

# DISABILITY - MYTH BUSTING FACTS

## EAST SIDE CONSORTIUM

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In order to continue our work to eliminate discrimination and intolerance we need to raise funds. Donations and offers of help will be gratefully received.

### Introduction

#### What is this myth-busting pack about?

Every day people are bullied or picked on because they are seen as being “different” in some way – perhaps because of their race, colour, religion, gender or sexuality, because they have a disability or illness.

People with disabilities are often the target of discrimination, misunderstanding or abuse. The aim of this pack is to dispel some of the myths around disability, provide you with the facts and hopefully increase understanding. It is part of a series of myth-busting packs produced by the East Side Consortium.

Other myth-busting packs currently available from the East Side Consortium include:

- New Arrivals
- Islamaphobia
- Homophobia
- Learning Difficulties
- Africa
- Europe
- Mental Health

**The East Side Consortium** is formed by:

**Barking & Dagenham Racial Equality Council**

**Redbridge Equalities & Community Council**

**Waltham Forest Race Equality Council**

working together on projects across the three boroughs, to provide advice, information, advocacy, support and training, events, meetings, briefings and outings.

*“Schools, colleges and universities have a duty to parents with disabilities to let them have reasonable access to services related to the education of their child or children. This is to ensure that parents with disabilities can be fully involved in their child's education.”*

*([www.nidirect.gov.uk/disabled-parents-and-school](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/disabled-parents-and-school))*

**Myth:** Most people with disabilities are unable to marry or have relationships.

**Facts:** Disabled people make many different life choices the same as able-bodied people do. Some choose to marry or form long-term relationships and some choose not to do so.

**Myth:** People with disabilities cannot be effective parents or carers.

**Facts:** Many people with disabilities do become parents and carers. Others may become disabled when they are already parents or carers. Some people with disabilities who are planning a family may want to discuss issues with their doctor in advance, such as how their particular disability could affect pregnancy and what sort of post-birth health support may be needed. Caring for someone else can sometimes be lonely for anyone, whether they are able-bodied or have a disability. However, there are community support groups available for carers.

**Myth:** Deaf people cannot communicate

**Facts:** Deaf people use many communication techniques, including sign language, lip-reading and subtitles on T.V.



*The Equality Act 2010 requires all companies to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that Disabled people (including Deaf and Hard of Hearing people) have full access to their premises and the goods they provide. Listed buildings and companies with less than 15 employees are no longer exempt.*

**Myth:** There is little that can be done to eliminate barriers confronting people with disabilities.

**Facts:** Many groups have faced challenges and fought hard and have won, and it is still possible to change things with education, awareness campaigns and respect. The fight is not yet over and things change over generations. The Equality Act 2010 has enshrined in law certain rights and it means that people with disabilities can challenge unfair and discriminatory practices.

If you believe you have been treated unfairly or discriminated against because of a disability or for any other reason, you can get advice and support from:

<b>Barking &amp; Dagenham Racial Equality Council</b>	<b>0208 594 2773</b>
<b>Waltham Forest Race Equality Council</b>	<b>0208 279 2425</b>
<b>Redbridge Equalities &amp; Community Council</b>	<b>0208 551 8178</b>



**Myth:** People with disabilities cannot meet performance standards at work.

**Facts:** A 1981 study found 92% of disabled employees rated average or better in job performance compared to 90% of employees without disabilities

**Myth:** Employing people with disabilities increases insurance rates.

**Facts:** Insurance rates tend to be based on the hazards connected to certain jobs and the accident history of the organisation, rather than the disability of staff.

The term "Disability" can cover a wide and varied range of conditions including:

AIDS

Angina

Anxiety disorders

Asthma

Bi-polar disorder

Blindness

Cancer

Deafness

Diabetes

Dyslexia

Hypertension

Paralysis

Stuttering

TB

**Myth:** All people with disabilities are living on benefits

**Facts:** Some people do claim and some do not. In fact it can often be very difficult for people to claim the benefits that they are entitled to.



**Myth:** If you can walk you cannot be disabled

**Facts:** There are many hidden disabilities e.g. heart and lung conditions and joint pain. Pain is felt differently in different people at different times in their lives. People may hide their disability due to fear of judgement, criticism or discrimination. Other disabilities are just not visible by their very nature. The Disability Discrimination Act defines "disability" as "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such impairment, or a perception of such impairment."

Did you know . . .  
*Britain sent a team of 212 athletes to the Paralympics in 2008 in Beijing. Team GB finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the medals table winning 42 gold medals and 102 medals in total.*

**Myth:** People with disabilities need to be helped to do things.

**Facts:** Do not assume that someone needs help simply because they have a disability. Please ask someone if they need help first. Many people with disabilities are fully independent and are not only able to do things for themselves but are also able to offer help to others.



Eleanor Simmonds Gold Medallist swimmer

**Myth:** There is nothing I can do to help break down the barriers facing people with disabilities.

**Facts:** Yes there is! We can all contribute to making life better for people with disabilities by being thoughtful and considerate. For example:

- Challenge myths and name-calling and people who make fun of disabilities
- Do not park in a disabled parking space if you do not have a disability.
- Make sure you hold community events at an accessible venue
- Accept other people regardless of their differences
- Answer children's questions about disability
- Help campaign for accessibility

## **East Side Consortium**

[www.eastsideconsortium.wordpress.com](http://www.eastsideconsortium.wordpress.com)

East Side Consortium organises outings, conferences, training and events to bring people from different communities together, to increase understanding and co-operation between communities, to discuss issues of mutual interest, to find common ground and values and to dispel myths and misunderstanding.

Members of the East Side Consortium are:

### **Barking & Dagenham Racial Equality Council**

**Tel: 02085942773**

Unit 2, 30 Thames Rd; Barking IG11 0HZ

Normal opening hours: Mon – Fri 11am – 4pm

We provide help, support and advocacy in cases of discrimination and hate crime and work with partner agencies to offer support, advice and assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse. We offer daily drop-in general advice sessions at our office or you can ring to make an appointment. We also run outreach drop-in advice sessions at Dagenham Heathway Library on Tuesdays 10 am until 12 noon and at Barking Learning Centre on Wednesdays 11 am until 1pm. We have a number of bi-lingual advice workers.

[www.bardagrec.wordpress.com](http://www.bardagrec.wordpress.com)

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### **Redbridge Equalities & Community Council**

**Tel: 02085518178**

Gants Hill United Reformed Church, 39 Woodford Ave;

Gants Hill, Ilford IG2 6UH

Mon-Fri 11am – 3 pm

We provide advice, support and advocacy to victims of hate crime. We work with diverse communities. We run a hate crime hotline daily 6pm to midnight Tel: **02085518178**

We also provide training and speakers.

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### **Waltham Forest Race Equality Council**

**Tel: 02082792425**

Community Place, 806 High Road Leyton, London E10 6AE

Normal opening hours: Mon, Wed and Thur 10 am – 3pm

We offer specialist advice on immigration and on discrimination issues. We also offer advice, advocacy and support to victims of hate crime and drop-in general advice sessions on Thursdays between 10.30 a.m and 2.30 pm

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## **ARTS & CRAFTS FAYRE**

Every Wednesday 10.30 am until 3.30 pm at Gants Hill United Reformed Church Large Hall, 39 Woodford Avenue, Gants Hill IG2 6UH to raise funds for the work of Barking & Dagenham REC, Redbridge Equalities & Community Council and Waltham Forest REC.

*Please come along, have a cuppa, meet your friends, browse around the stalls and support this worthy cause so that we can continue to provide our services to the local community.*