

# SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH WITH UNIQUE NEEDS

A RESOURCE OF THE  
ST. NICHOLAS  
MINISTRY



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

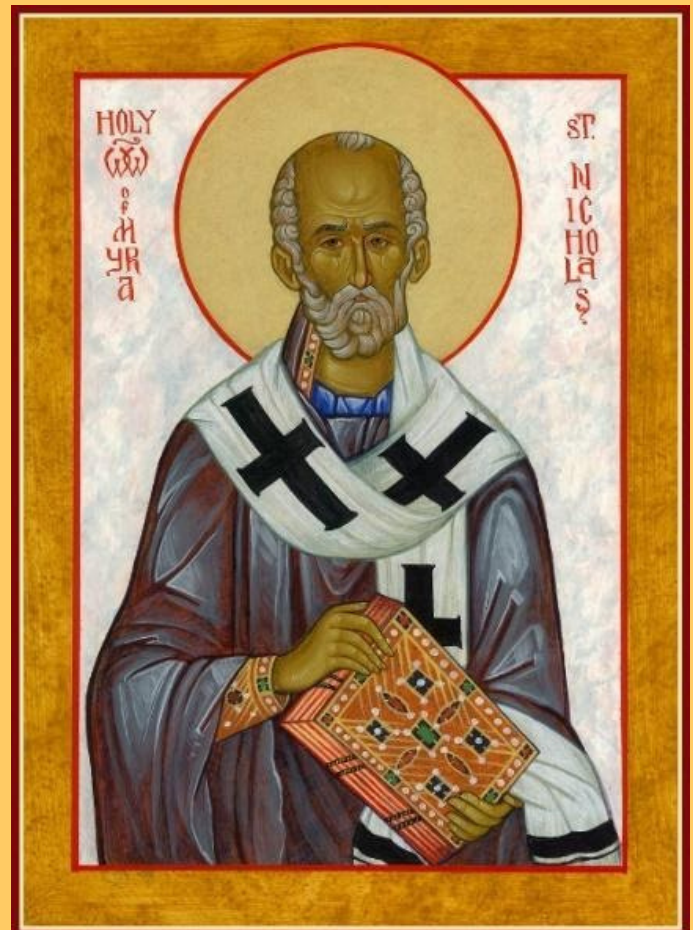
3	INTRODUCTION
	His Eminence Metropolitan Antony
	His Eminence Archbishop Daniel
4	INTRODUCTION
	ABOUT THE GUIDE
5	TERMS TO KNOW
17	COMMUNICATION & RELATIONSHIPS
19	NEXT STEPS
	Sensory Items
	Quiet Space/Sensory Room
	Parish Buddies
	Adaptive Services
	Modifying Church School & Youth Group
27	FOR CLERGY
30	PARISH EDUCATION
32	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
37	REFERENCES



## Supporting our Youth with Special Needs

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA  
Consistory Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry

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# ***SPECIAL NEEDS GUIDE FOR PARISHES***

of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA



We are blessed to have Natalie Kapeluck-Nixon as Director of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for more than two decades. Natalie has assembled a group of mostly volunteers over the years who have, with the great depth in the Love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and always under the guidance and Grace of the Holy Spirit, developed life enriching educational and nurturing programs to serve the needs of our youth and young adults. We thank God in the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – for His gift of these dedicated servants.

The present effort, a “SPECIAL NEEDS GUIDE FOR PARISHES” of our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church and beyond, if requested, is a prime example of our Youth Ministry Office. Here you will find a comprehensive introduction to what “special needs and those who have them” are, along with the teaching and nurturing efforts necessary for reaching out to them. We find here information that urges us on to further investigation about what our own roles might be in supporting these efforts, as well as a desire to examine what our own personal base attitudes and concerns are or have been prior to receiving this guide.

We urge our clergy, parish boards of administration members, church school teachers, sisterhood members, UOL chapter members and more to begin with this guide in educating themselves and planning for the future, whether or not you have any special needs parishioners or not. This guide could serve as the basis for a short-term adult education or teen education program to ensure the successful welcoming of anyone into the parish family. We are certain that if you need further information, you will find much in the short bibliography included and that you may contact Natalie Kapeluck-Nixon for assistance or perhaps as a guest speaker for your parish or community.

Our Youth Ministry Office and Ministry is well known throughout the Orthodox Christian jurisdictions in the USA and has very often been the trend-setter in new programs of education and nurturing in the Name of our Lord. God bless the entire team and God bless the efforts to be put forth by our parishes who utilize materials such as this Special Needs Guide. We, hereby, give our Archpastoral blessing to this worthy effort with the hope that we will see many positive developments arising from it.

In our Lord's All-Encompassing Love,

+ Antony

By the Grace of God, Metropolitan

+ Daniel

By the Grace of God, Archbishop

# Introduction

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In the eyes of God and in the eyes of the Church – we are all members of the Body of Christ. Each of us is unique in how God has made us. This is no different for our youth with unique/special needs. Youth who might be considered artistic or sporty are still individuals who reveal attributes that are different from another youth.

Our youth with unique needs may live with autism, down Syndrome, ADHD and other physical and emotional disabilities, but within that diagnosis they are individuals too. That is one reason why it is crucial to connect individually with EACH and EVERY ONE of our youth and parents on a personal level.

Communication and building relationships are two main components of creating a strong ministry. In youth work, it is quite common for us to have a general means of communication to ensure that our youth are receiving what they need. Questions such as, “Does your child have any food allergies?” have become commonplace. What we may not realize is that we need to approach communication and relationship building with our youth and families with unique needs from a different angle.



## About The Guide

Supporting youth with unique needs in our ministry may seem overwhelming but in fact, with just a little bit of improved communication it can be an amazing part of your ministry!

We are providing some best practices, resource and guidance in supporting youth and families with unique needs. This list is by no means exhaustive. However, it does give you a good basis to begin and build upon.

The guide begins with terms frequently used when discussing disabilities. Knowing these terms will help you while using this guide.

The remaining sections will give you guidance in developing your ministry.

# TERMS TO KNOW

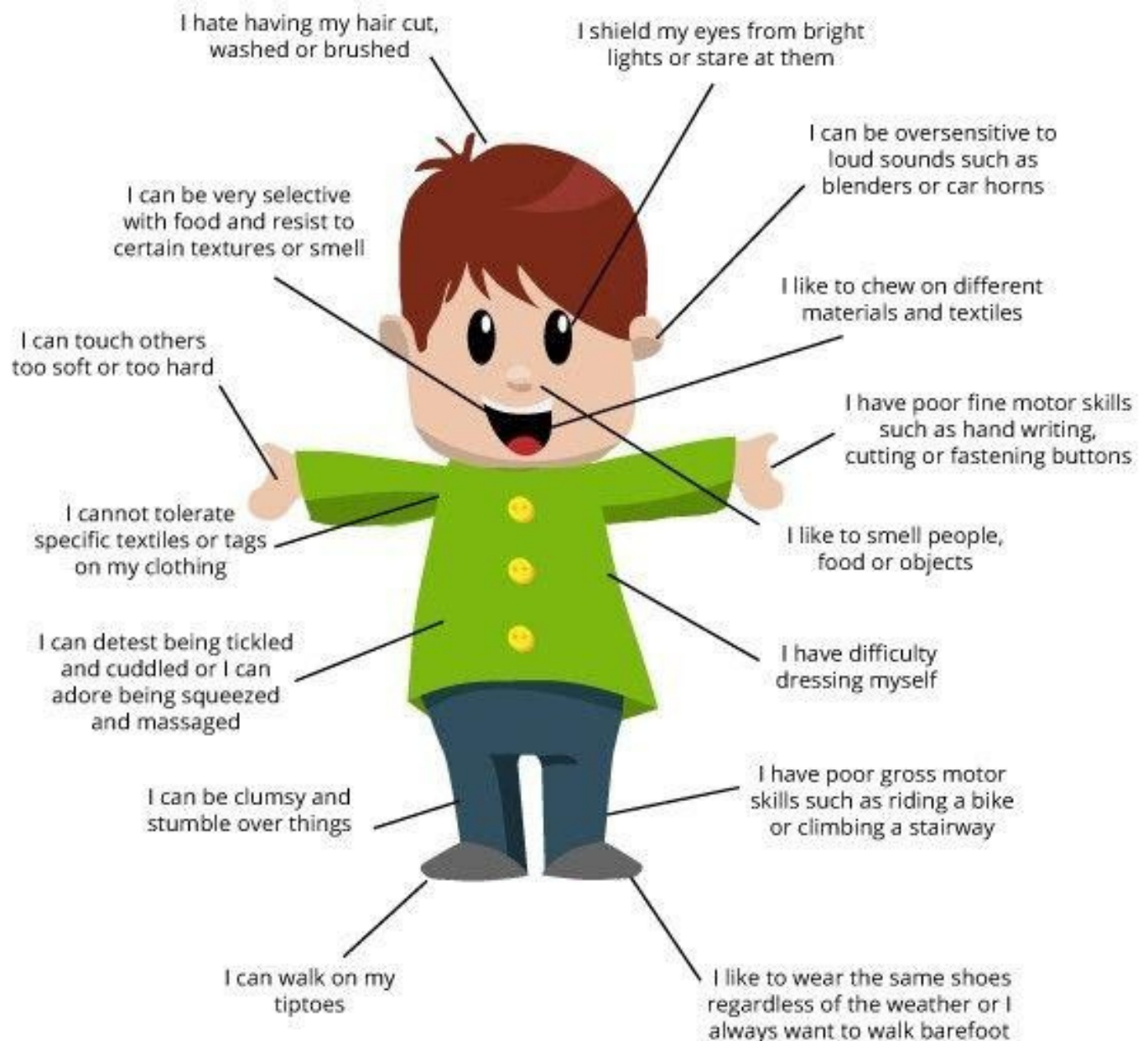
There are terms used within the world of special needs that will help your communication with parents and youth.



# TERMS TO KNOW

## Sensory Issues (Medical Term –

**Sensory Impairment):** Sensory issues occur when a child has a difficult time receiving and responding to information from their senses. Children who have sensory issues may have an aversion to anything that triggers their senses, such as light, sound, touch, taste, or smell. (1)



# TERMS TO KNOW

**Sensory Triggers** - Kids who are sensory avoiding may react to a wide range of triggers. These can include loud sounds, uncomfortable clothing, crowded spaces, or certain food smells or textures, among others. Whatever the trigger, the reaction can sometimes be extreme. Sensory overload can lead to sensory meltdowns. (2)

## Triggers for Kids With Autism & SPD



# TERMS TO KNOW

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**Behaviors** – An emotional and behavioral disorder is an emotional disability characterized by the following: (i) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and/or teachers (ii) A consistent or chronic inappropriate type of behavior or feelings under normal conditions (3)

Behaviors can be deceiving. What we may see as a child with 'bad behavior,' 'disobedient,' 'rude,' may be a child who has a behavioral disorder. The behavior is something they do not choose to do. It is something we can help them learn to control!

**Behavior management will continually need to change as the child grows and changes.**





# TERMS TO KNOW

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**Medical Issues** - Medical issues for children include serious conditions like cancer, heart defects, muscular dystrophy, and cystic fibrosis. It also includes chronic conditions like asthma and diabetes, congenital conditions like cerebral palsy and dwarfism, and health threats like food allergies and obesity. A child may need frequent medical testing, hospital stays, equipment, and accommodations for disabilities. Establishing a good support system is very important when dealing with uncertainty and any medical crises. (4)

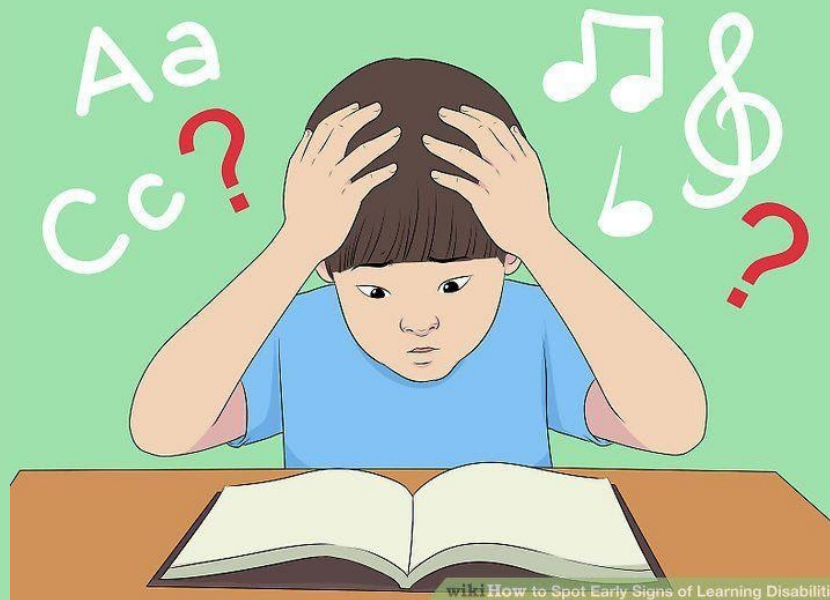


# TERMS TO KNOW

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**Developmental Issues** - Developmental disorder or developmental disability means a severe, chronic disability of an individual who has a mental or physical impairment by the age of 22 which is likely to continue indefinitely and results in substantial functional limitations in three or more areas of major life activity. (5) Some examples of major life activities include:

Youth with developmental disability would include those diagnosed with Down Syndrome, Autism, Dyslexia



**Learning Issues** - Children with learning disabilities may or may not have intellectual disabilities. Children with learning issues struggle with schoolwork regardless of this. They require specialized learning strategies to meet their potential and avoid self-esteem problems and behavioral difficulties. Some non-intellectual disability related learning disabilities include: Dyslexia and Auditory Processing Disorder.

# TERMS TO KNOW

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**Mental Health Issues** – This is commonly the most misunderstood and mishandled area in youth work.

**Mental Disorders** - Social Security has a set of disability listings for mental disorders, ranging from depression-related illness, anxiety-related disorders, and psychotic disorders to autism, ADHD and learning disabilities, and mental retardation (intellectual developmental disorder) and low IQ. (6)

**IEP (Individualized Education Plan)** - The IEP creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to improve educational results for children with disabilities. The IEP is the cornerstone of a quality education for each child with a disability. (7) IEP is a specially tailored educational plan uniquely fit to meet the needs of a specific individual.



# TERMS TO KNOW

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## Behavioral Supports

**Positive Behavior Supports** - Positive behavior support (PBS) is a behavior management system used to understand what maintains an individual's challenging behavior. People's inappropriate behaviors are difficult to change because they are functional; they serve a purpose for them. These behaviors are supported by reinforcement in the environment. (8)



# TERMS TO KNOW

## Behavior Support Plan -

A "Behavior Support Plan" (BSP) is a plan that assists a member in building positive behaviors to replace or reduce a challenging/dangerous behavior. This plan may include teaching, improved communication, increasing relationships, and using clinical interventions, etc. (9)

**Visual Schedule** – Visual activity schedules can be defined as a series of images, pictures, photographs, or line drawings used to depict a sequence of events. Frequently, the images are used to prepare the individual for the next activity, the next step of an activity or a sequence of activities. (10)

**My Camp Schedule!**



The visual schedule consists of five items arranged in a grid-like fashion. At the top is the title "My Camp Schedule!". Below it are four photographs, each with a label in a white box with a black border. The first row contains "Church" (a group of people in a church) and "Dinner" (a group of people at a dining table). The second row contains "Activity" (a child reading a book) and "Campfire" (a group of people around a campfire). At the bottom is an illustration of a child sleeping with a thought bubble containing a purple 'Z', and the text "Get Ready for Bed!".

Church

Dinner

Activity

Campfire

Get Ready for Bed!

# TERMS TO KNOW

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**Social Stories** - Social Stories are a concept devised by Carol Gray in 1991 to improve the social skills of people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The objective is to share information through a description of events that occur around a specific subject and explains why. Social stories are used to educate and as praise.  
(11)

**Diagnosis/Classification** - The diagnosis or classification is the technical term for the disability or need of the person.

**Typical** - This term is generally used for what is considered the "norm" by a community.



# TERMS TO KNOW

**Modification** – Making an adjustment to the program/curriculum to meet the needs of the individual

**Accommodation** – Providing a change in setting/timing/format or a service (such as an aide) to meet the needs of the individual.

**Praise and Reward** – These are techniques often used to promote positive behavior.



# TERMS TO KNOW

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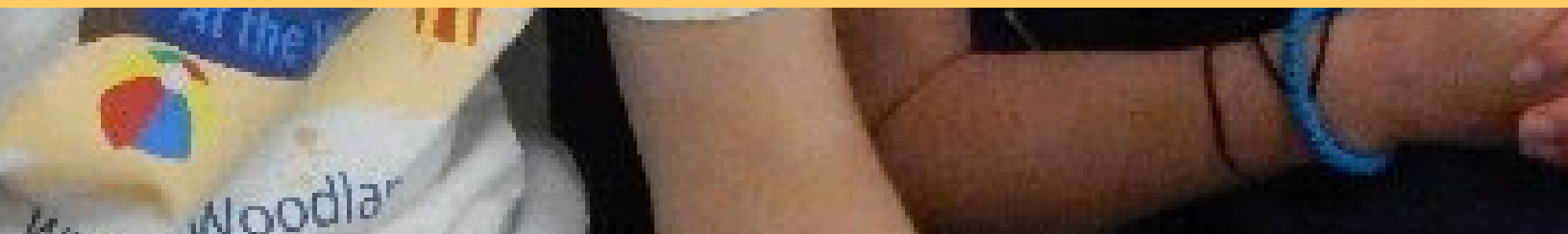
**Stimming** - Self-stimulatory behavior, also known as stimming and self-stimulation, is the repetition of physical movements, sounds, words, or moving objects. Stimming behaviors can consist of tactile, visual, auditory, olfactory and vestibular stimming. Some common examples of stimming (sometimes called stims) include hand flapping, clapping, rocking, excessive or hard blinking, pacing, head banging, repeating noises or words, snapping fingers; and spinning objects. All people can stim – the habit of tapping your fingers, chewing a pencil or shaking your foot can be considered stimming. (12)







# **COMMUNICATION & RELATIONSHIPS**



# COMMUNICATION & RELATIONSHIPS

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Building a strong relationship with all parents in your ministry is crucial. The discussions you need to have with parents of youth with unique needs will be a bit different than typical discussions.

Here are some things you want to touch upon with parents:

- Ask them to tell you about their child. Listen, take notes, parents know their children better than anyone else. Sometimes just listening to them is the best resource!
- Does their child have any sensory concerns such as aversion to loud noises or smells? What does the parent do to help with these sensory issues? Is there anything they can provide to you or that you could provide to aid with these concerns during youth programming?
- Does the child manage any behaviors? What are those? Does the child have a behavior management plan? Is the parent willing to share this with you? If the parent feels comfortable sharing the behavior management plan with you, ensure the following:
  - This information will be kept private and only used by those on the approved team.
  - This information will be kept in a secure location.
  - Ask the parents if they would take the time to review the plan with you (and/or the team) so that you have a full understanding of implementation.

# COMMUNICATION & RELATIONSHIPS CONT.

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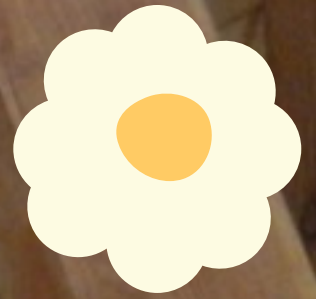
- Does their child have an IEP? Is this something that would be of benefit to the team to have on hand? If shared, this document would fall under the same policies as the behavior management plan.
- Does your child have Wrap-around services? If so, would the TSS (Therapeutic Support Staff) or the BSC (Behavioral Specialist Consultant) be able to come in for a few session/activities to help their child acclimate or to give suggestions to the youth team?
- Does the child use a visual schedule or social stories? These two resources can be a huge aid in helping our youth with unique needs succeed in our youth ministry. The Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry is developing church related modifiable visual schedules and social stories. You can also create your own by taking photos of the young person doing the various activities and creating your own schedule. Note the example in the term section by Visual Schedule. A visual schedule or activity chart could be a useful tool to promote positive behavior and outcome for ALL youth in your ministry. This can be used in Church School Settings or for activities.
- First– Then, cards. These are also a very useful aid. Parents can show you how to use the First – Then cards.

# COMMUNICATION & RELATIONSHIPS CONT.

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- What does their child like? Such as special characters, movies, videos, games. These can all be useful as motivators, modification and reward.
- Does their child have any special items that help them for soothing or stimulation/sensory purposes such as a favorite doll or chewy?
- Does their child need any adaptive equipment such as a tablet or special seating?
- Does their child need one-on-one support? Are they able to provide this? If families are not able to provide such support, you will provide it.
- Are there any particular phrases they use that work well with their child?
- Also keep in mind that youth with unique needs may have a number of overlapping diagnoses.

You will find a ***Unique Needs Information Form*** on our website. This will help you keep notes during your conversation with the parent. You may choose to have the parent fill out the form. However, DO NOT make this the only step. You need to follow-up with the parent and DISCUSS the information, so you have a full understanding of the needs and information.



**NEXT STEPS**

# NEXT STEPS

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There are some standard things you may want to have in place for any youth with unique needs.

*Sensory Items* – Many youth, with or without diagnosed special needs, deal with sensory issues. Having sensory items such as fidgets, weighted blankets, squeeze balls/animals, different textiles are great to have on hand! Put together a sensory box that can be used in classrooms or at youth activities/events. You can purchase these items from many different places on-line or in stores. You can even make your own! Here is a good resource for making your own sensory box

<https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/my-top-10-sensory-bin-items/>

It might also be helpful to have a sensory box in the back of church. You can add items such as some seen below, in addition to the some of the items in a traditional sensory box.



# SENSORY ITEMS CONT.



Soft cloth icon. This one is from Door9 creations on Etsy.



Crocheted sensor. This one is from Anna Crawford at cozyhousecurios on Etsy



Wood carved icons – These are not only good for sensory needs but also for faithful who have a disability concerning their sight. This icon is from Maxim Kozak at Kozakworkshop on Etsy



Orthodox Soft touch dolls. These can be made by you or purchased from Draw Near Designs on Etsy

Orthodox peg dolls. These can be made by you or purchased from many sources. This one is from stalexiscreations on Etsy

# NEXT STEPS CONT.

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**Quiet Space or Sensory Room** – Often faithful with unique needs become over-whelmed or over-stimulated. They need a place they can retreat to, feel safe, and reset. Speak to your parish priest and council to devise areas in your parish (church proper, church hall, church school rooms), that can be designated as a Quiet Space/Sensory Room. It would be good to have lowered lighting and items such as a bean bag chair, sensory items, weighted blanket in the room.

Suggestions for setting up Sensory/Quiet Room may be found in the additional resources section.

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**Parish Buddies** – Developing a Parish Buddy program can be a wonderful part of your ministry. As noted in the parent discussion session – some faithful benefit from having one-on-one attention. Parishioners interested in being buddies can receive special training in working with faithful with unique needs. In discussion with families, designate times the Parish Buddies would be needed or helpful, such as during services, church school, coffee hour, etc. You may already have people in your parish that work or volunteer in this field. Some schools or organizations may provide trained individuals who would come to your parish to help with this ministry. You may contact the Office of Youth Ministry for additional suggestions for training as well as personalized training from our St. Nicholas Ministry Team.



# NEXT STEPS CONT.

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**Adaptive Services** – You may want to take a walk around your parishes and look at them through the eyes of our faithful with unique needs. This would also be a great addition to your discussion with families. What areas of the parish could be adapted for all abilities? Take time to discuss with your priest the needs of your youth with disabilities and ways you may adapt services. Some suggestions:

- Provide headphones for individuals with sound sensitivity
- Do you need ramps, elevators, or chair lifts?
- Can lights be dimmed at certain times or in certain areas?
- Do you need to install supports in bathroom stalls?
- Do you have a handicap regulation bathroom door or bathroom stall?
- Can you provide Parish buddies to help individuals enter/exit or move around your parish if you do not have some of the adaptive equipment mentioned?
- Can you designate one stall for handicap use and provide a toilet seat lift assist?
- Provide areas for special seating or for wheelchairs. Many of our parishes have pews. Perhaps a pew could be removed to provide the needed room for a wheelchair or to provide an individual with additional space to move or stim without intruding on other's personal space.
- For more ideas you can purchase the resource - *Removing Barriers: A Step by Step by Guide to Making Your Parish Disability Friendly* from Faithtree Resources.

# Modifying Church School or Youth Group Activities

Each of our youth are at different levels of learning. Youth with unique needs may need special placement or modified curriculum/activities. If you need help modifying your program, please contact the Office of Youth Ministry and we will work with you. There are some additional resources to help with this:

- Special Education for Orthodox Church School - Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago <https://www.goreligiousedchicago.org/classroom-inclusion.html>
- Let All the children come to me: A Practical Guide to Including children with disabilities in Your church ministries by MaLesa Breeding, Dana Hood and Jerry Whitworth
- 17 Ways to Use Catherine's Pascha by Charlotte Riggle <https://charlotteriggle.com/14-ways-to-use-catherines-pascha/>
- Divine Liturgy Visual Schedule <https://summerkinard.com/2016/11/27/visual-schedule-for-orthodox-liturgy/>
- Saints for Students with Learning Disabilities <https://charlotteriggle.com/saints-students-learning-difficulties/>
- Holy Unction Social Story <https://www.facebook.com/uocyouth/photos/a.401574249924370/2255768041171639/?type=3&theater>
- Holy Week and Pascha Fabric Playset - St. Tabitha's Workshop [https://www.spoonflower.com/en/fabric/8657504-holy-week-pascha-playset-by-st\\_tabithas\\_workshop](https://www.spoonflower.com/en/fabric/8657504-holy-week-pascha-playset-by-st_tabithas_workshop)
- Handbook for Adaptive Catechesis – Serving Those with Special Needs by Michele E. Chronister - <https://www.amazon.com/Handbook-Adaptive-Catechesis-Serving-Special/dp/0764821458>
- Exceptional Teaching by Jim Pierson -[https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Exceptional+Teaching+%E2%80%93+Jim+Pierson&i=stripbooks&ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Exceptional+Teaching+%E2%80%93+Jim+Pierson&i=stripbooks&ref=nb_sb_noss)



**FOR CLERGY**

# FOR CLERGY

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Communication with our youth and families is not just for youth workers! One of the most crucial relationships is between faithful and their priest. We need to help families feel comfortable speaking to clergy concerning the struggles and joys of a unique needs family. Some things to discuss with families may include:

- **Discussing the Sacraments** - Participation in the Holy Sacraments is one of the most essential elements of our faith. Ensuring that our faithful with disabilities can be FULL participants in this part of the life of the church is vital. However, we need to consider many of the challenges we have already mentioned such as intellectual disability and sensory issues.
- **Communion** - May need to be received after Divine Liturgy. This could alleviate any feeling of being overwhelmed during the distribution of the sacrament during the Liturgy or sensory issues.
- **Confession**
  1. Not all faithful with disabilities will participate in this sacrament. You will need to consult with your Hierarchy for guidance concerning this on an individual basis.
  2. If the individual participates in Holy Confession – you may need to consider the sensory issue of touch. A social story could be used to aid with this. Speaking clearly to the individual about when you will touch them with the stole and where will help. Perhaps they may be able to touch a stole to prepare for this so they are familiar with it.

# FOR CLERGY CONT.

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- **Confession cont.** – 3. Modified prayers or approach may be needed when confessing a member of the faithful who has an intellectual disability. Helping families develop a plan for reflection prior to confessing and communion with their child would help them in fully understanding and participating in the sacrament. A picture chart with items they may point to may be helpful.
- **Serving** - All faithful should be given the opportunity to serve our Lord. Discuss with parents if their child would be interested in serving at the altar and devise a plan on how this can best be accomplished. St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Parma, OH has access to the epistle readings in braille. Contact them if this resource would be useful in your ministry. There are additional ways to serve, perhaps as greeters, choir members, holding candles, as with any of our youth, help them discover where they are called to serve Christ - it may just be simply in attending the services and that is ok.



# PARISH EDUCATION

# PARISH EDUCATION

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Education is the best resource we have! To ensure that our faithful with disabilities are fully embraced in the life of the church – we may need to provide some education for our parishes. Here are some ideas for accomplishing this:

- Bring in a speaker concerning walking alongside our faithful with disabilities. Natalie Kapeluck Nixon director of Youth & Young Adult Ministry is available to give this workshop in person or via the internet. There are also many qualified Orthodox speakers who may be in your area. Ask the OYM office for suggestions.
- Provide articles in your parish bulletin. Resources and articles may be found at the end of the is document. There is a wealth of resources on the internet. Your families with unique needs would also be a wonderful resource for this type of material.
- Education through living example is the best tool you can have. We learn daily through the actions of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The more people in your parish that can lead by example, the more effective your ministry.





**ADDITIONAL  
RESOURCES**



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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**Summer Camp** – The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Camping Ministry provides several opportunities for our faithful with unique needs to experience the beauty of summer camp. If you are unable to come to All Saints Camp, many sister Orthodox camps also provide adaptive summer camp experiences.



- St. Nicholas Program – Summer Camping for Families with Unique Needs – This is a four-day program specifically designed for faithful of ALL ages and their families. It normally take place from Friday to Monday during the third weekend of June.  
<https://www.uocyouth.org/stnicholasprogram.html>
- Mommy & Me/Daddy & Me – This program has been designed for young children ages 4-8 and their parents. This program has been developed to accommodate the needs of children with unique needs. To see if this program would fit the needs for one of your youth contact MMDM Directors Kira Senedak [ksenedak@gmail.com](mailto:ksenedak@gmail.com) or Denise Strashinsky [dspoganz@att.net](mailto:dspoganz@att.net) to discuss.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES CONT.

- Diocesan Church School Camp (youth ages 9-13) and Teenage Conference (teenagers 13-18) are both able to accommodate youth with unique needs. Contact OYM Director Natalie Kapeluck at uocyouth@aol.com to discuss if these programs are the right fit for your youth.
- Family Fest – This is a less structured program that takes place over Labor Day Weekend. This might be a good introduction to Orthodox camping.



## DIVINE LITURGY

What do I see? Place a sticker in the boxes that apply. Read when to do so!

	I SEE 	I HEAR 	I SMELL 	I KISS / VENERATE 	I TOUCH 	I TASTE 
Icons 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bishop, Priests, Deacon, Altar Servers 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bells & Incense 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Choir Chanters 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family & Friends 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Holy Oil & Holy Communion 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of USA - Office of Youth Ministry

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PARISH USE

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- **Modifiable Visual Schedules** – The St. Nicholas Ministry is continually developing the materials needed for parishes and families to create their own unique visual schedules for use at divine services and parish life. They may be found at on the OYM website under St. Nicholas Ministry. The OYM team is able to personalize picture tiles for faithful. Contact the OYM Office and let us know which tiles you would like to have personalized. One of our team members will contact you to discuss needs and photos.

Some additional Orthodox Visual Schedules

- Divine Liturgy Visual Schedule from Summer Kinard  
<https://summerkinard.com/2016/11/27/visual-schedule-for-orthodox-liturgy/>
- Orthodox Liturgy Wheelchair from Summer Kinard  
<https://summerkinard.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/orthodox-liturgy-wheelchair1.pdf>

- **Modifiable Social Stories** – The St. Nicholas Ministry is also continually working to provide social stories that may be used for our youth with unique needs. Some of our current stories are *When I Go to Church, Lighting Candles, and When I Pray*.

- **Liturgical Action Cards** - This resource provides youth with a task that helps them focus on the service.

- **Holy Unction Social Story**

<https://www.facebook.com/uocyouth/photos/a.401574249924370/2255768041171639/?type=3&theater>

- **Sensory/Quiet Room Set-Up**

1. <https://www.thechaosandtheclutter.com/archives/create-a-sensory-room-on-any-budget-in-any-space>
2. <http://speech-specialied.blogspot.com/2013/09/check-out-our-sensory-break-space.html>

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES- READING LIST

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- ***Parenting a Child with Special Needs*** - One Mom's Perspective by Pr. Melanie DiStefano - <https://www.goarch.org/-/parenting-a-child-with-special-needs-one-mom-s-perspective>
- ***Of Such is the Kingdom - A Practical Theology of Disabilities*** by Summer Kinard - [https://store.ancientfaith.com/of-such-is-the-kingdom-a-practical-theology-of-disability/?fbclid=IwAR2VAIZRyapFJsYyeYO9ovb6IsHDjiTvw29O\\_INa6sRN8FQDHOrk\\_ijqwc](https://store.ancientfaith.com/of-such-is-the-kingdom-a-practical-theology-of-disability/?fbclid=IwAR2VAIZRyapFJsYyeYO9ovb6IsHDjiTvw29O_INa6sRN8FQDHOrk_ijqwc)
- ***Pascha for Families with Special Needs*** by Charlotte Riggle <https://charlotteriggle.com/pascha-special-needs/>
- ***Arms Wide Open*** - Orthodox Christian Disability Resources <https://armsopenwide.wordpress.com/>
- ***Church and the Child with Invisible Disabilities*** - By Mt. Wendy Cwiawinski <https://oca.org/parish-ministry/familylife/church-and-the-child-with-invisible-disabilities>
- ***Embracing All God's Children: Orthodox Theology Concerning Disability and Its Implications for Ministry with Special Needs Youth in the Orthodox Church*** by Wendy M. Cwiklinski <https://armsopenwide.wordpress.com/2014/11/24/embracing-all-gods-children-orthodox-theology-concerning-disability-and-its-implications-for-ministry-with-special-needs-youth-in-the-orthodox-church/>
- ***Official Statement of the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas*** Thursday, June 25, 2009 Embracing People with Disabilities within the Church <http://www.assemblyofbishops.org/news/scoba/disability-and-communion>
- ***The Handicapped and Orthodox Worship*** by Fr Stephen Plumlee - <https://oca.org/parish-ministry/parishdevelopment/the-handicapped-and-orthodox-worship>
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- Fully Human - Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Center for Family Care <https://www.goarch.org/-/fully-human-social-media-graphics-quotes>
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