



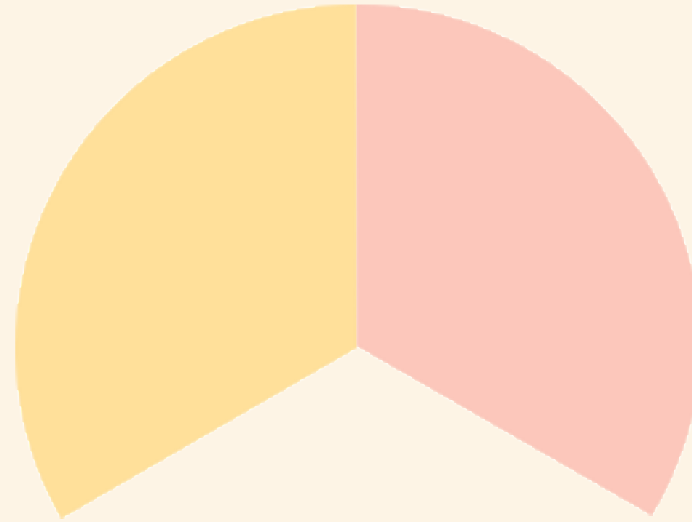
# Double Minority Challenge

**The role of Social Educators  
in work with Persons with Disabilities  
of an Immigrant Background**

**Katarzyna Kubiś**

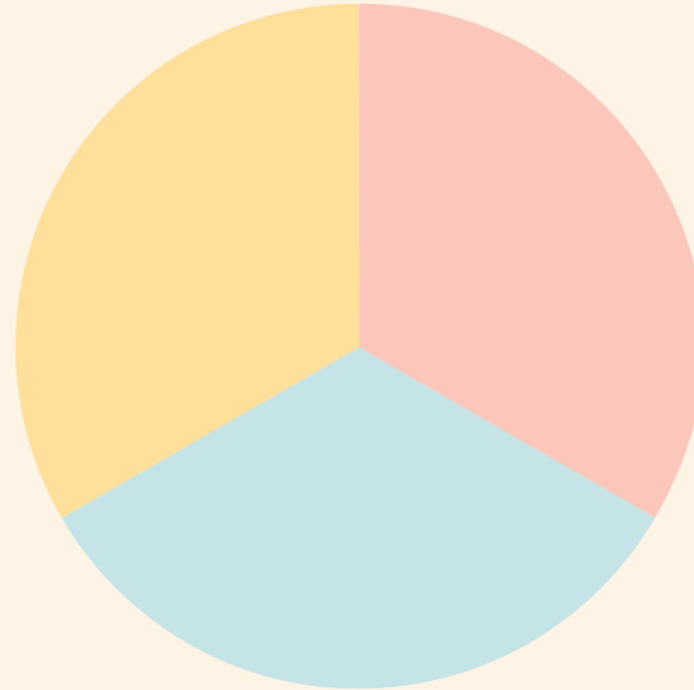
Social Educator, Iceland

**Immigrant**



**Social Educator**

**Immigrant**



**Social Educator**

**Mother of a child  
with disability**

Can you remember a time when you worked with someone from a different cultural background than your own?

What was challenging?

What was rewarding?

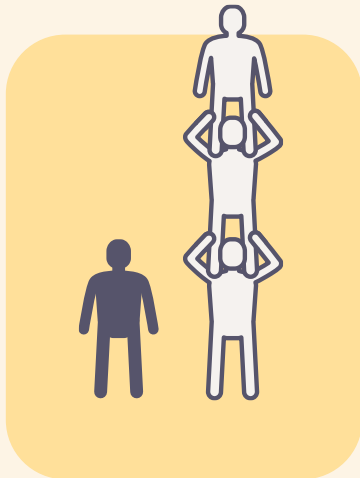
# Double Minority Challenge

Where a person with disability  
is also an immigrant  
but the system is providing services  
based on only one factor

# Challenges of persons with disabilities of an immigrant background and their families



Language  
barriers



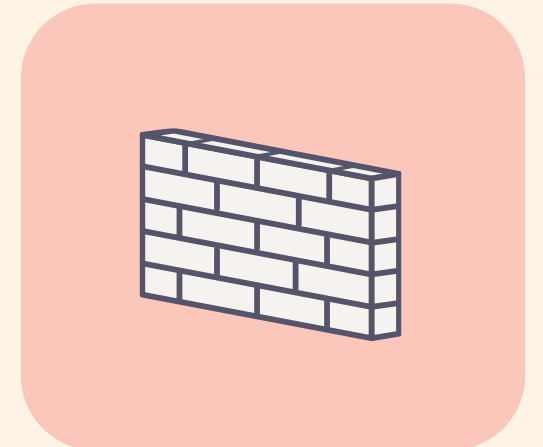
Lack of  
support



Difficult social  
and economic  
situations



Cultural  
differences



Lack of  
accessibility  
to information

# Challenges of the persons with disabilities of an immigrant background

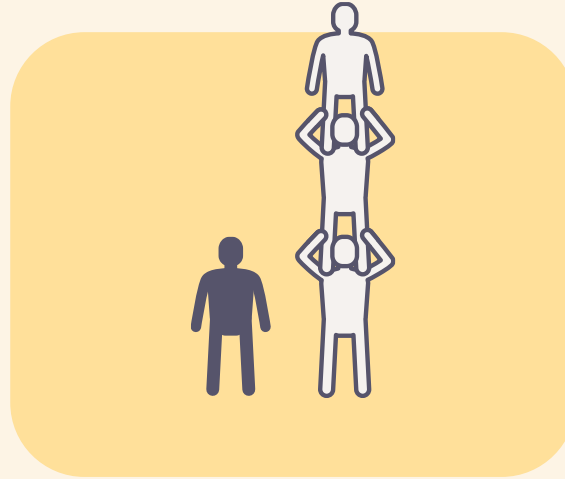


## Language barriers

Difficulty in communication

Direct impact on the quality of life

# Challenges of the persons with disabilities of an immigrant background



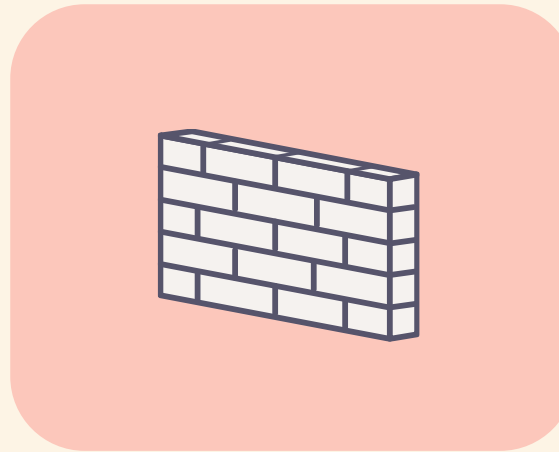
## Lack of support

Families are isolated and without support  
from family and friends.

The importance of community



# Challenges of the persons with disabilities of an immigrant background



## Lack of information

Difficulty with finding accessible,  
easy-to-read information

# Challenges of the persons with disabilities of an immigrant background



## Cultural differences

Disability considered a matter of shame  
or witchcraft in some cultures

# Challenges of the persons with disabilities of an immigrant background



## Social and economic situations

Financial concerns, housing problems,  
unstable employment situation, shift work

How can we respond  
to these challenges





## **Accessible information in many languages**

Providing simple and clear  
information, multilingual content,  
visual presentation,  
utilising audio and video



## **Active listening and support**

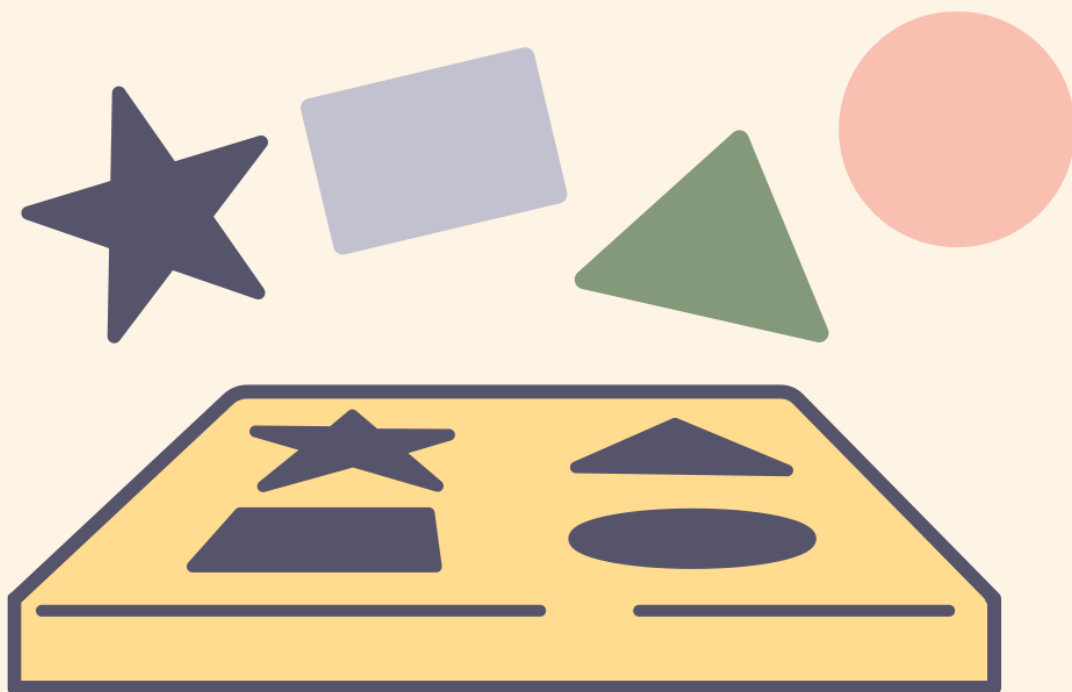
Allow time for communication,  
use interpreter services if needed

Listen – Ask – Understand



## **Support Social Connections**

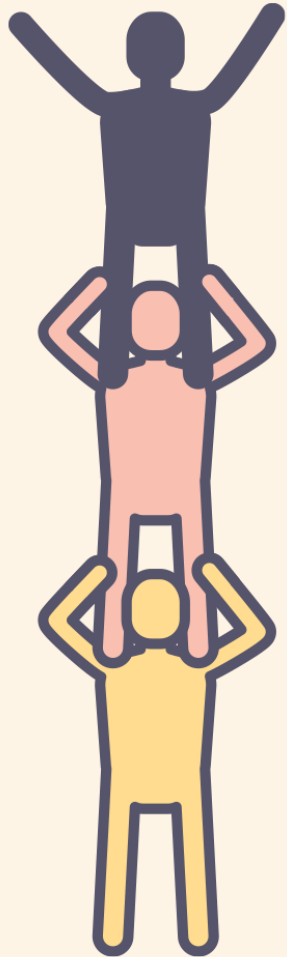
Parental groups,  
peer support groups,  
connections with others  
in similar situations



## Ongoing education

Training in diversity and inclusion,  
prejudice awareness





## **Collaboration is key**

Interdisciplinary cooperation  
between schools, health services  
and social services

Family-centered services

What barriers  
do you think a person with disability  
of an immigrant background  
might face in your country or context?

What role  
can a social educator play  
in reducing these barriers?

# Case Study 1

Ali is an 8-year-old boy from Syria who recently moved with his family to Northern Europe.

He has been diagnosed with autism and struggles with sensory overload and communication.

His parents speak little of the local language and do not fully understand the school or healthcare system.

The family feels overwhelmed and isolated.

At school, Ali is often alone, and his teacher is unsure how to support him.

The family has had no contact with disability support services.

## Questions

1. What are the key challenges or barriers the child and family face?
2. What kind of support might the family need (practical, emotional, systemic)?
3. What could a social educator do in this situation?
  - At school?
  - With the family?
  - In the broader system?
4. What would be important to consider culturally or ethically?

## Case Study 2

Sara is a 16-year-old girl with cerebral palsy who uses a wheelchair.

Her family moved from Lithuania five years ago.

Sara is fluent in the local language, but her parents still struggle with reading official documents and forms.

Sara is finishing compulsory school and wants to continue her education, but she and her family are unsure about her rights and the support available.

Her mother often misses meetings with school staff due to her job, and there has been miscommunication about accommodations.

Sara feels caught between two cultures and is anxious about her future.

## Questions

1. What are the key challenges or barriers the child and family face?
2. What kind of support might the family need (practical, emotional, systemic)?
3. What could a social educator do in this situation?
  - At school?
  - With the family?
  - In the broader system?
4. What would be important to consider culturally or ethically?







**Thank You!**

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