Partners in Faith Formation of Children & Youth with Autism & other Developmental Disabilities

The whole community of faith needs to be aware of the presence of persons with special needs within it and be involved in their catechesis.

National Directory for Catechesis 49

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Office for Persons with Disabilities
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
PARTNERS IN FAITH FORMATION OF CHILDREN & YOUTH with Autism & other Developmental Disabilities

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“...spread a culture of encounter, solidarity and hospitality towards persons with disabilities, not just asking for the proper social services but also encouraging their active participation in society.”

Pope Francis, 6.11.13

Office for Persons with Disabilities & the Deaf Apostolate
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Sr. Kathleen Schipani – sr.kschipani@archphila.org
1978 PASTORAL STATEMENT OF U.S. CATHOLIC BISHOPS
ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

We call upon people of good will to reexamine their attitudes toward their brothers and sisters with disabilities and promote their well-being, acting with the sense of justice and the compassion that the Lord so clearly desires. Further, realizing the unique gifts individuals with disabilities have to offer the Church, we wish to address the need for their integration into the Christian community and their fuller participation in its life. (1)

Defense of the right to life, then, implies the defense of other rights which enable the individual with a disability to achieve the fullest measure of personal development of which he or she is capable. (10)

The central meaning of Jesus’ ministry is bound up with the fact that He sought the company of people who, for one reason or another, were forced to live on the fringe of society. (cf. Mk. 7:37) The Church finds its true identity when it fully integrates itself with these marginal people, including those with physical and psychological disabilities. (12)

The parish is the door to participation for individuals with disabilities, and it is the responsibility of the pastor and lay leaders to make sure that this door is always open. (18)

If the participation of persons with disabilities and their families is to be real and meaningful, the parish must prepare itself to receive them (19)

It is essential that all forms of the liturgy be completely accessible to persons with disabilities, since these forms are the essence of the spiritual tie that binds the Christian community together. To exclude members of the parish from these celebrations of the life of the Church, even by passive omission, is to deny the reality of that community. (23)
1995 Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities

By reason of their baptism, all Catholics are equal in dignity in the sight of God, and have the same divine calling. (1)

Catholics with disabilities have a right to participate in the sacraments as full functioning members of the local ecclesial community (Cf. canon 213). Ministers are not to refuse the sacraments to those who ask for them at appropriate times, who are properly disposed, and who are not prohibited by law from receiving them (Cf. canon 843, sect. 1). (2)

In accord with canon 777, n.4, pastors are responsible to be as inclusive as possible in providing evangelization, catechetical formation, and sacramental preparation for parishioners with disabilities. Parish catechetical and sacramental preparation programs may need to be adapted for some parishioners with disabilities. (5)

...criterion for reception of holy communion is the same for persons with developmental and mental disabilities as for all persons, namely, that the person be able to distinguish the Body of Christ from ordinary food, even if this recognition is evidenced through manner, gesture, or reverential silence rather than verbally. .. Cases of doubt should be resolved in favor of the right of the baptized person to receive the sacrament. The existence of a disability is not considered in and of itself as disqualifying a person from receiving the Eucharist. (20)

Download this document:  www.ncpd.org/views-news-policy/policy/church/bishops/sacraments

1998 Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities: A Framework of Access and Inclusion

This brief statement is a moral framework based upon Catholic documents and serves as a guide for contemplation and action. In this statement the Us Catholic bishops provide ten principles to assist the faithful in bringing the perspective of justice and inclusion to the many new and evolving challenges confronted by persons with disabilities today.

National Directory for Catechesis
CATECHESIS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Why...

No one can believe alone...(28:F,2nd paragraph)

Every person, however limited, is capable of growth in holiness. (49:2nd paragraph)

All baptized person with disabilities have a right to adequate catechesis and deserve the means to
develop a relationship with God. (49:3rd paragraph)

Children with cognitive disabilities often have an unusual intuitive understanding of the
sacred....Children are capable of being formed as disciples of the Lord at an early age. (28: A, 4th
paragraph)

How...

It is the responsibility of the pastor and lay leaders to make sure that the door to participation in the life
of the Church is always open for persons with disabilities. (36:A,3b-3, 2nd paragraph)

Every parish should seek out its parishioners with cognitive, emotional, and physical disabilities,
support them with love and concern, and ensure that they have ready access to a catechetical
program suited to their needs and abilities. (61:B,1, 2nd paragraph)

Persons with disabilities should be integrated into ordinary catechetical programs as much as
possible...They should not be segregated for specialized catechesis unless their disabilities make it
impossible for them to participate in the basic catechetical program. Catechesis for persons with
disabilities is most effective when it is carried out within the general pastoral care of the community...
The whole community of faith needs to be aware of the presence of persons with special needs within
it and be involved in their catechesis. (49:4th paragraph)

Catechesis for some person with disabilities, however requires more personalization. In these
situations, the involvement of their families is indispensable. The Church’s pastoral response in such
situations is to learn about the disability, offer support to the family, and welcome the child. (49:5th
paragraph)

Parents…a uniquely valuable resource… However, parishes should not assume that the parent of a
child with a disability will serve as a primary catechist. (49:5th paragraph)
Introduction

Every year, under the federal law known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), millions of children with disabilities receive special services designed to meet their unique needs. Early intervention services are provided through the state to infants and toddlers with disabilities under three years of age and their families. For school-aged children and youth (aged 3 through 21), special education and related services are provided through the school system. These services can be very important in helping children and youth with disabilities develop, learn, and succeed in school and other settings.

Who is Eligible for Services?

Under IDEA, states are responsible for meeting the special needs of eligible children with disabilities. To find out if a child is eligible for services, he or she must first receive a full and individual initial evaluation. This evaluation is free. Two purposes of the evaluation are:

• to see if the child has a disability, as defined by IDEA; and

• to learn in more detail what special education and related services he or she needs.

Infants and Toddlers, Under Three Years of Age

Under IDEA, “infants and toddlers with disabilities” are defined as individuals under three years of age who need early intervention services because they—

★ are experiencing developmental delays, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following areas:

• cognitive development;

• physical development;

• communication development;

• social or emotional development; and

• adaptive development; or

★ have a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay.

The term may also include, if a state chooses, children under three years of age who would be at risk of experiencing a substantial developmental delay if early intervention services were not provided.
Children and Youth
Aged 3 Through 21

IDEA lists 13 different disability categories under which 3- through 21-year-olds may be eligible for services. The disability categories listed in IDEA are:

- autism;
- deaf-blindness;
- deafness;
- emotional disturbance;
- hearing impairment;
- intellectual disability;
- multiple disabilities;
- orthopedic impairment;
- other health impairment;
- specific learning disability;
- speech or language impairment;
- traumatic brain injury; or
- visual impairment (including blindness).

IDEA further defines each of these disability terms. We’ve provided those definitions on pages 3 and 4.

Under IDEA, a child may not be identified as a “child with a disability” primarily because he or she speaks a language other than English and does not speak or understand English well. A child may also not be identified as having a disability just because he or she has not had enough appropriate instruction in math or reading.

Children Aged 3 Through 9

It is important to know that, under IDEA, states and local educational agencies (LEAs) can use the term “developmental delay” with children aged 3 through 9:

- if they experience developmental delays in one or more of the following areas:
  - physical development;
  - cognitive development;
  - communication development;
  - social or emotional development; or
  - adaptive development; and
- who, because of the developmental delays, need special education and related services.

If a state chooses to include developmental delay in its definition of an eligible “child with a disability,” it must define precisely what the term means and ensure that its definition is consistent with IDEA’s definition. “Developmental delays” must be measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures. The state also determines whether the term applies to children aged 3 through 9, or to a subset of that age range (for example, ages 3 through 5).

Three more points to note about the term developmental delay:

- A state may not require an LEA to adopt and use the term developmental delay.
- If an LEA uses the term, the LEA must conform to both the state’s definition of the term and to the age range the state has adopted.
- If a state does not adopt the term, an LEA may not independently use the term to establish a child’s eligibility under IDEA.
The 13 Disability Categories, Defined

IDEA provides definitions of the 13 disability categories listed above. Federal definitions guide how states define who is eligible for a free appropriate public education under IDEA. The definitions are as follows:

1. Autism...

...means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engaging in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term *autism* does not apply if the child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance, as defined in #4 below.

A child who shows the characteristics of autism after age 3 could be diagnosed as having autism if the criteria above are satisfied.

2. Deaf-Blindness...

...means concomitant [simultaneous] hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

3. Deafness...

...means a hearing impairment so severe that a child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

4. Emotional Disturbance... *Psychiatric disability or mental illness*

...means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

(a) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

(b) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

(c) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.

(d) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

(e) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.

5. Hearing Impairment... *Hearing Loss or Hard of Hearing*

...means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance but is not included under the definition of “deafness.”

6. Intellectual Disability... *IDD is the term used instead of MR*

...means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently [at the same time] with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.
7. Multiple Disabilities...

...means concomitant [simultaneous] impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

8. Orthopedic Impairment...

...means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

9. Other Health Impairment...

...means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that—

(a) is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and

(b) adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

10. Specific Learning Disability...

...means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; of intellectual disability; of emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

11. Speech or Language Impairment...

...means a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

12. Traumatic Brain Injury...

...means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech.

The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

13. Visual Impairment Including Blindness...

...means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child’s educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.
More About Disabilities

IDEA’s definitions of disability terms—combined with comprehensive assessment information on the child—help states, schools, service providers, and parents decide if the child is eligible for early intervention or special education and related services. Beyond these definitions, there is a great deal of information available about specific disabilities, including disabilities not listed in IDEA. NICHCY would be pleased to help you find that information, beginning with:

- our disability fact sheets and other publications on the disabilities listed in IDEA;
- contact information for many organizations that focus their work on a particular disability.

More About Services

Special services are available to eligible children with disabilities and can help children develop and learn. For infants and toddlers under the age of three, early intervention services may be provided through state systems such as the state’s health department or education department. If you are a parent and would like to find out more about early intervention in your state, including how to have your child evaluated at no cost to you, try any of these suggestions:

- ask your child’s pediatrician to put you in touch with the early intervention system in your community or region;
- contact the pediatrics branch in a local hospital and ask where you should call to find out about early intervention services in your area;
- visit NICHCY’s website, where you can identify the contact information for early intervention in your state on our State Resource Sheets, under “State Agencies.” The state office will refer you to the contact person or agency in your area. Find our state sheets at: http://nichcy.org/state-organization-search-by-state

For children and youth ages 3 through 21, special education and related services are provided through the public school system. One way to find out about these services is to call your local public school. The school should be able to tell you about special education policies in your area or refer you to a district or county office for this information. You can also contact your state’s Parent Training and Information (PTI) center for this information. You’ll find the PTI listed on NICHCY’s State Resource Sheet for your state (look under “Organizations Especially for Parents”). State sheets are available online at: http://nichcy.org/state-organization-search-by-state

If you are a parent who thinks your child may need special education and related services, be sure to ask how to have your child evaluated under IDEA for eligibility. Often there are materials available on local and state policies for special education and related services.

There is a lot to know about early intervention, about special education and related services, and about the rights of children with disabilities under IDEA, our nation’s special education law. NICHCY offers many publications, all of which are available on our website or by contacting us directly. We can also tell you about materials available from other groups.

More on “Adversely Affects Educational Performance”

You may have noticed that the phrase “adversely affects educational performance” appears in most of the disability definitions. This does not mean, however, that a child must be failing in school to receive special education and related services. According to IDEA, states must make a free appropriate public education available to “any individual child with a disability who needs special education and related services, even if the child has not failed or been retained in a course or grade, and is advancing from grade to grade.” [§300.101(c)(1)]
Other Sources of Information for Parents

There are many sources of information about services for children with disabilities. Within your community, you may wish to contact:

- the Child Find coordinator for your district or county (IDEA requires that states conduct Child Find activities to identify, locate, and evaluate infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities aged birth through 21);
- the principal of your child’s school; or
- the special education director of your child’s school district or local school.

Any of these individuals should be able to answer specific questions about how to obtain special education and related services (or early intervention services) for your child.

In addition, every state has a Parent Training and Information (PTI) center, which is an excellent source of information. The PTI can:

- help you learn about early intervention and special education services;
- tell you about IDEA’s requirements;
- connect you with disability groups and parent groups in your community or state; and
- much, much more!

To find out how to contact your state’s PTI, look at the NICHCY State Resource Sheet for your state (available on our website). You’ll find the PTI listed there (look under “Organizations Especially for Parents”), as well as many other information resources, such as community parent resource centers, disability-specific organizations, and state agencies serving children with disabilities.
You are in a unique position to shape the public image of people with disabilities. By putting the person first and using these suggested words, you can convey a positive, objective view of an individual instead of a negative, insensitive image.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do say</th>
<th>Don’t say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Differently abled, challenged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with disabilities</td>
<td>The disabled, handicapped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with spinal cord injury</td>
<td>Cripple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with autism, on the autism spectrum</td>
<td>Autistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with Down syndrome</td>
<td>Mongoloid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person of short stature</td>
<td>Midget, dwarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses a wheelchair, wheelchair user</td>
<td>Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair-bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a learning disability</td>
<td>Slow learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has chemical or environmental sensitivities</td>
<td>Chemophobic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a brain injury</td>
<td>Brain damaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind, low vision</td>
<td>Visually handicapped, blind as a bat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf, hard of hearing</td>
<td>Deaf-mute, deaf and dumb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual disability</td>
<td>Retarded, mental retardation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amputee, has limb loss</td>
<td>Gimp, lame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congenital disability</td>
<td>Birth defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burn survivor</td>
<td>Burn victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-polio syndrome</td>
<td>Suffers from polio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service animal or dog</td>
<td>Seeing eye dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric disability, mental illness</td>
<td>Crazy, psycho, schizo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How should I describe you or your disability?</td>
<td>What happened to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible parking or restroom</td>
<td>Handicapped parking, disabled restroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Want more information?
Download our brochure *Guidelines: How to Write and Report About People with Disabilities* at [www.rtcil.org/guidelines](http://www.rtcil.org/guidelines). [EXCELLENT RESOURCE TO DOWNLOAD.](http://www.rtcil.org/guidelines)
Solving Organizational Barriers to Inclusion

The parish is the door to participation for individuals with disabilities, and it is the responsibility of the pastor and lay leaders to make sure that this door is always open. (USCCB Pastoral Statement #18)

Knowledge, Creativity & Teamwork

◊ **Attitudinal Barriers**
  - Labels & Stereotypes
  - Fear of the Unknown
  - Segregated Programs of the Past

◊ **Administrative Barriers**
  - Outreach Network
  - Inexperienced staff & volunteers
  - Adequate support

◊ **Architectural/Physical Barriers**
  - Inaccessible building
  - Lack of materials or resources

◊ **Programmatic Barriers**
  - Content/Materials
  - Lack of Staff Support
  - Inflexible Program

◊ **Attitudinal Solutions**
  - Modeling
  - Language
  - Beginning at an early age

◊ **Administrative Solutions**
  - Teaming with Parents
  - Creating Instructional Support Teams
  - Utilizing available Resources/Persons

◊ **Architectural/Physical Solutions**
  - Plan in advance for Persons of mixed abilities
  - Identify barrier free, safe environments

◊ **Programmatic Solutions**
  - Inclusion Facilitator/Advocate
  - Training Staff
  - Accommodations /Flexible Grouping

********************************************************************************

Believe in Inclusion

⇒ Educate yourself about inclusion practices
⇒ Identify inclusion barriers
⇒ Take creative, problem solving approach to generate inclusion practices
⇒ Choose a solution and persevere until the barrier is removed (Document your plan)

Adapted from Linda A. Heyne/Solving Organizational Barriers to Inclusion
Sr. Kathleen Schipani, IHM/Archdiocese of Philadelphia 2012

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Parish Bulletin Announcement

A Parish that Welcomes Children with Disabilities

Catholics believe that all people are made in the image and likeness of God, and that all the Baptized share in the life and mission of the Church. This includes people from every range of ability. As a parish we are mindful and respectful of families who have children with disabilities. At times due to the behavioral aspects of some disabling conditions, parents seem to sense from some parishioners that their child may not be welcome during the celebration of Mass. Can we work together to change this perception? As a parish community, let us strive to be patient, respectful and helpful to individuals with disabilities and seek ways to assist families so that they can worship together as a family and we may have the blessing of their presence with us as we become one Eucharistic community of faith.

More if needed: One of every 68 children is born with autism and 5 in every 100 having some type of disability. It is safe to say that our parish community has many families raising children with disabilities, whether you are aware of them, or not. Together, let us seek ways to be welcoming and supportive of all our families. For more information on inclusion of people with disabilities in the life of the Church go to the National Catholic Partnership on Disability at www.ncpd.org.
Open Your Heart, Open the Classroom, Open to Grace

GATHERING INFORMATION

1. USE OF THE REGISTRATION FORM: Request information on the PREP registration form.

MEDICAL/LEARNING DATA
If any of the following apply to your child, please list his/her name and give details in the appropriate spaces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child's Name</th>
<th>Medical Conditions / Allergies</th>
<th>Prescribed Medications</th>
<th>Disability / Learning Support</th>
<th>Individualized Education Plan—IEP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

* As defined by *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), the term "child with a disability" means a child: "with intellectual disability, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

2. PARENT INTERVIEW
   - Please let us know how the PREP program staff and volunteers can support and make your child's PREP experience more successful.
   - Does your child have any conditions, allergies, physical, sensory, intellectual, or social/emotional disabilities of which we should be aware so we can respond more appropriately?
   - Describe your child’s special education programming or community-based services. Is there other information that would help us in planning for your child’s religious education?
   - Is there other information about your child that should be communicated?

3. CHILD INFORMATION FORM
   If the child has a disability and has an IEP in his/school setting, ask the parent to fill out all or part of the Child Information Form. The parent may seek help from the child’s school teacher or other members of the child’s IEP team in completing the form.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY
   Information on the Registration Form and on the Child Information Form is confidential. Catechetical Leaders, Catechists and support staff all must keep professional confidentiality.

Request for Volunteers Template

NAME OF PARISH _______ welcomes children of all abilities into the religious education setting. Classroom catechists and aides familiar with disabilities are needed in providing faith formation that meets the varied needs of each child. Those with professional background, personal experience or a desire to assist in the program are welcome to assist in some way. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering their time, expertise and service to the needs of the Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) please call ____________________________.

Include in Registration Announcement

Our Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) provides classes for children of all abilities. Children with developmental, intellectual, sensory, physical or behavioral disabilities are welcome and encouraged to attend weekly (PREP) classes.

OFFICE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE DEAF APOSTOLATE
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
E-Mail: sr.kchipani@archphila.org / Phone: 215-587-3530 Fax: 215-587-3561/ www.archphila.org
PARISH FAITH FORMATION
Child Information Form

Date ____________________________

Child_____________________________ DOB __________________

Religious Education Level _________________

Religious education goals:
The child and his/her parents/guardians desire that:
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Please identify your child’s disability ______________________________________

Does your child have an IEP? Yes □ No □

If needed, may the parish religious education program have access to your child’s IEP?
Yes □ No □

It is understood that this report contains confidential information which may be shared with the religious education program personnel who agree to confidentiality.

Parents/guardians ___________________________ Date________

DRE/CRE of parish ___________________________ Date________

Catechist ___________________________ Date________

Catechist ___________________________ Date________

Other ___________________________ Date________

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BACKGROUND:

Is your child able to attend Mass? Please comment. __________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Has your child had previous religious education classes: Yes □ No □

If yes, please indicate location and level(s).________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Circle the Sacrament(s) which your child has received:

Baptism Reconciliation Eucharist Confirmation
Please check all recommended accommodations.

I. COMMUNICATION (What is the best way to communicate with your child?)

A. Receptive Language Skills

To communicate with my child:

_____ speak in short sentences; use simple vocabulary

_____ give instructions one step at a time; allow time for the completion of each step

_____ make direct eye contact to focus attention

_____ avoid direct eye contact which distresses him/her.

Other ________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

☐ My child has partial hearing

To communicate with my child:

_____ face child so that he/she can read your lips

_____ speak into his/her good ear ___left ___ right

_____ use an assistive listening device (if made available by the family or IU).

Other ________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

☐ My child is deaf _____

To communicate with my child:

_____ use American Sign Language *

_____ speak facing child so he/she can read lips

_____ furnish a written outline and notes if possible

_____ arrange chairs in a circle so child can see other children when they are speaking

_____ indicate visually who will speak next

_____ use board, flip chart or technology to write important information when possible.

Other ________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

*(The Deaf Apostolate of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia assists parishes by providing a Religious Education Program in American Sign Language. Contact the Deaf Apostolate at 215-587-3913 or sr.kschipani@archphila.org.*)
B. Expressive Language Skills

My child:

- speaks clearly
- responds in brief sentences or phrases
- gives one word responses (routinely)
- gives yes/no responses (routinely)
- processes language slowly
- communicates non-verbally by:
  - pointing
  - eye movement
  - gestures
  - manual signs
  - manual picture board
  - electronic picture board
  - other: ____________________

Other ________________________________________________________________

Recommended accommodations for use by the catechists:

- ask if child understood you correctly by repeating what you think you heard
- provide more time for language processing by:
  - repeating the question slowly
  - requiring think time before any responses
  - inviting children to signal when they are ready to reply.
- provide visual cues to support responses
- give alternative modes of expression such as drawing or acting out a response.

Other ________________________________________________________________
C. Reading / Writing Language Skills

Please comment on your child’s reading ability: __________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

My child:

_____ needs someone to read with him/her

_____ uses tape recorded books

_____ uses computer assisted reading/writing technology: _____at home  _____ in class

_____ needs someone to write down his/her responses

_____ needs assistance in writing. Please explain: _______________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Other ______________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

My child is partially sighted / blind

My child:

___ uses large print materials

___ uses tape materials

___ uses Braille materials

___ uses computer assisted reading/writing technology: _____at home  _____ in class

Other ______________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
II. MOTOR SKILLS
   A. Fine Motor Skills

My child needs assistance with the following skills:

___ cutting  ___ coloring  ___ pasting/gluing  ___ writing

___ copying from board  ___ buttoning  ___ zippering  ___ tying shoes

Other _______________________________________________________

Comment on useful accommodations: ________________________________________
                                           ________________________________________
                                           ________________________________________

B. Large Motor Skills

My child needs assistance with:

_____ sitting down  _____ standing up

_____ walking short distances  _____ walking long distances

_____ putting on coat  _____ toileting

Other _______________________________________________________

Comment on useful accommodations: ________________________________________
                                           ________________________________________
                                           ________________________________________

My child needs mobility assistance:

_____ walker  _____ wheelchair

_____ crutches  _____ cane

_____ needs a sighted guide (due to low vision needs a peer or aide to assist with mobility)

Other _______________________________________________________

Comment on useful accommodations: ________________________________________
                                           ________________________________________
                                           ________________________________________
### III. LEARNING STYLE

**My child learns best from:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>what he/she hears</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what he/she does</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what he/she sees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what he/she talks about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what he/she touches/handles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**What holds your child’s attention?**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**What is distracting to your child?**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Please indicate methods/techniques that do not work for your child.**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Additional techniques, recommendations and information:**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
IV. EMOTIONAL / SOCIAL WELL BEING

How will the catechist know if your child is becoming unhappy, agitated or emotionally upset? Please describe behaviors.

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What types of events might trigger these behaviors?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What are some ways/techniques a catechist might help your child regain emotional composure?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What should we know about how your child interacts socially?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Are there social goals we should know about? Explain:

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Other social or emotional concerns:

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
### V. ALLERGIES

**Foods**  
My child has allergies to the following foods: ____________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
My child can have the following snacks: ____________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
Would the parents/guardians prefer to supply snacks when needed?  
Yes ☐  No ☐

**Pollens**  
My child has allergies to the following pollens (specify): ____________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
Are the allergies severe enough to restrict bringing plants into the classroom or going outside?  
Yes ☐  No ☐

**Chemicals**  
My Child has significant allergies to: ____________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  

**Animals**  
My child has significant allergies to: ____________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  

**E. Other significant allergies:** ____________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  

Instructions in the event of an allergic reaction: *(Please attach more detailed instructions if needed.)*  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________

### VI. MEDICAL CONDITIONS

My child has the following medical conditions: ____________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
My child’s current medications are: ____________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
Instructions in the event of a medical emergency: *(Please attach more detailed instructions if needed.)*  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________
Building a Toolkit to Breakdown Obstacles to Learning

Tools

- Maintain a Proper Perspective
- Build a Foundation of Knowledge
- Implement Research-Based Best Practices
- Understand Foundations of Behavior
- Follow the Process of Instruction

1. Maintain a Proper Perspective
   Know all the dimensions of the student, not just his disability.

2. Build a Foundation of Knowledge
   Autism is a group of neurological, physiological, developmental disorders known as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ASD causes substantial impairment in three areas of functioning:
   - Communication
   - Social Interaction
   - Behavior

   27 practices have been identified that meet the criteria for evidence-based practices for children with autism spectrum disorders: [http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/sites/autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/files/imce/documents/table7_working_definition ebp.pdf](http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/sites/autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/files/imce/documents/table7_working_definition ebp.pdf)
   A. Applied Behavior Analysis
   B. Task Analysis
   C. Communication Devices
   D. Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS)
   E. Social Stories
   F. Assistive Technology

4. Understand Foundations of Behavior
   All behavior has 1 of 4 functions: Sensory, Escape, Attention, Tangible item (SEAT)

5. Follow the Process of Instruction
   - Gives step-by-step instructions with visual organizational aids,
   - Be as explicit as possible with instructions,
   - Uses visual models and hands-on activities,
   - Provides visual schedules and reviews them,
   - Follows a routine,
   - Organizes the work space the same each time,
   - Keeps strategies consistent across classrooms and at home.

Deborah Schadler, PhD, CPCRT, PRSE  Catherine Heller, EdD
Gwynedd Mercy University  Souderton Area School District
Director, Autism Institute  Supervisor of Curriculum
Schadler.d@gmercyu.edu  cheller@soudertonsd.org
Some Strategy Suggestions

- Think of the WHOLE Person
  
  Begin with the person before you.
  
  Relationship is central to the catechetical process
  
  Ask about his/her gifts, likes, dislikes AS WELL AS specifics of diagnosis and learning methods
  
  Parents, teachers, and the individual are a great source of insight and guidance
  
  *Communication and behavior are critical considerations for learning across ALL abilities*

- Attend to Communication - Receptive/Expressive/Combination
  
  Everyone communicates
  
  Use shorter phrases
  
  Avoid speaking in the negative
  
  Wait before repeating yourself
  
  Visualize sequenced directions
  
  Check for misunderstandings

- Preparation for Transitions - Advance Warning Systems
  
  Verbal countdown
  
  Picture or word schedule
  
  Use Concrete language—be descriptive

- Using Visuals to Reinforce What We Say

- Writing Stories to Help Anticipate New Situations

- Thinking Alongside the Person – understanding how he/she learns and interacts with the world.

- Behavior Supports
  
  Schedules, text or pictures: *Promote Independence; Provides predictability; Allows Self-Mgt*
  
  Making Routines Comfortable
  
  Task Analysis
  
  Shaping
  
  Prompting and Prompt Fading

- Ask for suggestions/guidance from school teacher and parents

For more information see Masters, Anne. *Pastoral Ministry WITH Persons WITH Disabilities Parish Resource Guide.* Advocate Publishing Corp. 973-497-4201 or pearsoma@rcan.org / masteranrcan@gmail.com / www.rcan.org/disabilities
Tip Sheet for First Reconciliation

By Judith Sunder, NAfIM Board Member, RN & Parent

Being part of any sacramental preparation and ritual is important to us in our Catholic faith. Our participation makes us one with our faith community and the universal church. Recognizing that we are all equal and one in the eyes of God, sacramental celebrations should be made accessible to persons with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD). In doing so, a true sense of equality, inclusion, and oneness is present within our faith community.

To receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation a person with IDD needs to recognize or feel that they have done something wrong. Also, they must be able to have a sense of being sorry. A person with IDD may express sorrow in many forms. It may be expressed in words, shown in gestures (sign language) or expressed in body language (a hug or tears). A person who does not recognize that they have done something wrong or cannot experience even minimal contrition will not be able to participate in the individual Sacrament of Reconciliation. However, they may be able to appropriately participate in a communal penitential service.

The following is offered for the parent, religious education teacher and pastor or priest to assist a child or adult with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Preparing the Person

1. Talk with the person about choices they make. Talk with them about the things they choose to do that makes God unhappy. Did they tease a friend? Did they fight with a sibling, friend, a coworker? Did they tell a story that wasn’t true? Did they hit or hurt someone? Explain that when we do something bad we need to say that we are sorry to the person we hurt and to God. Explain that God forgives us when we say we are sorry for doing wrong.

2. If first reconciliation will be received with a religious education class, be sure that the religious education teacher is aware of any discussions with the priest and knows how to handle any behaviors that may come up.

3. A person who is not able to cope with a large group may benefit from making a first reconciliation at a time when there are fewer people in church.

4. Speak frequently beforehand about reconciliation and where the sacrament takes place in the church. Pictures of a church and reconciliation room may help. Pictures of the specific church and reconciliation room can be even more helpful.

5. Take the person to church and show them the reconciliation room. Give them time in the room.

REFERENCES


The Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition

© 2007 National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry. All Rights Reserved. Exact copies of this Information Sheet may be made for personal use or for distribution in a diocese or local congregation provided the material is distributed free of charge. For all other uses, permission must be obtained from the National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry.
6. Practice at home how they will act and act it out without them saying their sins. If possible, practice in the reconciliation room.

7. Show the person where they may go in church if they need a quiet place.

8. Teach a simple act of contrition: “I am sorry Jesus”; “I am sorry Jesus for doing wrong. With your help, I will try not to sin again”; signing “Sorry” can be sufficient.

9. Show and practice with the person what is expected after they leave the reconciliation room. If necessary, designate someone to meet them and assist them.

Preparing the Pastor or Priest

Before a person with IDD receives the sacrament for the first time, the parent or guardian, or teacher/helper should make an appointment to speak with the pastor and/or a trusted priest that the person can go to for reconciliation. Explain the person’s desire to receive the sacrament. You may also want to explain why their participation in the sacrament is important to you.

Explain the person’s disability to the priest and provide him with information that allows him to assist the person in the sacrament.

1. If someone has speech and language delays, provide the priest with a sheet of cues that can assist him in leading the person throughout the sacrament. For example, “Let’s begin, In the Name....; Have you hurt anyone? Have you teased anyone? Have you fought with your sister and brother? Are you sorry for doing these things? Let’s tell God we are sorry by saying.....”

2. If someone uses a word or picture board, show and/or provide the priest with one. A picture board may demonstrate “I am sorry”; “I hurt ....”; a list of people, such as mom, dad, sister, brother, friend; “I am mad at....”

3. Ask the priest to keep language as simple as he can.

4. Instruct the priest on how you handle the person’s behaviors if they become excited or agitated.

5. Tell the priest if the person has a tendency to exit a room when they become upset or frustrated and to allow them to do so.

6. Identify with the priest a safe and/or quiet place the person can go if they need to (foyer, a family or cry room)

7. If a person uses a sign or gesture to express sorrow show the priest what those are.

8. Let the priest know you have taught the person a simple prayer of sorrow.
Some Strategic Components for Successfully Working with Individuals with ASD*

- Plan for the student to transition to another activity approximately every ten minutes
- Maintain a student/teacher ratio of 2:1 (or 3:1 if necessary)
- Present activities using a multi-sensory approach (utilizing all/many of the senses)
- Develop a consistent routine and a daily schedule
- Use of repetition, visual prompting, and backward chaining
- Utilize developmentally appropriate and ability-appropriate instruction
- Provide visual supports to students including written or picture schedules
- Minimize distractions and clutter in the instructional environment
- Minimize glare and shadows by lowering or filtering overhead lighting
- Incorporate learning centers designated for specific purposes (e.g., prayer, scripture, music, etc.)
- Use sensory rooms or objects to minimize stressor and anxiety
- Offer short periods of silence
- Include typical students (students without disabilities) whenever possible
- Provide take-home materials
- Involve students experientially
- Use of high school catechists and “peer models”
- Stagger class start and end times to avoid large crowds/noise
- Support and involvement of clergy, parish leadership, staff, and parishioners
- Use of small (hand held) picture activity cards/boards
- Emphasis on symbols and rituals
- Model social skills for students
- Provide supports for parents
- Involvement of trained professionals

*Not every child responds to every tactic. Choose the best strategies for the individual child. These ideas can also be used with children with other needs than autism, such intellectual/developmental disabilities.

Provided by the National Catholic Partnership on Disability Autism Task Force. See www.ncpd.org.
This document may be freely reprinted; please credit the source. 2-22-12
Positive Discipline for Children with Disability

Disciplining children is one of the most difficult responsibilities of parenting. Positive discipline teaches morality and promotes healthy development, establishing the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Parents of children with disability may hesitate to discipline them the same as siblings without disability, however, there are a few universal strategies that can be adapted for all children:

- Use praise as a foundation and focus for positive discipline.
- Use quality family time as an incentive for appropriate behavior.
- Model good listening and communication skills:
  - Misbehavior is often caused by the inability to communicate needs properly.
  - Use empathic statements to help children feel understood and encourage further communication, such as, *I see you’re angry. It must be frustrating because you want to play outside now, but it’s time to go to church.*
- Establish negative consequences for repeated or extreme inappropriate behaviors:
  - Clarify rules and set boundaries before children have the opportunity to misbehave.
  - Deliver consequences calmly and immediately when misbehavior occurs.
  - The duration and severity of punishment should relate to the degree of the inappropriate behavior.
- Use “timeout” to modify behavior:
  - Duration should be adapted to a child’s developmental age, with a maximum of one minute per year.
  - Explain to children only one time, in a way they understand, through voice, sign, and/or communication device, the reason for their punishment.
  - Do not look at or talk to children once timeout begins.
  - Make sure location is safe and quiet; monitor inconspicuously from a distance.
  - At the conclusion of timeout, immediately resume praising good behavior.
- When behavior is a symptom of disability, special circumstances may apply:
  - Separate the behavior from the child when disciplining.
  - Never limit the use of assistive devices, such as mobility or communication aids as a form of punishment.
  - Avoid the use of negative labels or psychological terms when discussing children’s behavior.

Parents should expect some degree of misbehavior from all children, as a normal part of development. When these behaviors threaten a child’s safety or their ability to interact with others in acceptable ways, there must be consequences. To deny these consequences to children with disability may delay their development into responsible adults.

Resource:
*Positive Discipline for Special Needs Children*, by Kara Ayers, [www.disaboon.com](http://www.disaboon.com)

For more information contact Marsha Rivas, Equal Access Ministry  
Diocese of Toledo  419-244-6711  mrivas@toledodiocese.org
Inclusive Catechesis Support Wish List

1. **Catechists** - Catechist with skills as an educator, particularly special education or the parent of a child with a disability. Sense of humor and flexibility are a huge asset.

2. **Aides/Assistants** - Caring adults who can be present in groups to be extra eyes, hands, legs and hearts.

3. **Teen Aides** - Caring teens who can be present in groups to be extra eyes, hands, legs and hearts.

4. **Buddies** – Someone who will support one child in particular in a larger group, in a noninvasive way.

5. **Inclusion Consultants** – People with special education, psychology or behavior specialist background that can serve as consultant/support for catechists.

6. **Hall Monitors** – Some facilities have many entrances and exits. It’s good to have extra people around for the restroom and keeping in those who belong inside and keeping out those who belong outside.

7. **Crafters** – Some materials/activities may require extra preparation for children with limited fine motor skills. It can be a huge help to catechists if someone else can prepare the material once he/she has determined what is needed.

8. **Audio Recorders** – Someone with a good speaking voice to record prayers, songs, and other catechetical material. This is especially helpful for children with visual impairments or who are blind, but also helpful for others, particularly children with attention issues.

9. **Digital Photographer** - A volunteer who assist in taking pictures to assist with making materials specific to your parish to assist with enabling the children with disabilities to make the connections.

11. **Inclusion Facilitator or Coordinator** – This person expands the capabilities of the Parish Catechetical leader. S/he can make phone calls to schedule meeting, make contacts for adaptive services, reach out to families who have indicated special needs on the registration form and assist with the Child Information Form process.

Pastoral Ministries with Persons with Disabilities
Archdiocese of Newark
Anne Masters - masteran@rcan.org

Office for Persons with Disabilities
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Sr. Kathleen Schipani – srkschipani@archphila.org
WEB RESOURCES

www.arch phil a.org (On Home page find Offices under Archdiocese scroll down.)

USCCB Documents on Disabilities
http://archphila.org/evangelization/resplife/pcpd/pcpd.htm
- USCCB 1978 Pastoral Statement on Persons with Disabilities
- 1995 Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities
- 1998 Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities

Resources for Inclusive Parish Religious Education Program (PREP)
http://archphila.org/evangelization/resplife/pcpd/religioused.htm
- Model of Inclusion
- Guidelines for Inclusion
- PREP Volunteer / Registration Announcement
- PREP Registration Form
- PREP Child Information Form
- PREP Resources for Preview
- PREP Inclusion Bibliography
- Tip Sheet for Catechists: Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Inclusion at the Heart of Catechesis Article
- Web Links for Inclusive Religious Education - Annotated
- Power Point – A Place for All: Religious Education and Sunday Liturgy
- Power Point: Religious Education: Models & Resources for Accommodating All Children
- Power Point: Widening the Welcome: Inclusive Faith Formation How To's

Pastoral Care for Persons with Disabilities General Resources
http://archphila.org/evangelization/resplife/pcpd/pcpd.htm
- American Sign Language Interpreter Policy
- Disability Etiquette - Ushers and Hospitality Training
- Making Meetings and Events Accessible
- Monthly Prayer of the Faithful Suggestions
- Preferred Language
- Parish Suggestions - Supporting Families with Children with Disabilities
- Support for Families Expecting Children with Disabilities

Deaf Apostolate
http://archphila.org/evangelization/resplife/deafapos/deafapos.htm
- Schedule of Masses in American Sign Language
- Deaf Apostolate Religious Formation Programs: Youth, Teens, Adults
- Interpreter Resources/ Accessing an Interpreter
- Other Resources for individuals who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Office for Persons with Disabilities & the Deaf Apostolate
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Deaf Apostolate 215-587-3913 / Video Phone 267-507-1215 / Fax 215-587-3561
The Office for Divine Worship is committed to assisting parish communities in developing the means for full participation of persons with disabilities in the sacramental life of the Church. We offer our support to pastors, principals, directors of religious education, catechists, parents, and all those who work to ensure that persons with disabilities can live out their Baptismal Call.


Resources from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities
Life Matters – Persons with Disabilities Bulletin Insert

Resources from the Office for Divine Worship
Sample Bulletin Announcement Regarding Liturgical Celebrations with Persons with Disabilities - PDF
Sample Intentions to Promote Full Inclusion - PDF
Sample Intentions to Promote Full Inclusion – Word Document
Holy Communion and Celiac Sprue Disease

Providing Pastoral Support When an Infant Dies Before or Shortly After Birth
Resources for anyone experiencing a poor prenatal diagnosis
www.odwphiladelphia.org/sacred-liturgy/providing-pastoral-support-when-an-infant-dies-before-or-shortly-after-birth/

Office for Divine Worship
Father G. Dennis Gill, Director
Miss Jean E. Madden, Associate Director
Mrs. Mary Ann Johnston, Programs Administrator
These web sites provide information and materials to support Inclusive Religious Education:

- **www.ncpd.org National Catholic Partnership on Disability:** The National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) works collaboratively to ensure meaningful participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of the life of the Church and society. This web-sites contains webinar trainings for catechists, tip sheets, forms and resources for catechesis of persons with disabilities.

- **www.udayton.edu/artssciences/ipi/inclusive_catechesis_resources/index.php Network of Inclusive Catholic Education:** As part of the University of Dayton Institute for Pastoral Initiatives, the Network of Inclusive Catholic Educators, serves as a support network and resource to individuals with disabilities and their families. Resources for Sacramental preparation, print and DVD’s to assist with religious education are provided.

- **www.inclusioninworship.org Pathways Awareness:** The "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors" program of Pathways Awareness assists congregations of all faith traditions to include people with physical, sensory, mental or emotional differences into all aspects of faith life. The web site also includes downloads of lesson plans for religious educators to teach students age 8 to 18 about the gifts received when everyone is included.

- **www.friendship.org Friendship Ministries:** An international, inter-denominational ministry helping equip churches from more than 60 denominations to include people with cognitive impairments. Friendship materials are inter-denominational, easy to use, and sensitive to different ages and learning levels.

- **www.xaversocietyfortheblind.org Xavier Society:** The Xavier Society continued its pioneering mission by producing Braille, large print, audiocassette and most recently digital formats of religious books and periodicals.

- **www.ncod.org National Catholic Office for the Deaf:** NCOD develops and disseminates religious education and pastoral training resources for ministry with deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

- **http://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/vkc/resources/tipsheets/ Vanderbilt Kennedy Center:** General disability specific tip sheets and faith formation tip sheets. Teaching strategy tip sheets like: How to Write a Social Story Tip Sheet
Catechetical Resources for Children and Youth with Disability

A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

CATHOLIC CURRICULUM RESOURCES

Network of Inclusion Catholic Educators (NICE), University of Dayton:
Sacramental Preparation Penance, Eucharist, Confirmation: Individualizing Lesson Plans
Sacraments: Gifts for All (Confirmation, Eucharist, and Reconciliation)
Welcome One, Welcome All: Inclusive Religious Education Resource Binder

All About Mass - Student Edition: Uses limited vocabulary and simple images to explain the mass in a way that both young children and adults with developmental disabilities can understand.

Apostles Creed/Mary/Sacraments/Beatitudes/Saints: Individual books on a variety of topics that can be used as a supplement.

Contact: Margaret.Shufflebarger@notes.udayton.edu
www.udayton.edu/artssciences/ctr/mpi/inclusive_catechesis_resources/index.php
1-888-532-3389

Loyola Press:
Adaptive First Eucharist Preparation Kit for Children with Autism and Other Special Needs
Adaptive Reconciliation Preparation Kit for Children with Autism and Other Special Needs
Adaptive Confirmation Preparation Kit for Children with Autism and Other Special Needs
The kits contain tactile components, including picture cards and other manipulates. These kits also includes social stories and picture exchange communication system (PECS) strategies.

My Picture Missal App was developed for children with special needs and for young children. With a choice of English or Spanish, all children can learn, understand, and fully experience the Mass. When used at Mass, it's a great tool to help children follow along step-by-step and join in appropriately and reverently. Available on the iPad now for purchase at itunes.com

Adaptive Finding God Program: A full curriculum offering faith formation for children with special needs adaptable to a variety of settings and situations. Includes lesson plans and adaptive materials for each grade level and sacramental prep.


Faith, Family and Children with Special Needs by David Rizzo 2012

Spiritually Able: A Parents’s Guide to Teaching the Faith to children with Special Needs by David Rizzo 2015

Contact: www.loyolapress.com (Special Needs web site: www.loyolapress.com/special-needs)
Our Sunday Visitor

*My First Eucharist / Sacrament of Reconciliation:* These videos and teacher’s guides created by the National Catholic Office for the Deaf (NCOD) provides a signed and closed captioned sacrament preparation to assist in preparing deaf children to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation ([www.ncod.org](http://www.ncod.org) or [www.osvparish.com](http://www.osvparish.com)).

*Strengthened in Faith: Confirmation:* Three DVD’s that contain 12 video lessons in American Sign Language, captioned and voiced in English and a Teacher Manual. Produced by the National Catholic Office for the Deaf (NCOD) for individuals who are deaf and very effective for any visual learners. Voiced and captioned in Spanish Version available in 2015.

**Contact:** [www.osvparish.org](http://www.osvparish.org) or call 1-800-348-2440, ext. 2173

**RCL-Benziger:**

*Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Program* to Improve Catholic Religious Education for Children and Adults with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities.

- Level based Student Activity books are also available.
- Autism Supplement (2014)

Published by Diocese of Pittsburgh; distributed by RCL-Benziger

Series of picture books published by Diocese of Pittsburgh and distributed by RCL-Benziger:

- *My Church: A young girl shares her Catholic Deaf Community*
- *Created in God’s Image: A Photo-essay on Faith, Family, and Friendship*
- *Seeing Through God’s Eyes*
- *Just Like Me*
- *We Go To Mass* (geared for children with autism)
- *One Flock, One Shepherd: A Collection of Prayers by Parents of Children Who Are Disabled*

**Contact:** RCL-Benziger - [www.rclbenziger.com](http://www.rclbenziger.com) or 1-877-275-4725

**Cardinal Stritch University Bookstore:**

*Journey with Jesus: Call to Love* by Sr. Sheila Haskett, O.S.F. Suggestions for Special Religious Education for Persons Categorized as Severely/Profoundly Mentally Retarded. Topics covered: Call to Be; Call to Respond; Call to be Loving

*Call to Communion; Call to Reconciliation. Call to Service* (Confirmation). Each of these also has a black line picture book for the participants. (Note: These are for those with special education needs, but not classified as severely/profoundly mentally retarded.)

*Seasons of Grace: Sacramental Preparation for Mentally Handicapped Teens and Adults* by Brigid O’Donnell.

*Journey with Jesus Gospel Study: A Curriculum Guide for Adult Special Religious Education* by Sr. M. Sheila Haskett, O.S.F., Ph.D. and Sr. M. Coletta Dunn, O.S.F., Ph.D.

**Contact:** Cardinal Stritch University Bookstore; (414) 410-4035 or [http://www.csu.bkstr.com/](http://www.csu.bkstr.com/)

**Labosh Publishing:**


**Contact:** Labosh Publishing: East Petersburg, PA, 2007. [www.laboshpublishing.com](http://www.laboshpublishing.com)
OTHER CATHOLIC RESOURCES

A Place for All: Ministry for Youth with Special Needs by John E. Barone, St. Mary Press, 2008. A manual that provides background and practical skills for creating a learning environment and preparing dynamic lessons to accommodate all youth in religious education programs. St. Mary Press, www.smp.org, 800-533-8095

Awakening Spiritual Dimensions: Prayer Services with Persons with Severe Disabilities I and II by Fr. William Gillum, OFM Cap. Available from: AuthorHouse 1663 Liberty Drive, Suite 200 Bloomington, IN 47043, 800-839-8640 or www.AuthorHouse.com or book order hotline 888-280-7715, bkorders@authorhouse.com


Creative Teaching website: Offers creative resources for understanding the sacraments and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Useful for learners with and without disabilities. Creative Teaching activities have been given an Imprimatur. 1-586-992-2368 or www.creativeteaching.net

Catholic Icing website: Suggestions and templates for hands on activities and crafts that assist in making religions lessons hands-on and memorable. www.catholicicing.com


Special Children, Blessed Fathers: Encouragement for fathers of children with special needs by Randy Hain. Emmaus Road, 2015. Order through Amazon.


This Is My Church. A power point template of a church tour that you may insert digital photos of your own church to share with your child(ren). Department for Pastoral Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, Archdiocese of Newark. masteran@rcan.org or 973-497-4309
Resources from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB):  
Bishops’ Statements/Publications:  
*USCCB is updating and plans to re-authorize in 2015-2016.  

Web Version of these documents also available at:  www.ncpd.org

INTERFAITH RESOURCES


AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE RESOURCES


BRAILLE & LARGE PRINT RESOURCES

Xavier Society for the Blind – Provides free spiritual and inspiration reading materials and lending library services in Braille, large print and audiocassette formats. 212-473-7800; 1-800-637-9193, www.xaviersocietyfortheblind.org


AUTISM-SPECIFIC RESOURCES


WEBSITE RESOURCES


NCOD - The National Catholic Office for the Deaf, www.ncod.org

Church Access for Persons with Disabilities; Catholic Theological Information & Practical Advice: http://www.catholicdisabilityteachings.com/

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Sample Models of Inclusion

Parish Religious Education Programs
(Office for Persons with Disabilities, Archdiocese of Philadelphia)

Be creative. Inclusive faith formation programs are only limited by your imagination.

Integration with Accommodations
The student participates in classroom with the support of a catechist assistant, peer tutor or therapeutic support staff. Supplemental materials could be used.

Integration in Parish Program
The student participates in the religious education classroom with peers.

Program Integration in Learning Support Classroom
The student participates in small group learning support classroom using an adapted curriculum and materials.

Integration with Individualized Instruction
The student participates in classroom opening prayer, program liturgies and special classroom activities. Student receives individualized instruction.

The catechist, then, is a Christian who is mindful of God, who is guided by the memory of God in his or her entire life and who is able to awaken that memory in the hearts of others. This is not easy! It engages our entire existence! ... Dear catechists, I ask you: Are we in fact the memory of God? Are we really like sentinels who awaken in others the memory of God which warms the heart?

Pope Francis, 9.30.13 Homily to Catechists

Every parish should seek out its parishioners with cognitive, emotional, and physical disabilities, support them with love and concern, and ensure that they have ready access to a catechetical program suited to their needs and abilities.

National Directory for Catechesis 61:B, 1, 2nd paragraph

Office for Persons with Disabilities
215-587-3530 / www.archphila.org / sr.kschipani@archphila.org
It is to those who have the most need of us that we ought to show our love more especially.

St. Francis De Sales