

# Embracing Disability: Practical Advice for Accessible Library Programming

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# Agenda

- What is CELA?
- What is disability?
- Common barriers
- Promotion
- Outreach
- Physical spaces
- In-person programs
- Online programs
- Program evaluation
- Resources to learn more

# What is CELA?

- Free library service offered through Canadian public libraries
- Serves people with print disabilities across Canada
- Provides materials in accessible formats: braille, e-text, audio



# What is disability?

- Interaction between person and personal and environmental factors
  - Negative attitudes
  - Inaccessible physical spaces
  - Limited social support
  - Inaccessible communication
  - Etc.



# Barriers encountered by people with disabilities

- Types of barriers include:
  - Physical
  - Attitudinal
  - Communication
  - Programmatic



# Accessible promotions

If you build it, they will come...but  
only if they know about it!

# Promote accessibility

## Promote accessibility features:

- Contact information is a must but is only a start
- Examples:
  - “Fidgets and headphones are available”
  - “Captions will be turned on during the movie”

# Outreach

- Always talk about accessibility when you do outreach
- Contact disability organizations



# Accessible physical spaces

## Choosing a location:

- Convenient location
- Proximity to accessible washrooms
- Lighting and sound
- Ramp access

# Furniture and layout

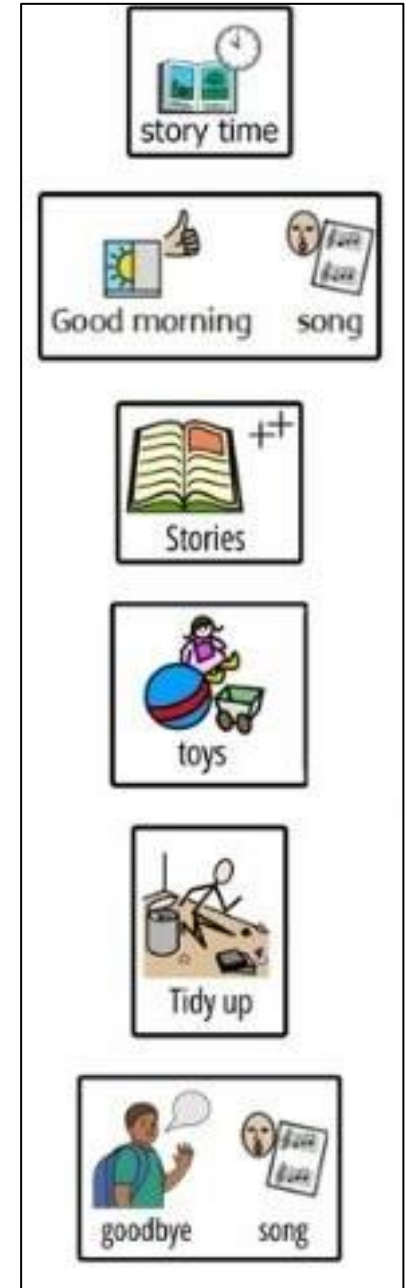
- Maneuverability
- Seating
- Adjustable tables



# Accessible programs

## General tips:

- Flexibility is key!
- Build in choice
- Outline the schedule at the beginning
  - Give updates on timing
  - Visual schedules



# Crafts and activities

- Engage multiple senses!
- Avoid paper-only crafts
- Use lots of different objects, textures, etc.
- Consider dexterity and vision—Offer bigger materials



# Crafts and activities instructions

## Instructions

- One step at a time
- Be specific and descriptive
- Demonstrate visually
- Written instructions with diagrams

# Storytime

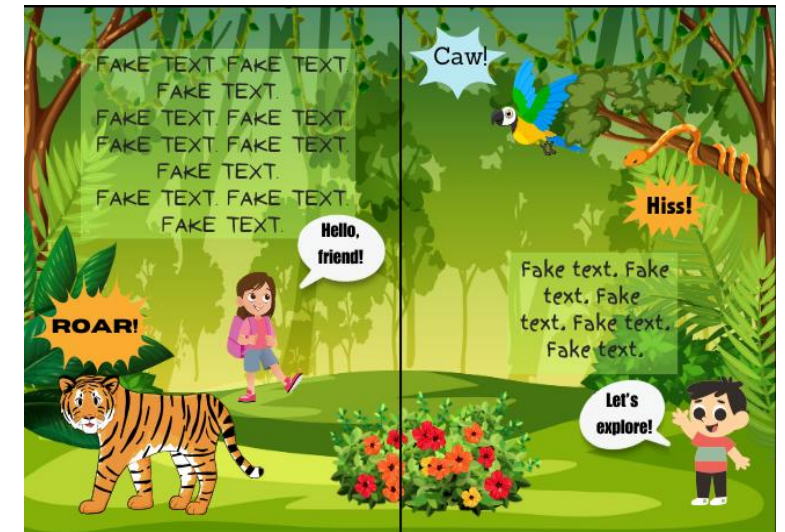
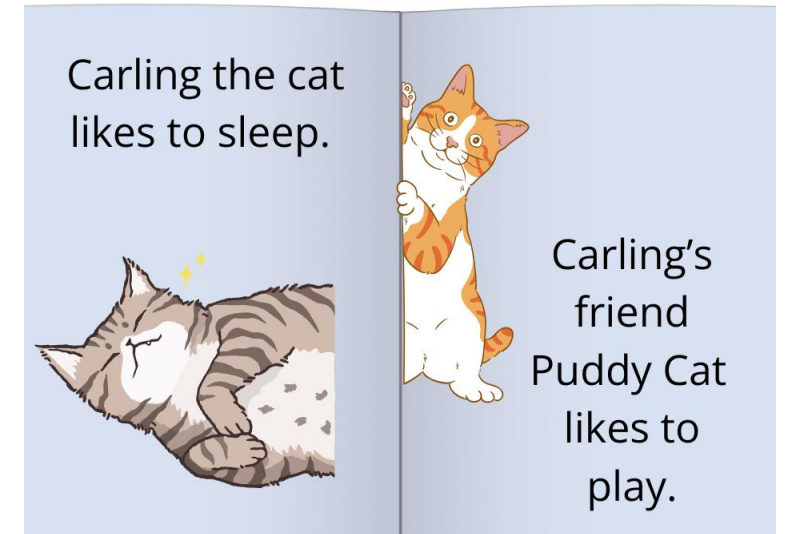
- Offer fidget toys and headphones
- Not everyone listens by sitting still
- Make it interactive



# Storytime story choice

## Choosing a story:

- Illustrations
  - Bold colours, high contrast, minimalist background
- Shorter stories
- Intersperse with songs and rhymes



# Book clubs

- Choose books available in multiple formats
- Consider reading level of book
- ASL interpretation and FM application systems
- Provide discussion topics/questions in advance
- Don't require speaking participation

# Author talks and lectures

- Use a microphone
- Book ASL interpretation early
- Offer reserved seating
- Record and/or simulcast
- Do your presenters need accommodations?

# Online programming: Getting started

Start the session by mentioning:

- Location of key features and keyboard shortcuts
  - Mute/unmute, raise/lower hand, open/close chat
- Accessibility offerings
  - Captions, describing visuals, etc.
- Reminder to mute when not speaking

# Accessible online programming

- Be flexible with interactive components
- Presenters and facilitators should be visible
  - But do not require participants to have their cameras on

# Program evaluation

- Survey delivered after the program
- Give option of either digital or print
- Keep it short
  - 5-7 questions
  - Combination of multiple choice and open-ended
  - Use simple, straight-forward language

# Accessible online surveys

- Include description at the beginning with number of questions
- Images should be accompanied by text
- Accessible font, colour contrast, etc.



# CELA Resources

- CELA website ([For Libraries](#) and [Help](#) pages)
  - [Resources supporting kids and teens with disabilities](#)
  - [Accessible crafts and activities resource guide \(PDF\)](#)
  - [Child and Teen Library Accessibility Interest Group \(email listserv—English only\)](#)
  - [Community outreach toolkit](#)
  - [Accessible summer reading clubs webinar](#)

# Other Resources

- [Accessible Libraries \(PLARC\)](#)
  - [Social media and marketing](#)
- [Access Ability: A practical guide on accessible graphic design \(PDF\)](#)
- [WebAIM typefaces and fonts](#)

# Contact information

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