

Intellectual Disability

Scenario #1

Roles:

Michael – an individual with an intellectual disability

Stacee – the caregiver at a nursing facility

Scenario:

Michael is a 55-year-old man with an intellectual disability and many health conditions. He is unable to be independent in the community because he requires medical oversight.

Michael wants to go out of the facility every Wednesday to attend his preferred church service, but no nurse is available to leave the facility with him. He becomes distraught and struggles to understand why he cannot leave to go on his own.

Michael becomes verbally aggressive towards staff and is refusing to leave his room. Stacee, his caregiver for the day, is struggling to understand how best to support him. He begins asking her again to take him out into the community to attend church.

Symptoms of Condition:

Difficulty thinking and understanding. Impacted life skills include certain conceptual, social, and practical skills.

Suggested Approaches:

Stacee could use either of the following approaches (or use them together):

1. Teach Michael about his medical condition so that he understands how unsafe it is to go out on his own while validating his frustration in not being able to come and go as he pleases
2. Identify alternative options for him going to the church service (online service, asking a pastor to visit him, etc.)

Expected Outcome:

Meet Michael's underlying needs, causing verbal aggression and outbursts to decline.

Intellectual Disability

Scenario #2

Roles:

Tyler – a man with Down syndrome

Juan – the caregiver who supports him at work

Scenario:

Tyler works at a local grocery store several days per week. Juan, who is Tyler's in-home caregiver, has been going with him to work for years. He is there for oversight and hands-on assistance as needed when Tyler is working.

Tyler recently began opening snacks at work and eating them. This has never been an issue for the last several years that Tyler was working at the store, but Tyler's boss has threatened to cut his work hours if he continues to eat snacks at the store.

Juan wants to work with Tyler at home about this issue but isn't sure where to start.

Symptoms of Condition:

Down syndrome causes a distinct facial appearance, intellectual disability, developmental delays, and may be associated with thyroid or heart disease.

Suggested Approaches:

Juan could use either of the two options:

1. Identify if Tyler is hungry and not packing or eating enough food before work, and develop a plan to ensure he isn't hungry or tempted by work snacks.
2. Teach Tyler about the negative consequences that will impact his life if he continues eating snacks without paying for them, or if he gets fired and has no income. Do so slowly and in a way that Tyler can understand to ensure his success.

Expected Outcome:

Tyler needs to pack more snacks for work to eat on his breaks and understand what will happen if he loses his job. This will help Tyler stop eating food at work.