



TIPS FOR PARENTS HOW TO DISCUSS DISABILITY

We understand that sometimes there's a hesitance to discuss disability for fear of "saying the wrong thing".

Here are a few ways the STEPtember team discuss disability, that might help you.

"It's so important that we have these conversations with kids at such a young age. There is a learned fear around what you can and cannot say, which comes a lot later in life.

When you're having these conversations at that earlier stage, it's all curiosity."

- Adrian, Leon's Dad

- **Educate kids on the 'Social Model of Disability'**

Disability isn't just about someone's body or mind working differently. It's about how society is set up and whether it allows everyone to participate equally.

Example:

Imagine if every building had ramps and elevators for people in wheelchairs. That would mean that being in a wheelchair wouldn't stop you from going anywhere because our environment was designed with everyone in mind.

The following short video is an oldie but a goodie and uses animation to show how anyone can be disabled in their environment, no matter what their ability is:

[Social Model Animation Video](#)

- **Focus on what people with disabilities can do, rather than what they can't**

Share stories or examples of individuals with disabilities who have achieved great things. A few examples you can look up together are:

Hannah Diviney

Writer, Disability Advocate, Editor in Chief at Missing perspectives

Disability: Cerebral palsy

Achievements: At 23-years-old, she is a published writer, prolific disability advocate, actor, Editor in Chief at *Missing Perspectives*, was recently awarded Marie Claire's 'Voice of Now'. Hannah's advocacy has made waves around the world and even reached the likes of Beyonce and Lizzo who changed offensive lyrics in their chart topping songs after Hannah brought attention to them. Hannah's book 'I'll Let Myself In' is a defiant coming of age story about a young woman coming to terms with all that she is, the good, the bad and the ugly.

Dylan Alcott

Paralympic Gold Medallist, Athlete and former Australian of the Year

Disability: Paraplegia

Achievements: Dylan Alcott is a world-renowned Australian wheelchair tennis player and basketball player. He has won multiple Grand Slam titles, including the Australian Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open. Dylan is also a motivational speaker, author, and founder of the Dylan Alcott Foundation, which aims to help young Australians with disabilities achieve their dreams, as well as a popular radio host and TV personality, using his platform to advocate for disability rights and inclusion.

Stephen Hawking

Theoretical Physicist

Disability: Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)

Achievements: Despite being diagnosed with ALS at the age of 21 and given only a few years to live, Stephen Hawking became one of the most renowned theoretical physicists. He made groundbreaking contributions to cosmology, general relativity, and quantum gravity, especially in the context of black holes. His book 'A Brief History of Time' became an international bestseller and made complex scientific concepts accessible to the general public.

Thank you for your support and participation in making STEP4Schools Day a success!