

## Our Own Council's Badge

### EXPLORING DISABILITIES

<b>For Whom:</b>	Junior Girl Scouts
<b>Timing:</b>	After completing the Participant Agreement Form found in the forms section, the badges may be earned once and completed in the time required by the girls.
<b>Purpose:</b>	To gain an understanding of the challenge that is faced by people with disabilities as they learn the skills and the demands of developing their potential.
<b>Recognition:</b>	Complete the Participant Evaluation and Feedback Form found in the forms section and turn into council shop when you purchase the badge.
<b>Placement:</b>	May be worn on the badge sash/vest along with other official badges.



#### Requirements:

To earn the badge, girls select eight of the requirements, including at least four of the starred ones.

1. \* Talk to someone whose career involves working with people with disabilities. Find out how they prepared for their profession, where they attended school, and what kind of classes they took. Discover if they are required to be licensed or certified by the state or by another agency, and if they have to continue to take classes or courses.
2. \* Talk to your troop about how it would feel to be a person with special needs and to always be considered different by others at school.
3. \* Plan a meeting or an activity for your troop with each person choosing one disability and pretending that this is a permanent condition. Talk about how each of you felt and what she learned about the disability. Were there some things that were difficult to do? Did you learn that some things that seem so easy can be very hard for people with disabilities?
4. \* Find out if children with disabilities attend your school. Invite the special education teacher to come to your troop meeting to talk to you about her classroom and her students. Does she need special equipment or special materials to teach her class? Find out if there are girls in her class who would like to be Girl Scouts and how you might help them join. Find out if she might be able to use your help in the class.
- 5.\* Plan a visit with a physical, occupational or recreational therapist at a school, medical treatment unit, hospital or rehabilitation center. Find out what kind of adaptive equipment (i.e., splints, braces, mouth sticks, head pointers, switches, eating utensils) they use, have them fit you with the equipment and discover how it would feel to use it regularly.
6. \* Invite a person with a disability to visit your troop. Explore the disability and plan for their

visit by preparing a list of questions you want to ask. Ask them to explain their disability and share their feelings about it. Find out how they learned to do things that you do every day (i.e., getting to school, reading, or talking with a friend on the phone).

7. Find out about the Special Olympics in your community, the people who are responsible for planning them, when and where they are held and how you can help. Take part and share the experience with other Girl Scouts.
8. Read a book about a person with a disability and find out how their life is affected by their “special need.” Write a book report or draw a picture about your favorite part of the book. Share your report or picture with your troop.
9. Locate adaptive devices such as a wheelchair, a walker, or a white cane, etc. that your troop can use for a meeting. Practice using the aid and go out into a public area using it. How did people treat you when you were using the aid? How did it make you feel? Did you find that using the bathroom, the phone, or getting a drink was difficult?
10. Find someone who can communicate using American Sign Language. Learn to sign your name and the Girl Scout Promise.
11. Find someone who can communicate using Braille. Learn to write your name and the Girl Scout Promise using this language.
12. Choose a regular activity, a game, or something that you do all of the time. Plan how you could adapt this activity so that a person with one of the disabilities you have learned about could participate.
13. Find out how people get permits to park in handicapped parking spaces and what kind of fine is charged to those people who park illegally in these specially marked spaces.
14. Rent or check out from your local library a video or a film about people who are disabled. Talk with the girls in your troop about it. What did you learn about how people with disabilities are treated? Were they treated fairly? Were they accepted?
15. Visit a “Sheltered Workshop” or another facility that employs persons with special needs and discover what kind of work is being done by the workers there. Do most of the workers at this kind of center earn wages that they use to pay for their food and shelter? Find out how old the workers are and how long they usually work at the center.