

## **Birth defects #2**

(Each group will have 5 minutes to experience their activity;  
5-10 minutes per group for classroom discussion)

National FACS Standard N 15.4.2

### **Objectives:**

Student will:

- Learn about the difficulties associated with birth defects
- Experience what it is like to live with disabilities caused by birth defects
- Understand disabilities learn to accept the differences

### **Materials:**

- 1-2 pairs of old sunglasses with Aloe Vera or another gel-like substance coated on the outside of the lenses
- Newspaper or other reading material with smaller print
- Earplugs
- Bandana or scarf (used as a blindfold)
- Scenario card (example provided)
- Difficult math problem (example provided)

### **Instructions:**

Divide the class into five groups. Each group will have around 5 minutes to “experience” a different birth defect. One student per group (or two depending on the amount of certain materials) will be the person experiencing the birth defect while the other students will observe their behaviors, actions and attitude. Do not tell the groups what their disability is, have them observe and come up with ideas of what they think they may be representing. Each group should be prepared to discuss their activity with the class as a whole. Explain to the blindfolded group the importance of not allowing students to run into a wall or objects around the room.

**Group 1: Visual Impairment**- Give this group the 1-2 pairs of sunglasses coated with gel and the reading material you have selected. Have 1 or 2 students put on the glasses and read the material provided. Other students will observe.

*Questions for large group discussion:* What disability do you think you represented? Were you able to comprehend what you read, or were you more focused on the reading the words rather than content?

**Group 2: Hearing loss**- This group will be given the earplugs. Have one student put in the ear plugs while the other students have a conversation with the entire group.

*Questions for large group discussion:* What disability do you think you represented? Were you able to communicate with the other members of your group? Was it frustrating not being able to hear everything that was said? Did the group members find themselves repeating themselves or talking more loudly so the student could comprehend what was said? Did the group members get frustrated?



**Group 3: Blindness**- Give this group the blindfold. Blindfold one person and move them to another area of the room. The other members of the group will try to direct them back to their seat without having them run into the different objects around the room.

*Questions for large group discussion:* What disability do you think you represented? Did you have a difficult time communicating with your group? Group members, did you find it difficult to pick the right or proper language to get the person back to their seat? What did you notice about the room? Were the other students distracting? Was it hard to hear over the other voices and discussions around the room?

**Group 4: Loss of Speech**- Give this group the scenario card. Without the use of words, one student will try to explain the situation on the card, while the other students try to figure out what they are trying to communicate.

### **Scenario Example:**

Without the use of words, explain that you want to go to McDonalds and you would like a Big Mac, fries and a diet cherry coke.

*Questions for large group discussion:* What disability do you think you represented? What did you find frustrating about this? Were you able to figure it out? How?

**Group 5: Learning Disability**- Give this group the math problem. Without the help of the other students, one student will have to try and solve the math problem.

### **Math Problem Example:**

$$100^{(x^2-6x+1)} + 5 = 10$$

*Questions for large group discussion:* What disability do you think you represented? What did you find frustrating about this? Group members, what did you observe as they tried to solve the problem?

After each group has had enough time to complete the activity (about 5 minutes) bring the class back together. Go around to each group and have them explain their activity, what they felt and/or observed and their feelings about what it would be like to live like that every day. Discussion questions are listed for each group that may be asked during this time to encourage discussion.

*Overall Discussion Questions:* How would you feel if you had to live like this every day? Would it be frustrating? Would you want to give up? What were the group members saying as you were struggling with your particular activity? How did that make you feel?