



"Building Partnerships"
*Working Together to Protect
Persons with Disabilities*

This project was spearheaded by the:

***Massachusetts Building Partnerships for the
Protection of Persons with Disabilities Initiative***
www.buildingpartnershipsma.org

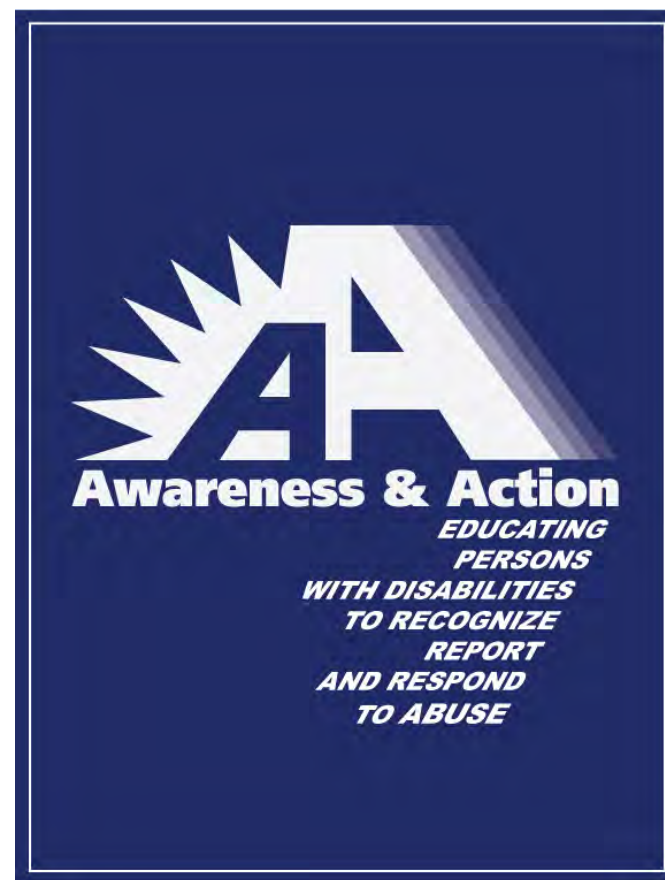
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**Massachusetts
Building Partnerships for the
Protection of Persons with
Disabilities Initiative**

Awareness and Action
*Learning Tool
Instruction Manual*



Instructions for the Use of *Awareness and Action*

Awareness and Action is a learning tool to teach persons with disabilities how to recognize, report and respond to abuse and mistreatment committed against them or others. It should be used only by pairs of trained **Awareness and Action** facilitators — one who is an individual with a disability.

Caution: Some of the images or words used in **Awareness and Action** may be shocking, scary or offensive. **Awareness and Action** is not a game and should not be used without guidance. It is a **learning tool** to teach about abuse and mistreatment and must be facilitated by specially trained facilitators.

What is in the Awareness and Action Bag

- ✦ 56 Awareness cards:
 - 16 Green cards (non-abuse)
 - 15 Yellow cards (questionable; may or may not be abusive)
 - 25 Red cards (abuse or mistreatment)
- ✦ 63 Blue Action cards:
 - 3 copies each of 21 different cards
 - Each Blue card is an action that could be taken after experiencing the event described by the Red, Yellow or Green cards.
- ✦ 5 Card holders
- ✦ 1 *Stop Light* card
- ✦ 1 copy of the *Rules for Use* Booklet



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Alternate Ways to Use Awareness and Action

- ✦ Use a closed hand instead of an open hand.
- ✦ Deal Action cards (Blue) to participants instead of Awareness cards (Red, Yellow and Green). Then have the facilitator use the Awareness cards.
- ✦ Vary the number of Awareness Cards dealt.
- ✦ Vary the number of participants from one to as many as five.

Tips

- ✦ It is OK if a participant does not have a “perfect” match for the chosen Action card. He/she should be instructed to choose the best card possible and talk about why it was not really a good match.
- ✦ Table talk is recommended! All participants are encouraged to talk about each other’s cards and choices. Learning through talking is **Awareness and Action’s** goal.
- ✦ If participants resist selecting Yellow Awareness cards for discussion, the facilitator should take extra time to encourage Yellow card use by asking participants why they are not selecting them. Then share thoughts about what would make the Yellow cards applicable to the Action card.

Safety Considerations

Participants should be encouraged to talk about abuse or mistreatment in general terms and are discouraged from sharing personal stories during the activity. However, if a participant wants/needs to talk about an incident of personal abuse, he/she should be encouraged to find a trusted confidant or to call DPPC. If those options are not sufficient, the facilitators will make arrangements to deal safely with the situation.

Getting Started

Gather a small group of people (it is recommended to have a maximum of five (5) participants) willing to learn about abuse and mistreatment. These instructions should be flexibly adapted to fit any circumstance. There are no hard and fast rules. For example, it is possible to use **Awareness and Action** one-on-one.

The facilitators will:

- ✦ Have all participants introduce themselves and ensure provision of any special assistance needed.
- ✦ Provide a description of abuse and mistreatment (e.g., *any type of behavior that hurts you physically, emotionally, financially, sexually or through neglect*) and answer early questions about abuse or mistreatment.
- ✦ Explain that the Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC) is where you call (800-426-9009 or 888-822-0350 TTY) to report abuse or mistreatment against a person with a disability and 911 is called in an emergency.
- ✦ Explain that some of the subjects that will be talked about may be uncomfortable or difficult to discuss.
- ✦ Discourage participants from sharing personal stories and stress that any personal situations revealed during the use of **Awareness and Action** are private and not gossip.
- ✦ Note that for safety reasons the facilitator is required to report to DPPC the specific abuse or mistreatment disclosed while using **Awareness and Action**.

Explain that there are three types of **Awareness and Action** Cards:

1. **Awareness** cards in three colors:
 - Red=abuse or mistreatment
 - Yellow=questionable
 - Green=not abuse
2. **Action** cards in Blue:
 - Depict actions that might be taken after experiencing an event described on the Red, Yellow or Green cards.
3. **Stop Light** card:
 - The Stop Light card is placed in a central location for everyone to see.
 - The Stop Light card reminds us that Awareness cards can be thought of as a stop light: Red for “Stop,” Yellow for “Caution,” and Green for “OK.”

Using Awareness and Action

- ✦ Set up the *Stop Light* card and explain the “Stop, Caution, Go” principle of the Awareness card colors.
- ✦ Deal five (5) Awareness cards to each participant except the facilitator.
- ✦ Help each participant arrange his/her cards in the card stands or on a table, face up for all to see. Remember: This is an educational tool; there is no reason to hide the cards.
 - If a participant cannot see or read the cards, ensure support.
 - If a participant has received several cards of the same color, he/she may turn them back and receive others to ensure a diversity of card choices. (Alternative dealing: rather than traditional, random dealing, the facilitator may choose to select a variety of *Awareness* cards for

each participant.)

- Select an Action card (Blue), read it out loud, make sure each participant sees it and place in a central location for all to see it.
- Ask if all participants understand what is indicated on the Action card.
- ✦ Ask each participant to select a card from his/her hand that would cause the Action indicated on the Blue card.
 - Participants place their card choices in front of them.
 - The facilitator begins by saying, “Choose a card from your hand that would make you [read the Blue Card: “Get Angry;” “Call DPPC,” etc].”
 - If a participant does not have an appropriate card:
 - ◊ Option 1: He/she may discard then draw one card at a time until a satisfactory card is chosen or
 - ◊ Option 2: He/she may choose an inappropriate card then talk about why it is not a good choice.
 - Begin discussion by asking participants one at a time, “Why did you select that card?”
 - Facilitators should encourage continued discussion by asking open ended, follow-up questions to keep the group learning about what is and what is not abuse or mistreatment.
 - After each participant has finished sharing thoughts about his/her card choice, those cards are discarded and each participant draws a new card from the deck.
- ✦ Continue using the learning tool repeating the steps above for a designated period of time or until participants are ready to stop.