

# ACCESSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

**Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. (Romans 15:7)**

Additional needs are wide-ranging and include physical, learning, mental health and undiagnosed needs – all of which can impact on someone being able to join in. Here are some top tips and ideas of things you can do to help.

## CHANGES FOR ALL NOT ONE

God's heart is for all people. We see Jesus consistently draw people into community, rather than segregate. If we make small changes across what we're doing we can enable all individuals to join in, irrespective of whether they have additional needs or not.

## TELL IT ANOTHER WAY

We all understand the world through our senses. If we can explain what we're saying not just with words but with a smell, something visual, a taste, a sound effect or an opportunity to act it out or respond with our body in some way, we're all much more likely to understand more of what has been said. This will mean that individuals who don't understand verbal communication can still engage by experiencing and connecting with God through their bodies.

## MOVEMENT BREAKS

Our brains find 'heavy work' movement activities (where we put pressure through our joints) calming and regulating. The more we move (eg run on the spot, do 10 star

jumps, have a plank competition, play crab football) the more we're able to then engage with periods of concentration. Try a movement break in-between every activity.

## **SIMPLIFY**

It's easy to give lots of information, but to help everyone to understand we can try to simplify. What is the one point you want to get across? As well as expanding your point you can repeat the one 'take-home' sentence so that everyone has an opportunity to learn what is being communicated.

## **STRUCTURE**

Most of us like to know what is going to happen and when. Providing an outline and structure for any session or activity reduces anxiety.

## **PRAY CREATIVELY**

There are so many ways to tune in to what God is saying. We can enable children and young people to engage in different ways. You could try stamping feet, lying still, dancing, singing, drawing, modelling clay.

## **USE FIDGETS**

Having a pipe cleaner, tangle, pencil, or piece of Blu Tack in your hands can help keep your body busy enough for your brain to listen.

## **ADJUST AND ADAPT**

Flexibility is key in enabling everyone to join in. Adjust & adapt activities so the whole group can join. It's always okay for someone to have a break.

## **ALWAYS ASK**

If you're not sure what will help someone ask them or their parent/carer.

## **FIND OUT MORE**



Go to [www.methodist.org.uk/3genaccessibility](http://www.methodist.org.uk/3genaccessibility) for details about different additional needs, sensory processing and for more resources and ideas.

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