

Healthy Living for ALL

By: Andi Crockett, AAP (*she/her/hers*) - Product Manager, EFT, Middletown Campus

The United Nations and the World Health Organization join together every year on December 3rd to celebrate International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPWD). This day focuses on the celebration of our differences as humans. We all ultimately play a role in our own lives, the lives of others, and our communities that surround us. It is understandable to infer that with all the people in the world, that not all of us are alike, have the same interests, or even have the same abilities. Regardless of these factors, we are all still human at our core.

For me, this brings up a lot of questions surrounding belonging. How am I playing my role or part in making the world a more equitable and I'll say it, *fair* place to be? How am I creating a safe place for people around me that are living with disabilities and are inherently different than I am? How can I learn more about what experiences people with disabilities have? How can I approach them from a welcoming place of understanding?



IDPWD focuses on four main themes: celebration, learning, action, and optimism. This day of celebration is all about embracing the value that others bring to the table. It's important to focus here on the significance of those with disabilities. Their value is not determined by their disability, nor does having a disability negate who they are as a person and what they have to offer. As humans, we should all endeavor to accept others as they are and to understand the experiences that others have living with various disabilities. Once we have insight into the lives of others, we can take a closer look at disparities. What isn't fair? How can we make meaningful improvements? How can we get involved and encourage others to take action? If you have asked yourself any of these questions, reach out to an organization, agency, or charity to get involved. It's never too late to do your part!



This brings us to **OPTIMISM**. Think of a time where everyone you meet has not a glass half full but overflowing. That's the kind of world that I want to be a part of and I am sure I am not the only one that shares that sentiment. We are all similar in the way that we all

have differences. It's important that we embrace, support, and care for one another because we only have this one life to live and we should spend it spreading kindness and improving the lives of others. With all this being said, I know what I'll be doing on December 3rd of this year, do you?

Check out the links below learn more about International Day of Persons with Disabilities, recognized on December 3.

- [United Nations recognition of International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [2023 Information on IDPWD](#)