

Ministry Approaches & Models



Launching a disability inclusion ministry often happens in one of three ways: The Program Approach, The Outreach Approach, or the One-Kid Approach.

- The **Program Approach** begins with an individual or small group who feels led to start a program. After approval of the idea by the senior pastor, children’s pastor, or elder board, a committee forms to strategize next steps.
- The **Outreach Approach** is typically event-focused, such as a respite night, game night, or special needs prom. The key to this approach is being intentional with the follow up, so that guests and their families become connected with the church.
- With the **One Kid Approach**, the ministry starts with one kid – the child who is already at your church but who may be struggling in the current environment – and grows as staff and volunteers learn the best ways to provide support.

No matter the approach, the next step is determining the setting, or model.

Inclusive	Specialized	Hybrid
<p>With the inclusive model, supports are put into place within the existing programs of the church to allow every participant to be fully involved in the Body of Christ.</p> <p><i>Example: adhering to best practices for sensory friendly worship can create an environment that includes people with sensory processing differences and other mental, physical, and hidden disabilities.</i></p>	<p>In the specialized setting, programming is tailored to meet each student’s needs.</p> <p><i>Example: providing a separate environment – often referred to as a self-contained classroom or a sensory classroom – as an alternative to the inclusive or grade-level environment, or using a curriculum that is designed for kids with intellectual or developmental disabilities.</i></p>	<p>The hybrid model is a combination of the inclusive and specialized settings.</p> <p><i>Example: providing a sensory room option for kids who need a break during while participating in the inclusive or grade-level Sunday School setting.</i></p>

When a church is willing and able to support children with a variety of needs, and is welcoming to families impacted by disability, word gets out to the community and the ministry will grow.

For more examples and suggested next steps, check out Episode 075 of *Key Ministry: The Podcast* available at keyministry.org/podcast.