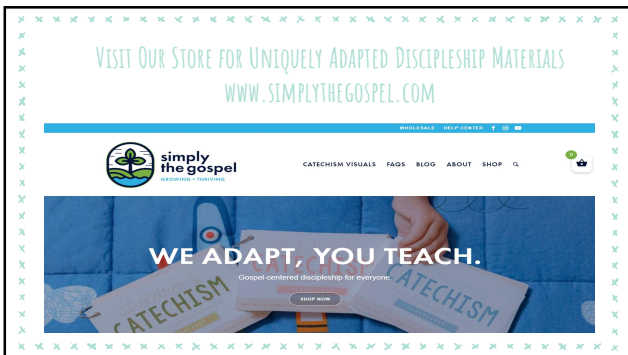




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**Q&A: SIBLINGS
BALANCING THE NEEDS
OF THE FAMILY**
Family Resources, Living with
Disability, Q&A Videos

**Q&A: MAKING
CLASSROOMS SAFE
FOR ELOPERS**
Behavior, Church Resources,
Family Resources, Q&A Videos,
Teacher Training

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UNIQUE NEEDS: HOW TO IDENTIFY, LOVE, AND DISCIPLE KIDS IMPACTED BY DISABILITY IN YOUR CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



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HELLO!
Ashley Belknap
 Executive Director of Engaging Disability With
 The Gospel
ashley@engagingdisability.org

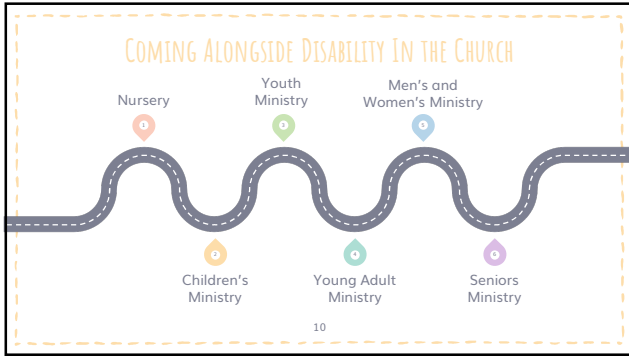
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1900+
 PCA Churches

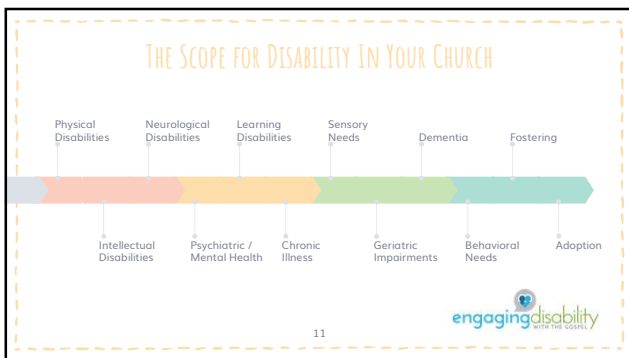
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 The Approximate # of PCA Churches Who Are
 Intentionally Discipling & Enfolding Kids/Teens/Adults
 with Disabilities

100%
 Engaging Disability is here to assist, encourage, and
 coach your church – and it's free!

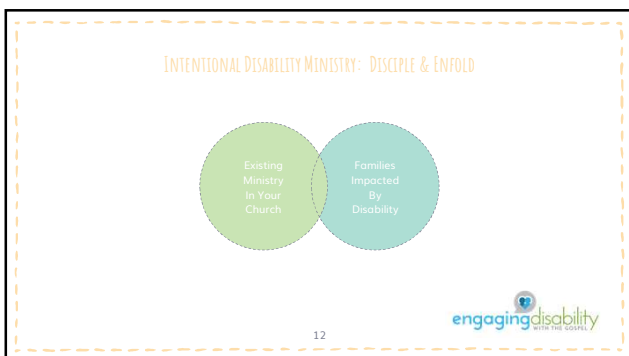
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INTENTIONAL DISABILITY MINISTRY: DISCEPLE & ENFOLD

Existing Ministry In Your Church

Families Impacted By Disability

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1.
IDENTIFYING UNIQUE NEEDS

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WHY IDENTIFY?

Identifying kids with unique learning needs at church is for the sole purpose of helping them grow in Christ & enfold into children's ministry.

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DEVELOPING EYES TO SEE NEEDS

Unique Learning Needs:

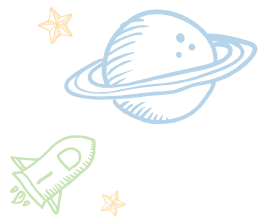
1. Attention to Task
2. Movement
3. Language – Understanding & Expression
4. Behaviors
5. Social / Fine / Gross Motor Skill Differences



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DIAGNOSIS OR NOT?



Our goal at church is helping every child grow in Christ & enfold into children's ministry. While diagnoses can be helpful, they are not at all required for you to better serve the kids in your children's ministry.

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VISIBLE DISABILITY VS. INVISIBLE DISABILITY

Kids (and their families) with visible disabilities often receive greater care, empathy, and patience than kids with invisible disabilities.



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BEHAVIOR: BAD BEHAVIOR VS. COMMUNICATION

Bad Behavior

Every child misbehaves – including those with unique needs. Does this behavior:

1. Disappear with consistent correction?
2. Appear irregularly?

Behavior that is Communication

Kids with unique needs often use behaviors in place of language. Does this behavior:

1. Not disappear with consistent correction?
2. Appear consistently across settings and tasks?

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PRESENT IN CLASS BUT NOT GROWING IN CHRIST

Learning Disabilities:

It often takes a consistent teacher or volunteer in the classroom to identify kids who are: present, (may) have wonderful social skills, but are not really learning and growing.



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POSTURE FOR IDENTIFYING UNIQUE NEEDS

Eyes to See

Have you noticed the children who don't quite thrive in your Sunday school class?

Heart that Cares

Do you find yourself more frustrated with the kids who aren't learning...or do you find yourself really wanting to love well and help?

Passion for Growth


Do you feel a need to convince the parents that "something is wrong" or are you passionate to see this kid grow in Christ?

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2.
 LOVING KIDS (& THEIR FAMILIES) WELL



22



KID BEFORE
 DISABILITY

What matters to the family is that you know them...not the disability. What often matters most to you is getting help with the unique need. Remember to spend more time getting to know each child than you do getting knowledge of about a diagnosis or unique need.

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LOVING WITHOUT DEMANDS

When possible, try to be the person in the family's life that loves them first without trying to change them. Remember that families with unique needs have many people (doctors, school, therapists, and more) telling them what to do every day. Church needs to be different.



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LANGUAGE MATTERS

Terminology in the broader world of disability changes regularly. Currently, there is a huge divide on using the terms "special needs" in reference to someone with a disability. Families are starting to insist that their needs are not "special" – just different. When possible, choose neutral language: "unique needs."




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LOVING FAMILIES WELL

<p>Learn What they Love It will mean so much to the child and the family if you learn what they love and strengths in the process of learning unique differences. Create access to things they love within your classrooms/relationship</p>	<p>Don't Try To Change 5 Things at Once It's easy to forget that kids with unique needs can also be overwhelmed by everyone wanting them to change/grow. Church should not fundamentally be a place to work....it's a place to worship and God accepts us as we are.</p>	<p>Ask Families What Matters Most Right Now Ministry-minded people often have really good plans for next steps. But don't forget that parents and even kids with unique needs might know best what matters most right now. What matters to them is where ministry begins.</p>
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3.

DISCIPLING KIDS WITH UNIQUE NEEDS



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PRESENT AND
GROWING

Our starting point is to have families impacted by disability present at church, but our goal is to see them all—especially the child with a unique need – grow in Christ.

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I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

- Ezekiel 36:26

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I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord.

- Jeremiah 24:7

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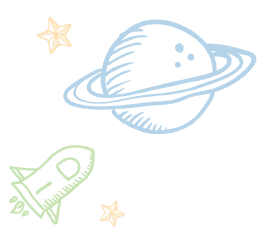
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Knowing God is what we
were created for. It will
occupy us throughout
eternity.
- Sinclair Ferguson

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JUMPSTARTING GROWTH

Most of the time, children are not learning about God and growing due to barriers that are present. When we learn to break down those barriers (making adaptations), often they begin learning. Barriers also reveal skill deficits and those are prime places for us to teach new skills so learning can continue!

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CORPORATE WORSHIP

Is this family active in worship, inside the sanctuary?

Children's Church

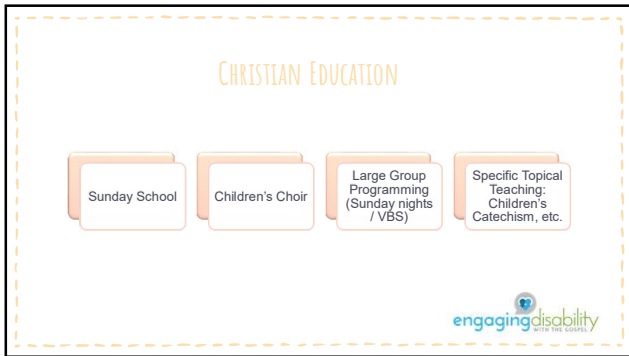
Hymns, Prayers, and Teaching Kids to Worship

Membership and Communion

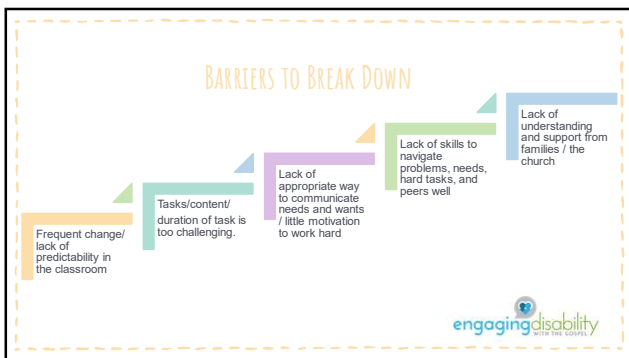
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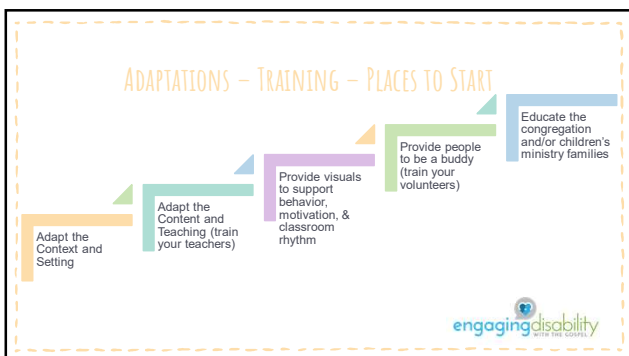
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4.
 ENFOLDING KIDS WITH UNIQUE NEEDS



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ENFOLDING TO
 THRIVING


Ultimately, we want our families to love church. If church is hard and stressful, no one will grow. When church is a place where you are known and loved, growth begins to happen. Now your families are on a track to thrive relationally with God and with their peers.

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EVERY CHILD AND FAMILY CAN CONTRIBUTE AND SERVE

- Get to know your student and his/her family
- Consider strengths and how to use those strengths to serve
- Think creatively, outside the box.
- Everyone, EVERYONE can serve the church



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DEVELOPING COMMUNITY

Is this family well-known or broadly known at church?

Is this family developing friendships?

How can we strategically connect this family?

Determining interests and developing community around those interests.



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THANKS!

To engage with us further on this topic or other topics:

www.engagingdisability.org
connect@engagingdisability.org

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