



Addressing Preschoolers with Special Needs

You may have the opportunity to teach preschoolers with various abilities. This could include preschoolers with visual, hearing, physical, speech, or learning special needs. Some other special needs could be preschoolers living with autism, attention deficit disorder, or giftedness. Preschoolers with special needs may need additional support or adaptations in the classroom.

Here are some general guidelines to help you prepare for and include preschoolers with special needs.

- Talk with the parents or caregivers of the preschooler to find out the child's strengths, weaknesses, and strategies that are successful. Ask what skills are difficult for the child and what skills the child does well.
- Provide adequate space and resources for activities.
- Adapt activities to allow the preschooler to participate.
- Allow the time a preschooler with special needs may require to complete an activity.
- Ask an extra leader to help in the classroom if needed.
- Prepare and be flexible with plans.
- Discuss with other preschoolers the ways they may be able to help the preschooler with special needs.
- Encourage the preschooler to do as much as possible by himself.
- Affirm the child with sincere and specific praise.