ableism   [**ey**-b*uh*-liz-*uh*m]

noun

1. discrimination against disabled people:
   laws to prevent ableism, racism, and sexism in the workplace.

2. the tendency to regard people with a disability as incomplete, diminished, or damaged, and to measure the quality of life with a disability against a non-disabled standard:
   Ableism reinforces the idea that disability is a personal tragedy.

Think about it like this:

Racism   **Sexism**   **Ableism**

What does ableism look like?   ## Some examples:

Institutional (Noticeable Ableism)

These are the types of things you may already be aware of because this kind of ableism is often built into how our communities are structured. Institutional ableism can be found in areas such as policy, education, employment, and social norms.

- Public buildings without ramps or elevators
- Refusing reasonable accommodations
- Inaccessible playgrounds
- Wage gaps

Social (Subtle Ableism)

These types of behaviors may take longer to see because people do them without thinking. This form of ableism takes awareness and practice to change, but once you get it, your inclusive behaviors and actions will be second nature to you!

- Lack of representation in the media
- Calling people with disabilities an inspiration just for being disabled
- Slow/baby talk
- Unsolicited touch

Is ableism really an issue?   ## What can you do?

Yes, it is. Ableism is the root of disability inequality. It limits access to important things in people's lives like education, employment, healthcare, and voting. It also causes people with disabilities to be socially isolated.

Ableism can be found in all areas of our communities. We must all work together to end it.

Talk to the experts! People with disabilities are the best resource to learn about how to treat people with disabilities and what you can do to help advocate for change.

Reflect on your own actions and prejudice. If you ever feel like you are doing or saying something that contributes to ableism, take a minute to figure out why and adjust what you are doing.