

MENTALLY Disabled PRISONERS IN PA STATE  
Prisons, Educate them OR NOT? This  
Prison System Says NO.

Education is an important part of bettering oneself in prison. However, a group of people are neglected, the people with special needs. It's just like outside of prison, where teachers just push students through instead of actually trying to help them learn. Many prisoners pick on people with learning disabilities or mental challenges, calling them "the crazy" block, etc. However, these people are human beings, too.

Education should be available to all people willing to learn or attempt to learn. The DOC has no special education classes. It often gives prisoners with special needs books a grade level too high for them, as well as hired "tutors" who think they are better than those they teach or know everything, and often neglect the special needs of those with mental illness. Just because a person earns a GED doesn't make him or her a good tutor. Tutor training is a must, and teaching and reaching a student is a gift or talent. Anyone can give someone a book and say, "Do this, I check, I give you back the book, you do more."

I am not trying to offend anyone. However, if someone is not given an education/special education, how are they expected to be successful when released from prison? All I wish is that everyone be afforded the chance to learn and the opportunity to have accommodation for special needs. I am no better than anyone else, I just want to make a difference and help my fellow brothers and sisters.

People need to call or write the DOC, the governor, and people in office to stress the importance of education — not just on the street but also in prisons. This is especially true for people with special needs. However, education is one of the first things cut from budgets. That is why most prisoners come back to prison: lack of education and life skills.

Many worry about how much food is on their tray instead of worrying about having the skills to stay out of prisons. I am but one voice. I can't do this on my own. If my words hold value to you, please speak up — not for my sake, but for yours and your fellow brothers and sisters.

Do you want your fellow human beings treated like they have no value, or do you want people to see everyone as equals, as human beings, as people clinging to hope — hoping one day people will stop hating and give them tools to help them change their lives and break the cycle of crime?