SPECIAL NEEDS, SPECIAL MINISTRY
AUTISM, TRAUMA, AND DOWN SYNDROME

OUTLINE

During this second video segment on “Special Needs, Special Ministry,” we will focus on:

- Children with autism
- Children who have experienced trauma
- Children who have Down syndrome

AUTISM

Autism is characterized by impaired ________________; communication: both verbal and non-verbal; and unusual, ________________ activities.

- They are socially withdrawn.
- They do not have an emotional ________________ with others.
- They appear to lack ________________________________.
- They have an exaggerated startle response.
- They can become very preoccupied with certain objects.

Myths

- Children with autism will not look you in the eye and lack ________________.
- Everyone with autism is a ________________________________.
- Autism is caused by poor parenting.
Treatment

• Children with autism function best in a ____________________ environment.
• They respond very well to positive reinforcement.
• Some will require sensory therapies and __________________ therapy.
• Some medications may be prescribed to control aggressive or impulsive behaviors.

Lesson Planning and Behavior Management

• Have a calm, structured, and not over stimulating __________________ environment.
• Lessen the _________________________________.
• Limit _________________________________ contact.
• Be intentional in giving opportunities for social _____________________.
• Pick your battles.

TRAUMA/FRAGILE CHILD

Categories of Trauma

• Child ____________________ and _____________________________
• Serious accidental injury
• _________________ in their homes, school, or neighborhoods
• Medical trauma

Characteristics

• Children will have a hyper startle _________________________________.
• They have a lot of _______________________________ complaints.
Myths

Of the myths related to children with trauma, many may surprise you.

- Children will more likely to be hurt by ____________________________.
- ____________________________ are more often affected by abuse.
- ____________________________ is the most common form of abuse in children.
- Talking about it will make the person re-live the event.
- Most sexual abuse of children is caused by ____________________________.
- ____________________________ most often abuse their children.

Treatment

- Begin re-establishing appropriate personal ________________ with the child.
- ____________________________ is very important to help children deal with past abuse.
- Re-establishing normalcy after a traumatic event.

Lesson Planning and Behavior Management

- Never assume.
- Keep in mind that there is a ____________________________ for every behavior.
- Respect ____________________________ space.
- Have a calm, focused, structured ____________________________.
- Spend time getting to know the ____________________________ of the children.
- Allow each child to feel your place of ministry is a safe place to be.
DOWN SYNDROME

Down syndrome occurs when a person has 3 rather than 2 copies of the 21\textsuperscript{st} chromosome.

There are common physical traits in persons with Down Syndrome:

- They usually have low \underline{__________________________} tone and small stature.
- There is an upward slant of the \underline{______________________________}.
- They are more prone to certain \underline{________________________} conditions.
- They have cognitive delays that will require special \underline{________________________} accommodations.

Myths

- The life span of people with Down Syndrome is short.
- People with Down Syndrome cannot \underline{__________________________}.

Treatment

- The best treatment is early \underline{____________________________________}.
- Children with Down Syndrome will require \underline{________________________} therapy and \underline{________________________} therapies at an early age.

Lesson Planning and Behavior Intervention

- Use multi-sensory learning.
- Get them \underline{__________________________________________}.
- One-on-one \underline{______________________________} works best.
- Maintain a structured and predictable learning environment.
- Minimize the \underline{_______________________________} in your classroom.
- Be intentional in \underline{________________________________} with other students.
- Build self-esteem.
PREPARING YOUR CHURCH FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

Begin to Prepare the Way

Talk with children about—

- How we are all different
- How we are all “wonderfully made”
- Share lessons about people in the Bible who had special needs

When you have a special needs child in your ministry, remember the following tips:

- The ______________________________ is the expert.
- If there are accommodations that have worked at public school, those same accommodations should work in your children’s ministry.
- ____________________________ yourself.
- Don’t avoid the fact that this child has special needs.

CONCLUSION

Practical strategies that will be helpful in teaching children with special needs:

- Have a positive ____________________________ plan in place.
- Audio tape your class once.
- If you are able to have the staff, each class should have a teaching ____________________________.
- The Buddy System works very well.
- Using your ____________________________ in ministry is very important.
• Consistency, structure, and predictability allow your children to feel comfortable and safe in your classroom.

• Some __________________________ may need to be modified to reach all children in your classroom.

All children have the same SPECIAL NEEDS. Name several needs all children have.
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________