



How Do I Talk
to My Kids about

DISABILITIES?

Written with input from Church Disability Services

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THINGS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

- We all have different abilities. Sometimes these differences are obvious and sometimes they aren't. We can learn a lot from our differences.
- While it's OK to notice differences, we should also take time to find out what we have in common. People are more alike than we are different.
- A person with a disability is a child of God, just like you and me.
- Don't be afraid of someone with a disability. You can't "catch" a disability like a cold.
- One good thing we can do when we meet someone with a disability is to ask them, "Tell me more about yourself." It's nice to give others a chance to share. (Find more "Tips for Talking with Someone with a Disability" on the next page.)
- Probably the best thing we can do for anyone is to be their friend. Find things you enjoy doing together.
- If you have a question about someone with a disability, talk to your parents about it. Even if they don't know all the answers, you can learn more about it together.

ACTIVITY IDEAS



Help your child think of someone who has a different level of ability. Come up with a list of things that are different about that person and things that are the same. Be sure to point out how many things your child has in common with them.



Again, help your child think of someone who has a different level of ability. Ask your child, “What are three ideas you have for how you can be their friend?” (It would be great to come up with some activities that your child could invite the person to join!)



Read and talk about articles from the *Friend* on the topic of disabilities (some examples are listed under “Additional Helpful Resources”).



Practice using some of the “Tips for Talking with Someone with a Disability” on this page.



TIPS FOR TALKING WITH SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY

- Ask before helping them with something.
- Talk directly to them, not whoever is with them.
- Avoid talking louder or shouting at them.
- If they don’t communicate with words, look for other ways to communicate.
- If you hear someone saying something mean to them—sometimes our own children can be rude without meaning to—use it as an opportunity to model an empathetic reaction. You could say something like this to the person with a disability: “I’m sorry they said that. Some of us are still learning.” ■



Additional Helpful Resources

- The Church’s site for disability resources is disability.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
- For child-friendly stories, activities, and media, visit lessonhelps.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and click on the topic “Disabilities.”
- “Eli’s Helping Hands,” *Friend*, June 2020, 4–5.
- “Katie and Quincy,” *Friend*, Oct. 2018, 8–9.