

Communicating with persons with Intellectual Disability

Tips to improve your communication with persons with intellectual disabilities:

Use short sentences

Use repetition

Break instructions down

Use concrete language

Use gestures or pictures

Allow more time

To improve diagnosis and health care, LISTEN to what I have to say.

Use your Voice/Intonation to express meaning. Also use Gestures like pointing and body language.

The nurse gave me written information about my medication. It had pictures and was easy to understand.

For more information, contact Inclusion Ghana:

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Intellectual Disability is NOT

IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO CONFUSE AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS OR OTHER ILLNESSES, ALTHOUGH PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES MAY ALSO HAVE OTHER ILLNESSES OR A PHYSICAL DISABILITY. AN ID IS NOT:



A MENTAL ILLNESS: unlike an ID, a mental illness can come and go, and affects a person's perception and mood. Examples of mental illnesses are depression and schizophrenia.

ANY INTELLECTUAL IMPAIRMENT ACQUIRED AS AN ADULT: the definition of an ID is that it develops before the individual turns 18 years of age.

DEMENTIA: unlike an intellectual disability, dementia is a loss of short-term memory generally associated with old age



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Possible signs of Intellectual Disability

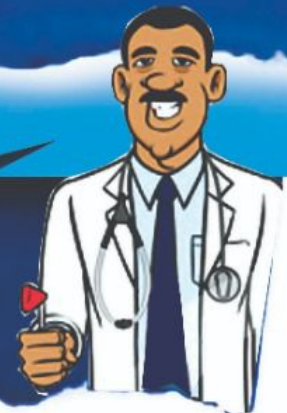
"My baby is slow to crawl, unlike my previous children"



"My baby seems unresponsive to the games I play and it is hard to get a reaction from her"



"The child I treated today had a lot of trouble talking to me and following the instructions I gave him"



Alarm Bells

- Late sitting, crawling, standing, walking and talking
- Difficulty saying what they want or understanding what is said
- Difficulties understanding social rules and customs, waiting their turn
- Child consistently behaving much younger than his/her actual age
- Difficulty learning new information even when give plenty of chances
- Difficulty learning new skills even after many chances to practice.
- Difficulty remembering things
- No real fear of danger, will run into busy road
- Shows little or no interest in the world around them
- Behaviour problems, intolerance and tantrums

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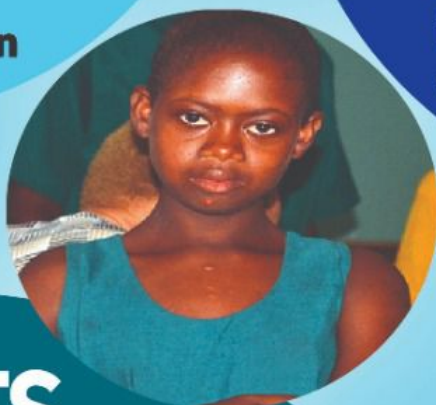
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The Rights of Persons with Intellectual Disability

IN GHANA

Many persons with intellectual disability (ID) are denied their human rights. They face stigma and discrimination



4 FACTS about ID

- ID is **NOT** contagious
- It is not caused by juju or witchcraft
- Anyone can have a child with ID
- Persons with ID deserve love and support

RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH ID?

Persons with ID have right to:

- Be free from abuse and discrimination
- Free & affordable quality health care
- Education
- Live a fulfilling life
- Be loved and supported

What can I do?

- Educate yourself about ID
- Treat persons with ID fairly
- Show love and respect to Persons with ID and families

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The Causes of Intellectual Disability

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY IS **NOT** CONTAGIOUS

Below is a list of the known causes of intellectual disabilities

At Risk of Developing Intellectual Disabilities

Genetics

E.g. abnormalities in genes

Pregnancy

E.g. use of alcohol , illness during pregnancy

Difficulties at birth

E.g. premature birth , deprivation of oxygen

**Health/Environmental
Problems**

*E.g. childhood diseases, injuries,
lead exposures*

Severe Poverty and Deprivation

Poor nutrition

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What is an Intellectual Disability?

It is a disability characterised by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and in adaptive behaviour, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of 18. Persons with intellectual disabilities (ID) have limitations in 2 or more of the following adaptive skills:



Learning

Self Direction

Work Tasks

Communication

Personal Care

Social Skills

This means a baby with ID may learn to crawl or talk later than other children.

A child or adult with ID may have difficulty talking, reading, writing or taking care of themselves.

A person can have a mild, moderate or severe ID.

Just like everyone else in the community, each person with an intellectual disability is different.

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WHO is at risk of Intellectual Disability?

DOWN SYNDROME

- i. Caused by abnormal gene
- ii. Common across all cultures
- iii. Very likely to have ID



Physically, a person with down syndrome may have eyes that slant upwards and ears that fold over a little at the top

AUTISM

- i. Develops during first three years of life
- ii. Have difficulties with social interaction and communication
- iii. Affects each child differently
- iv. Unusual behaviours ranging from mild to severe
- v. Not all children with autism have ID



Each person with autism is very different in their own unique way just the same as persons without autism

CEREBRAL PALSY (CP)

- i. Impairment of motor function
- ii. Can occur before, during and immediately after birth
- iii. Occurs in early stages of brain development
- iv. Many have eating and drinking difficulties
- v. Not all children with CP have ID



Every case of cerebral palsy is unique to the individual. One person may have total paralysis and require constant care, while another with partial paralysis might have slight movement

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