

Text of email request to Target Corporate Responsibility Team sent 1/11/21
CorporateResponsibility@target.com

Target Corporate Responsibility Team:

A request:

I am writing to request consideration of an additional step to expand resources for populations addressed by Target's diversity and inclusion policies of design for all, sensory and adaptive clothing, Aira-enabled stores, by corporate adoption of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program (www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/us). You may be aware that MSP International Airport just adopted this program <https://www.msairport.com/airport/accessibility/hidden-disabilities-sunflower-program>.

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program is a way for individuals with a hidden disability (e.g. individuals with dementia, autism spectrum, hearing deficits, brain injury, Parkinson's disease, general aging-related decline, etc.) to self-identify as someone who might require extra assistance. The Sunflower Program uses a lanyard, lapel pin, or bracelet bearing the sunflower logo for someone to wear to self-identify as a person living with a hidden disability. The Sunflower Program is recognized in international airports and broader sectors of society. In the UK, the Sunflower Program is implemented/recognized in many sectors: transportation (airports, buses, etc.), retail services, national health service clinics, football leagues, etc. While there are an increasing number of US airports adopting the Sunflower Program, to my knowledge, no retail operation in the US has done so.

I am certain that many of your shoppers will appreciate your recognition of their special needs for civility and occasional extra assistance. Be assured that wearing the sunflower does not entitle anyone to special privileges or complicate retail functions. There is a mandatory, short training component for businesses adopting the Sunflower Program, and the investment in purchasing the Sunflower Lanyards for distribution upon request. This is a link to the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program as used in Tesco stores in the UK <https://www.tesco.com/help/invisibledisability/>. I am copying this email to Ruth Rabét, originator of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program ruth@hiddendisabilitiesstore.com, to facilitate your exploration of this program. I am also copying this email to Lynn Smith, Program Director Hidden Disabilities Sunflower - North America 617-797-4997 lynn@hiddendisabilitiesstore.com. FYI, I will paste in links at the bottom of this email to some personal stories testifying to the value of this Sunflower symbol to individuals wearing it in the UK.

Background to the request:

In addition to being a Roseville T1 Target shopper, retired special educator and dementia educator, I am the organizer of the Dementia-Friendly Airports Working Group (DFAWG) www.dementiafriendlyairports.com. DFAWG is working to build a group of allies to advocate for the broad adoption of the Sunflower Program. Our initial focus is in Minnesota, since that is our home location. While the Sunflower Program is associated with air travel, and we are working to expand the number of US airports that adopt this program, we think the greater use for this program is to increase hidden disability awareness and civil behavior in the general population. **Target Corporation is ideally placed to make this happen on a national basis.**

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sara

aging activist

Sara Barsel, Ph.D.

Dementia-Friendly Airports Working Group, organizer

Roseville Alzheimer's & Dementia Community Action Team, co-organizer

Roseville Community Health Awareness Team (CHAT), co-organizer

Travelers with Disabilities Committee – Metropolitan Airport Commission (MN), member

TSA Disability & Medical Condition Coalition, member

Ramsey County Citizens Advisory Council Adult Services Committee, retired co-chair

Phone: xxx (home landline with message machine)



Actively working to improve travel conditions for people living with dementia and their care partners.

www.dementiafriendlyairports.com

About the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program:

Details about the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program are found on their website:

<https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/> and in this video link:

<https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/blog/post/the-sunflower-stories-with-ruth-rabet-and-sara-marc-hant>

Details about training that is required for providers adopting the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program can be obtained from Ruth Rabét, Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Store – UK

ruth@hiddendisabilitiesstore.com, and Lynn Smith, Program Director Hidden Disabilities Sunflower - North America 617-797-4997 lynn@hiddendisabilitiesstore.com

Testimony to the impact of wearing the Sunflower helps individuals in their daily lives are recorded in the Sunflower Stories produced by the UK Hidden Disabilities Store. I have included links to several Sunflower Stories:

- many individuals with assorted hidden disabilities: <https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/blog/post/share-your-sunflower-story>
- someone living with Parkinson's disease: <https://youtu.be/RIOgteU5mxY> [The Sunflower Stories with Lucy Beaty \(captions\) - YouTube](#)
- mother of a son with profound autism: <https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/blog/post/sunflower-stories-with-maria-cook>
- a couple where the man has Pick's disease, a form of dementia: [The Sunflower Stories with Paul&Penny Hoskins captions - YouTube](#)

- a woman living with visual impairment: [The Sunflower Stories with Kristina Joseph - YouTube](#)