

Disability Disclosure

A Fact Sheet for Youth with Disabilities

Disclosure means telling people that you have a disability, which is personal and may not be something you like to share. It is important for you to carefully think about what information you may need or want to share with whom and for what reason. It is **YOUR CHOICE** to make!

When to Disclose or Not Disclose? You don't have to tell everyone everything about your disability. Some information is best kept private. Therefore, you need to think about, and maybe talk with your family, trusted friends, or advisors to decide what to share, and what to keep private.





Here are a couple of questions to consider and discuss with your inner circle.
(Look at second page to answer these questions)



How does saying that you have a disability make you feel? There is no wrong answer. Only what is right for you!	Would telling your employer, college or others about your disability be helpful or not? In what ways?	Are there times you choose to not tell people about your disability? Why?	Do you know what <i>reasonable accommodations</i> are and which ones help you to be successful?	Have you practiced telling someone else about your disability where you needed accommodations?
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REMEMBER You do not have to tell specific personal information about your disability.

Only what is the most important and helpful is to provide information about:

 How your disability affects your learning and your ability to do your job	 What kind of place, supports, and services you'll need to do your best
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While it is **NOT** required for you to disclose your disability to anyone, disclosure is necessary in certain situations such as some of the ones below:

<input type="checkbox"/> New friends who have invited you to a concert because you need accessible seating close to the stage to see. <input type="checkbox"/> Your track coach because your math tutoring sessions overlap with track practice after school. <input type="checkbox"/> A potential employer in order to receive needed job accommodations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Your benefits counselor if you are applying for Social Security benefits. It is crucial for you to have your personal information (medical and educational records) related to your disability in order and ready to share.	<input type="checkbox"/> If you are college bound, it is a good idea to make an appointment with your college or university's counseling support services (or Disability Support Services) office to find out what accommodations are available to students with and without disabilities.
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Remember, disclosure is **YOUR** decision!
Thinking, discussing, and preparing is essential
when deciding whether to disclose your disability.



Disclosure can be complicated, but it does not have to be. Here are some of the tasks that you can do to help you navigate this process and in turn allow you to be more confident in advocating for yourself on your terms.

Answer the following questions and discuss with your inner circle if needed.

How does saying that you have a disability make you feel?

What are your goals? Would telling your employer, college or others about your disability be helpful? In what ways?

Are there times you choose not to talk about your disability? Why?

Do you know what reasonable accommodations are and which ones help you to be successful?

What questions do you still have about disclosure?

In the event of when you do need to make a disclosure, it is always better to be prepared.

So, **Practice, Practice.** It can help to write it down explaining your disability and supports.

List your accommodations here:	Explain your disability and your needs here:
(Include school, work, and social)	(How would you explain it to someone outside of your inner circle?)

Source

➤ Adapted from [Military Parent Technical Assistance Center](#)