

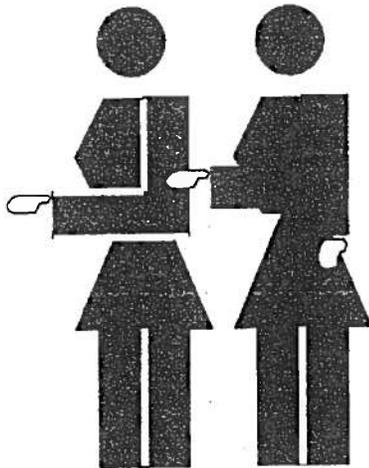


ASSOCIATED SERVICES
FOR THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

HELPFUL HINTS OF COURTESY WHEN YOU MEET A PERSON WHO IS BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

When you meet a person who is blind or visually impaired, don't be uneasy. It will help if you remember these simple rules of courtesy.

- I'm an ordinary person who happens to have a vision problem. Don't shout or speak to me as if I were a child. Don't ask my spouse if I would like something, ask me.
- I can walk easier with you than with a dog or a cane. Don't grab my arm; let me take yours. I'll keep a half step behind to anticipate curbs and steps. Going down stairs, I prefer to hold the railing.



Sighted Guide Technique

- When I enter a bus or restaurant, don't be timid. Guide me to a seat; do not leave me standing alone at the door.
- I want to know who is in the room with me. Speak when you enter. Introduce me to others; include children and tell me if there is a cat or a dog. Place my hand on the back of a chair and I will seat myself.
- An open door is a hazard to me, so are toys on the floor. Watch out for protruding obstacles; I hate to break things.
- At dinner, I'll tell you how I'm accustomed to having things arranged. Tell me where the food is on my plate: "Meat at 12 o'clock, peas at 3 and potatoes at 6."
- Don't avoid words like "see." I use them too. I'm always glad to see you!
- I don't want pity, but don't talk about the "wonderful compensations" of blindness. What I've learned has been by hard work.
- If I'm your houseguest, show me around. Help me locate the bathroom, closet, dresser, window, outlets and light switches.
- I enjoy being included in a discussion. I depend on radio and television to keep me up-to-date on news and information. I am as well-informed as the average person.
- After engaging me in conversation, don't leave without warning. Don't tap me on the shoulder or disguise your voice and say, "Who am I?" Guessing games may be fun at times, but if I don't recognize your voice, I am embarrassed.
- If you're not sure I need help, just ask. Everybody needs help sometimes. I will not be offended by your offer. I will tell you "yes," or "no thank you." Please accept whatever response I give.

Thank you for caring and taking the time to read these helpful hints.