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Clients with Disabilities



1. Identify common causes of disabilities

Define the following term:

disability

the impairment of a physical or mental function.

1. Identify common causes of disabilities

Causes of disabilities include the following:

- Diseases and disorders
- Accidents
- Complication of pregnancy or childbirth
- Genetic factors

1. Identify common causes of disabilities

These factors may affect how well a person copes with a disability:

- General ability to cope with stress
- Specific disability
- Available support
- Other difficulties

1. Identify common causes of disabilities

There may be many different emotions associated with caring for disabled family members, such as the following:

- Stress
- Resentment
- Disappointment
- Guilt
- Shame
- Anger
- Frustration
- Loss of time, energy, patience, and money

1. Identify common causes of disabilities

Think about this question:

How might a person with a disability sometimes feel resentment about being dependent, yet also fear the effort required to become independent?

1. Identify common causes of disabilities

Think about this question:

With regard to disabilities caused by complications of pregnancy or childbirth, what psychological and emotional challenges might the parents face?

2. Describe daily challenges a person with a disability may face

HHAs should understand these challenges for a person with a disability:

- Getting out of bed
- Preparing or eating meals
- Washing, dressing, or grooming himself
- Getting to the bathroom
- Communicating with family, friends, or caregivers
- Meeting basic human needs for acceptance, belonging and community
- Getting from one place to another
- Finding or functioning in a job
- Making ends meet financially

Critical Thinking: Conversation Starter

- How can you gain the trust of the client and the family?
- How can you motivate clients when they are discouraged?

3. Define terms related to disabilities and explain why they are important

Think about the different terms used to describe disabilities and people with disabilities. Which are most appropriate? Which are insensitive?

- Cripple
- Hearing challenged/hearing impaired
- Physically challenged, etc.

Critical Thinking: Conversation Starter

- What other negative terms have you heard that refer to people who have a disability?
- What kind of feelings could these terms bring up for people who are disabled? Are these feelings positive or negative?

4. Identify social and emotional needs of persons with disabilities

Understand these terms as they relate to people with disabilities:

- Independence
- Acceptance
- Dignity
- Social interaction
- Sense of worth

4. Identify social and emotional needs of persons with disabilities

Think about these questions:

What might make clients with disabilities feel humiliated?

What might make clients with disabilities feel respected for being the people they are?

5. Explain how a disability may affect sexuality and intimacy

HHAs should understand how disabilities affect the human need for sexuality and intimacy:

- Clients may be sensitive about how an illness or injury has affected their sexuality
- Sexual desire may not be lessened by a disability, but the ability to meet sexual needs may be limited
- HHAs should not assume to know what impact a physical disability has had on sexuality
- Sensitivity to privacy needs is very important
- HHAs should not judge or make comments about any sexual behavior you see

5. Explain how a disability may affect sexuality and intimacy

Remember:

You should never make assumptions or judgments about sexuality or sexual behavior

6. Identify skills that can be applied to clients with disabilities

HHAs should understand how the following basic skills apply to working with clients with disabilities:

- Communication
- Safety and body mechanics
- Safe and comfortable transfers, ambulation, and body positioning
- Assisting with ADLs
- Measuring vital signs and specimens
- Skin care
- Housekeeping and meal preparation

7. List five goals to work toward when assisting clients who have disabilities

Remember:

A positive working relationship with a disabled client will help you and your client work together toward the client's goals.

Treating each client as an individual and with respect by providing person-centered care will enable you to provide excellent care for all clients.

Key Material 17-1: Goals for Assisting a Client Who is Disabled

- Promote self-care and independence.
- Assure the client's safety.
- Promote the client's health and comfort.
- Maintain the client's dignity and self-worth.
- Maintain the stability of the client's household,

Critical Thinking: Conversation Starter

- How do you gain the trust of the client with a disability and her family?
- How do you motivate clients when they are discouraged?

8. Identify five qualities of excellent service needed by clients with disabilities

HHAs should know the qualities that people with disabilities need in their caregivers:

- Punctuality
- Reliability
- Responsiveness to needs
- Continuity
- Positive attitude

Critical Thinking: Conversation Starter

What does each of the qualities on the previous slide mean to you?

Why do you think they would be especially important to a client who has a disability?

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Define the following term:

developmental disabilities

disabilities that are present at birth or emerge during childhood up to age 22.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Review the following about intellectual disability:

- It is the most common developmental disability.
- People develop at a below-average rate and have below-average mental functioning.
- Causes difficulty in learning, communicating, and moving and may cause problems with social adjustment. The ability for self-care and independent living may be limited.
- There are different degrees of this disability: mild, moderate, severe, and profound.
- Clients have the same emotional and physical needs that others have.
- Main goal of care is to help clients have as normal a life as possible.
- Use terms that clients prefer to refer to this disability.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Follow these guidelines when caring for a client with an intellectual disability:

- Treat adult clients as adults.
- Praise and encourage often, especially positive behavior.
- Help teach clients to perform ADLs by dividing a task into smaller units.
- Promote independence, but also assist with activities as needed.
- Encourage social interaction.
- Repeat what you say to make sure clients understand.
- Be patient.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Review the following about Down syndrome:

- Cause: an abnormal cell division
- Different degrees of intellectual disability and physical symptoms result.
- A person with Down syndrome typically has a small skull, a flattened nose, short fingers, and a wider space between the first two fingers and toes.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Follow these guidelines when caring for a client with Down syndrome:

- Give the same type of care as you would give to any client with an intellectual disability.
- Praise and encourage often.
- Help teach the client to perform ADLs by dividing a task into smaller units.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Review the following about cerebral palsy:

- Cause: brain damage either while in the uterus or during birth
- Both physical and mental disabilities may result, including problems with muscle coordination and nerves, lack of control of the head, difficulty using arms and hands, poor balance, stiffness, limpness, impaired speech, gait problems, and affected intelligence.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Follow these guidelines when caring for a client with cerebral palsy:

- Allow the client to move slowly.
- Maintain the client's body in as normal an alignment as possible.
- Talk to the client, even if she cannot speak.
- Be patient and listen.
- Use touch as a form of communication.
- Avoid activities that are tiring or frustrating.
- Be gentle when handling the body.
- Promote independence and encourage socialization.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Review the following about spina bifida:

- When part of the backbone is not well developed at birth, the spinal cord may bulge out of the person's back.
- Causes a range of disabilities. Some people are able to walk and have no lasting problems, while others are in a wheelchair and have no bladder or bowel control. Brain damage may result due to complications.
- complications.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Follow these guidelines when caring for a person with spina bifida:

- For adults, provide assistance with range of motion exercises and ADLs. Help perform light housecleaning duties.
- For infants or children, perform tasks that help the parents manage and stabilize the home.
- Be a positive role model for the family and the client.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Review the following about autism spectrum disorder:

- Cause: unknown, but genetics may be a factor.
- It appears in early childhood, usually by age 3.
- Social skills and communication issues include being unable to communicate using words, being withdrawn, and being unable to make eye contact. Intense tantrums, repetitive body movements, aggression, a short attention span, an inability to be empathetic, and intensely focused interests are also symptoms.
- Treatment includes many types of therapies (behavioral, speech, and occupational therapies) that should be started early and must be tailored to the person.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Remember:

There are many services available to help people who have developmental disabilities. Home- and community-based waivers may be available to pay for certain services for people who are chronically ill or disabled. Your state's department of health should have more information.

9. Explain how to adapt personal care procedures to meet the needs of clients with disabilities

Some additional resources include the following:

- American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), aidd.org, (202) 387-1968
- Autism Science Foundation, autismsciencefoundation.org, (914) 810-9100
- National Down Syndrome Congress, ndsccenter.org, (800) 232-6372
- Special Olympics, specialolympics.org, (800) 700-8585
- Spina Bifida Association, spinabifidaassociation.org, (800) 621-3141
- United Cerebral Palsy, ucp.org, (800) 872-5827

10. List important changes to report and document for a client with disabilities

HHAs should report any of the following changes:

- Inability to perform a task previously able to do
- Skin problems or changes
- Emotional changes (depression, moodiness, weight loss or gain, fatigue, or withdrawal)

