



# Arizona Sexual Violence & Disability Network



## Tips for First Responders

**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES** are a group of conditions due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavioral areas. These conditions begin during the developmental period, may impact day-to-day functioning, and usually last throughout a person's lifetime.

**INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES** refers to general mental capability and includes difficulty carrying out everyday activities, and an impaired ability to reason, plan, and solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly, and learn from experience.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Say:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ My name is.... I'm here to help you, not hurt you.</li><li>○ I am a ... (name your job)</li><li>○ I am here because ... (explain the situation)</li><li>○ I look different than my picture on my badge because ... (for example, if you are wearing protective equipment)</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Show:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Your picture identification badge (as you say above).</li><li>○ That you are calm and competent</li></ul></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Give:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Extra time for the person to process what you are saying and to respond.</li><li>○ Respect for the dignity of the person as an equal and as an adult (example: speak directly to the person).</li><li>○ If needed, offer an arm to the person to hold as they walk, or an elbow for balance.</li><li>○ If possible, quiet time to rest (as possible, to lower stress and fatigue).</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Use:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Calm tone of voice</li><li>○ Short sentences.</li><li>○ Simple, concrete words.</li><li>○ Accurate, honest information.</li><li>○ Pictures and objects to illustrate your words. Point to your ID picture as you say who you are and point to any protective equipment as you speak about it.</li></ul></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Predict:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ What will happen (simply and concretely)?</li><li>○ How long this will last – when things will return to normal (if you know).</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Repeat:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Reassurances (for example, "You may feel afraid. That's ok. We're safe now.")</li></ul></li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When the person can contact or rejoin loved ones (for example: calls to family, re-uniting pets)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Encouragement (for example, “Thanks for moving fast. You are doing great. Other people can look at you and know what to do”).</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Example:</b> “Just like I said before, we’re getting into my car now. We’ll go to...”</p> </div>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Ask for/Look for:</b></li> <li>○ An identification bracelet with special health information.</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Examples:</b> wheelchair, walker, oxygen, batteries, communication devices [head pointers, alphabet boards, speech synthesizers, etc.]</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Essential equipment and supplies</li> <li>○ Medication</li> <li>○ Mobility aids (<b>for example</b>, assistance or service animal)</li> <li>○ Special health instructions (for example, allergies).</li> <li>○ Special communication information (for example, is the person using sign language)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Ask for/Look for:</b></li> <li>○ Special communication information (for example, is the person using sign language)?</li> <li>○ Contact information.</li> <li>○ Signs of stress and/or confusion (<b>for example</b>, the person might say he or she is stressed, look confused, withdraw, or start rubbing their hands together).</li> <li>○ Conditions that people might misinterpret</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Example</b>, someone might mistake Cerebral Palsy for drunkenness).</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Distractions. <b>For example:</b> lower volume of the radio, use flashing lights on vehicles only when necessary.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Explain:</b></li> <li>○ Any written material (including signs) in everyday language.</li> <li>○ Public address system announcements in simple language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Share:</b></li> <li>○ The information you’ve learned about the person with other workers who’ll be assisting the person</li> </ul>



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