**Use this template to personalize an awareness letter and send it to a local business. Tell a store manager about a positive or negative experience you had shopping at their store with your loved one. Educate the store owner or manager about how to better prepare their staff when interacting with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.**

Dear (business owner’s name or business name),

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is \_ and I am a frequent customer in your store. March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and I want to take this opportunity to speak with you about community inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

My *[son/daughter]* is *[age]* and has *[intellectual disability, developmental disability, Down Syndrome, etc.]*. [*He/she]* lives *[at home group home, etc.]* with *[me, sister/brother, etc.].* My *[son/daughter]* spends *[his/her]* days *[working, at a day program, volunteering, etc.].*

*(Write about any experience you may have had while shopping with your loved at the store, positive and/or negative.)*

As you continue to grow and expand your business please consider all of your customers. I welcome you to use National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month as an opportunity to learn more about people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their incredible accomplishments in our community.

More information is available on The Arc of New Jersey’s website at www.disabilityawarenessnj.org. Or feel free to use me as a resource for personal stories and information. Please contact me at \_.

Thank you for your commitment to our community and for supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Sincerely,