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Dealing with Disabilities:

"These Hands Have Ministered unto My Necessities" (Acts 20:34)


Sandra K. Ruconich
Mary Anne Prater
Roselyn M. Baird



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Parents and Schools: Fostering Child-Centered Partnerships

Sandra K. Ruconich



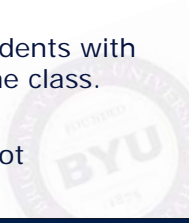
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- Cultivate relationships with teachers and others serving your child.
- Ask what's going well, what isn't, and how you can help.
- Be prepared to work with the child at home – homework, additional experience, etc.




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- Talk to the class about your child's disability (perhaps using puppets, simulators, or examples of how disabilities can be overcome – like Braille).
- Invite adults or older students with disabilities to talk with the class.
- Emphasize similarities, not differences.




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- Be involved with the school and get to know your child's classmates and their parents.
- Volunteer in the classroom, be a room mother, chaperone field trips, serve in the PTA, etc.




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- Invite classmates/students over to play at your house so your child can be comfortable in his/her own territory and use his/her own adaptations.
- Encourage your child's visits to classmates' or other students' homes.



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- Be unafraid to ask questions at your child's IEP (Individualized Education Program) meeting and to explore all possible placement options.
- Placement can change several times during a child's educational career as his/her needs change.



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Tips for Church Members and Teachers


Mary Anne Prater



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They may appear different, move awkwardly, and speak haltingly, but they have the same feelings. They laugh, they cry, they know discouragement and hope...They want to be loved for what they are inside, without any prejudice for their impairment. Can there not be more tolerance for differences—differences in capacity, differences in body and in mind?

James E. Faust (*Ensign*, Nov. 1984)



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Tips To Teach and Remember

- It's okay to:
 - Offer help, but ask first.
 - Ask people about their disability and it's okay for them not to talk about it.
 - Use words like "see," "hear," and "walk" when talking to those with disabilities.
 - Ask people who have speech problems to repeat what they said if you didn't understand.

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- When talking to a person:
 - In a wheelchair, sit down so their neck doesn't get sore.
 - Who has a disability talk to that person, not the interpreter or person accompanying him/her.
- Don't assume people with physical disabilities are sick or have mental disabilities.
- Treat the person the way you would like to be treated.

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Tips for Church Teachers

Two Main Ideas

- Be sensitive to their limitations and strengths.
- Provide opportunities to participate.

Several Tips

- **Reading in Class**
 - Don't spontaneously ask members to read.
 - Ask for volunteers.
 - Make assignments in advance.
 - Use pairs, one reads and the other follows along.

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- **Class Participation**
 - Arrange in advance for contributions they can make to the class.
 - Speech impairment – may wish to prepare a presentation rather than join in a discussion.
- **Physical Classroom Arrangements**
 - Consider what would make them more comfortable, able to learn, and to participate.
 - Hearing impairment – sit where s/he can see the teacher speak
 - Wheelchair – remove chairs to make room
 - Seat a distractible child next to the teacher
 - Low vision – may want to sit close to the board

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- **Class Content**
 - Simplify or explain difficult vocabulary.
 - Frequently restate major concepts.
 - Use multisensory representations:
 - Showing a picture – add verbal description
 - Playing music – provide a copy of the words
- **Class Format**
 - Establish routines so they know what to expect.
 - Consider assigning another adult to the class.
 - Recognize when a major disruption occurs learning stops.

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Resources to Teach About Disabilities: Children's Literature

My Brother Sammy
Developmental Disability



Knots on a Counting Rope
Visual Impairment/Blind



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The ADDED Touch
Attention Deficit Disorder



Thank You, Mr. Falker
Learning Disability



Be Good To Eddie Lee
Down Syndrome



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The Handmade Alphabet
Hearing Impaired/Deaf



Harry and Willy and Carrothead
Orthopedic Impairment



Ian's Walk
Autism



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Internet Resources
Church Web Site: www.lds.org

- Serving in the Church
 - Primary
 - Teaching All Children
 - Teaching Children with Disabilities
 - » [Help Each Child Feel Loved and Accepted](#)
 - » [Responsibilities of the Ward Primary President](#)
 - » [Responsibilities of the Primary Teacher](#)
 - » [Helping Children Develop Appropriate Behavior](#)
 - » [Dealing with a Child's Disruptive Behavior](#)
 - Teaching Our Children to Accept

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–Helps for Specific Disabilities

- » [Attention Deficit Disorder \(ADD\) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder \(ADHD\)](#)
- » [Autism](#)
- » [Behavior Disorders](#)
- » [Deaf and Blind](#)
- » [Intellectual Impairment](#)
- » [Language and Speech Disorders](#)
- » [Learning Disabilities](#)
- » [Mobility and Movement Impairments](#)




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LDSAbility

- <http://www.ldsability.org/>
- Promotes awareness of the presence and needs of members with disabilities in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Children’s Books about Disabilities


- <http://ericec.org/fact/kidbooks.html>
- Provides a list of children’s books by disability



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How to Serve Those with Disabilities and Their Families

Roselyn M. Baird



Service Ideas


- Allow the child to participate in sports games either directly or during an extra inning.
- Offer to provide rides for the child's siblings on either a short- or long-term basis.

- Offer to tend the child or siblings so the caregiver can have time to him/herself for physical, mental, emotional building.
- Help the family participate in organized activities.
- Say something nice about the child to the parents.

- Visit the family in the hospital.
- Provide meals.
- Offer to help with household chores.
- Be a non-judgmental listener.

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- Offer care for children.
- Provide an unexpected gift.
- Help children with their homework.
- Be a substitute Santa.




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Stages of Grief

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross


- Numbness
- Denial and Isolation
 - Anger
- Depression



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Additional Resources

- Utah Parent Center
 - 1-800-468-1160
 - www.utahparentcenter.org
- The Arc of Utah
 - 1-800-371-5060
 - www.thearc.org



“Our task, facilitated by prayer, is to recognize even the slight limitations of each person...It may be a minor learning disability, dyslexia, or a slight hearing impairment. Without our help, they may be unable to partake of the Savior’s goodness or enjoy the fullness of life.”

Boyd K. Packer (*Ensign*, May 1991)

