

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower: A Symbol of Support and Inclusion

In recent years, the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower has emerged as a powerful symbol of support and inclusion for individuals facing unseen challenges such as autism, anxiety, hearing loss, or chronic pain. It was first introduced by the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower organisation in the UK, aiming to raise awareness, promote understanding for individuals with hidden disability, and foster a society that is more considerate and accommodating, promoting equal opportunities for everyone. A sunflower was chosen as it suggests happiness, positivity, strength as well as growth and confidence and is universally known. It has since gained international recognition and adoption as a symbol of support and inclusion.

To further enhance this initiative, many individuals choose to wear a Hidden Disability Sunflower Lanyard. This lanyard features the distinctive sunflower symbol and serves as a clear indication of the wearer's unseen challenge. The lanyard is not only a practical tool for self-advocacy but also a conversation starter, allowing individuals to share their experiences and educate others about hidden disabilities if they are comfortable to do so.

Besides the lanyard, the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower icons are designed as a simple and effective way for individuals to communicate their hidden disability and signal to others that they may need additional assistance or understanding.

The Sunflower lanyard and icons are recognized by various services, businesses, and facilities. In spaces like airports, public transportation, or retail establishments, staff members may be



trained to recognize the symbol and provide appropriate support. A number of Australian and international airports recognise and support the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program, including Sydney Airport, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Albury, Cairns, Gold Coast, Hobart, Launceston airports.

It's important to note that wearing the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard is a personal choice, and individuals may choose not to disclose specific details about their hidden disability.

For those in Australia looking to embrace the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative, obtaining a Hidden Disability Sunflower Lanyard is a straightforward process. Lanyards and Wristbands are available free of charge. These can be ordered online (<https://shout.finsbury.com.au/ustore/138/Home>) to be delivered or can be picked up from select train stations including Sutherland, Hurstville, Campbelltown, Liverpool and Penrith stations. Various organizations and retailers offer these lanyards online, making them easily accessible to individuals across the country. Additionally, local disability support groups or community centers may distribute these lanyards as part of their advocacy efforts.

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Website: <https://hdsunflower.com/au>

Instagram Australia and New Zealand Region: @HiddenDisabilities_ANZ

Icons images source: <https://hdsunflower.com/au/insights/post/sunflower-icons>

