

Dwarfism Awareness Day

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25th October is International Dwarfism Awareness Day. It is a day to celebrate dwarfism (also known as short stature) and to raise awareness to stop the negative stigma.

Here are five facts about dwarfism:

1. There are over 200 distinct forms of dwarfism. The most common form is achondroplasia, which means the whole body is shortened. The second most common form is hypochondroplasia, which is the dwarfism I have. It means just my limbs are shortened.
2. 80% of people with dwarfism have average height parents. My parents are both average height.
3. When referring to someone with dwarfism, the common way is to say they are a person with short stature or a person with dwarfism. The term 'dwarf' is not commonly accepted, and the term 'midget' is highly offensive. Although, individuals have different preferences, so it's always encouraged to ask if you're unsure. I usually prefer the term short statured, but, like everyone else, I like being referred to by my name!



4. People with dwarfism are capable of working in all kinds of industries, but we may need some workplace modifications to be able to work. I have four jobs! I am a Youth Expert by Experience and Sharing Our Expertise Expert by Experience, creative writing mentor and administrator, and an electorate officer. Since most of my work is sitting down, I usually just need a step stool to put my feet on and to reach some things.
5. Dwarfism is not shameful, nor is it contagious, a joke, or something that needs to be cured. Most people with dwarfism live long, fulfilling lives. I have a uni degree (and am studying for a second one), have written and published articles and poetry, and have represented Australia internationally in sport, and this is only the beginning.

Green is the official colour that represents dwarfism awareness, so I encourage you to wear a bit of green on this day if possible.

Happy International Dwarfism Awareness Day!



Photo of Julie: A young, short statured woman, is smiling to camera. She is wearing a predominantly green coloured checkered dress.