



## Adults with Disabilities

### *Facilitator's Script*



2 hours,  
51 minutes total



10 minutes



## Adults with Disabilities— Creating a Long-Term Vision

### Introduction and Overview

Welcome to our session, “Adults with Disabilities—Creating a Long-Term Vision.” My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I represent the voice of \_\_\_\_\_ (family, early intervention, early care and education). Facilitating with me today are \_\_\_\_\_ (name/voice) and \_\_\_\_\_ (name/voice).

**Facilitators briefly introduce themselves and describe the unique background and experiences they bring to this session.**

Even though we are here because of our work with young children, we can do our best to help infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families when we have a long-term vision—when we look to their future. We want all children to grow up using their full potential and living as contributing citizens of our community. Since babies with disabilities cannot yet share their experiences, providers need to listen to those who can give voice to the experiences and realities of living with a disability.

Today we are going to celebrate the lives of adults with disabilities. People with disabilities make positive contributions to their families, community, and society every day. Often the contributions of those with disabilities are restricted more by the limitations placed on them by the community and society than by any impairment they experience.

People with disabilities are not “special” or unusual. They are people leading their lives, with dreams for their future much like everyone else. Many of these dreams are made more difficult to achieve, not because of a disability, but because the social and physical environment is not as accommodating as it so easily could be.

Fortunately, views of disabilities are changing in our society. People are beginning to recognize that disability is a natural part of human experience.

It doesn't take much to support a person with a disability to achieve his or her dream. It just takes one person who sees **abilities**, rather than disabilities.



**Add participant introductions/openers, as needed.**

**Review the Learning Outcomes and Agenda.**

**See Facilitator's Guide.**



The learning outcomes for this session are:

- ◆ *Participants will recognize the value of learning from individuals with disabilities.*
- ◆ *Participants will realize how important it is to develop long-term visions for infants and toddlers with disabilities.*
- ◆ *Participants will recognize that involving adults with disabilities in all phases of their program has a positive impact on the program, the children, the families, and the service providers.*
- ◆ *Participants will discuss how they will take actions to involve adults with disabilities in their programs.*

## Agenda

Agree on Ground Rules

Adults with Disabilities

- View DVDs: *Marvin and Jack* and *Ted Polito, Jr.: An American Man*
- Large-Group Discussion

Lecturette: People First Language

Creating Bright Futures

- Small-Group Discussion
- Large-Group Share-Back

Wrap-Up

- View DVD: *I Wanna Be* and More (NICHCY PSAs)

Reflections/Continuous Improvement



5–10 minutes



60 minutes total



30 minutes

## Agree on Ground Rules

See Facilitator's Guide.

Chart and post ground rules.

## Adults with Disabilities

### View DVDs: *Marvin and Jack* and *Ted Polito, Jr.: An American Man*

The DVDs that you are about to see were developed by the Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program. You will meet three men: Marvin, Jack, and Ted. They remind all of us who work with young children that people with disabilities are capable, contributing members of their families and communities. The vision of people with disabilities as capable human beings enhances the future of young children with disabilities and supports the notion of inclusion of infants and toddlers with disabilities.



**Handout #2: Acknowledgements: *Marvin and Jack* and *Ted Polito, Jr.: An American Man***

**Handout #3: Guided Viewing: *Marvin and Jack* and *Ted Polito, Jr.: An American Man***

As you watch the DVDs, take notes on your handout on the following questions:

- ♦ *What are some of Marvin, Jack, or Ted's most notable childhood experiences?*
- ♦ *What key messages did Marvin, Jack, and Ted share with us?*
- ♦ *How can you relate these messages to your work with children and families?*

First we'll watch *Marvin and Jack*. It's 16 minutes long. Then we'll watch *Ted Polito, Jr.: An American Man*. It's 8 minutes long.



**Start DVD: *Marvin and Jack* (16 minutes);  
*Ted Polito, Jr.: An American Man* (8 minutes)**



*30 minutes*

## Large-Group Discussion



**Let people share their reactions, making no judgement as they share.**



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*What are some of Marvin, Jack, or Ted's most notable childhood experiences?*

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**Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:**

- ◆ *Wanting to do what other kids were doing—being like anyone else (Marvin, Jack, and Ted)*
- ◆ *Given a positive “can do” message by their families (Marvin, Jack, and Ted)*
- ◆ *Needed to be challenged like other kids (Jack)*
- ◆ *Having choices and making decisions for their own lives (Jack)*



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*What key messages did Marvin, Jack, and Ted share with us?*

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**Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:**

- ◆ *People with disabilities have the same wants and needs as everyone else.*
- ◆ *Life can be joyful for people with disabilities.*
- ◆ *People with disabilities have many ABILITIES.*
- ◆ *Don't give up hope.*



*How can you relate these messages to your work with children and families?*



**Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:**

- ◆ *Service providers and families need to hold positive visions for all infants and toddlers.*
- ◆ *Talk with families about their dreams, supporting their child's strengths, enjoying their kids.*
- ◆ *Encourage young children to experience a full range of experiences, so they can find their interests and abilities as they grow.*
- ◆ *People with disabilities are important role models, providing positive glimpses into the future for children and families.*



*15 minutes*

## **Lecturette: People First Language**

Now, let's discuss People First Language. There is an old Chinese proverb: "The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right names." People First Language means putting the person first and the disability, or any other characteristic, second. People First Language means describing what a person has, not what a person is. For example, are you the "bald man"? Or are you the man with no hair? You're a man first. The fact that you have no hair comes second and does not define you.

Are you cancerous or do you have cancer? Are you myopic or do you wear glasses? Are you freckled or do you have freckles? Are you disabled or do you have a disability? (For more information, see [www.disabilityisnatural.com/peoplefirstlanguage.htm](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com/peoplefirstlanguage.htm).)



#### Handout #4: People First Language

Review the handout and share your reactions with the person next to you. You have 5 minutes.



*Did any insights come up in your discussions?*



Allow a few minutes for examples.



**55 minutes total**

## Creating Bright Futures

Let's take the ideas that we just discussed one step further. In the following activity you will consider why and how you would include adults with disabilities in your programs and communities. You will think through your program's priorities, needs, concerns, and potential resources for including adults with disabilities to support your inclusion efforts of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.





40 minutes



## Small-Group Discussion

### Handout #5: "Creating Bright Futures"

Let's look at the handout, "Creating Bright Futures." We will break into small groups to identify benefits, challenges, strategies, and actions. Be prepared to share some of the key points of your discussions with the full group. We will come back together in 35 minutes.



15 minutes



## Large-Group Share-Back

Take 2–3 minutes per question for share-back. Solicit as many ideas as quickly as possible in the limited time available.



*What are the benefits of including adults with disabilities?*



**Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:**

*Listen for any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:*

- ◆ *Persons with disabilities bring the voice and perspective of having a disability to others.*
- ◆ *They are able to advise boards and groups on specific ways in which children and adults with disabilities can be supported.*
- ◆ *Adults with disabilities provide role models for young children with disabilities as they grow and learn.*



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*What are the challenges you anticipate when including adults with disabilities in your program?*

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**Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:**

- ◆ *Creating an accessible environment and removing existing barriers*
- ◆ *Need for adaptations and accommodations*
- ◆ *Staff attitudes*



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*What ideas or strategies can you generate to include adults with disabilities in your program?*

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**Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:**

- ◆ *Orientation training for staff and families*
- ◆ *Having a program vision and commitment to ongoing inclusion of persons with disabilities in your program*



*What actions might you take as a result of this session?*



**Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:**

- ◆ *Revisit your vision for inclusion.*
- ◆ *Explore new possibilities.*
- ◆ *Expand partnerships to agencies that work with adults with disabilities.*
- ◆ *Look to staff who can be resources for inclusion.*



*11 minutes*

## Wrap-Up

Today, we have heard about the lives of several adults with disabilities—their dreams, hopes, and challenges. Listening to the voices of adults with disabilities gives us a glimpse into the futures of the children we serve and helps us support their abilities rather than focus primarily on disabilities.

You also began to think about how you can involve adults with disabilities in your programs for infants and toddlers and their families. We hope you will follow through on them, and that soon adults with disabilities will be part of your early care and education communities.



The key points we hope you take from this session are:

- ◆ *Views of disability are changing in our society. People are recognizing that disability is a natural part of human experience and to understand that impairment does not necessarily imply a disability or a handicap.*
- ◆ *While in the past disability was seen only as a medical issue, it is increasingly seen as a civil rights issue as well. We have come to appreciate that every child has the right to a childhood, and every family has the right to share that childhood within the context of a normal family life. A disability should not require that the child and family live in a “separate world” away from the everyday routines and places that others enjoy.*
- ◆ *Infants and toddlers with disabilities have a future, and that makes the work that families and providers do when they are young even more important!*

Those providing services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families have a responsibility to hold positive attitudes about the futures of infants and toddlers with disabilities and to provide positive role models for all children and families they serve. Programs should strive to find ways for adults with disabilities to be meaningfully involved at all levels.

Now let’s take a minute to hear from some children about their ideas about their futures.



**Handout #2: Acknowledgements: *I Wanna Be and More***

**Start DVD: *I Wanna Be and More* (1 minute)**



Allow 2–3 minutes for the group members to share their reactions to the DVD. Encourage participants to focus on the fact that all of the children in the DVD had the same dreams and that providers need to encourage everyone's dream.

We would like to thank the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) for their generous contribution of these public service announcements (PSAs) for and about people with disabilities. If you would like to contact NICHCY, please call 1-800-695-0285 or visit their website at [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org).



*Are there any questions or comments about the training today?*



**Review Learning Outcomes.**

**See Facilitator's Guide.**



*10 minutes*

## Reflections/Continuous Improvement

We now would like to give you an opportunity to think about how this session today applies to your work situation. Please list 2–3 strategies you can start to use next week.

We'd like to hear about what worked for you in this session, and what could be done to improve it.



Divide a piece of chart paper into 2 columns, as shown.  
Entitle 1 column **“What worked?”** and the other column **“Suggestions for improvement.”**

What worked?	Suggestions for improvement

Chart participants’ comments without rebuttal or discussion.  
Facilitators can act on these suggestions, as appropriate, in future training sessions.



*What worked for you today?*

*What suggestions for improvement do you have?*

Thank you for your participation today.

## End training session