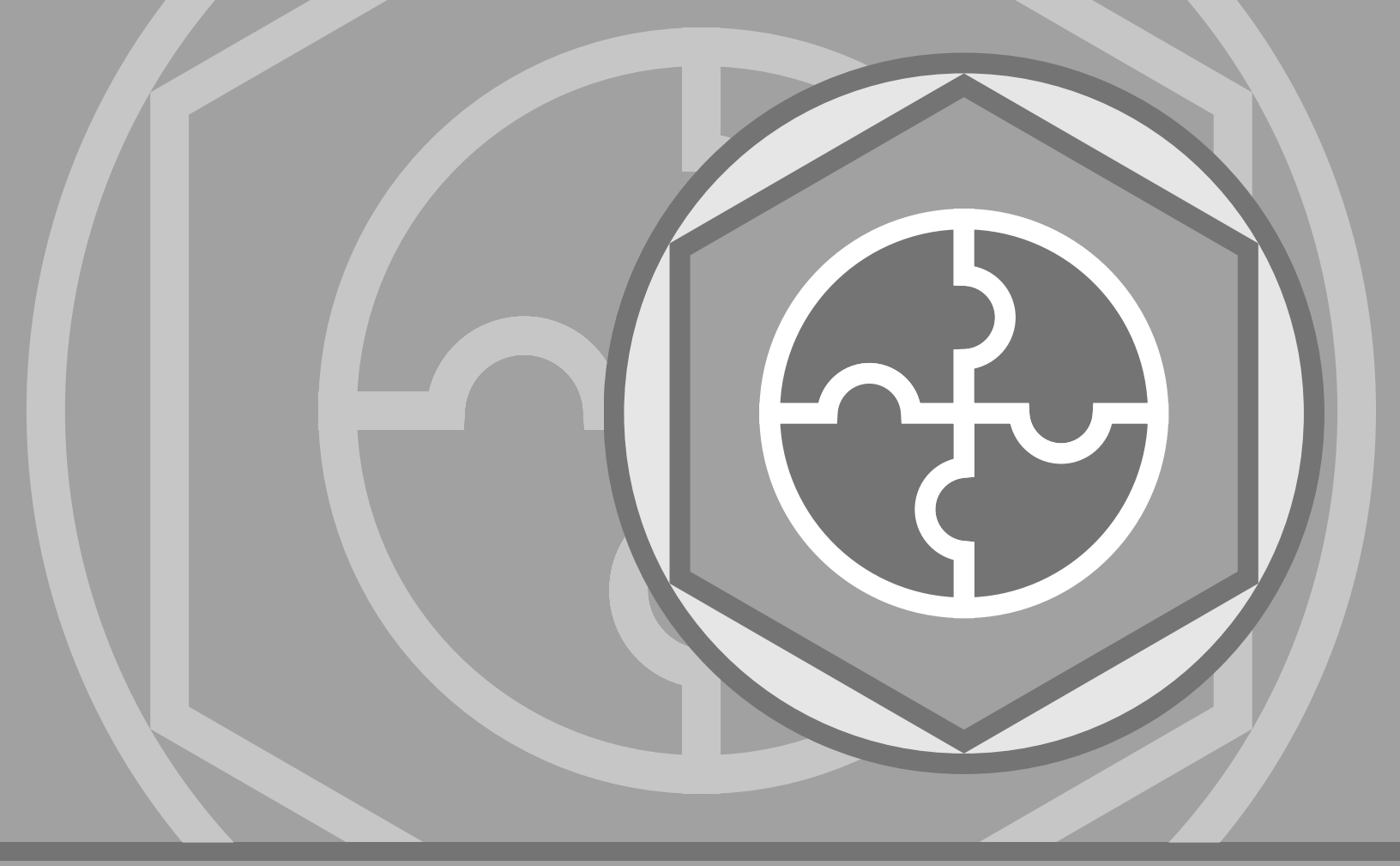
Inclusion of Youth With Disabilities

WORKSHOP RESOURCES FOR PRESENTERS



Inclusion of Youth With Disabilities

WORKSHOP RESOURCES FOR PRESENTERS

Inclusion of Youth With Disabilities Workshop Resources for Presenters

Produced by the Youth and Young Adult Ministries Department of Seventh-day Adventists - North American Division

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Inclusion of Youth With Disabilities

INTRODUCTION

Pre-requisites

- Commit to the Youth/Children's Ministry Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- Be currently approved by your conference's child protection screening verification.

Overview of Workshops

Introduction to Youth with Disabilities - PSYO 160

This workshop provides an overview of the number of school age youth with disabilities and what the most prevalent disabilities are. It also discusses the laws protecting young people with disabilities. Additionally, this workshop stresses the importance of inclusion and of creating a welcoming environment for young people with disabilities.

Understanding Accommodations and Modifications for Youth with Disabilities - PSYO 161

This workshop discusses accommodations and modifications that can assist you in providing inclusive and meaningful activities for young people with disabilities in your ministry.

Barrier Free Facilities and Emergency Plan Inclusion - PSYO 121

This workshop provides an overview of creating inclusive barrier free facilities for youth with disabilities in your ministry.

Specific Learning Disabilities - PSYO 260

This workshop discusses Specific Learning Disabilities and how ministry leaders can include youth with Specific Learning Disabilities in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) - PSYO 261

This workshop discusses Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and how ministry leaders can include youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Autism Spectrum Disorder - PSYO 262

This workshop discusses Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and how ministry leaders can include youth with ASD in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Intellectual Disabilities - PSYO 263

This workshop discusses Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and how ministry leaders can include youth with ID in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Mobility Disabilities - PSYO 264

This workshop discusses mobility disabilities and how ministry leaders can include youth with mobility disabilities in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Required Field Work

Create a Portfolio that contains the handouts and your personal notes from the workshops you attend.

Portfolio

The Including of Youth with Disabilities Certification requires a portfolio documenting the journey, progress, lessons learned and completion of requirements.

The portfolio should include a completed certification check sheet and evidence confirming requirement completion. This evidence can come in the form of signed workshop cards or sign in sheets or completed workshop handouts.

The physical portfolio can be a three-ring binder or folder in which all materials are kept. However, fully digital data collection is also acceptable.

Portfolio Review

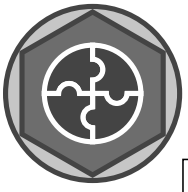
The purpose of the review is to confirm completion of the requirements. It is not to require conformity to any system requiring specific formats of style of presentation. Portfolios are reviewed to determine if they are complete or incomplete. An incomplete portfolio will be returned to the participant with a written explanation of what needs to be added, corrected or completed. Portfolios, whether complete or incomplete, should be returned to the participant in a timely manner.

Review of the completed portfolios will be done by an invested Master Guide appointed by the Conference Youth Director or their designee.

Recognition of Completion

Everyone likes to have their efforts recognized. Pathfinder leadership who put in untold hours of prayer, planning and training are no exception.

Upon successful review of the portfolio, the participant is eligible for an enameled pin and certificate of completion.



Introduction to Inclusion of Youth With Disabilities - PSYO 160

Description

This workshop provides an overview of the number of school age youth with disabilities and what the most prevalent disabilities are. It also discusses the laws protecting young people with disabilities. Additionally, this workshop stresses the importance of inclusion and of creating a welcoming environment for young people with disabilities.

Audience/Participants

All Children's and Youth Ministries leaders and their team would benefit from this workshop.

Resource Material

Internet sites on disability law, people first language and numbers of children/youth with disabilities, preventing bullying of youth with disabilities

Video: The Church is Not Complete Without People with Disabilities on Joni and Friends' YouTube channel or similar video

Handouts

- Examples of people first language
- Sample disability disclosure form
- Tips to preventing bullying of youth with disabilities
- Handout of websites for professional or governmental organizations that provide information on specific disabilities

What Your Participants Will Learn

1. Disability rights laws
2. Number of young people with disabilities
3. Most frequent disabilities in school age youth
4. How to use people first language to promote inclusion
5. Percentage of youth with disabilities that are bullied

Workshop Content

- Overview of the number of school-age youth with disabilities
- The most prevalent disabilities
- Laws protecting young people with disabilities
- The importance of inclusion
- Creating a welcoming environment for young people with disabilities

Purpose of Youth Ministries

The purpose of Youth Ministries is to welcome all youth, to encourage the development of individual gifts, to help all young people experience success and, most importantly, to grow closer to Jesus. This purpose also includes welcoming and encouraging youth with disabilities.

Taking the Lead

As a Youth Ministries leader, you set an example to the other adults and youth about how to welcome a youth that has a disability. Youth and adults look to you to see how you treat and interact with the youth with a disability. Make sure you treat the youth with a disability with the same openness and ease that you show all youth.

Disability Law

As a Seventh-day Adventist, you know that we all are part of the body of Christ and that all people are a part of the body (I Corinthians 12:12-27). As part of the body of Christ, all are called to fulfill God's mission. This directive for inclusion of all was illustrated by Jesus. He included individuals with disabilities in his ministries, and modeled that all are part of God's family. Unfortunately, youth with disabilities have been excluded from many areas of life, including the church. As a result, laws have been enacted to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as their peers. While these laws focus on the public sector, it is of greater importance that all youth with disabilities are included and welcomed into God's family as equal members of the body.

U.S. Laws

The three main laws impacting U.S. students are the following:

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Canadian Laws

- The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Section 15 of the Canadian Constitution
- The Canadian Human Rights Act of 1997
- The U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Bermuda Law

For Information on the rights of Bermudian youth with disabilities, contact the following organizations:

- Aging and Disability Services at gov.bm
- The Disability Advisory Council Bermuda on Facebook
- Bermuda Human Rights Commission at humanrights.bm and on Facebook

Disabilities by the Numbers

According to the Pew Research Center, 7.3 million U.S. public school students have a disability (pewresearch.org, 2023). Statistics Canada reports that over 800,000 children in Canada have a disability (ourcommons.ca, 2022), and 27% of Canadians fifteen and over have a disability (statcan.gc.ca, 2023). For information on Bermudian children with disabilities go to notprofitalliance.bm and review the "Report On the Situation of Children in Bermuda."

Specific Percentages of Disabilities

In *U.S. public schools children with the following disabilities are the most prevalent:

- Specific learning disabilities 32%
- Speech or language impairment 19%
- Other health impaired 15%
    * (Other health impaired includes conditions like asthma, diabetes and epilepsy.)
- Autism 12%

Less common disabilities include developmental delays, intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbances, multiple disabilities, hearing impairments, orthopedic impairments, visual impairments, traumatic brain injuries, and deaf-blindness.

*For Canadian percentages go to "Functional difficulties for children 5 to 17 years, Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth 2019" at www.150.statcan.gc.ca. For information on Bermudian children with disabilities go to the Disability Advisory Council Bermuda's Facebook page or email them at dac@gov.bm.

Focus on the Youth Not the Disability

These percentages are just a quick snapshot of disability categories. All youth are unique in their strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes. It's the same for youth with disabilities. Make sure you take time to learn about the individual young person's disability, but then take more time to get to know the young person. By talking to the young person and his or her family, you can discover how the young person is impacted by the disability. Your primary focus should be on the young person first and the disability second. This means discovering his or her interests and strengths before focusing on any obstacles created by the disability. The next step is to remove or lessen these obstacles by talking with the young person with the disability, his or her family and experts in the area of the disability (i.e., special education teachers, physical or occupational therapists, others with the same disability, or searching online organizations specific to the disability).

Other ways to focus on the young person, not the disability, is to interact with the young person the same way you do with all youth. If you give kids a fist bump as they come into the room or you lay a gentle hand on a shoulder to get a young person's attention, do the same with the youth with a disability. However, there are some youth with disabilities, such as autism or sensory integration disorder, that may not be comfortable with touch, so you will want to check with the young person or parents and guardians ahead of time and agree on acceptable replacements.

Focus on Youth With Disabilities Tips

- Speak directly to the young person, not the adult.
- Ask the young person the best way for him or her to do something.
- Foster independence.
- Focus on strengths and abilities.
- Expect reasonable behavior from all youth in your ministry.

People First Language

People first language should be used when talking to or about a young person with a disability. This means focusing on the young person first and the disability last. This recognises the youth as a person and shifts the focus away from the disability. All young people like to have their strengths and talents recognized and so do youth with disabilities! When talking to others about a young person with a disability, don't mention the young person's disability in the description of the youth.

> Say: Jamie, Dana's son, is a talented musician.
>
> Don't say: Jamie, the boy in the wheelchair, is a talented musician.

Using the disability to describe the young person is generally unnecessary and, often, inappropriate.

The way you state that a youth has a disability is also important. If you were discussing someone with cancer, you wouldn't say, "She is cancer." Instead, you would say, she has cancer or has been diagnosed with cancer. When talking about an individual with a disability, the young person does not want to be seen as the disability, but rather the disability is something he or she has. When discussing young people with disabilities, use first language.

Examples of people first language and words to avoid can be found at the Office of Disability Rights, odr.dc.gov, keyword search "people-first language" and many other online sites.

Neurodivergent

As you include youth with disabilities in your ministry, you may hear the word neurodivergent. This is a non-medical term that people use to describe how someone's brain works differently than a typical or neurotypical person. The use of neurodivergent focuses on natural differences in all brains and the strengths and challenges those differences make for people instead of focusing on a disability(myclevelandclinic.org). Some youth with disabilities may use neurodivergent to refer to themselves and may prefer that you, also, use neurodivergent instead of disability.

Bullying

Your words are often the first hint to youth, parents and caregivers of how the young person with a disability will be accepted into your ministry. Your modeling and expectations can also reduce bullying. In Canada, 42 percent of youth with disabilities experience bullying

and that number increases to 62 percent with more severe disabilities (150.statcan.gc.ca). In the U.S. researchers at Trinity College found that students with disabilities in Connecticut were 86 percent more likely to be bullied than their peers and 55 percent more likely to be cyberbullied (Jan 13, 2024, Kristen Cole, trincoll.edu/news). Bullying of any young person should not be tolerated, especially in church activities. To reduce and hopefully prevent bullying, create an environment that fosters friendships and support between youth with disabilities and their peers. Visit stopbullying.gov/bulling/special-needs for more information.

Communication With Parents And Caregivers

To help you understand the individual needs of all the youth in your ministry, consider adding a section on disability to your application or other forms. By simply asking parents and caregivers if their young person has a disability that requires accommodations of which you and your team should be aware, you open the door to parents and caregivers to share information. Make sure that you state on the form that all information is confidential and will only be shared with your team as necessary.

Suggested Activities

Watch a video on the importance of churches welcoming and including youth with disabilities. Suggested video: The Church is Not Complete Without People with Disabilities on Joni and Friends' YouTube Channel.

Reflect on your ideas, and perhaps misconceptions, about young people with disabilities. Question examples: What is your biggest concern about having a young person with a disability in your ministry? Do you generalize what a young person with a disability can or can't do based on the disability? Select a specific disability and describe how you think the disability would impact a young person's participation in your ministry. How can you respectfully inquire about disability needs to the young person with a disability? Are you comfortable with individuals with disabilities? Why or why not? Do you have the same expectations (good behavior, class participation) for young people with and without disabilities? Why or why not?

In small groups, discuss how disability laws have impacted young people with and without disabilities.

In pairs, correct sentences to reflect people first language.

Create a sample disability disclosure section for an application or other form you use in your youth ministry.

Understanding Accomodations and Modifications For Youth With Disabilities - PSYO 161

Description

This workshop discusses accommodations and modifications that can assist you in providing inclusive and meaningful activities for young people with disabilities in your ministry.

Audience Participants

All Children's and Youth Ministries leaders and their team would benefit from this workshop.

Resource Material

Internet sites on accommodations and modifications

Handout of accommodations and modifications

Low tech and high tech assistive technology for participants to use

(Schools, physical and occupational therapists, rehabilitation or disability service providers may have low and high tech assistive technology that you can borrow.)

What Your Participants Will Learn

- The definition of an accommodation
- The definition of a modification
- Examples of accommodations and modifications
- Examples of assistive technology

Workshop Content

Colossians 3:14-16 (ESV)

And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which you were called in one body . . . Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Reflect on what this passage means to you as a Children's or Youth Ministries leader, especially including young people with disabilities.

Purpose of Youth Ministries

The purpose of Youth Ministries is to welcome all youth, to encourage the development of individual gifts, to help all young people experience success and most importantly, to grow closer to Jesus. Some disabilities may limit a young person's activities, but not the youth's desire to fully participate in your ministry. This means that barriers to the youth with a disability need to be removed.

Removing Barriers to Participation

Barriers to participation in Youth Ministries generally fall into five categories:

- The method information is presented.
- The way a young person is required to respond.
- The curriculum content.
- Physical characteristics of a setting.
- Timing and scheduling.

Accommodations and Modifications

You may have heard the words accommodations and modifications in conjunction with disabilities. These are the legal and educational terms used in most public school systems. Many youth with disabilities have grown up in a school with mandated equal access for students with disabilities; these young people and their parents or guardians expect for youth with disabilities to be included. As a Children's and Youth Ministries leader, you need to know that it is okay and strongly encouraged to make accommodations and modifications so a young person with a disability can fully participate in your ministry.

The Difference Between Accommodations and Modifications

An accommodation changes the way the information is presented or the way a young person with a disability responds. Also, it may include changes to the physical environment of the activity. An accommodation does not change the content of material or the requirements.

A modification fundamentally alters the expectations, content, or standards of requirements and activities to meet the needs of an individual young person with a disability.

Common Accommodations

- Listen to an audio book instead of reading a book.
- Watch a movie instead of reading a book or listening to a lecture.
- Give written directions in addition to oral instructions.
- Give an outline of information being presented.
- Give oral responses instead of written responses.
- Allow additional time for tests, projects and activities.
- Change the lighting.
- Select a hiking trail with a paved path.
- Use trekking poles.
- Select an accessible camping site.
- Camp with a larger tent and cot.
- Ride a tandem bike or adult trike instead of a two wheeled bike.
- Use a buddy system in drill and marching.
- Use color coded armbands (red/left, green/right) for drill and marching.
- Create a quiet zone.
- Provide noise cancellation headphones.
- Move meeting or activity location to a wheelchair accessible building or room.
- Work in cooperative groups.
- Increase adult to youth ratio.
- Use assistive technology.

Common Modifications

- Reduce the amount of information to read, memorize, or write.
- Reduce hiking and biking mileage.
- Substitute activities needed to fulfill requirements.
- Provide age appropriate material at the young person's reading/developmental level and interest.
- Alter requirements so they are at the young person's developmental age or physical abilities.
- Allow different subject material to be learned.
- Score on a different standard (pass/fail).
- Reword material or questions in a simpler vocabulary.
- Allow a variety of methods to demonstrate knowledge.
- Don't penalize for spelling or grammar mistakes.

Examples of Accommodations and Modification in Youth Ministry

Teach all youth to sign the Pathfinder pledge and law or a song, not just the Deaf youth or youth with language disabilities.

Have the young person with Down Syndrome complete a craft about the theme being discussed instead of memorizing material or writing a report.

Visit a public pool that is accessible by a ramp or sling chair for a youth with a mobility disability.

For a young person who's disability impacts fine motor skills, use oversized paint brushes and large sheets of paper for painting activities.

Instead of memorizing Bible verses, allow a young person with a closed head injury and memory problems to act in a skit about the Bible verses' themes.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology is any product, piece of equipment or software used by a person with a disability to perform functions or actions that might be difficult or impossible without the product.

Low Tech Assistive Technology Examples

- Pencil grips
- Large print font
- Screen magnifier
- Weighted vests
- Fidgets or squishy balls
- Binder clips that make turning pages easier
- Adaptive utensils
- Highlighters

High Tech Assistive Technology Examples

- Voice to text programs
- Word prediction
- Speech-generating devices
- Screen readers
- Modified keyboards
- Electric wheelchairs
- Touch screens

Be Flexible

Making accommodations and modifications may mean some creative and flexible thinking on your part in order for a young person to successfully participate in your ministry. Asking the young person with a disability and her or his parents or guardians for suggestions of accommodations and modifications is a great place to start. It also helps you to avoid providing assistance that the young person doesn't want or need. Additionally, the young person with a disability should never be excluded or left to just watch and wait until an activity is over. Instead, you should find a meaningful way for the young person with a disability to participate.

Activities

Answer the following self-reflection question:

What concerns do you have about adapting your ministry or a specific activity for a young person with a disability?

In small groups brainstorm specific accommodations or modifications from the list of activities provided that would make the activity inclusive to youth with different disabilities. For this exercise, you can reflect back on a young person with a disability you've had in your ministry or select various disabilities.

Try out assistive technology and discuss how the technology would be useful to youth with disabilities in your ministry.

'I am not ashamed': Disability advocates, experts implore you to stop saying 'special needs'

In our daily lives, we may encounter phrases like "I am disabled" or "My child has special needs." And to someone who is not part of the community, this wording may seem synonymous. But it's not.

Most experts and advocates vehemently oppose the term "special needs," and believe we need to eliminate it from our vernacular. Furthermore, they say avoiding the term "disabled" only leads to stigmatization.

For some, the term "special needs" feels offensive.

"I am disabled by society due to my impairment," says Lisette Torres-Gerald, board secretary for the National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities. "My needs are not 'special;' they are the same, human needs that everyone else has, and I should be able to fully participate in society just as much as the next person."

It can also be counterproductive.

Researchers from a 2016 study found people who are referred to as having "special needs" are seen more negatively than those referred to as having a disability.

Lawrence Carter-Long went viral with the hashtag #SayTheWord several years ago in an effort to promote the use of "disabled."

Carter-Long, communications director for the Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, says the word disabled connects members of the community "to each other, our common history, and to the lineage of all those who fought, protested and persisted so that one day we could be proud of disability history too."

Torres-Gerald says there is power in the word disabled.

"I am not ashamed to be disabled; I consider it a difference that allows me to view the world in a different way than other people."

The history of the term 'special needs'

This workshop discusses accommodations and modifications that can assist you in providing inclusive and meaningful activities for young people with disabilities in your ministry.

It's not clear where the term "special needs" originated; one theory is "special needs" arose following the launch of the Special Olympics in the 1960s, according to the 2016 study published in "Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications."

The National Center on Disability and Journalism says special needs "was popularized in the U.S. in the early 20th century during a push for special needs education to serve people with all kinds of disabilities."

Data shows it permeated the public consciousness over the last few decades. Special needs has grown increasingly popular in books the past several decades, while "handicapped" has decreased significantly.

The term is not a legal one – in fact, it only appears about a dozen times across thousands of pages of laws in the U.S. "Never once are children with disabilities or adults with disabilities referred to as children with special needs or adults with special needs," according to the study. "Rather, individuals with disabilities are always referred to in U.S. law as individuals with disabilities."

Jamie Davis Smith, whose daughter is disabled, points out that people with disabilities are entitled to certain rights as a result – from movie theater seating to Medicaid and more.

"Special needs" doesn't offer the same legal protections.

The term 'special needs' is harmful, experts say

"Special needs" has actually become a "dysphemism" – a derogatory term as opposed to a softer one. Like saying "loony bin" instead of "mental hospital."

Quinn West, a disabled artist living in Chicago, grew up going to a mainstream school and felt the impact of the term "special needs."

"Abled people assume that saying 'special' means a 'good special' when disabled kids who went through the system know that kids would use 'special' as an insult," West says.

West says it makes those who are disabled sound like an extra burden, when that's not the case; "I'm deaf, so like everyone else I need communication. That need isn't anything extraordinary. It's the same need for human connection, but I just need an accommodation to do so."

Nila Morton, a 22-year old college student, disabled advocate and model in South Carolina, says that words matter. "It's OK to say 'disabled' and 'disability,'" Morton says. "Those words aren't bad. The only reason they are seen as bad is because of the able-normative view of disability."

What parents say about their children with disabilities

Parents may be more comfortable using "special needs." But their children most likely won't take that with them into adulthood. "While it is used by parents of disabled kids, as those kids become young adults, they do not use this term," Lauren Appelbaum, vice president of communications at RespectAbility says.

Smith doesn't want her disabled daughter Claire to have "special" treatment. Her daughter simply requires extra support. "I think it's really important that non-disabled people, people who don't know people with disabilities, understand that I'm not really asking for anything that special for my daughter, I'm just asking that she be able to participate in her community, in life, on an equal basis as my other kids," she says.

Parents who opt to use the term are not coming from a bad place.

"Parents, like all of us, are prone to adopt whatever is common in the ecosystem that surrounds them," Carter-Long says. "And since most folks aren't born into disabled families, it's no surprise that they just adopt whatever their friends and neighbors do. Even if it's unintentionally bigoted. Even if it harms their kids in ways they don't quite understand."

What you should be saying instead

The National Center on Disability and Journalism recommends never using it: "Our advice: avoid the term 'special needs.' Disabled is acceptable in most contexts, but we advise asking the person to whom you're referring what they prefer."

Sonja Sharp, a metro reporter with the Los Angeles Times, prefers identity-first language: "disabled" over "person with disabilities." "It's cleaner, it's simpler, and it's more reflective of my reality," Sharp says. "The law defines me as disabled."

For Sharp, disability is at the core of her identity.

"Every significant experience – school, friendships, puberty, sex, career, marriage, motherhood – has been shaped by this body, made different because of this body," she says. "I am disabled the way I am Jewish – intrinsic and inseparable from me."

Barrier Free Facilities and Emergency Plan Inclusion - PSYO 121

Description

This workshop provides an overview of creating inclusive barrier free facilities for youth with disabilities in your ministry.

Audience Participants

All Children's and Youth Ministries leaders and their team would benefit from this workshop.

Resource Material

Internet sites about the following:

- Universal Design in everyday life
- Checklists for facility accessibility
- Making the outdoors more accessible
- Adaptable furniture
- Adventist Risk Management church and school assessments
- Emergency protocols for young people with disabilities
- Handouts
- Sample Emergency Information form for children/youth with disabilities
- Checklist for facility accessibility
- Sample emergency protocols for young people with disabilities

What Your Participants Will Learn

- Adaptations that create an accessible facility
- How to include youth with disabilities in an emergency plan

Workshop Contents

An overview of creating inclusive barrier free facilities for youth with disabilities.

Higher Mandate for Inclusion

In addition to providing an inclusive Children's or Youth Ministries curriculum and activities for youth with disabilities, you will also need to make sure the meeting facility is accessible. In the U.S. churches are exempt from mandated government accessibility laws; however, religious organizations are mandated from a higher authority. In the Parable of the Banquet, Jesus teaches that his kingdom is available to all, even those society excludes.

The servant went back to his owner and told him these things. Then his owner became angry. He said to his servant, "Hurry into the streets and narrow roads of the city . . . Bring those whose bodies are diseased. Bring those who cannot walk and those who are blind. . . Do this so my house will be filled" (Luke 14:21-23, NLV).

Universal Design

Making a facility accessible for all is called Universal Design. Universal Design means that facilities and programs can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people. While you

aren't expected to know the exact specifications for facility accessibility requirements, you are expected to report any areas of concern to your pastor or church board and ensure that youth with disabilities can conveniently access and use the facilities. You may find that making the facility accessible for youth with disabilities will benefit all church members and visitors. Older church members may especially appreciate an accessible facility.

5 Principles of Facility Accessibility

(joniandfriends.org)

1. **Provide access without limiting options**
   - Example: Limiting wheelchair accessible seating to only one area of the sanctuary may segregate or isolate the person with a disability.
2. **Provide access that enables independence**
   - Examples: Ramps, doors, and elevators that can be used with minimal strength, motor skills and cognitive abilities.
3. **Respect sensory needs**
   - Examples: Presentations, worship services, fire alarms may need to be communicated in a multi-modalities: sign language interpreters, audio induction loops, words projected on a screen. Bright lights, loud noises, and smells may impact some individuals with disabilities, especially people with autism.
4. **Include people with disabilities in the evaluation and design process.**
   - Example: Designing accessible facilities works best when individuals with a range of disabilities actively participate in the process.
5. **Provide safety and emergency devices and protocols**
   - Examples: Fire alarms with strobe lights and tactile emergency routes (raised dots, tape).

Helpful Facility Accessibility Checklist

Use a facility accessibility checklist to help you identify areas of concern. In addition to a generic accessibility checklist, ask a young person with a disability in your ministry and the youth's parents or guardians to identify specific areas of concern for your facility. Not only should the facility be accessible, if you take young people on field trips, hiking or camping, you'll also want to make sure that these activities are accessible for the specific needs of any youth with a disability that will be participating in the activity.

Changes To Improve Facility Accessibility

Before making any of these changes, find out your local building codes and regulations.

1. **Upgrade door hardware**
   - Example: Install compliant lever handles
2. **Provide assistive technology**
   - Examples: automatic door openers, signage in large print and/or Braille
3. **Install ramps**
   - Examples: add ramps to entrances and exits, install low threshold ramps where needed
4. **Make doors accessible**
   - Examples: Door width should be wide enough for wheelchairs to easily fit through, there must be clear floor space around the door and clearance for door latch and hinges.
5. **Provide accessible sidewalks (paths)**
   - Examples: width should easily accommodate a wheelchair, should be free of obstructions and have good lighting
6. **Provide accessible parking**
   - Examples: clearly marked as accessible parking, close to entrance

7. **Provide accessible restrooms**
    - Examples: big enough to easily maneuver wheelchair or walker; sinks, counters and other fixtures should be lowered for wheelchair users access and allow room for knee and toe clearance); include grab bars in toilet stalls.

8. **Install elevator or stair lift**
    - Examples: accessible elevators should include large print and braille signage and be large enough to easily maneuver a wheelchair. Stair lift may provide a short term option if an elevator is cost prohibitive.

Not all changes can be made quickly, but it's important to address concerns of a youth with disabilities currently involved in your Children's or Youth Ministry and the youth's family as quickly as possible. Some accessibility solutions might be cost prohibitive, so you may need to brainstorm ways to make the facility accessible that can meet short-term needs of your ministry. This might be as simple as changing to a first floor classroom or renting a ramp.

Meeting and Activity Room Accessibility

In addition to some of the obvious accessibility concerns, such as parking, stairs, and restrooms, some youth with disabilities might have additional accessibility challenges in the meeting or activity areas. Space for maneuvering with wheelchairs and other mobility devices, lighting, height of tables and counters are a few of the areas you should consider. As always, talk to the youth with a disability or the youth's parents or guardians to identify specific needs.

The following information is to help you be aware of what the youth with a disability might need to fully participate in activities and meetings. This isn't a complete list. You'll need to be alert to each individual youth with a disability's specific needs.

For a youth with a mobility disability:

- The room should be easy to navigate in a wheelchair, with a walker or canes.
- The work areas should be high enough for a wheelchair to fit under.
- Chairs with arms should be available.
- Craft and other activity supplies should be reachable from a wheelchair.
- The young person in a wheelchair should be able to reach the sink and supplies.

For a Blind youth or youth with a visual impairment:

- Doors should always be left open.
- The layout of the room should be the same for each meeting.
- Craft and other activity supplies should be kept in the same location.
- Braille or large print signage and labels should be used.

For Deaf youth or youth that are hard of hearing:

- The room should be well lit to increase clarity and decrease visual fatigue.
- The use of carpet or area rugs can be used to create a quieter environment.
- There should be a direct and unobstructed line of sight to the activity leader and the Sign Language interpreter.
- Directions should be written on a white board or given in a handout.
- Videos should be closed captioned.

Emergency Protocols

To complete your barrier free facility, make sure your emergency protocols include a plan that meets the specific needs of each youth with a disability. If you don't already have an emergency plan, now is the time to get a team together and create one. Remember to include individuals with disabilities and their family on the team. To help you get started on facility risks, visit Adventist Risk Management (adventistrisk.org) and print out their Church Risk-Assessment form and/or their School Self-Inspection form. Then you will want to identify specific concerns for youth with disabilities. Other helpful resources include schools and disability

sites that discuss emergency planning for students with disabilities. Once you have an emergency plan, your entire team should have regular training on how to meet the needs of each specific youth with a disability during an emergency. Remember to keep key information and plans current and accessible to all.

Areas of Emergency Preparedness

Your emergency plan should include the following areas and how to address specific needs of each youth with a disability:

- Preparing for medical emergencies
- Preparing for severe weather
- Preparing to shelter in place
- Preparing an emergency kit

Adapting an Emergency Plan to Individual Disabilities

A general plan may not meet the needs of a young person with a disability in your ministry. You will need to adjust the plan to meet the specific needs of the youth with a disability.

Examples

- Escape routes should be marked with accessible signage and be clear of obstacles. Practice locating and following the escape routes before there is an emergency.
- Use alert systems with assistive technology like flashing lights, voice alerts, or vibrating pagers.
- If medication and medical equipment are needed for the youth with a disability, they should be available to all ministry team members. The team members should know where the medication and medical equipment is located and receive training in how and when to administer medication and how to use medical equipment.
- Assign assistants to youth with disabilities that may need additional support during an emergency. The assistant should receive training in how to support the youth with a disability. A backup assistant should be trained in case the assistant is unavailable. If the assistant is the youth with a disability's parent or guardian, make sure you discuss the emergency plan with the designated family member.
- Practice drills should be held. However, for some youth with disabilities the drills may need to be done in small groups or alone. Youth with disabilities with sensory impairments that may be overwhelmed by loud noises, lack of routine, and unfamiliar spaces should have the steps and sounds introduced in small increments and slowly build up to what they would do in an actual emergency.
- Emergency kits should include a notepad and pencil for communication with Deaf youth or for youth with language impairments. Medication and directions for use can be kept in the emergency kit. Parents can provide a to-go bag with their young person's favorite items, snacks, activities and additional things to keep the youth occupied, soothed and quiet.

Activities

Give examples of Universal Design in everyday life and how they would help a young person with a disability in your ministry.

In small groups select a disability and then identify what barriers in your church or facility would be a barrier for including a young person with the selected disability. Then brainstorm solutions to the barrier.

Select one or more areas of an emergency plan and list how you would adapt it for a youth with a specific disability.

Specific Learning Disabilities - PSYO 260

Description

This workshop discusses Specific Learning Disabilities and how ministry leaders can include youth with Specific Learning Disabilities in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Audience/Participants

All Children's and Youth Ministries leaders and their team would benefit from this workshop.

Resource Material

Internet sites about the following:

- Youth with Specific Learning Disabilities
- Accommodations and modifications for youth with Specific Learning Disabilities
- Assistive technology for youth with Specific Learning Disabilities
- YouTube video of a young person discussing their Specific Learning Disability. See the activities section of this workshop for specific examples of videos or do a keyword YouTube search: My Learning Disability Story.

Handouts

- Resources for additional information on Specific Learning Disabilities from sites such as the following:
- Learning Disability Association of America at ldanatl.org, Learning Disability Association of Canada at ldac-acta.ca, National Center for Learning Disabilities at ncld.org, or Redflags Bermuda at redflagsbermuda.org/learning-disabilities
- List of common accommodations and modification for youth with Specific Learning Disabilities

What Your Participants Will Learn

- The definition of a Specific Learning Disability
- Challenges for youth with Specific Learning Disabilities
- Accommodations and modifications for youth with Specific Learning Disabilities

Workshop Content

- Overview of specific learning disabilities
- How ministry leaders can include youth with specific learning disabilities
- Tips for in Children's and Youth Ministries

What a Specific Learning Disability Is Not

A Specific Learning Disability is not a problem with intelligence or motivation. Youth with Specific Learning Disabilities are as intelligent as their peers; some may even be gifted intellectually. Specific Learning Disabilities are not a result of a visual, hearing, mobility, or cognitive disability. Specific Learning Disabilities can not be cured or outgrown. However, they can be remediated and accommodated.

Specific Learning Disabilities Defined

Specific Learning Disabilities covers a range of neurological processing disorders that vary in severity. Specific Learning Disabilities can cause challenges in reading, writing and/or math.

The following processes may be affected:

- Auditory and visual perception input. This may cause problems with reading, spelling, writing, understanding and using language.
- Integration of information. This may impact prioritizing, organizing, doing mathematics, and following instructions.
- Memory storage and retrieval. This may create difficulties with storing and retrieving information from short and/or long term memory.
- Output of information. This can cause problems with spoken language.
- Fine and gross motor skills. This may cause difficulties with precision, finger dexterity, hand eye coordination, and balance.

(What are learning disabilities, ldaamerica.org)

Challenges for Youth with Specific Learning Disabilities

Not all youth with Specific Learning Disabilities have the same challenges. As always, the best way to discover how a youth is affected by a Specific Learning Disabilities is to talk to the young person and the young person's family. The following are just a few of the challenges that youth with Specific Learning Disabilities may experience.

- Trouble reading, writing, or doing simple math
- Trouble with spelling
- Difficulty answering open ended questions
- Difficulty writing legibly
- Difficulty following directions
- Understanding abstract concepts
- Trouble using scissors
- Trouble with hand eye coordination
- Difficulty learning to ride a bike
- Trouble catching or dribbling a ball
- Trouble jumping or skipping
- Difficulty learning to tie shoe laces
- Difficulty starting, planning, and/or organizing a project
- Trouble remembering what someone said
- Trouble completing assignments or activities
- Difficulty memorizing
- Difficulty keeping track of assignments and other objects
- Trouble with time management
- Difficulty knowing right from left
- Difficulty interpreting or recognising social cues

All Youth Have Gifts

Remember to focus on things a young person with a Specific Learning Disability does well! No one wants to constantly be reminded of what they can't do or what they have problems doing. Focusing on the positive can increase young people's confidence and self-worth and even their determination to try difficult things.

Purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries Revisited

Remember that the purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries is to welcome all youth, to encourage the development of individual gifts, to help all young people experience success and, most importantly, to grow closer to Jesus. This purpose should be your focus as a leader, not rigidly fulfilling requirements.

Accommodations for Youth with Specific Learning Disabilities

Accommodations need to be made to meet the individual needs of each youth with a Specific Learning Disability. The same accommodations may not work for all youth with a Specific Learning Disability. Again, this is why it is important to talk to the youth with a Specific Disability and/or the youth's parents or guardians about what accommodations the youth will need. This should be an ongoing discussion, so needs can be identified for new activities or adjustments made if accommodations aren't working. Accommodations should be discussed and provided in an unobtrusive and confidential manner.

Common Accommodations

- Allow verbal responses instead of written answers
- Allow a scribe to dictate answers or other information
- Give frequent breaks in activities
- List fewer items per page
- Use large font with more white space on each page
- Present information and directions orally and in writing
- Provide a timeline for starting and completing a project
- Color code activities and directions
- Allow the use of a dry erasable board instead of pencil and paper
- Allow the use of assistive technology, i.e. spell check, voice-to-text programs
- Provide extra time to process information
- Do not require reading aloud (If youth is willing to read aloud, give the text ahead of time so it can be practiced.)
- Use highlighters to identify important information
- Break down new skills or information into small chunks

Modifications for Youth with Specific Learning Disabilities

At times you may need to alter your expectations, the content or the standard of a requirement inorder for the youth with a Specific Learning Disability to participate in the activity and experience success. It's important to talk to the youth with a Specific Learning Disability and/or the youth's parents or guardians about any modifications that need to be made. Ahead of time, you should explain the requirement to the young person with a Specific Learning Disability and the young person's family. Then ask if they have any concerns about the youth's ability to successfully do the activities and if they have ideas for modifications. If they don't have any suggestions, you'll need to research possible modifications.

Common Modifications

- Reduce the amount of information to be memorized
- Replace memorizing with another activity on the same topic: art project, skit
- Change the format of a test: use a word bank or multiple choice questions
- Replace reading a book with another activity on the same topic: interview people, watch a video, visit a museum
- Replace writing in a journal with another activity on the same theme: art journal, photo journal
- Extend the amount of time required of an activity or exam

Examples of Accommodations and Modifications in Your Ministry

For the My God requirement for Sunbeams

For the Sunbeam with a Specific Learning Disability that has a difficult time memorizing, allow the use of tabs to mark verses in the Bible. Then ask the Sunbeam to explain the meaning of the verses instead of memorizing the verses.

Craft directions for Vacation Bible School

When teaching a craft, write the directions on a poster or dry erasable board or for nonreaders use pictures of each step for all children to see while you orally explain. Showing a completed project and modeling each step is also helpful.

Finding and reading Bible verses in Sabbath School

Some young people with a Specific Learning Disability may struggle to locate Bible verses and be uncomfortable reading the verses aloud. Ahead of time (after last week's Sabbath School class or by text, give the young person with a Specific Learning Disability a Bible verse to practice locating and reading, so the youth can prepare ahead of time.

Pathfinder Knitting Honor

For a Pathfinder that has difficulties with fine motor skills, substitute larger sized knitting needles when working on the Knitting Honor. Patterns that work well with the larger needles could also be substituted instead of the projects listed for the honor requirements.

Investiture Achievement Spiritual Discovery Voyager requirement

Ahead of time, give the Pathfinder with a Specific Learning Disability each of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs and Bible texts the youth will be assigned to discuss in a group. Divide the club into small groups. Give each group a copy of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs and supporting Bible texts. Assign each group one or two of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs. Have each group create a poster, collage or storyboard that illustrates the assigned fundamental beliefs. Display the projects at a club meeting or at church.

Investiture Achievement Personal Growth Companion requirement

If reading or reading comprehension is a challenge for the Pathfinder with a Specific Learning Disability, make audio recordings of the weekly devotionals available or encourage the use of text-to-speech programs or scan reader pens. Some families may need assistance finding, funding or using assistive technology, so you may need to provide assistance. Additionally, the Pathfinder may need help creating a timeline for the weekly readings. You should check in weekly to check on progress or see if additional assistance is needed.

Investiture Achievement Spiritual Discovery Friend requirement

Memorizing all the books of the New Testament may create challenges for a Pathfinder with a Specific Learning Disability. Instead of memorizing, allow the Pathfinder to use tabs to mark each New Testament book. Then have the Pathfinder participate in fun New Testament Bible activities and games and allow the use of the Bible with chapter tabs. Also, chunking the New Testament into just a few books at a time to memorize over a longer period of time instead of all of them at once might work for some Pathfinders.

Activities

Watch a YouTube Video of a young person discussing a personal experience with a Specific Learning Disability. Here are two videos to check out, but you can select a video of your choice:

- Overcoming a Struggle with Learning Disabilities - Josh Brandon's Story on Hear My Story Co;
- STORYTIME: My Learning Disability + Academic Journey, What It Taught Me & Encouraging Tips on Desirae M.

In small groups or pairs, brainstorm ways to present new information to young people with Specific Learning Disabilities other than a lecture or oral presentation.

Identify activities in your ministry that might cause difficulties for a young person with a Specific Learning Disability. Explain why each activity might cause difficulties. Then discuss accommodations or modifications for each activity that would help the young person achieve success.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder - PSYO 261

Description

This workshop discusses Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and how ministry leaders can include youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Audience Participants

All Children's and Youth Ministries leaders and their team would benefit from this workshop.

Resource Material

Internet sites such as the following:

ADHD organizations, i.e. ADDitudemag.org, CHADD.org, addwarehouse.com, brainfacts.org, Centre for ADHD Awareness, Canada at caddac.ca and Support ADHD Bermuda on Facebook

YouTube video of a young person with ADHD discussing ADHD; keyword Youtube search: what it's like to have ADHD my story. Specific videos suggestions in the activities section.

Handouts on the following:

- Challenges for youth with ADHD
- Accommodations and modifications for young people with ADHD

Low-tech technology examples: graphic organizers, fidgets, kneaded erasers, rubbery finger springs, stress balls, chair rubber bands, doodling supplies

What Your Participants Will Learn

The definition of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Challenges for youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Accommodations and modifications for youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Workshop Content

What Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Is Not

The Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) diagnosis was not created to excuse poor behavior of young people. Youth with ADHD are not lazy or unmotivated. ADHD is not the result of poor parenting or a bad diet. ADHD does not mainly occur in males. ADHD can not be cured or outgrown. However, it can be treated and remediated.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Defined

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a neurological condition which is severe enough to interfere with day-to-day functions in multiple settings: home, school, church, clubs, work. Research has found possible structural differences in the brains of people with ADHD compared to people without ADHD. These neurological differences cause problems with the brain's executive functions: working memory, inhibitory control and mental flexibility.

Executive Functions Defined

Working memory temporarily stores information. Some of the skills working memory affects are decision making, reasoning, reading, taking notes and having a conversation.

Inhibitory control manages urges related to thoughts, emotions and behaviors.

Mental flexibility is the ability to switch thoughts or actions in response to a situation, environment or activity.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Subtypes

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity includes three subtypes: predominantly hyperactive-impulsive type, inattentive type and combined type. A young person can have one or more of the subtypes. The severity and challenges of each subtype may affect each youth with ADHD differently.

Accepting the Youth with ADHD

Once you are told a young person has ADHD, you should accept the diagnosis. With ADHD, more than many other diagnoses, people tend to freely share their opinions about ADHD by questioning the diagnosis or sharing diets and supplements. As a ministry leader, these actions are not acceptable. Youth with ADHD and their families are looking to you to discredit or to offer a cure for ADHD; instead, they are looking to you to welcome and include the young person with ADHD.

Challenges for Youth with ADHD

Not all youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity have the same challenges. As always, the best way to discover how a youth is affected by ADHD is to talk to the young person and the young person's family. The following are just a few of the challenges that a youth with ADHD may experience.

- Short attention span
- Difficulty listening to others
- Trouble concentrating on details
- Easily distracted
- Poor organizational skills
- Difficulty completing tasks
- Trouble managing time
- Often interrupts others
- Difficulty taking turns
- Blurts out answers or interrupts
- Takes risks without considering the consequences
- Trouble making friends
- Difficulty prioritizing
- Appears to be constantly moving
- Fidgets
- Loses or forgets things often
- Difficulty staying on task

All Youth Have Gifts

Remember to focus on things a young person with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder does well! No one wants to be constantly reminded of what they can't do or what they have problems doing. Focusing on the positive can increase young people's confidence and self-worth and even their determination to try difficult things.

Purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries Revisited

Remember that the purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries is to welcome all youth, to encourage the development of individual gifts, to help all young people experience success and, most importantly, to grow closer to Jesus. This purpose should be your focus as a leader, not rigidly fulfilling requirements.

Accommodations for Youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Accommodations need to be made to meet the individual needs of each youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The same accommodations may not work for all youth with ADHD. Again, this is why it is important to talk to the youth with ADHD and/or the youth's parents or guardians about what accommodations the youth will need. This should be an ongoing discussion, so needs can be identified for new activities or adjustments made if accommodations aren't working. Accommodations should be discussed and provided in an unobtrusive and confidential manner.

Common Accommodations

- Preferential seating away from distraction and near instructor
- Provide a tidy, organized meeting space
- Display important information and rules where they can be easily seen
- Label supply storage locations
- Give directions orally and in writing
- Give a written summary of oral presentations
- Color code information
- Highlight specific requirements on handouts
- Use an agreed upon signal for switching activities
- Use an agreed upon signal to help the youth know it's time to get back on track
- Help starting an activity
- Assistance making a timeline for starting, working on and completing activities
- Alternate between seated and physical activities
- Breakdown tasks into manageable chunks
- Use a timer for all youth taking turns
- Allow activities to be completed at home
- Extra time on timed activities
- Use assistive technology: fidget tools, pencil grips, graphic organizers, highlighter pens, audio books, text-to-speech readers, voice-to-text software, to-do list software or phone calendars with color coding and reminders

Modifications for Youth With Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

At times you may need to alter your expectations, the content or the standard of a requirement inorder for the youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder to participate in an activity and to experience success. It's important to talk to the youth with ADHD and/or the youth's parents or guardians about any modifications that need to be made. You should explain the requirement to the young person with ADHD and the young person's family. Then ask if they have any concerns about the youth's ability to successfully do the activities and if they have ideas for modifications. If they don't have any suggestions, you'll need to research possible modifications.

Common Modifications

- Reduce the amount of information to be memorized
- Reduce the number of questions to be answered
- Replace memorization with another activity such as an art project or skit
- Give frequent short quizzes instead of a long test at the end of an requirement or unit
- Replace reading a book with another activity such as watching a video, going on a field trip, interviewing people

Examples of Accommodations and Modifications in Your Ministry

For the "My God" requirement for Sunbeams

For the Sunbeam with ADHD that has difficulty memorizing, allow the use of tabs to mark verses in the Bible. Then ask the Sunbeam to explain the meaning of the verses instead of memorizing the verses.

Behavior Management in Vacation Bible School

Post the rules in an easy to read location. Review the rules often. Ahead of time, talk to the young person with ADHD and agree on a signal to be used when the young person needs to stop a behavior and get back on track. Examples of signals are standing near the young person with ADHD, picking up and holding a certain object or a hand signal.

Sabbath School Behavioral Expectations

Youth with ADHD may have a difficult time sitting quietly during Sabbath Schools. You can help by having a variety of activities that give all young people a chance to move. You can also let the young person with ADHD know that it's okay to use a fidget tool or get up and move to the back of the room to stand, pace or sit on the floor.

Pathfinder Wood Carving Honor

Before starting the requirements for the Wood Carving Honor, review safety rules both orally and in writing. Youth with ADHD can be impulsive, so make sure they follow the safety rules. Consider asking an adult to unobtrusively watch that the youth with ADHD is correctly using the tools. Demonstrate the steps for carving the item and give the steps in writing with visual aids for each step.

Investiture Achievement Spiritual Discovery Friend Requirements

Instead of having the Friend with ADHD memorize all New Testament books at one time, divide the books into groups of four (or whatever number works for the Friend) to memorize weekly. The youth should not be required to list all of the books after completing the small grouping memorization. However, you can add an activity such as a craft activity about the New Testament books to reinforce learning all of the New Testament Books. Requirement 1b has Friends competing to quickly find the books of the New Testament. Let the Friend with ADHD use a Bible with book tabs and consider competing in pairs.

Investiture Achievement Personal Growth Explorer Requirement

To help the Explorer with ADHD get started and not be overwhelmed, provide a color coded checklist of each weekly reading and journal assignment that includes a date completed space. If the checklist gets lost, remind the Explorer it's okay to ask for a new one. Have an older peer or an adult to call or text the Explorer once or twice a week to check on progress and see if assistance is needed. Also, this requirement could be done with a peer in person or on Zoom/FaceTime or with a family member.

Activities

At the beginning of the workshop, select a fidget to use during the presentation. Later in the workshop discuss how the fidget helped you or could help a youth with ADHD to focus.

Watch a YouTube video of a young person discussing a personal experience with ADHD. Here are some videos to check out, but you can select a video of your choice: This is What It's Really Like to Have ADHD at How to ADHD; My ADHD Story at Kojo Sarfo, DN; Being Latino with ADHD The Struggle is Real at Andrea Farias.

Discuss what challenges church services might present for youth with ADHD.

Individually or in small groups, identify activities in your ministry that might cause difficulties for a young person with ADHD. Explain why each activity might cause difficulties. Then discuss accommodations or modifications for each activity that would help the young person achieve success.

Autism Spectrum Disorder - PSYO 262

Description

This workshop discusses Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and how ministry leaders can include youth with ASD in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Audience Participants

All Children's and Youth Ministries leaders and their team would benefit from this workshop.

Resource Material

Internet sites such as the following:

- American Autism & Rehabilitation Foundation, americanautismcenter.org
- AIDE Canada:REsources for Autism, aidecanada.ca
- Base Bermuda Autism Support and Education, bermudaautism.bm

Handouts on the following:

- Accommodations and modifications for youth with ASD
- Sensory break strategies
- Adaptive VBS strategies for kids with ASD
- Tips for hiking or camping with youth with ASD

What Your Participants Will Learn

- The definition of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Challenges for youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Accommodations and modifications for youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Workshop Content

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Myths

- Youth with ASD are all alike with the same challenges
- ASD is a behavioral disorder
- Youth with ASD can be identified by appearance
- Youth with ASD can't form loving relationships
- ASD only affects males
- ASD is caused by poor parenting

Autism Spectrum Disorder Definition

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a neurodevelopmental disorder. Neurodevelopmental refers to the brain's development of pathways (the nervous system). These pathways send messages to and from the brain from all areas of the body and influence performance and functioning. Autism Spectrum Disorder refers to a broad range of challenges. These challenges include but are not limited to social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and non-verbal communication. There is wide variation in the nature and severity of symptoms in each individual with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Challenges for Youth with ASD

Not all youth with ASD have the same challenges or challenges at the same level of severity. As always, the best way to discover how a youth is affected by ASD is to talk to the young person and the young person's family. The following are just a few of the challenges that a youth with ASD may experience.

Challenges with social interactions

Social skill struggles include making peer friendships, engaging in others' interests and emotions, participating in reciprocal interactions such as taking turns and responding on topic in a conversation, and understanding if they are being bullied or teased. Often large individual differences are seen in social skills.

Challenges with intense sensory differences

Sensory overload can be caused by noisy, cluttered environments, school alarms or buzzers, fluorescent lights, loud voices, food smells and other odors, and echoes in the gym or auditorium. For the youth with ASD, touching others or others touching the youth with ASD should be optional.

Challenges with changes in routines

Struggles can occur when routines, such as bedtime or morning rituals, are changed, going somewhere new, changing classrooms or instructors, switching to a new activity, and changing the order of an activity or meeting.

Challenges with self-regulation (understanding and managing behavior and reactions)

When feeling overwhelmed or experiencing sensory overload, an individual with ASD may make noises, fidget, pace or rock back and forth to self-sooth.

Challenges with reading and verbal comprehension

Reading and verbal comprehension challenges include understanding and responding to oral and written language at a speed and level considered below age level. It also includes difficulty understanding figurative, abstract language and sarcasm. Examples of figurative language include, it hit me like a ton of bricks, or I'm so hungry I could eat a horse. Abstract language examples include concepts such as freedom, faith, and grace.

Challenges with executive function

Executive functions include challenges with memory, especially working memory. Working memory temporarily stores information. The skills working memory affects are decision making, reasoning, reading, taking notes, planning, organizing, and self-control. Executive function difficulties may also make a youth with ASD uncomfortable switching between tasks.

Challenges with fine and gross motor skills

Fine motor skill challenges may include writing, drawing, cutting, pasting, buttoning cloths or tying shoes. Gross motor skill challenges include jumping, kicking, sitting, climbing, walking and swimming.

Focus on the Positive

Remember to focus on the positive. All young people have areas of strengths and so does the young person with ASD. No one wants to be constantly reminded of what they can't do or what they have problems doing. Focusing on the positive can increase young people's confidence and self-worth and even their determination to try difficult things. Some, but not all, youth with ASD may have the following strengths:

- Strong attention to detail
- Visually perceptive
- Creative
- Excellent mathematical and technical abilities
- Honest and loyal
- Punctual
- Strong adherence to rules
- Alternative problem solving
- Think and learn in a visual way
- Rote memory

altogetherautism.org.nz

Purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries Revisited

Remember that the purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries is to welcome all youth, to encourage the development of individual gifts, to help all young people experience success and, most importantly, to grow closer to Jesus. This purpose should be your focus as a leader, not rigidly fulfilling requirements.

Accommodations for Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Accommodations need to be made to meet the individual needs of each youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The same accommodations may not work for all youth with ASD. Again, this is why it is important to talk to the youth with ADS and/or the youth's parents or guardians about what accommodations the youth will need. This should be an ongoing discussion, so needs can be identified for new activities or adjustments made if accommodations aren't working. Accommodations should be discussed and provided in an unobtrusive and confidential manner.

Common Accommodations

- Clearly established routines
- Advise and prepare for routine changes
- Use noise-canceling headphones
- Provide sensory breaks
- Provide safe, quiet spaces
- Give preferential seating away from distractions
- Have flexible seating options: standing work areas, wobble chairs/stools, chairs with kick/bouncy bands, disc cushions, scoop rockers
- Allow fidgets
- Put tennis balls on chair legs to stop scraping noise
- Reduce visual clutter from walls and bulletin boards
- Use floor lamps instead of fluorescent lights
- Post or handout visual schedules with words and pictures/symbols
- Use graphic organizers
- Give visual and oral instructions
- Simplify and declutter handouts and instruction sheets
- Model each step of an activity
- Use of computer instead of writing with pen/pencil and paper
- Give extra time to complete tasks
- Assign a trusted and trained adult or peer to read, scribe and assist in activities
- Break activities or requirements into smaller chunks of information and actions
- Model and practice appropriate behavior
- Provide frequent feedback and checks on progress on projects

Modifications for Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder

At times you may need to alter your expectations, the content or the standard of a requirement inorder for the youth with ASD to participate in an activity and to experience success. It's important to talk to the youth with ASD and/or the youth's parents or guardians about any modifications that need to be made. You should explain the requirement to the young person with ASD and the young person's family. Then ask if they have any concerns about the youth's ability to successfully do the activities and if they have any ideas for modifications. If they don't have any suggestions, you'll need to research possible modifications.

Common Modifications

- Work at own pace
- Provide information and activities that meet the youth with ASD's level of understanding
- Allow reading a short article or watching a video instead of reading a book
- Reduce the number of tasks required
- Adapt information or activity to include the youth with ASD's interest
- Accept alternative forms of presenting understanding: drawing pictures of a book's theme instead of a written book report, create a storyboard, make a video
- Replace an activity or requirement with something that meets the youth with ASD's abilities and interests. The youth should still feel a part of the ministry group and not feel excluded. Discuss

the replacement activity or requirement with the youth with ASD and the youth's family before changes are made.

Examples of Accommodations and Modifications in Your Ministry

Sabbath School Accommodations

Start on time and stick to the same schedule each Sabbath. If there is going to be a schedule or activity change, let the youth with ASD and the youth's family know in advance. Provide noise reduction headphones, especially if the singing or special music is too loud for the youth with ASD. Ahead of time, let the youth with ASD know it's okay to use a fidget, pace at the back of the room or go to a designated quiet room if needed.

Vacation Bible School Accommodation

Begin each meeting with a pictorial schedule of the day's activities. VBS is a fun, colorful and sometimes noisy event; however, you may need to declutter, turn down the volume and limit the visual and other sensory information in the room inorder for the child with ASD to participate and be comfortable.

Youth Hike

Wisely select a hike that won't trigger the youth with ASD. Begin talking about and preparing for the hike weeks ahead of the time. Show the youth with ASD a map of the hike to decrease anxiety and let the youth know how long the hike will be, what you'll be doing on the hike and when the youth with ASD will be returning home. Allow the youth with ASD to bring a device (i.e. IPad) or other comforting, familiar object.

Tamarakaanderson.com, 2017, 6 tips to Hiking with Children with Autism Spectrum

Pathfinder Honors

Let the youth with ASD select honors to work on in your club meeting even if the honors are not the same ones the club is earning. Another option is to have the youth with ASD do an activity related to the honor the club is earning but modify the activity. For example, if the club is working on the basketball honor, the youth could practice one skill such as shooting a basket. You might need to provide a low hanging hoop and let the youth with ASD repeatedly drop the ball in the hoop. Have an adult or peer assist and encourage.

Investiture Achievement Making Friends the Friend Requirement

For many youth with ASD making friends is a challenge. For this requirement, select one to three qualities (kind, good listener, interested) of a friend for the youth with ASD to learn during the year. Only work on one quality at a time. Model each step of the quality. and have the youth with ASD practice with family and other trusted peers. If the youth with ASD is severely challenged just practicing these qualities is enough to meet the entire Making Friend requirements.

Investiture Achievement Health & Fitness Requirement all levels

Youth with ASD may find exercising a challenge due to poor motor skills, balance and coordination. Youth with ASD are at risk of having an inactive lifestyle and all of the health issues that come with being inactive. Helping youth with ASD find a fitness activity they enjoy is a great achievement. For youth with ASD that are severely challenged by physical activities help the youth discover an activity to learn and then practice throughout the year. Examples of activities that might be ASD friendly or adaptable are using a kick board to swim, riding a recumbent exercise bike while using an IPad or other device, playing soccer or just practicing kicking the ball, playing disc golf, lifting weights (start with very low weights),or learning martial arts. These activities can be practiced throughout the year and can meet all the Health & Fitness requirements.

Activities

Journal concerns and questions you have about having a young person with ASD in your ministry.

Watch one or two Youtube videos that feature young people with ASD or parents of youth with ASD telling their stories. You may want to select videos at different ends of the spectrum to give yourself a broader understanding of ASD. Here are some videos to check out, but you can select videos of your choice: Stories from the Spectrum: Growing up with Autism at Storyhive, Living with Autism: Maliyah's Story at NationalChildren or visit For the Love of Gabe channel on YouTube.

In pairs, select strengths that some youth with ASD have. Discuss ways you could incorporate those strengths into an activity in your ministry.

Individually or in small groups, identify activities or locations of activities in your ministry that might cause difficulties for a young person with ASD. Explain why each activity might cause difficulties. Then discuss accommodations or modifications for each activity that would help the young person achieve success.

Intellectual Disability - PSYO 263

Description

This workshop discusses Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and how ministry leaders can include youth with ID in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Audience Participants

All Children's and Youth MInistries leaders and their team would benefit from this workshop.

Resource Material

Internet sites about the following:

- Intellectual Disabilities Fact Sheets
- Adaptive sports, recreation activities or recess games
- Special Olympics developmental sports essentials
- Including students with Intellectual Disabilities in marching band (ideas for drill and marching)
- YouTube Videos of youth with Intellectual Disabilities or their family sharing their experiences (The YouTube channel SBSK is a great resource for videos of youth with ID.)

Handouts

- The Adventurer Law
- The Pathfinder Cake Decorating Honor requirements

What Your Participants Will Learn

- The definition of Intellectual Disabilities
- Challenges for youth with Intellectual Disabilities
- Accommodations and modifications for youth with Intellectual Disabilities

Workshop Content

Myths about Intellectual Disabilities

- Most people with an Intellectual Disability (ID)
    - Have a severe disability
    - Receive great medical care
    - Can't play sports
    - Can't get married or have children
- Specialolypmics.org

Intellectual Disability Defined

An Intellectual Disability limits mental functioning in skills, communication and social skills. These limits cause a child to develop and to learn more slowly than peers. Children with intellectual disabilities may take longer to speak, walk, feed themselves and dress themselves. However, they can learn but it may take longer than peers. Some children with Intellectual Disabilities may be severely limited in what they can learn. There are many disabilities that may co-occur with Intellectual Disabilities and cause additional limitations and challenges.

ID Fact Sheet,ecac-parentcenter.org

Intellectual Disability Levels

- Mild
- Moderate
- Severe
- Profound

Within each of the four levels of ID, a young person may have strengths and weaknesses and differing levels of severity. A youth with moderate ID may not be able to read or have limited speech, but may only have mild social and physical impairments. As with many disabilities, each young person has unique strengths and challenges.

Causes of Intellectual Disabilities

- Down Syndrome
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Fragile X Syndrome
- Genetic conditions
- Birth deficits
- Injury during birth
- Injury after birth
- Head injury
- Stroke
- Certain infections, e.g. toxoplasmosis, rubella

Challenges for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities

Some of the conditions that cause Intellectual Disabilities may also involve physical and emotional disabilities, can vary from mild to severe, and can contribute to the youth with ID's challenges. As always it's important to get to know the youth with an ID in your ministry inorder to know what needs the youth has. The following are examples of difficulties some youth with Intellectual Disabilities might have. They may also experience these challenges with varying degrees of severity.

- Talk later, have trouble talking or unable to talk
- Difficulty learning at grade or age level
- Trouble with handwriting
- Trouble with spelling and punctuation
- Difficulty putting ideas onto paper
- Difficulty generalizing information
- Trouble remembering things
- Trouble with new information
- Trouble learning to read
- Difficulty with reading comprehension
- Difficulty processing quickly
- Difficulty adapting to new situations
- Difficulties communicating their wants and needs
- Trouble with self-care: bathing, dressing, feeding self
- Difficulty with abstract concepts such as money or time
- Trouble understanding social rules
- Trouble understanding consequences of their actions
- Trouble understanding how to pay for things
- Difficulties with problem solving
- Difficulties with logical thinking
- Trouble identifying unsafe situations
- Trouble with technology: phones, computers, tablets

All Youth Have Gifts

Remember to focus on things a young person with an Intellectual Disability does well! No one wants to constantly be reminded of what they can't do or what

they have problems doing. Focusing on the positive can increase young people's confidence and self-worth and even their determination to try difficult things.

Purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries Revisited

Remember that the purpose of Children's and Youth MInistries is to welcome all youth, to encourage the development of individual gifts, to help all young people experience success and, most importantly, to grow closer to Jesus. This purpose should be your focus as a leader, not rigidly fulfilling requirements.

Accommodations for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities

Accommodations need to be made to meet the individual needs of each youth with an Intellectual Disability. The same accommodations may not work for all youth with Intellectual Disabilities. As always, it's important to talk to the youth with an Intellectual Disability and/or the youth's family about what accommodations the youth will need. This should be an ongoing discussion, so needs can be identified for new activities or adjustments made if accommodations aren't working. Accommodations should be discussed and provided in an unobtrusive and confidential manner.

Common Accommodations

- Allow verbal response instead of written response
- Demonstrate verbal and written instructions
- Give immediate feedback
- Allow use of computer and spell check
- Give concrete examples
- Speak slowly
- Ask one question at a time
- Use a communication device
- Provide visual instructions or to do lists
- Allow use of a scribe to write responses
- Provide extra spacing on activity sheets and forms to accommodate difficulty writing in small spaces
- Allow use of calculator
- Use pre-marked levels on measuring devices
- Record verbal instructions so they can be listened to as often as needed
- Use both written and pictorial directions on frequently used devices
- Color code items and directions
- Divide large tasks into smaller activities
- Label storage where supplies or sports equipment are kept with pictures or symbols
- Use alarm on watch to remind of a task
- Create a numbered task list to help sequentially complete a task
- Use a large button phone
- Use a phone with universal signs such as the police, fire and ambulance
- Use orthopedic writing aids
- ID Fact Sheet, ecac-parentcenter.org
- Job Accommodation Network for Persons with intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, wise.unt.edu

Modifications for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities

At times you may need to alter your expectations, the content or the standard of a requirement inorder for the youth with an Intellectual Disability to participate in the activity and to experience success. It's important to talk to the youth with ID and the youth's family about any modifications that need to be made. Ahead of time, you should explain the requirement to the young person with ID and the young person's family. Then ask if they have any concerns about the youth's ability to successfully do the activities and if they have ideas for modifications. If they don't have any suggestions, you'll need to research possible modifications.

Common Modifications

- Reduce the amount of information to be memorized
- Replace memorization with a different activity on the same topic
- Change the format of the test to short answer or open ended questions
- Reduce the number of tasks required/assigned and extend the time to complete the tasks
- Replace a required book with a book that is at the youth's reading level but is also appropriate for the youth's age
- Replace reading with another activity: watch a movie, go to a museum, interview people
- Replace written reports and journaling with other activities: skits, photo journals, collages
- Reword with simplified information
- Simplify a requirement or activity

Additional Tips for Assisting Youth with Intellectual Disabilities

- Avoid isolating the youth
- Keep help near if needed
- Teach new vocabulary
- Give concrete examples of abstract words
- Reteach concepts and skills as often as needed
- Don't ask yes or no questions when checking for understanding
- Provide a lot of positive feedback
- Give age appropriate, tangible rewards
- Model behavior
- Give repeated opportunities to practice new skills
- Create routines to help with behavior and understanding
- Teach specific skills needed for activities: using scissors, tying knots, kicking a ball
- ID Fact Sheet, ecac-parentcenter.org
- Job Accommodation Network for Persons with intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, wise.unt.edu

Examples of Accommodations and Modification in Your Ministry

For the My God requirement for Sunbeams

For the Sunbeam with an Intellectual Disability that can't read and has trouble memorizing, replace memorizing and explaining Bible verses about being saved by Jesus with a craft about being saved by Jesus. Also pre-teach and check for understanding of being saved by Jesus. If this is a difficult concept for the Sunbeam to understand, try replacing being saved with Jesus is my friend.

For the My Family Requirement for Builders

To begin this requirement, you may need to explain what it means for people to change and then give concrete examples. An Adventurer with an Intellectual Disability might not be able to explain family changes. Instead of explaining, the Adventurer, with assistance if needed, could make a photo album or photo collage of the youth's family showing how the family has changed or activities the family likes to do.

Finding and Reading Bible verses in Sabbath School

If a youth has a severe Intellectual Disability, pair the youth with a peer. If possible the youth with a severe ID could hold the Bible or signal when the team has found the verse. Additionally, you could give the youth with a mild ID the verses to practice locating and reading ahead of time. Provide the youth that reads and comprehends at a lower level an easy reading Bible (The Beginner Bible or The Adventure Bible for Early Readers), just make sure it's not below the youth's developmental age. Also, make sure all the youth in Sabbath School understand and are supportive of the changes that need to be made for the youth with ID to participate.

Craft and Activity Directions at VBS

For the child with an Intellectual Disability, give directions orally and with step-by step pictures. It's helpful for all children to see a completed project. Break the activity into smaller steps and model each step. Have a trained teen Buddy available to assist if needed. If a child is unable to sing, let the child shake a tambourine, beat on a drum, twirl a rhythm scarf or blow a whistle during songs.

Camping

For many Pathfinders, camping is their favorite activity. However, some youth with Intellectual Disabilities may be unsure about camping. To overcome the young person's fears, start small. Begin by having the young person camp in the backyard at their home. If home backyard camping is not an option, try afternoon camping or day camping. Use backyard or shorter introductory day camping experiences to teach camping basics and safety. Backyard camping should include fun outdoor activities. Some skills and safety rules may need to be pre-taught and practiced before camping.

How to Enjoy Campingwith a Child with a Intellectual Disability, by Brenda Stuart, August 20, 2021 at special.olympics.org/campingblog

Drill and Marching

If a young person with an Intellectual Disability wants to participate in your club's drill and marching, here are a few ideas of what you can do.

- Pre-teach commands
- Break instruction into simple steps
- Model movement
- Give handout with pictures and names of movements
- Provide time for practice
- Assign a buddy to assist during drill and marching
- Discuss accommodations for youth with disabilities with the competition organizers ahead of time.

Activities

Watch a YouTube video of a young person with an Intellectual Disability or the youth's family sharing their story. Here are two videos to check out, but you can select a video of your choice: Unable to Walk or Talk But Always Laughing on SBSK; Kids Meet Woman with Down Syndrome (Michela) Kids Meet on HiHo Kids.

In pairs, give specific examples of how to teach the abstract words in the Adventurer Law, so a child with Down Syndrome can understand what each word means.

Adventurer Law

Jesus help me to:

Be **obedient**

Be **pure**

Be **true**

Be **kind**

Be **respectful**

Be **attentive**

Be **helpful**

Be **cheerful**

Be **thoughtful**

Be **reverent**

What accommodations and modifications would you make to the Pathfinder Cake Decorating Honor for each of the following Pathfinders?

1. Mateo is a 13 year old boy with a mild Intellectual Disability. He also has fine motor skill challenges.
2. Mia is a 15 year old girl with a moderate Intellectual Disability. She is unable to read or write. She is able to do her own self-care with moderate support.

Mobility Disabilities - PSYO 264

Description

This workshop discusses mobility disabilities and how ministry leaders can include youth with mobility disabilities in Children's and Youth Ministries.

Audience/Participants

All Children's and Youth Ministries leaders and their team would benefit from this workshop.

Resource Material

Internet sites on the following:

Adaptive sports, adaptive recess and recreational activities, accessible camping and hiking

YouTube video of a young person discussing their specific mobility disability; YouTube key word search: In my own words wheelchair or talk to me physical disability

Handouts: adaptive sports, recreational activities and craft tools/devices

What Participants Will Learn

Definition of a mobility disability

Challenges for youth with mobility disabilities

Accommodations and modifications for youth with mobility disabilities

Workshop Content

- Overview of mobility disabilities
- How ministry leaders can include youth with mobility disabilities
- Tips for in Children's and Youth Ministries

Mobility Disability Definition

A mobility disability affects movement, range of motion and fine and/or gross motor skills. The youth with a mobility disability may have difficulties with balance, coordination, walking, and manipulating small objects. Some youth with disabilities may not be able to walk or may have extremely limited movement. Mobility disabilities vary in severity and abilities. A youth with a mobility disability may have additional health impairments/disabilities.

Examples of events or conditions that contribute to or cause a mobility disability include, but are not limited to the following:

- Amputation
- Paralysis
- Cerebral palsy
- Cystic fibrosis
- Spina bifida
- Stoke
- Muscular dystrophy
- Juvenile arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions
- Spinal cord injury
- Acquired brain injury
- Congenital disorders

Challenges for Youth with Mobility Disabilities

There are many different mobility disabilities,each with their own unique challenges. Therefore, not all youth with mobility disabilities have the same challenges or challenges at the same level of severity. As always, the best way to discover how a youth is affected by a mobility disability is to talk to the young person and the young person's family. The following examples include but are not limited to challenges a young person with mobility disabilities might experience.

- Handling, grasping or moving small objects: pencils, books, eating utensils
- Walking or walking distances
- Posture, sitting or standing
- Balance
- Coordination
- Excessive fatigue with movement or walking
- Low stamina
- Weak upper or lower body strength
- Twitching or spasticity
- Speech/communication
- Chronic pain
- Loss of muscle tone
- Tremors
- Bowel and bladder issues
- Numbness, tingling and/or increased sensitivity
- May have more respiratory or serious illnesses than peers
- Quickly transitioning locations or activities
- Transportation
- Social isolation
- Accessible physical environment

Focus on the Positive

Remember to focus on the positive. All you people have areas of strengths and so does the young person with a mobility disability. No one wants to be constantly reminded of what they can't do or what they have problems doing. Focusing on the positive can increase young people's confidence and self-worth and even their determination to try difficult things.

Purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries Revisited

Remember that the purpose of Children's and Youth Ministries is to welcome all youth, to encourage the development of individual gifts, to help all young people experience success and, most importantly, to grow closer to Jesus. This purpose should be your focus as a leader, not rigidly fulfilling requirements.

Accommodations for Youth with Mobility Disabilities

Accommodations need to be made to meet the individual needs of each youth with a mobility disability. The same accommodations may not work for all youth with mobility disabilities. Again, this is why it is important to talk to the youth with a mobility disability and the youth's parents or guardians about accommodations that the youth will need. This should be an ongoing discussion, so needs can be identified for new activities or adjustments made if accommodations aren't working. Accommodations should be discussed in an unobtrusive and confidential manner.

Common Accommodations

- Create a physically accessible environment that promotes independence: ramps, electronic door openers, accessible restrooms, accessible and valet parking
- Remove trip hazards: rugs, matts, clutter

- Create wide aisles or room to maneuver with a wheelchair, walker or crutches
- Relocate to another room or location if inaccessible
- Provide adjustable height and tilt tables
- All supplies and equipment should be inreach
- Use of assistive technology: voice recognition software, alternative keyboards, touch screens
- Replace writing with oral activities
- Longer transition time between activities
- Provide written copy of directions or presentations
- Extra time for activities and requirements
- Digit copy of text and audio books
- Use of trained buddy/assistant during meetings and activities
- Work in pairs or small groups
- No penalties for being late or missing meetings and activities
- Use lightweight balls, balloons or scarves for games
- Use a gutter ramp for bowling
- Lower the basketball hoop
- All to carry basketball in lap instead of dribbling

Modifications for Youth with Mobility Disabilities

- Give unlimited time on physical requirements
- Reduce number of times a physical activity has to be done
- Shorten distance of required hikes
- Replace required physical activities with alternative activities
- Omit a physical requirement
- Etiquette for Interacting with a Youth in a Wheelchair or Using Other Mobility Devices
- Make eye contact.
- Speak normally.
- No comments on wheelchair or mobility devices. Talk about personal interests and activities.
- Respect personal space. Don't touch, lean on, or push a youth's wheelchair or other mobility devices.
- Sit down when having conversations with a youth in a wheelchair.
- Allow youth in a wheelchair or with other mobility devices to help you: carry things, pass out supplies, tidy up.
- Don't assume a youth with a mobility disability needs assistance, but if you see the youth is struggling with something like reaching something or opening a door, offer to help.
- Don't say a youth is confined to a wheelchair. The wheelchair is a means of transportation and often is viewed as a means of freedom.

Stronggo.com

Examples of Accommodations and Modifications in Your Ministry

Pathfinder Cycling Honor

Some youth with mobility disabilities might be able to ride an adaptive bike: eclectic assist cycle, recumbent or tandem recumbent cycle. A youth with a mobility disability could give directions to a person as that person replaces brakes and derailers. The Pathfinder with a mobility disability might be able to use a stationary (standard or recumbent) bike and record miles. The miles and time allotted to do the rides should be modified to meet the needs of the Pathfinder with the mobility disability. If possible, figure out a way to involve in a meaningful way the Pathfinder with the mobility disability on the group's longer rides even if the Pathfinder can't physically do the ride. Riding in the sag van and giving support along the ride and route planning are ways the youth with a mobility disability might be involved.

Sabbath School

Make sure the Sabbath School classroom is easily accessible. If not, consider relocation to a classroom or area of the church that is. Make sure the room is easy to navigate in a wheelchair or with other mobility devices. Easy navigation includes creating wide aisles between the chairs, clearing obstacles from the floor, and using tables that are wheelchair accessible and providing a space for the youth that uses a wheelchair to sit with the group. If you are asking the youth to write or look-up answers, have the youth work in pairs if you have a young person with a mobility impairment that is challenged with writing or turning pages.

Vacation Bible School Crafts

For children with upper body and fine motor skill challenges, you will need to adapt craft activities. Here are some adaptive art tools that might be helpful: easy grip scissors, adaptive cutting aids, chubby/easy grip brushes, creative brushes (designs on the end of the brush), giant palm painters, table top easels, adjustable tables. Additional adaptations might include the following. Instead of drawing or painting, the child with fine motor skill challenges could use a stamp and inked stamp pads. Instead of a glue bottle, pour glue into a bowl and use a brush to "paint" the glue onto the craft. Pre-cut supplies needed to make the craft. Provide an art Buddy to provide assistance as needed.

Pathfinder Camping and Hiking

Camping and hiking is such a fun part of Pathfinders, you'll want to do all that you can to include youth with mobility disabilities. Here are a few tips to make camping and hiking accessible:

- Research accessible campgrounds and hiking trails ahead of time.
- Select a level campsite that has accessible showers and toilets.
- Locate full-service accessible campgrounds.
- Use accessible hiking trails.
- Rent an all-terrain wheelchair. Some parks rent electric mobility devices.
- Use a large tent with plenty of head room, a shallow entry lip and large entrance.
- Use a two room tent and use one room as a hygiene and toilet room.
- Use a cot and blankets instead of a sleeping bag.
- Use a trained buddy for assistance.

Rei.com

Swimming Honors and Activities Required for Investiture Achievement

Locate information on water safety for youth with disabilities and use this to replace some or all material for the Basic Water Safety Honor. Visit public pools that are accessible by a ramp or sling chair. Adjust the Beginning Swimming Honor activities to meet the youth with a mobility disability's needs or locate an adapted swimming lessons class. If the Pathfinder with a mobility disability is unable to participate in swimming activities, replace the Beginning Swimming Honor with one that is appropriate for the young person.

Activities

Watch a YouTube video of a young person discussing a personal experience of a mobility disability. Here are some videos to check out, but you can select a video of your choice: A Day in the Life of a Quadriplegic at Soph & Indy; TALK TO ME Physical Disability Awareness at 7 Stream Media.

Have areas set up where participants can make crafts using adaptive tools and play adaptive sports/recess games.

In small groups or pairs, identify activities in your ministry that might cause difficulties for a young person with a mobility disability. Explain why each activity might cause difficulties. Then discuss accommodations or modifications for each activity that would help the young person achieve success.

CHILD PROTECTION PLAN RESOURCES

Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America

NAD - YOUTH/CHILDREN'S MINISTRY VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Acknowledgment

Because I want the best possible environment for our children and youth to grow up in, it is important that those working with children have guidelines for conduct in order to protect both themselves and those under their care. As a ministry volunteer, I want parents and others to feel comfortable and confident with me.

My Commitment to Volunteer Ministry
As a Youth/Children's Ministry Volunteer, I will:

1. Provide appropriate adult supervision at all times for the children for whom I am responsible.

2. Have at least one other adult, eighteen (18) years of age or older, to help with the supervision of children. If I find myself in a situation where I am the only adult present, under no circumstances will I allow myself to be alone with one child (the "two-person rule"). This protects the child as well as protecting the adult from possible allegations.

3. Ask a child's permission before physically touching him/her anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any areas that would normally be covered by a T-shirt and/or shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you as care is provided.

4. Refrain from physical and verbal attacks and corporal punishment which are inappropriate behaviors and should never be used as discipline. "Time outs" or "sit-in-that-chair" may be helpful discipline methods to use with children.

5. Affirm children with appropriate touching by keeping hugs brief and "shoulder-to-shoulder" or "side-to- side." I will keep hands at (not below) the shoulder level. For small children who like to sit on laps, I will encourage them to sit next to me.

6. Provide extra care when taking small children to the restroom. I will take another adult along, or leave the door open.

7. Be aware of conducting activities in rooms that do not have an interior viewing area, or I will leave the door open during the activity to allow easy observation by others.

8. Cooperate with the volunteer screening process and complete the Volunteer Ministry Information form, as required by the church.

9. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and aware of the legal requirements for reporting suspected cases of abuse. In addition to any legally required reporting, I agree that if I become aware of any behavior by

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another individual which seems abusive or inappropriate towards children I am supervising, I will report that behavior to the church pastor, elder, or directly to the Conference Treasurer's or Risk Management Director.

10. Cooperate with church leadership in conducting children and youth ministries by being a volunteer who is loving, kind, firm, and always a thoroughly professional person. Working with children and youth is not only a privilege; it is also a serious responsibility that must be approached with utmost care.

11. Participate in orientation and training programs conducted by the church.

12. Uphold the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

* In the event I find it impossible to comply with the above, I will comply as closely as possible with the Code of Conduct and act in good faith for the welfare of the people involved.

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The Inclusion of Youth with Disabilities workshop resources for presenters includes helps for each of the eight workshops required for the inclusion of youth with disabilities certificate.

Presenters responsible for these workshops should make sure that, in addition to communicating the information, they take time to make the workshop practical and give participants time to think about how they are going to apply this in their youth group.

These workshops include:

- Introduction to Youth with Disabilities - PSYO 160
- Understanding Accommodations and Modifications for Youth with Disabilities - PSYO 161
- Barrier Free Facilities and Emergency Plan Inclusion - PSYO 121
- Specific Learning Disabilities - PSYO 260
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) - PSYO 261
- Autism Spectrum Disorder - PSYO 262
- Intellectual Disabilities - PSYO 263
- Mobility Disabilities - PSYO 264

Each of the workshops includes a description of the content, the audience, or participants that you can anticipate will attend, resource material, what your participants will learn, basic content for the workshop, and suggested activities.

Inclusion of Youth with Disabilities Certification is part of Adventist Youth Ministries Training (AYMT) which includes certifications for Adventurer Club Ministries, Pathfinder Club Ministries, Master Guides, and Youth Ministries.

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