

What is the “inclusion” model for special needs assistance?

Inclusion Model

Rather than creating a separated special needs ministry or classroom, at Eagle Brook we adopt the ‘inclusion model.’ Our goal is to help make it possible for children with special needs to participate alongside students without special needs within EBC’s weekend kids’ programs. We will strive to welcome each child to the kids’ program that corresponds to their peer age-group, helping them to learn and grow in Christ. With reasonable (non-professional) volunteer support, we will partner with parents to accommodate every child to the best of our abilities for the one-hour service. In some cases, we may not be able to offer assistance, and reserve the right to decline volunteer services in those rare circumstances.

We DO provide:	We DON’T provide:
The opportunity for kids to participate and learn <i>within</i> kids ministries according to their unique abilities	Separate classrooms or classes for kids with special needs, or accommodations for kids older than grade 5 at this time*
One hour of care and programming while a parent/guardian attends service onsite	Respite care or drop-off care
Trained, screened, secure volunteers who love kids with special needs	Professionals who do therapy or behavior modification programs
One-on-one volunteers or a “para-type” room assistants for individualized attention/oversight	Medical intervention or diapering/toileting for children over 5 (parents will be paged)
Some creative adaptations with curriculum, activities, and sensory/visual/physical resources to increase successful participation	Strategically separate curriculum, teaching or environment for learning

*Our physical space limits us from having designated rooms to accommodate individualized sensory, development or behavioral needs. To utilize our special needs assistance, we work with the child to be able to be included within the established kids’ programs, under the safety, security and well-being offered by that structure.

If a child needs to calm, reduce distraction, or leave the classroom to regulate, a volunteer may take them to a secured hallway for a short period of time (5-10 minutes) and return when appropriate. If there is an empty classroom available for a period of 15-20 minutes, the volunteer may utilize that room that is behind secured doors temporarily if the child is having a hard time participating. Beyond that, the parent will need to be paged. (Volunteers cannot relocate with a child outside of the secured area.)

We empower our pastors and special needs volunteers to observe the physical or behavioral needs of a child and make a recommendation to the parents should the child need a Room Assistant, a Side-By-Side volunteer, or have a meeting to assess how we may be able to best accommodate the family.

Some examples of diagnoses which may be appropriate for special needs assistance:

Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Developmental Delay, Muscular Dystrophy, ADD, Cancer, and Down’s syndrome are just a few examples.