



THE DISABLED ACCESS FRIENDLY CAMPAIGN

www.disabled-accessfriendly.com

THE CHALLENGE

An average estimate of the number of wheelchair users in Europe is 1% of the population. This means that there are about 5 million wheelchair users in the EU; these people are largely invisible; you don't often see them going about their daily business in the streets or shops, or in places of business or entertainment. They are disabled more by inaccessible infrastructure and other people's attitudes and behaviour than they are by their own physical situation. Largely through omission and ignorance they are isolated, disempowered and excluded from actively participating in everyday activities.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

The Disabled Access Friendly campaign aims to sensitise students to issues affecting people with mobility/disability. We reach young people through the teaching of English as a foreign language. Our website provides teachers, of all levels, with free online material. This can be used as additional material, project work and examination practice, but at the same time provides students with the information necessary to allow them to put themselves in the shoes of someone with a mobility/disability, and stimulates them to understand others and to think how others feel.

Although based in Greece, the project is equally accessible by and relevant to ELT teachers worldwide, as it is not culturally bound. It is internet based, uses the English language, and the teaching material provided has no expiry date and can be used over and over again for new classes of students.

The campaign's website (www.disabled-accessfriendly.com) also provides foreign language centres and schools with information explaining how they can make small changes to their premises to facilitate people with mobility disability, as well as a forum to share experiences.

MISSION

To pave the way to changes being made both in attitudes and infrastructure so that people with mobility/disability have better access, are less isolated and are empowered to live more independent lives. To increase ELT students' awareness of the world in which we live and to persuade them that through their own actions they have the ability to make improvements.

ORGANISATION AND EXPERTISE

We are a small core team of volunteers supported by professionals from a variety of backgrounds. Working with us are also international ELT "ambassadors", who spread the word of the campaign at professional events and through online networking. We work closely with other organisations specialising in ELT and issues of disability. Our work complements that of other organisations, but does not duplicate it.

ACTIVITIES

We provide ELT material that raises awareness about issues affecting people with mobility/disability and offer this for free download on our website (www.disabled-accessfriendly.com).

We participate in and present our programme at English language teaching conferences, such as Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Macedonia-Thrace, N. Greece, 18th International Convention (2011) and the 45th Annual International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition, Brighton, U.K.

We also organise events of our own, for example at schools, ranging from Kindergarten to High School.

We network, produce handouts and posters, send mailings and cooperate with other organisations whose aims complement our own.

We submit articles for publication in relevant newspapers, magazines and on websites.

SUPPORTERS

International teaching courses, ELT institutions, examination bodies, publishing houses, renowned material writers and academics.

Example of free downloadable teaching material
(available in full on www.disabled-accessfriendly.com)
WORKSHEET FOR INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

1. QUIZ

Tick (✓) the things you can do.

the board when you're sitting at your desk.	
what the teacher is saying.	
round the shops with your friends.	
sports.	
to your friend on the phone.	
yourself something to eat or drink.	
stairs, trees and hills.	
to, and/or sing along to, music.	
supermarket shopping.	
the road.	

2. Read and think.

i) Imagine you can't see well. Which of the things in the quiz would be more difficult to do?

- ii) Imagine you can't hear well. Which of the things in the quiz would be more difficult to do?
- iii) Imagine you can't walk well. Which of the things in the quiz would be more difficult to do?
- iv) Imagine you have to use a wheelchair all the time. Which of the things in the quiz would be more difficult to do?



**How to get involved in the Disabled Access Friendly campaign
and be a teacher who makes a difference for tomorrow**

1. Spread the word

Kindly spread the word amongst your colleagues by sending them information or posting it to your site. If you are attending an ELT event, maybe you could consider acting as an ambassador for the campaign. We would provide information and handouts, or you could just talk about the Disabled Access Friendly campaign to colleagues and put them in touch with us.

2. Use the Disabled Access Friendly campaign's teaching material.

Please visit our site www.disabled-accessfriendly.com and use the campaign's free downloadable teaching material. Our material not only builds language skills and provides exam practice, but also raises awareness about people with mobility disability and the challenges they face, and about different aspects of human diversity and how social integration can be an enriching experience for all. The material encourages students to notice their own and others' behaviour and attitudes towards people with mobility disability and to become more sensitive, positive and supportive where necessary.

3. Contribute teaching material yourself

You could send in a simple idea, suggestion, worksheet or contribute a full lesson-plan with activities. We would welcome any kind of contribution from teachers or other interested persons - you do not have to be a materials writer to contribute. We can all make use of our teaching or life experience to suggest ideas for a lesson or a particular text that could be used. You can send in an idea, an outline, or material which you think would make a good lesson at any level and for any age group. Every little bit helps. If necessary, we would then develop your idea into a more fully fledged lesson or worksheet.

Copy this link into your browser for more detailed guidelines. http://www.disabled-accessfriendly.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=102&Itemid=236

4. Involve student teachers

If you are a teacher trainer then you might be able to get student teachers involved. Student teachers could write a lesson or worksheet that helps raise awareness, with the incentive that perhaps it will be uploaded to the Disabled Access Friendly site and used by teachers globally.

5. Share your own experience

Our website also has a section entitled "Tell Your Story", where we upload personal accounts from people's experiences either with or as a person with physical disabilities. Many people have at some time in their lives been touched by an issue to do with disability that they would like to give voice to, to help raise awareness. We would also welcome short accounts of what policies member schools or institutions have regarding the inclusion of students with mobility problems.

Contact us

e-mail: disabledaccessfriendly@hotmail.com

Facebook "Disabled Access Friendly"

www.disabled-accessfriendly.com

Excerpts from letters of support for the Disabled Access Friendly campaign

As the UK's principal cultural relations organisation, British Council Greece is strongly committed to equal opportunities and diversity. Our Equal Opportunities and Diversity agenda sets the standards and defines our performance in this area, an integral part of which is disabled access. In this context, we are pleased to support the 'Disabled-Friendly Access' campaign having full belief in its dynamics to raise awareness and prompt changes in this area.

On behalf of British Council Greece
Silvia Berny, Assistant Director ELT and Education"

"The Disabled Access Friendly campaign is a commendable original initiative [.....] the Hellenic American Union wholeheartedly endorses the campaign's efforts to raise awareness in Language Schools and wishes success to all of its future activities."

Hellenic American Union
Thessaloniki, Greece

"TESOL Macedonia-Thrace, N. Greece strongly supports the Disabled Access Friendly Campaign for a number of reasons which I will mention.

- *It is a step towards the elimination of discrimination against disabled people.*
- *It promotes equal opportunities for disabled people.*
- *It is a step towards the establishment of relevant legislation in Greece.*
- *It serves as an effective way to raise awareness about the issue in ELT classrooms around the world."*

Julia Tanner-Bogia
Chair
TESOL Macedonia-Thrace, N. Greece

"The Association of Foreign Language School Owners PALSΟ Northern Greece, wholeheartedly embraces the 'Disabled-access friendly' campaign and endorses its significant effort to raise teachers and students' awareness concerning people with disabilities and mobility problems. [.....]Realizing how crucial our role as shapers of our students' personality is, I forward this letter of moral support to you, confident that your initiative will stir our moral and human conscience and ultimately create a better society and a world worth living in."

The Association of Foreign Language School Owners
Panhellenic Association of Language School Owners (PALSO)
N. Greece

We are [...] pleased to full support the Disabled Access Friendly campaign which we are hoping to be able to help in the following areas:

- *Promoting equal opportunities for disabled people all over Greece*
- *Ensuring disabled people have equal access to language and computer skills certification*
- *Raising awareness about equal opportunities and diversity among the language and computer training centres that we work with*
- *Eliminating all signs of discrimination against disabled people*

Constantinos Kesentes
General Manager, Peoplecert Group
(City and Guilds English exams)