

An Outreach Program  
of the  
Amputee Coalition of America  
National Limb Loss Information Center

900 E. Hill Avenue, Suite 285  
Knoxville, TN 37915-2568  
888/267-5669

[www.amputee-coalition.org](http://www.amputee-coalition.org)

©2002 Amputee Coalition of America



Welcome to LLEAP, the Limb Loss Education & Awareness Program. This curriculum was created for able-bodied students in the third, fourth, and fifth grades.

LLEAP addresses a key problem: the social stigma of children with disabilities, particularly those with a limb difference. The curriculum is based upon a simple premise: Children can be taught to recognize and appreciate differences in themselves and others. Building upon this appreciation for differences, children will begin to ask questions and develop a personal awareness of their attitudes toward differences. These experiences, hopefully, will encourage children to explore disability issues and their role in promoting acceptance of other people.

Through the sequence of multisensory activities in LLEAP, children will:

- Realize that individuals are more alike than different
- Identify their own strengths and attributes
- Develop an appreciation for the strengths and accomplishments of other people
- Explore the nature of the helping relationship
- Become aware of how limb loss or limb differences might affect daily activities
- Appreciate the strengths and accomplishments of individuals with limb loss or limb differences
- Understand the types, functions, and limitations of prostheses

The LLEAP package includes:

- A spiral-bound manual
- A full-color poster for classroom display
- Fun frog stuff to integrate Llenny the LLEAP frog into the curriculum
- Bookmarks
- Stickers

I encourage you to try these activities with your students; then let me know what you think by completing the included curriculum evaluation form. Please contact me if you need any additional information.

Best regards,  
Patricia J. Isenberg, MS  
Chief Operating Officer  
Amputee Coalition of America  
1-888/267-5669, ext. 8104  
[pisenberg@amputee-coalition.org](mailto:pisenberg@amputee-coalition.org)

# Lessons & Activities by Grade Level

ACTIVITY	Third grade	Fourth grade	Fifth grade	Sixth grade
Special potatoes	X	X	X	
Silhouettes	X	X	X	X
Signs r us	X	X	X	
Links	X	X	X	
Helping hands	X	X	X	X
What if?	X	X		
Questions	X	X	X	X
Myths & facts	X	X	X	X
Stories about limb loss	X	X	X	X
Kids with limb loss	X	X		
Kids with limb loss 2	X	X	X	X
Experiencing limb loss	X	X	X	X
Star search		X	X	X
Word find	X	X	X	X
Prosthetist visits	X	X	X	X
Child visits	X	X	X	X
Write a story	X	X	X	X
Feelings about limb loss	X	X	X	X
Feelings about limb loss 2	X	X	X	X

# Lessons & Activities by Length, Type

ACTIVITY	0-15 minutes	15-30 minutes	30-45 minutes	Large group	Small group	Individual
Special potatoes		X	X	X	X	
Silhouettes			X	X	X	
Signs for us			X	X	X	
Links			X	X	X	
Helping hands	X			X	X	
What if?		X		X	X	
Questions		X		X	X	
Myths & facts		X		X	X	
Stories about limb loss			X	X	X	X
Kids with limb loss		X	X	X	X	X
Kids with limb loss 2		X	X	X	X	X
Experiencing limb loss		X	X	X	X	
Star search			X	X	X	X
Word find	X			X	X	X
Prosthetist visits			X	X		
Child visits			X	X		
Write a story			X	X	X	X
Feelings about limb loss			X	X	X	
Feelings about limb loss 2			X	X	X	

# Lessons & Activities by Objective

ACTIVITY	More alike than different	Identify own strengths	Appreciate strengths, differences	Helping others	Aware of limb loss	Appreciate strengths of individuals with limb loss	Understand prostheses
Special potatoes	X		X				
Silhouettes	X	X	X				
Signs r us	X	X	X				
Links				X			
Helping hands			X	X	X		
What if?			X			X	
Questions			X		X		
Myths & facts	X						
Stories about limb loss			X		X		X
Kids with limb loss	X		X		X	X	X
Kids with limb loss 2	X		X		X	X	X
Experiencing limb loss						X	X
Star search			X		X	X	X
Word find					X		
Prosthetist visits					X	X	X
Child visits	X				X	X	X
Write a story					X	X	X
Feelings about limb loss					X	X	
Feelings about limb loss 2					X	X	

# Lessons & Activities by Subject Area

ACTIVITY	Language arts	Science	Health	Art	Games	Movement
Special potatoes	X	X	X			
Silhouettes	X		X	X		
Signs r us	X		X	X		
Links	X	X				X
Helping hands	X		X	X		
What if?	X		X	X		
Questions	X		X			
Myths & facts	X					X
Stories about limb loss	X					
Kids with limb loss	X					
Kids with limb loss 2	X					
Experiencing limb loss	X			X		
Star search	X			X		
Word find	X				X	
Prosthetist visits	X	X	X			
Child visits	X		X	X		
Write a story	X		X	X		
Feelings about limb loss	X			X		
Feelings about limb loss 2	X			X		

# Special Potatoes

## Curriculum area(s):

- Language arts
- Health
- Science
- Art

## Materials:

- Potatoes (one for each child); oranges, bananas, and pears will also work

## Objectives:

- Recognize that individuals are similar, yet unique

## Vocabulary:

- Special
- Alike
- Different

## Activity:

- With potatoes displayed in a pile, talk about how the potatoes are all alike. Do they think that each of these potatoes is also different from the others? How might they be different?
- Have each student select one potato and spend five minutes getting to know his or her potato. What is its shape, size? Are there markings that make this potato special?
- Gather all the potatoes into a single pile (or two piles for a large group).
- Have students look through the pile until they find their special potato. Ask for volunteers to describe how they “knew” their own potato.
- Discuss how this activity relates to people. In what ways are people alike, yet different? How are you like your brothers, sisters, and classmates? How are you different? What would life be like if we were all the same?
- Bake the potatoes for a snack, or boil them to make potato salad. Or, halve the potatoes and carve designs into them; use to stamp with tempera or acrylic paint on paper for an art project called “Special Potatoes.”

# Silhouettes

**Curriculum area(s):**

- Art
- Health
- Language arts

**Materials:**

- Dark construction paper
- Chalk
- Tape
- Scissors
- Source of light (slide projector, lamp, etc.)
- Self-adhesive labels (10 per student)

**Objectives:**

- Recognize and appreciate individual differences
- Identify own strengths, attributes

**Vocabulary:**

- Silhouette
- Profile
- Quality

**Activity:**

- Tape dark paper to a wall and trace an outline of each student, using a light source to create a silhouette.
- Have each student determine 10 words or qualities that best describe him or her and write each on a separate label.
- Have the students affix the 10 labels to their own silhouette.
- Discuss the similarities and differences among students. What did you learn about your classmates? Why is it important to find your own unique qualities? Why is it hard to say good things about yourself?
- Display the silhouettes.
- Optional: If time or light sources are limited, ask students to draw their own profiles, and proceed as above.

# Signs R Us

## **Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts
- Art
- Health

## **Materials:**

- Poster board, various sizes and colors
- Permanent markers
- Scissors
- Old magazines

## **Objectives:**

- Recognition of positive aspects of self, others
- Enhance self-esteem
- Promote and celebrate accomplishments and differences

## **Vocabulary:**

- Characteristics

## **Activity:**

- Two days before the activity, ask students to begin noticing signs and billboards and to jot down information about them: What are the signs? What are they advertising? What are their characteristics (colors, size, graphics used, message, number of words)? What about the sign grabs your attention?
- Talk about the signs and billboards students saw and the characteristics they noted. List some common features of the signs for reference as the students begin to develop their signs (for example, one feature may be that effective signs have no more than 15 words, etc.)
- Ask students to list or sketch a sign that advertises them to their peers. What words will they use? What colors, graphics?
- Have students create their sign.
- Display each sign as the student who created it explains why the sign is a good “ad” for him or her. Applaud each student’s project.
- Expand the activity by talking about how the signs and the students are alike and different.
- Optional: Make a sign representing the classroom, students, and teacher.

# Links

**Curriculum area(s):**

- Physical education
- Language arts
- Science

**Materials:**

- None

**Objectives:**

- Understand the concept of interdependence

**Vocabulary:**

- Interdependence
- Links

**Activity:**

- Write “Interdependence” on the board. Ask students to guess the meaning of the word.
- Arrange students in two concentric circles, with inner circle students facing those in the outer circle.
- Have each student link (hold hands with) two other students, one from their circle and one from the other circle. Students must form one large link.
- Give instructions for movement such as: move the link to the door; move the link to the window; move the link so that John is facing the water fountain or sink.
- When the laughter subsides and while hands are still linked, talk about what had to be done for each movement to be successful. Which movements were easier? Which were more challenging? Would the link improve with practice?
- Summarize by talking about links in real life and the importance of how we are all linked together. Examples include: How did you come to school this morning? Who drove the car or bus? Who puts fuel in the vehicle? Where does the fuel come from?

# Helping Hands

**Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts
- Art

**Materials:**

- Construction paper, various colors
- Markers
- Scissors

**Objectives:**

- Understand the role of a helper
- Recognize when help is needed
- Practice offering help appropriately

**Vocabulary:**

- Helper

**Activity:**

- Discuss helping using the following questions: Have you ever needed help? How do you let someone know that you need help? Are there people who want help but do not ask for it? How do you know they need help? What if someone tries to help you when you do not need help? How does that make you feel? How should you offer to help? How do you know when you have given enough help?
- Have each student trace around his or her hand and cut out the shape.
- Have each student write, "Helping is..." inside the hand and complete the sentence.
- Ask students to share their ideas about helping.
- Role play positive and negative ways of helping one another. In the first role play, a person is struggling with taking off a coat, but does not ask for help. In the second role play, someone drops several papers on the floor and looks around for help. In the third role play, someone begins helping simply because the person is wearing a bandage on his or her hand.
- Optional: Make a bulletin board with the hands.

# What If?

## Curriculum area(s):

- Language arts
- Health
- Science

## Materials:

- Drawing paper
- Writing paper

## Objectives:

- Consider the impact of differences
- Develop empathy for others who are different

## Vocabulary:

- Changes
- Differences

## Activity:

- Begin activity by asking students to think about their own bodies: What color is your hair, skin? Are each of your hands the same size?
- Now ask the students to write down their responses and/or draw pictures to represent the following:
  - What if your head were twice as large?
  - What if your hair were purple?
  - If you could add another body part, what would it be?
  - If you could make a body part better, what would you do?
  - If you could make a new body out of any materials, what would you use and why?
- Discuss how they might change as people with these differences.
- Ask students to name their favorite color, food, activity.
- Now ask students to respond to “what ifs” related to differences: What if you could no longer see? What if you had only one hand? What if you had no legs?
- Again, discuss by asking how they would change and how they would remain the same as people with these differences. Would their favorite food change? Would their favorite color change? What about their favorite activity?

# Questions

## **Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts
- Health

## **Materials:**

- List of questions below

## **Objectives:**

- Examine beliefs about people with disabilities
- Discuss and understand the needs of people with disabilities
- Empathy for people with disabilities

## **Vocabulary:**

- Disability
- Frustrated

## **Activity:**

- Use questions below to stimulate discussion at any point in this curriculum.
- Use questions to prepare for the visit by an amputee.
- Use questions to process information provided by the amputee.

## **Questions:**

- How would you feel if you could not leave your house because of limb loss?
- If someone in your family suffered limb loss, what changes would have to be made in your home?
- Have you ever tried getting dressed with just one hand? How would it feel?
- Do students in our school make fun of kids who are different? How does that make them feel? How does it make you feel when you see it happen?
- When you think of people with limb loss, do you think of them as getting help from others or giving help to others?
- Why do people feel uncomfortable around someone with limb loss? Do you?
- Why might someone with limb loss get angry at times? Would you?
- Do you think people with limb loss get frustrated over the same things you do?

# Myths and Facts

## Curriculum area(s):

- Language arts

## Materials:

- List of myths and facts

## Objectives:

- Dispel myths and misunderstandings about people with limb loss
- Understand that people are more alike than different

## Vocabulary:

- Myth
- Fact
- Adapt
- Assistive device

## Activity:

- Discuss what a myth is.
- Read each myth and ask students to raise their hands if they believe that myth.
- Optional: Place a sign that reads “true” at one end of the classroom and one that reads “false” at the other end of the classroom. Ask students to vote by physically moving to the sign that indicates their answer.
- Read and discuss the facts related to that myth.
- Discuss why myths can be a problem.

**Myth:** People with limb loss live very differently from people without limb loss.

**Fact:** People with limb loss go to school, get married, work, have families, buy groceries, get angry, laugh, cry, plan, and dream like everyone else.

**Myth:** People with limb loss are brave.

**Fact:** Adjusting to limb loss means learning new ways of doing things. Just because you have lost a limb doesn't mean you become a super person.

**Myth:** People who use wheelchairs are sick most of the time.

**Fact:** A person may use a wheelchair for a lot of reasons. The reasons may have nothing to do with being sick. Many people with limb loss are not sick.

**Myth:** Wheelchair use is confining. Users of wheelchairs are wheelchair bound.

**Fact:** A wheelchair, like a bicycle, is a personal assistive device. It allows a person to get around faster or more easily.

**Myth:** People with limb loss are more comfortable being with their own kind.

**Fact:** Most individuals with limb loss do not seek only friends with limb loss.

**Myth:** There is nothing one person can do to get rid of barriers that people with limb loss face.

**Fact:** Everyone can make a difference.

Discuss ways each student can make a difference.

Source: Myths and Facts list adapted from *Coping with Limb Loss*, 1995

# Stories About Limb Loss

**Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts

**Materials:**

- Alex's Story
- Craig's Story
- Little Brown
- Puppies for Sale

**Objectives:**

- Empathy for people with limb differences
- Appreciate the value of people with limb differences

**Activity:**

- Select one or more stories to read aloud. Or, ask students to read silently.
- Ask students to describe their reactions to and the meaning of each story.

# Alex's Story

My name is Alex. I am almost 11 years old and live in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. I was born with a partial left leg. I have worn a full prosthetic device on my left side since I was 8 months old.

I have always gotten lots of questions about my leg. I guess I always will. My parents have told me that it's okay for people to ask questions. That is my opportunity to erase ignorance. I think teasing comes from people not knowing. If I can educate them even a little bit, maybe they won't tease me or other kids like me. And if they still do, I find other people to hang out with.

My parents have always been positive and supportive. My brother and I are not allowed to say the word "can't." My mom and I always used the explanation for other kids that I wear my leg to help me walk, like she wears glasses to help her see. This was more helpful when I was younger. Now kids understand more and I am able to explain things in my own way better.

I don't hide my leg or show it off; it's just there. About a year ago, I had my doctors remove the cosmetic covering to my leg. It is more noticeable now, but it's also lighter. I made the change after being at camp with other kids like me. I decided that if they were okay with showing just the metal, so am I.

In school, my parents have always been there for me. They have talked to my teachers ahead of time. They ask them to not keep me from doing things in class, to let me make my own adjustments, to not treat me differently.

My parents also stress using positive language. My mom gets mad when hearing someone around me use words like fake, artificial, or my "bad" leg. We always have called it my "helper leg." Positive talk goes a long way, and my mom always stresses that I use positive self-talk too.

I have been skiing since I was 5 years old with the Pennsylvania Center for Adaptive Sports. I started at Jack Frost Ski Resort, and now we have been to Camelback ski area the last couple of years. This year, I did my first Black Diamond hill at Camelback. It was scary until I tried it. Now I can't wait for next season to do more! I also love racing.

I started taking Tai Kwon Do, which I love doing, with my leg and without. I can kick very hard using my crutches for balance. My first tournament is coming up soon.

I am who I am. Mom says that God made me this way for a reason and that she is sure that I have some higher purpose to fulfill. I am not sure about that, but I am having fun. And for a kid, I guess that's all that matters.

# Craig's Story

I grew up with my sister, my mother, and my grandmother. I am 17 years old. In my spare time I enjoy fixing and building computers, as well as programming them. I love building robots. Several friends and I are building a BattleBot for the TV show *BattleBots*. I have been a Boy Scout since I was in kindergarten and have earned the rank of Eagle Scout.

Of all my hobbies and activities, school comes first. I take advanced placement and honors classes, and I am a member of the National Honor Society.

When I was 13 and in the seventh grade, I thought that nothing could happen to me. On the news, I heard about people getting hurt and dying. But that was only on TV, right?

On June 16, 1997, I found out that accidents can happen to anybody. It was a nice summer day. I decided to ride my bike to the local golf course and look for golf balls. I never got there. As I was crossing a busy street, a passing bus blocked my vision of a truck. There was a collision...a pure accident. We just didn't see each other.

I woke up a week and a half later in the hospital. I had many broken bones, a punctured lung, and my right leg was amputated above the knee. At first I didn't know about my leg because it still felt like it was there. This is called phantom limb.

I had several operations on my arm and spent another four weeks in the hospital. I started out with a prosthetic leg a month after leaving the hospital. It took two weeks to figure out how to walk on it. And, it was almost a year before I could run.

It has been almost four years since the accident. I am doing everything I did when I had two legs. I play baseball, football, hockey, and golf. I am on my high school's varsity golf team. I go rock climbing, hiking with the Boy Scouts, and run in races. I even ride a bike as I did before the accident.

To do all this requires a highly active and durable prosthesis. My leg has a strong, flexible foot and a knee that is controlled by a hydraulic cylinder.

Life with limb loss is interesting. By all means, it is neither depressing nor sad. It has its ups and downs, as life always does. Life never gets boring!

# Little Brown, the Happy Beach Dog

I went to the beach the other day to enjoy some beautiful weather.

I settled onto my towel and began to watch the shrimp boats coming in. Just then, a small brown dog came into my view. He was happily running and chasing and nipping and yapping with a pack of four other dogs. It was clear he was the leader of these frisky dogs.

“Little Brown” seemed to be a good name for him. He had a spirit that drew all eyes to him. I noticed his perky ears, wagging tail and how tall he held himself, even though he was the smallest dog in the pack. He approached every towel in his path. He tipped his head as if to say, “I know you’d like to pet me, but I’m far too busy right now.”

When he was a few feet away from me, I noticed this cheerful dog lacked a front paw. I was surprised! He was jumping and running so well, I hadn’t even noticed. The other dogs loved and respected him enough to let him be their leader. The missing limb wasn’t important to them. I guess they didn’t notice his difference anymore.

I kept watching Little Brown, waiting for him to trip or fall. Instead, he took off for the surf and threw himself into the water. His buddies were right behind him. To my surprise, the dog could swim!

The dogs played and swam for a minute or two before bouncing out of the water. For a few moments they roamed the shore. They ignored calls from people who wanted to play with them. Suddenly, Little Brown stopped. He raised his head and approached two kids with a cooler, a beach ball, a beach bag and several shovels and buckets in various shapes and sizes.

Little Brown approached one of the children slowly. He bowed his head, as if to say, “You may pet me.” I was surprised the dog allowed himself to be touched after running away from the rest of us.

The boy, who looked to be about 6 or 7, began to laugh and pet Little Brown. The dog returned the affection with enormous tail wags.

This scene would have been rather ordinary except that the small boy was petting Little Brown with a prosthetic hand.

Of all the people on the beach this dog could have approached, he came near the person who was most like himself. He had bridged a gap with the boy that none of us could have. He made the child feel special, not different. He had shown by example that being different wasn’t a handicap at all.

In that moment, Little Brown reminded me of my favorite Southern saying: You shouldn’t judge a book by its cover. Although someone is a little different, they can still contribute, be accepted, be respected and most importantly, be loved.

# Puppies for Sale

A storeowner was tacking a sign above his door that read, Puppies for Sale. Signs like that have a way of attracting small children. Sure enough, a little boy appeared under the sign.

“How much are you going to sell the puppies for?” the boy asked. The storeowner replied, “Anywhere from \$30 to \$50.” The little boy reached in his pocket and pulled out some change. “I have \$2.37,” the boy said. “May I please look at them?”

The storeowner smiled and whistled. Out of the kennel came a dog, which ran down the aisle of his store, followed by five tiny balls of fur. One puppy was limping behind the others. Immediately, the little boy singled out the limping puppy. “What’s wrong with that little dog?”

The storeowner explained that the veterinarian had examined the little puppy and found it didn’t have a hip socket. It would always limp. It would always be lame.

The little boy became excited. “That is the puppy that I want to buy.”

The storeowner said, “No, you don’t want to buy that little dog. If you really want him, I’ll just give him to you.”

The little boy got quite upset. He looked straight into the storeowner’s eyes, pointing his finger, and said, “I don’t want you to give him to me. That little dog is worth every bit as much as all the other dogs, and I’ll pay full price. In fact, I’ll give you \$2.37 now, and 50 cents a month until I have him paid for.”

The storeowner stated, “You really don’t want to buy this little dog. He is never going to be able to run and jump and play with you like the other puppies.”

To his surprise, the little boy reached down and rolled up his pant leg. He had a badly twisted, crippled left leg supported by a big metal brace. He looked up at the storeowner and softly replied, “Well, I don’t run so well myself, and the puppy will need someone who understands.”

-Author unknown-

# Kids With Limb Loss

**Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts

**Materials:**

- Worksheets: Maria, Chris, and Nick

**Objectives:**

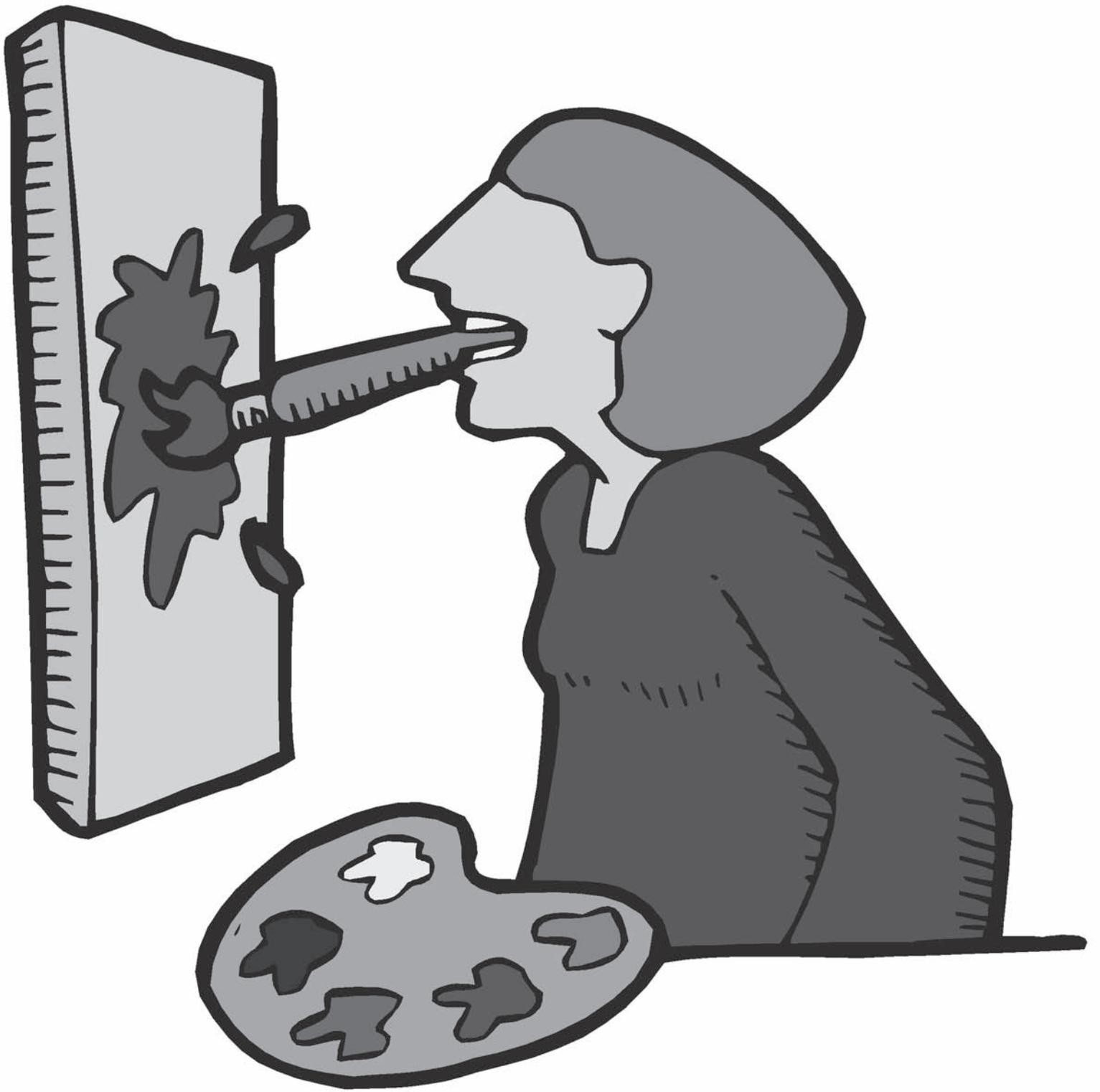
- Appreciation for limb differences
- Appreciation for different ways of accomplishing the same goal
- Consider the impact of limb loss
- Consider getting to know a child with limb loss

**Vocabulary:**

- Prosthesis

**Activity:**

- Distribute the worksheets one at a time.
- Ask students to look at the picture, read the questions and write their answers in the space provided.
- Ask students to read their answers and discuss them with the class.



**Maria**



Chris



Nick

# Kids With Limb Loss 2

**Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts

**Materials:**

- Color pages of children with limb loss

**Objectives:**

- Appreciation for limb differences
- Appreciation for different ways of accomplishing the same goal
- Consider the impact of limb loss
- Consider getting to know a child with limb loss

**Vocabulary:**

- Prosthesis

**Activity:**

- Display the pictures one at a time.
- Use photos of children with limb differences for group discussion.
- What is the first thing you notice about this boy or girl?
- Are you surprised to see them playing basketball? Why or why not?
- Would you play basketball with kids who have limb differences?
- What do you think happened to his or her arm or leg?
- What do you suppose he or she is thinking about?
- What questions would you like to ask him or her?
- How would you feel if he or she were in your classroom?
- How do you think they learned to use their prostheses?

# Experiencing Limb Loss: Mouth Painting

## Curriculum area(s):

- Art
- Language arts

## Materials:

- Small paintbrushes
- Tempera or acrylic paints
- Construction paper or newsprint

## Objectives:

- Demonstrate individual creativity
- Appreciation for limb differences
- Appreciation for different ways of accomplishing the same goal

## Activity:

- Inform students that for the next activity they will be unable to use their arms. Their arms must remain by their sides with hands in laps.
- Discuss how they might use a paintbrush for an art activity without the use of their arms.
- Give each student a small paintbrush, paper, and various colors of paint.
- Begin by having them pick up the paintbrush without using their hands (facilitate by having brushes near the edge of the table) and putting the end of the paintbrush in their mouths and finding a comfortable way of holding it.
- Have students dip their paintbrushes in paint and draw simple shapes. Move on to more complex designs, such as a tree or house.
- Encourage students to rest as needed.
- Ask students to sign their works of art.
- Display mouth paintings and discuss what they learned. Which designs were the most difficult? Who had the most trouble? What was difficult about the process? How often did they need a break? Would they improve with practice? How would they adapt to other activities, such as using the computer, dressing, eating?
- Optional: Begin with the Maria worksheet and discuss as a prelude to this activity.  
Optional: Have students make a fist with their preferred hand. Using masking tape, tape the fist of each child so that the fingers will not open. Leave the thumb free to move as usual. Have students eat lunch with their hands taped. Discuss their difficulties eating and how they learned to adapt.

# Star Search

**Curriculum area(s):**

- Art
- Language arts

**Materials:**

- *inMotion* articles
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- 10" X 10" construction paper stars

**Objectives:**

- Recognize achievements by people in spite of their limb differences

**Activity:**

- Have each student select one individual with a limb difference to read about from the materials provided.
- Have each student summarize the accomplishments of one individual into a 2-3 minute presentation for the class.
- After the presentation, have the student hang a star on the bulletin board representing that person and his or her accomplishments.
- Discuss the importance of setting goals and finding creative ways to achieve them.

# Word Find: Limb Differences

## Curriculum area(s):

- Language arts

## Materials:

- Word puzzle handout

## Objectives:

- Become familiar with vocabulary associated with limb loss

## Activity:

- Discuss vocabulary either before or after the word find activity.
- Have students circle the words as they find them.

ACCEPTANCE	ADAPT	ALIKE
AMPUTATION	AWARE	CELEBRATE
CHALLENGE	COPE	DIFFERENCES
DISABILITIES	ESTEEM	FEEL
FRIEND	FUN	HEALTH
HELPER	LEARN	LIMB LOSS
MORE ALIKE	MOVEMENT	PHYSICAL
PROSTHESIS	SAME	SELF
SHARE	SPECIAL	STRENGTH
RESPECT	THANK	

D	I	S	A	B	I	L	I	T	I	E	S	Q	R	Z
I	C	F	M	O	V	E	M	E	N	T	J	M	P	S
F	U	N	P	H	Y	S	I	C	A	L	V	Y	B	A
F	E	A	U	M	O	R	E	A	L	I	K	E	H	D
E	C	W	T	I	N	E	S	T	E	E	M	Q	S	A
R	E	A	A	C	C	E	P	T	A	N	C	E	H	P
E	L	R	T	S	H	M	R	T	R	W	Z	D	A	T
N	E	E	I	P	A	O	O	H	N	E	L	P	R	T
C	B	X	O	E	L	T	S	E	L	F	N	A	E	F
E	R	K	N	C	L	I	T	H	A	N	K	G	P	U
S	A	M	E	I	E	O	H	E	L	P	E	R	T	Q
Z	T	E	J	A	N	N	E	F	R	I	E	N	D	H
F	E	E	L	L	G	O	S	T	H	E	A	L	T	H
E	A	L	I	K	E	L	I	M	B	L	O	S	S	O
S	I	C	O	P	E	P	S	R	E	S	P	E	C	T

# The Prosthetist Visits

## **Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts
- Science
- Health

## **Materials:**

- None

## **Objectives:**

- Become aware of how limb differences might affect daily activities
- Understand the types, functions, and limitations of prostheses

## **Activity:**

- Prepare students for the prosthetist's visit by discussing the role of the prosthetist in caring for someone with a limb difference.
- Ask the class to develop a list of questions they want to ask the prosthetist.
- Prepare the prosthetist for the visit by discussing the information the class has covered to date. Ask the prosthetist to bring actual prostheses, prosthetic components, or miniature versions of prostheses.

## **Suggestions for locating and working with a prosthetist:**

- Search the yellow pages of the phone book.
- Contact a membership organization, such as AOPA ([aopanet.org](http://aopanet.org)) or AAOP ([oandp.org](http://oandp.org)).
- Meet with your visiting prosthetist in advance of the classroom presentation to ensure that the prosthetist understands the needs of your students and can communicate effectively with them.
- Use the Tips for Visiting a Classroom.

# Tips for Visiting a Classroom

## **Objectives for your visit:**

- Discuss or demonstrate how limb differences might affect daily activities
- Demonstrate and discuss the types, functions, and limitations of prostheses
- Answer questions

## **Questions children may ask:**

- Are they (the prostheses) like robots?
- How long do they last?
- How can people with limb loss take a shower or drive?
- Do they (prostheses) hurt?

## **Suggested materials to take:**

- Various prostheses, upper- and lower-extremity
- Components
- Photos of additional prostheses
- Liners, socks

## **Activity:**

- Discuss your role in caring for someone with a limb difference.
- Describe the process of creating a prosthesis.
- Talk about how a patient learns to use a prosthesis.
- If you are an amputee, you might want to talk about personal experiences.

# The Child With Limb Loss Visits

## **Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts
- Health
- Art

## **Materials:**

- None

## **Objectives:**

- Realize that individuals are more alike than different
- Become aware of how limb differences might affect daily activities
- Appreciate the strengths and accomplishments of individuals with limb differences

## **Activity:**

- Ask the class to develop a list of questions they want to ask the child.
- Prepare the child for the visit by discussing the information the class has covered to date. Ask the child to show and demonstrate prostheses.
- Have the students make thank you cards to send after the visit.

## **Suggestions for locating a child with limb loss:**

- To maximize interaction, select a child or adolescent whose age is within 3-5 years of your students.
- Talk with the school nurse to find a child within the school system.
- Contact an amputee support group.
- Ask a prosthetist to suggest someone.

# Write a Story to Share

**Curriculum area(s):**

- Language arts

**Materials:**

- Lined paper
- Magazines or photos to illustrate the stories

**Objectives:**

- Express feelings related to limb loss

**Activity:**

- Share a story or videotape about a child with limb loss.
- Ask the class to imagine that the child featured in the story or videotape will be enrolling in their classroom.
- Ask the class to list what is needed to write a good story.
- Divide the class into groups of three and ask each group to write a story about the new child and what they expect.

For resource information, see *Homemade Books to Help Kids Cope*, by Robert G. Ziegler, MD.

# Feelings About Limb Differences

## Curriculum area(s):

- Language arts

## Materials:

- Bulletin board (or long piece of butcher paper) with balloon captions below

## Objectives:

- Summarize feelings about unit
- Expression of feelings
- Deciding what is important to remember

## Activity:

- Ask the class to brainstorm responses to each of the following captions.
- Create a bulletin board.



# Feelings About Limb Differences 2

## Curriculum area(s):

- Language arts
- Art

## Materials:

- Bulletin board with captions below or related captions

## Objectives:

- Summarize feelings about unit
- Expression of feelings
- Deciding what is important to remember

## Activity:

- Ask the class to brainstorm responses to each of the following captions.
- Create a bulletin board.

**Limb loss**  
**Limb differences**  
**I wonder...** **I learned...**  
**I need to find out...**

# Tips for Including the Child With Limb Loss in Your Classroom

- Common questions that children will ask include: Where is your arm or leg? What happened to it? Did it break off? Be prepared to assist the child with an answer or answer these questions before the child returns to school to minimize the initial uneasiness.
- Can this happen to me? Alleviate fears by giving information that kids can understand. (One child, who heard that someone was asleep when his leg was removed, developed a fear of bedtime.)
- Make certain classmates know that the child did not do anything to make this happen. Limb loss is not a punishment. However, if the limb loss is the result of an accident, you may want to talk about safety issues at another time. (Suggested resource: *Spot the Danger* videotape)
- Children will not “catch” the limb difference. Model appropriate behaviors and try some role-play of classroom situations before the child returns to the classroom.
- Be sure the class understands that the child is a whole child regardless of his or her limb difference. Use activities to heighten the sense of similarities and differences among the children. (See curriculum.)
- What is appropriate behavior? The residual limb or the prosthesis should not be touched unless the person with limb loss gives permission. Use the correct terms or terms that the child with limb loss uses (remember that some children with limb differences have a special name for their prosthesis, much as children may call their blanket a “binkie”).
- Avoid adverse reactions. A classmate who cries or screams in response to seeing a child with limb loss upsets the child with limb loss and the other children. Explain differences in advance of the child’s return to the classroom. Show a photo of the child before and after the limb loss. Focus on the similarities, but prepare gently for the differences. Have the children talk about their feelings. Consider activities that allow the children to “experience” limb loss to increase their empathy and reduce apprehension.
- Find out all that you can about the child’s level of recovery before his or her return to the classroom so that you know how much assistance is needed.
- Contact the Amputee Coalition of America for additional information regarding specific types of limb loss, prosthetic devices, and psychosocial issues.

# When a Parent Loses a Limb: Helping Children Cope

- Common questions that children ask include: Where is your arm or leg? What happened to it? Did it break off? Be prepared to assist the child with an answer that is appropriate for his or her age and developmental level.
- Does it hurt? Pain is scary to children; the longer pain endures, the more frightened the child will be. Talk about different types of pain in terms the child can understand. (Remember the time you burned your finger? Or, the time you fell off your bike?) Remind the child that sometimes pain is short-lived, and sometimes it lasts for days - but, eventually, it gets better.
- Avoid giving children too much information, such as details about a complicated disease process or the amputation surgery.
- Can this happen to me? Alleviate fears by giving information that kids can understand. Telling a child that someone was asleep when his or her leg was removed can lead to a fear of bedtime. Remember that your explanations need to be planned to avoid creating additional fears or anxiety.
- Is this my fault? Younger children are egocentric; when things happen, they feel responsible. Make certain children know that they did not do anything to make this happen.
- Limb loss is not a punishment. However, if it's the result of an accident, you may want to talk about safety issues at an appropriate time.
- Children will not "catch" this. Hugging and touching are still safe and very important parts of healing for the entire family.
- The parent is still a mommy or daddy regardless of the limb difference. Talk about what is important - daddy can still read a bedtime story; mommy will brush your hair.
- You may also want to discuss which things may be different - mom may have to learn a new way to bake chocolate chip cookies; dad may not be able to walk the dog for a few weeks (or months).
- Call upon the child's natural desire to help - you can be mommy's right hand until she learns to use the new one.
- Explain the new words: prosthesis, limb, residual limb, prosthetist. Make a game out of spelling or pronunciation of these words.
- Avoid adverse reactions: a child who cries or screams in response to seeing a parent for the first time; a child who runs from the room each time the prosthesis is removed. Explain differences in advance to prepare the child. Show pictures of other people with limb loss (available from the prosthetist or therapist or *inMotion* magazine) to desensitize the child.
- Focus on the similarities, but prepare gently for the differences. Have the child talk or write about his or her feelings.
- Children are curious. Remove the mystery from the prosthesis by asking the prosthetist to spend time with the child, explaining the materials and components used. The child should be encouraged to manipulate the components.
- If possible, have the child talk with other children whose parents have lost a limb.
- Encourage the child to express his or her feelings through drawing, poetry, or telling or writing a story.

# Fun Frog Stuff

Why are frogs so happy? **They eat whatever bugs them!**

What happens when two frogs collide? **They get tongue tied!**

What kind of shoes do frogs wear? **Open toad!**

How does a frog feel when he has a broken leg? **Unhappy.**

Why did the frog read Sherlock Holmes? **He liked a good croak and dagger.**

What happened to the frog's car when his parking meter expired? **It got toad!**

What is a frog's favorite time? **Leap Year!**

What does a frog say when it sees somethin' great? **Toadly awesome!**

What did the frog order at McDonald's? **French flies and a diet Croak.**

What is the thirstiest frog in the world? **The one who drinks Canada Dry!**

What do stylish frogs wear? **Jumpsuits!**

How many frogs would fit in your glass of water? **Toadily too many.**

Why did the frog make so many mistakes? **It jumped to the wrong conclusions.**

On what planet would a space frog live? **Plutoad.**

What do frogs play at recess? **Jumping jacks and leapfrog.**

# Annotated Bibliography

## Books for children:

Ratto, L. *Coping with a Physically Challenged Brother or Sister*. New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 1992. Reading level: 5-6. Through stories told primarily by siblings, this book discusses the emotions and problems that can arise from having a sibling with a disability. Topics include: jealousy, depression, communication, acceptance, anger. The messages and coping strategies are appropriate for teachers and parents, as well as siblings. Includes a glossary. 119 pages.

Canfield, J., et al. *Chicken Soup for the Preteen Soul*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, 2000. Reading level: 4-7. Stories and poems penned by youngsters, parents, and teachers cover a wide range of topics: achieving dreams, friendship, family, love, death and dying, attitude, overcoming obstacles, choices, changes, tough stuff. "Adam's Apples" is a parable about how people are all alike on the inside. "You'll Be Good for Him" celebrates the importance of friendship and the spirit of a child with differences. "Annie Wiggle-Do," about a girl who has bilateral amputations due to a car accident, demonstrates the importance of role models for those with limb differences.

Smith, Sally L. *Different is Not Bad; Different is the World*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West, 1994. Reading level: 3-4. The purpose of the book is to help children realize that being different is okay. The introduction offers activity ideas to use in conjunction with the book. Artwork and text are colorful.

Dossett, Ellen. *Just as I am: Americans with Disabilities*. Birmingham, AL: Crane Hill Publishers, 1999. Reading Level: 7-adult. This book portrays individuals with disabilities from all over the United States. The author and photographer capture the courage, determination, and endurance of 40 individuals through words and photographs.

Myer, Donald, ed. *Views From Our Shoes*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House, 1997. Reading level: 4-7. This book is about young people who have a sibling affected by a disability. It includes personal stories of emotions, coping, and how their life has changed or been affected by a disability in their family. Includes a glossary.

Cosgrove, Stephen. *Fanny*. New York: Penguin Putnam Books for Young Children, 1986. Reading level: 2-3. Interest level: K-3. Fanny is a cat with three legs, who is ignored by the other farm animals until she is befriended by a dog. The friendship with the dog gives Fanny confidence to approach the other animals. The message of the story is that Fanny was never handicapped by what she was, but by what the other animals thought she was.

Brown, Beverly S. *Oliver's High Five*. Santa Fe: Health Press, 1998. Reading level: 3-4. Interest level: K-4. Oliver is an octopus with five arms instead of eight. He goes ashore to find out what the world above the sea is like. Oliver decides to find a job, but he learns that no one wants to hire an octopus with only five arms, until he saves the day in a pet shop. Wonderfully illustrated.

## Books for teachers:

The Area Child Information Center. *Children with Limb Loss: A Handbook for Teachers*. Grand Rapids, 1989. Includes terminology, information about prostheses and care plans, and tips for facilitating a normal school experience for children with limb loss. 24 pages.

Getskow, Veronica & Konczal, Dee. *Kids With Special Needs*. Santa Barbara, CA: The Learning Works, Inc., 1996. The purpose of this book is to promote awareness and understanding of children with special needs. Students can "experience" what it is like to have a disability through simulations, games, and activities, which allow them to find out for themselves the difficulties faced by children with disabilities.

The Easter Seal Society. *Friends Who Care*. Videotape and teachers manual. Includes activities, worksheets, and simulations for understanding vision, hearing, developmental, and physical disabilities. Video interviews are with older children; content and format would not be interesting to elementary children. Simulation activities and worksheets are appropriate for elementary.

Miller, Nancy B. & Sammons, Catherine C. *Everybody's Different: Understanding and Changing Our Reactions to Disabilities*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing, 1999. Featuring awareness activities that show us how we see differences. The book explores how our reactions to and beliefs about disabilities influence our progress toward an inclusive society. The authors share their innovative approach to becoming more at ease with the concept of disability. The chapter, "Understanding and Guiding Children's Reactions to Differences," is an excellent resource for teachers and parents.

Winchell, E. *Coping with Limb Loss*. Garden City Park, NY: Avery Publishing, 1995. An amputee uses extensive medical research, personal experience, and interviews with other people who have sustained limb loss to provide information on the physical and emotional impact of amputation. Book includes: causes of amputation, prosthetics, surgery, phantom limb pain, and rehabilitation. It provides advice on grieving the loss, coping with difficult emotions, rebuilding self-image, and reestablishing relationships with others. 321 pages.

Meyer, Donald J. & Vadasy, Patricia F. *Sibshops: Workshops for Siblings of Children with Special Needs*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 1994. This book is geared for children 8-13 who have a sibling with special needs. This resource details how to organize, plan, and run a sibshop from scratch. It provides activities including recreation, information, and education encouraging learning, sharing, and having fun.

### **Videos for children:**

*Just the Way I Am*. War Amps CHAMP Program, 800/267-4023. Target audience: grades K-4. Puppets with amputations respond to questions from their peers about limb loss. Fast-paced, fun for kids. 10 minutes. May be borrowed free of charge or purchased for a nominal charge.

*Kids Just Want to Have Fun*. Shriners Hospital for Children-Portland. Target audience: grades K-5. Features children with differences, including amputations, enjoying all types of activities and sports. Vibrant music with a series of positive messages. Each segment could be used independently as the starting point for group discussion. Segments include: I'm different because...; Kids are alike in lots of ways; Kids are different in some ways; All kids like to have friends; All kids are good at different things; Kids with differences can do all kinds of stuff; Kids just want to be treated like kids. The children talk openly about their lives and their differences. Portland: Mercury Productions. 7 minutes. \$15.00.

*Nobody's Perfect, Everybody's Special*. Distributed by Program Development Associates, 1998. The video profiles three children: Tristan, a 6-year-old, who was born deaf; Olivia, who has been blind since birth; Emily, who lost her right leg in an accident. The accompanying teacher's manual includes activities to process each segment of the videotape and to teach children more about abilities and differences.

### **Web sites for educators:**

**[www.ericec.org/abouterc.html](http://www.ericec.org/abouterc.html)** ERIC is an acronym for the Educational Resources Information Center. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education (ERIC EC) is one of 16 federally funded clearinghouses in the ERIC system, a nationwide information network sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), and administered by the National Library of Education (NLE). ERIC EC gathers and disseminates professional literature, information, and resources on the education and development of individuals of all ages who have disabilities and/or who are gifted.

**[www.nichcy.org/index.html#about](http://www.nichcy.org/index.html#about)** NICHCY is the national information and referral center that provides information on disabilities and disability-related issues for families, educators, and other professionals. Its special focus is children and youth (birth to age 22).

**[www.wemedia.com](http://www.wemedia.com)** A comprehensive online resource providing targeted information, products and services. The Web site concentrates on news, sports, accessible and assistive technologies, politics and advocacy, shopping, employment, education, finance, and real estate from a disability perspective.

**[www.childrenwithdisabilities.ncjrs.org/aboutsite.html](http://www.childrenwithdisabilities.ncjrs.org/aboutsite.html)** The Children With Disabilities Web site presents families, service providers, and other interested individuals with information about advocacy, education, employment, health, housing, recreation, technical assistance, and transportation. It contains material about a broad array of developmental, physical, and emotional disabilities, including learning disabilities, such as attention deficit disorder; debilitating illnesses, such as cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, and cancer; and physical challenges, such as blindness and deafness.

### **Web sites for parents:**

**[www.amp-info.net/childamp.htm](http://www.amp-info.net/childamp.htm)** A listserv for parents of children with limb differences.

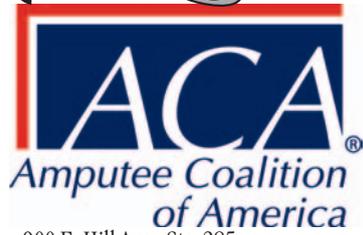
**[www.wemedia.com](http://www.wemedia.com)** A comprehensive online resource providing targeted information, products and services. The Web site concentrates on news, sports, accessible and assistive technologies, politics and advocacy, shopping, employment, education, finance, and real estate from a disability perspective.

**[www.nichcy.org/index.html#about](http://www.nichcy.org/index.html#about)** NICHCY is the national information and referral center that provides information on disabilities and disability-related issues for families, educators, and other professionals. Its special focus is children and youth (birth to age 22).

### **Web sites for children:**

**[www.ucando.org](http://www.ucando.org)** The Can Do! Web site offers stories, activities, and resources to help create a better understanding and deeper appreciation of how people can overcome their challenges and reach their dreams by using their abilities and a “can-do” attitude.

**[www.seattlechildrens.org/sibsupp/default.htm](http://www.seattlechildrens.org/sibsupp/default.htm)** The Sibling Support Project is a national program dedicated to the interests of brothers and sisters of people with special health and developmental needs. The project is based at Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Seattle, Washington.



900 E. Hill Ave., Ste. 285

Knoxville, TN 37915-2568

865/524-8772

1-888/AMP-KNOW (267-5669)

Fax & TTY: 865/525-7917

E-mail: [ACAinfo@amputee-coalition.org](mailto:ACAinfo@amputee-coalition.org)

Web site: [www.amputee-coalition.org](http://www.amputee-coalition.org)