

7 Tips for Communicating Accessibility on Your Church Website

Helping special-needs families know what to expect before they ever walk through your doors

1 Give your disability ministry its own page.

List it clearly in your main navigation or ministries menu so families don't have to dig for it. In classroom observation exercises, some church websites take over a dozen clicks to find this information, or never surface it at all.

2 Choose a clear name over a clever one.

Creative names drawn from Scripture are meaningful, but can confuse visitors from unchurched backgrounds. Pair any creative name with a plain descriptor, such as "Indispensable Disability Ministry."

3 Show real classrooms, not stock photos.

Actual pictures of your spaces help reduce a family's anxiety and let them picture their child there. A short welcome video that walks from the parking lot, through the door, and into the classroom, along with downloadable social stories, is also helpful!

4 Cross-post on your children's ministry page.

Families of kids with a behavior diagnosis or learning disability often look there first and may not identify with the term "disability ministry." Describe available buddy support and link back to your full disability ministry page.

5 Add a question to every registration form that helps you prepare.

Use broad language such as: *"To help us prepare, please let us know if your child has any allergies, learning disabilities, behavioral or mental health diagnosis, or other disabilities or special needs."* Include this on Sunday morning forms and for every event, including VBS and camps.

6 Multi-site? Post every campus's accessibility options on every campus page.

A family will often drive farther for the right fit, but only if they know it exists. If your north campus has a sensory-friendly room and your south campus offers buddies, list both offerings on both campus pages.

7 List accommodations by service time.

If ASL interpretation, sensory rooms, or other supports are only available at certain services (e.g., 10:30 but not 9:00), say so clearly. Clear communication is kind.

TRY THIS

Visit a handful of other church websites and click through as a first-time special-needs family would. Note what works and adapt it for your own site.