staff know what the barriers are and gives suggestions on how to get rid of barriers. The Committee must include persons with disabilities.

## Dismantling Ableism in Your Everyday Life

### [Why you need to stop using these words and phrases](https://hbr.org/2020/12/why-you-need-to-stop-using-these-words-and-phrases)

1. **Acknowledge the disability around you:** one billion people worldwide, around 15% of the population, have a disability. The more conscious we become of disability around us, the less we are likely to stigmatize it *as something to be fixed* and look at it as *something that is.*
   * 1. Don’t try and fix the disability; instead fix the oppression
2. **Learn, learn, learn:** Language is deeply ingrained in our families, friends, cultures and identity. Become aware of your own biases. To do this, listen more than you talk. Use resources made for disabled people; look for articles, books, videos, podcasts, and other work by disabled writers and activists. Use these tools to learn about discrimination and ableism.
   * 1. Educate yourself, and don’t rely on others to teach you.
3. **Don’t make assumptions about someone’s identity**: In the 1980s, this included people-first language (instead of defining people by their disability, the movement sought to focus on the fact that people with disabilities are first and foremost, just people). Then, in the 1990s, other disability communities mobilized for an identity-first rule so disability could be recognized as an identity and not just a medical category (ie. some individuals prefer ‘Deaf’ (capitalized) instead of ‘people who are deaf’). Today, the best strategy is to ask people how they want to be addressed. Clarifying questions about identity shows respect.
   * 1. Golden rule is: when you’re unsure of someone’s identity, just ask.

### [California Speech Language Hearing Association](https://www.csha.org/anti-ableism/)

* Ways to combat ableism:
  + Understand the definition of ableism
  + Understand that disability is a civil rights issue not an entitlement
  + Stop saying I am not ableist
  + Identify inequities and disparities
  + Confront ableism ideas that you have held or continue to hold
  + Understand how your anti-ableism needs to be intersectional
  + Champion anti-ableist ideas and policies
  + Stop your own ignorance – learn the history of ableism
  + Actively include the perspectives of people with disabilities
  + Think about how ableism impacts issues that are important to you
  + Seek out and actively support disability organizations
  + Interact with people who have disabilities

### [Stanford Student Affairs: Fighting Ableism](https://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/community-belonging-student-success/care-concern/stanford-against-hate/fighting-ableism#do)

* Honour Intersectionality
  + Ableism interlocks with other systems of oppression like racism, homophobia, classism etc.
  + Consume a diverse range of media around disability
  + Make sure who you hire, who you surround yourself with, and who you learn from also upholds these values and sees the world through an intersectional lens
* Educate yourself
  + Educating yourself is an essential first step in combating ableism and ensuring that you are an effective ally
  + It is important to not make assumptions about disability status or identity, to be informed of the many ways people with disabilities experience and move through the world, and continue to find and share resources.
* Understand how others want to identify
  + There is no one right way to identify with a disability. It is always best to ask how a person identifies in terms of their disability to respect their choice and use their preferred of language.
* Check your language
  + Consider how your choice of words can further ableist social constructs
  + Harmful words uphold stigmatizing constructs and associate a negative connotation to disabilities.
  + Expand your vocabulary to find words that haven’t been used to marginalize people with disabilities.
* Diversify your news and entertainment
  + Question media and entertainment that exploits disability tropes.
  + Ensure your social media feeds feature accounts discussing disabilities and disability justice activism
  + Watch entertainment that includes character with disabilities with diverse experiences
  + When consuming news and media, actively word to ask yourself, “is this content including how those with disabilities are impacted?” and other questions that help you critically reflect on and challenge ableism
* Vote and get involved with disability activists and organizations
  + Follow a variety of activists involved disability rights and advanced globally and nationally
  + Read and participate in conferences or events where you can better understand the current work happening in the realm of disability rights and disability visibility
  + Support organizations that are intersectional and consider their voting suggestions
  + Vote and support campaigns for legislation and policies that combat ableism and uphold and strengthen disability rights
* Allies and accomplices
  + Learn how to interact appropriately with people who have a disability and overcome your conditioning and bias in social situations
  + Help educate others and speak up when you see ableism occurring
* Ensure events you create or want to attend are accessible for all
  + Ensure your event is inclusive for all people with disabilities
  + Recognize that accessibility includes the web and digital platforms
  + Make sure that your in person events are accessible for all types of disability. Ensuring broader accessibility allows for more participation and more diverse perspectives represented at your events.

[Ableism and disablism – how to spot them and how we can do better](https://theconversation.com/ableism-and-disablism-how-to-spot-them-and-how-we-can-all-do-better-204541)

* At a systemic and societal level, the way we design and deliver systems, policies, virtual and physical environments, products and experiences need to be co-designed in partnership with people with disability – or better yet, through disability-led initiatives.
* The emphasis on co-design and engagement with people with disability is increasingly prevalent. However, it is critical to conduct co-design in ways that are not tokenistic and don’t merely validate current practice.
* At an individual level, we all have a part to play in creating an inclusive future. We will all likely experience disability at some point in our lives. Thus, the way to prepare for that time is to actively acknowledge and challenge personal biases, learn about and advocate for accessibility and inclusion in the spaces where you live, work and play and amplify the voices of people with disability at every opportunity.

## Healthcare

### [Conducting Accessible Research: Including People with Disabilities in Public Health, Epidemiological and Outcomes Studies](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5104996/)

* “Accessible research design”: research that is accessible to and inclusive of people with disabilities (PWD)
* Equal and just representation in health research is necessary to improve outcomes for PWD
  + Disability must be seen as a demographic factor (like age, gender etc)
* When researchers do not include PWD in health-related research, it can lead to serious concerns about the external validity of a study. PWD and other groups are excluded from research studies through overly rigid inclusion and exclusion criteria.
* Universal design: “designing all products, buildings and exterior spaces to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible”
* Universal design of research: the design of research so that all people can be included as potential participants, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.
* Accommodations: Even when universal design is applied, there may be times when accommodations are needed to enable equal participation for PWD.
* Modifications: modifications represent a further alteration in standardized process, in that they may change the way in which the measure or test is given, or provide an alternate measure

### [Enabling our instruments: Accommodations, universal design, and access to participation in research](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0003999300271207)

* Guidelines for the inclusion of people with disabilities and methodologic improvements would help break down research barriers. If practical suggestions and increased levels of funding accompanied these guidelines, they would be more forceful.
* Sampling and respondent recruitment
  + Survey research relies heavily on random digit dialing (RDD) for sample recruitment. For expedient reasons, RDD protocols specify that interviewers do not leave voice mail messages. People with disabilities may not immediately answer the call. One study found that leaving a message on answering machines improved response rates by 20%.
  + Therefore, it is recommended to provide training to interviewers and ensuring the use of telephone relay services and telephone devices for the deaf (TDD). This will allow for the use of TDD directories and thus the inclusion of those who use them in research.
* Mode of Administration
  + Many standard research instruments are self-administered questionnaires which present with significant barriers.
  + To prevent barriers associated with self-administered questionnaires, alternative formats (ie. Telephone or face-to-face interviews)
* Time reference periods and unstable conditions
  + Questions surrounding time such as “past 12 months” do not consider those whose health status may change dramatically over short periods of time. These questions also do not consider short-term memory loss or distortion.
  + Universal design approach 🡪 developing and implementing research instruments that do not categorically exclude people with disabilities. For example, shortening time referents for all people and creating questions that reflect amplitude.
* Physical mobility Language
  + Finding more appropriate ways to ask about personal mobility that is both meaningful and inoffensive. For example, substituting he word “go” for “walk” and “climb”
* Overall, include people with disabilities in the design of questions and in the focus groups, cognitive interviews, pretests, pilot studies etc.

## Disablism

### [Ableism and disablism – how to spot them and how we can do better](https://theconversation.com/ableism-and-disablism-how-to-spot-them-and-how-we-can-all-do-better-204541)

* At a systemic and societal level, the way we design and deliver systems, policies, virtual and physical environments, products and experiences need to be co-designed in partnership with people with disability – or better yet, through disability-led initiatives.
* The emphasis on co-design and engagement with people with disability is increasingly prevalent. However, it is critical to conduct co-design in ways that are not tokenistic and don’t merely validate current practice.
* At an individual level, we all have a part to play in creating an inclusive future. We will all likely experience disability at some point in our lives. Thus, the way to prepare for that time is to actively acknowledge and challenge personal biases, learn about and advocate for accessibility and inclusion in the spaces where you live, work and play and amplify the voices of people with disability at every opportunity.

### [Ontario Human Rights Commission: Preventing and responding to discrimination.](https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-based-mental-health-disabilities-and-addictions/17-preventing-and-responding-discrimination)

* Employers, housing providers, service providers and other responsible parties must make sure they maintain accessible, inclusive, discrimination and harassment-free environments that respect human rights.
* Ways an organization can respond to a human rights claim:
  + Procedures in place at the time to deal with discrimination and harassment.
  + The promptness of the organization’s response to the complaint
  + How seriously the complaint was treated
  + Resources made available to deal with the complaint
  + Whether the organization provided a healthy environment for the person who complained
  + How well the action taken was communicated to the person who complained
* A complete strategy to prevent and address human rights issues should include:
  + A barrier prevention, review and removal plan
  + Anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies
  + An education and training program
  + An internal complaints procedure
  + An accommodation policy and procedure
* Collecting data can also help an organization understand the barriers that exist, and identify and address concerns that may lead to discrimination.