

**BARTON LAB  
CONTACT:  
BARTONLABVU@GMAIL.COM**

# **DIGNITY & DISABILITY DISABILITY ETIQUETTE**

*How to interact with people with  
disabilities in a kind and respectful way*



# DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

## *Talking to People*

Talk to people with disabilities just like those who do not have disabilities. Never assume cognitive or physical functioning based on appearance or disability.

## *Talking about People*

People with disabilities should not be talked about as "brave," "heroic," or "inspirational" for completing everyday activities (e.g., going to the store or having a job). Hold people with disabilities to the same expectations as those without disabilities.

## DO NOT:

Talk down to people

Use a baby voice, talk louder/slower

Touch someone's mobility device

Assume the individual needs help

Remove/control an alternative augmentative communication (AAC) device

## DO:

Speak to people at eye level

Use a regular tone to speak to individuals

Consider accessibility when arranging the environment

Give help if the person asks for it

Assure a person's AAC is always accessible and charged

# DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

## *Emphasis on the Person*

Respect individual identity

When referring to a person with a disability, use language that reflects the way that person identifies (i.e., person-first or disability-first)

Listen to individual wants and needs

Avoid generalizing about a group of people based on one person's experience

Graciously accept being corrected, even if the mistake was unintentional



# RESOURCES

[Basic Guidelines for Interacting  
with People with Disabilities](#)

[Communicating with People with  
Disabilities](#)

[Using Inclusive Language](#)