

## Disability Awareness: Inclusion in Advertising

Est. Time: 30–45 Minutes

### Objective

Develop an awareness of the inclusion or omission of individuals with disabilities in advertising.

### Overview

Though the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in popular culture (e.g., in television programs and movies, on the Internet) is increasing, it is not yet comparable to their real-life representation in the general population. When one looks at advertising, one finds that the lack of representation is even more pronounced.

### Activity

1. Bring various advertisements (either drawn from the Internet or traditional print sources like newspapers and magazines) to class. Divide students into small groups and instruct them to search the ads for representations of individuals with disabilities.
2. Ask your students to watch a set amount of network or cable television for a full week (e.g., a one-hour program per night) and keep track of the number of TV commercials aired during that time. Instruct them to note the number of commercials that included individuals with disabilities.

### Questions/Discussion Topics

1. What were the results of your search? What types of disabilities were represented? Do you think the results are representative of the numbers of individuals with disabilities in the general population?
2. Why do you think individuals with disabilities are included or excluded in advertising or the media?
3. Do you think the current representation is acceptable? Explain.