

Dear Editors,

I have made a few comments on the most recent article "Mental Age Theory Hurts People with Intellectual Disabilities" and they have been deleted together with some responses. I inquired into this issue and asked if there was a reason. I did not get a response but the comment was deleted.

Please inform me why my comments have been deleted and what is the policy regarding comments? I am only asking questions and asking for clarification on this important topic and it is my belief that it helps readers to see different perspectives in order to come together.

Thank you,

Cheryl Felak

From: Editorial Staff <nos.editorial@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 7:21 PM

To: Cheryl Felak

Subject: Re: comments deleted

Hi Cheryl,

NOS Magazine is a community by and for self-advocates. Your comments were deleted because multiple readers with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including the author, found your comments upsetting and hurtful.

Additionally, your comments were not contributing to a constructive discussion. You seemed much more committed to explaining to Ivanova why her feelings don't matter than having an actual dialogue.

This is a site by and for self-advocates, self-advocate opinions and feelings take precedence. You are welcome to take your opinions somewhere else.

Best,
Sara

On Tue, Sep 12, 2017 at 10:57 PM, Cheryl Felak <CHERYLFELAK@msn.com> wrote:

Hi Sara,

Thank you for the response. I'm sorry that people had their feelings hurt. My feelings are hurt too and people like my son who are not allowed to be in the conversation or have their ideas shared are hurt.

In no way was I explaining to Ivanova why her feelings do not matter - I was actually asking how to say things so that people would not be hurt. I also compared the language used in these settings to similes and metaphors. These figures of speech are very common in English.

At any rate, I have connected with Ivanova and my son will be attending self-advocate meetings. My goal is to meet in person and hopefully bridge the "motive asymmetry" that is clearly apparent in the discussions that are allowed to be published. The discrimination against those who may not have the skills to write and make their voice heard is very hard to live with - especially when it comes from those who say they advocate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Nothing about us, without us! Please take it to heart!

On Wed, Sep 13, 2017 at 4:09 PM, Editorial Staff <nos.editorial@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Cheryl,

Since Ivanova has an intellectual disability, her opinion is the most important opinion when it comes to intellectual disability. Your son is fully welcome in the conversation. You are not your son. Your role in his life is important. If he has significant communication barriers, you are making your best guess about what his wants and needs are. I have no doubt you are an excellent parent. That doesn't make your opinions interchangeable with his, though. You are separate people. His opinions are not the same as your opinions.

"Nothing about us without us" refers to disabled people. Since you are not disabled, it's not about you. I am fairly confident that there is no adult human alive, barring perhaps some fetishists, who enjoy being compared to children. The fact that you are attempting to pass this off as your son's opinion is really unhealthy.

Best,
Sara

From: Editorial Staff <nos.editorial@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2017 1:11 PM

To: Cheryl Felak

Subject: Re: comments deleted

You may find this helpful, particularly, " Just because someone has difficulty voicing a coherent opinion, it doesn't mean you get to hoist him or her up like some kind of grotesque ventriloquist dummy."

<http://www.thinkingautismguide.com/2017/05/you-are-not-your-child.html>