



Kids Care: Tips for Volunteers

When working with a child with a physical disability:

- Familiarize yourself with any equipment the child uses.
- Explain to other kids in the class how to treat the equipment with respect.
- Make sure the facilities are physically accessible.
- Train a peer assistant to help the child with tasks that are beyond his/her physical capabilities.
- Be sure to engage in conversation with the child on asking for assistance, or letting you know when they need help, don't automatically do the task(s) for them.

When working with a child with speech difficulties:

- Practice good listening skills.
- Never pretend you understand something if you do not. Ask the child to repeat comments or questions. If you still have problems understanding, ask the child to draw a picture or gesture.

When working with a child with emotional difficulties:

- Be loving, but firm.
- Plan for success. Accentuate the positive, praise little victories.
- Ask for advice from the child's parents or caregivers and/or professionals that work with him/her.
- Do not make a commitment to the child you cannot keep.

When working with a child with developmental disabilities:

- Routine is important.
- Avoid abstract concepts and ideas.
- Allow more time for learning.
- Use repetition to aid retention.
- Be patient and unhurried in teaching.
- Give only one or two directions at a time.
- Make lessons meaningful and applicable to their lives.

When working with a child with autism:

- Ask the parents whether or not the child likes to be touched.
- Routine is very important.



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- Provide visuals whenever possible.
- Learn if there are any sensory issues to be avoided.
- Become familiar with any calming activities that can be used when needed.

When working with a child with learning disabilities:

- Provide the needed breaks in concentration.
- Do not lecture for long periods of time.
- Continually refocus the child's attention.
- Cut down on distracting noise and limit the visual environment.
- Use all five senses—hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch—in each lesson whenever possible.

When working with a child with hearing impairments:

- there is no need to shout.
- if the child lip-reads, make sure he/she has a good view of your mouth.
- provide a sign language interpreter if necessary.

When working with a child with visual impairments:

- Use clear, uncluttered visual aids.
- Address the child by name.
- Give explanations each time movement in the room is necessary.
- Familiarize the child with where things are in the room and then keep the room the same.
- Provide Braille or large print materials.

Always connect with a child's grown-up about pointers to best support their child. They are the experts on their child and want to see you have a successful time together!

Adapted from "Inclusion in Sunday School and Encouraging Volunteers" CCFH Ministries, 2004