

Vacation Bible School:

Simple tips to include all children



Lead Teachers

- Interview parents and gather helpful information about each child [\[sample\]](#). Obtain parent permission to share this info with volunteers or staff.
- [Plan a warm welcome](#) by offering early arrival to meet leaders or provide a tour prior to VBS.
- Use [picture schedules](#). ([Icons](#))
- Prepare a quiet area/room or [sensory bag](#). Offer 'break tickets' to children who have sensory issues.
- Provide a [buddy](#) for children with disabilities (ask parent/s).

Snacks

- Keep food simple.
- Consider nut-free and gluten free options such as cheerios or pretzels.
- Keep in mind that food coloring, milk and chocolate can trigger negative reactions.
- Consider allowing parents to provide alternative snacks.

Crafts

- [Plan to modify](#) crafts or provide alternative craft options. Have imperfect samples.
- Simplify steps involved like gluing or coloring. Have pre-made parts available with difficult steps completed.
- Avoid strong smelling craft supplies such as markers or stickers.
- Offer help *when needed*. Children of all abilities love to do things themselves.

Games

- [Enable participation in activities](#).
- Replace competitive games with cooperative ones.
- Use games with simple instructions.
- Provide game instructions beforehand so parent/s can practice games with their child.
- Plan for helper roles to encourage all children to join in.
- Provide one-on-one buddies as needed.

Bible Story/Verse

- [Consider and accommodate for learning styles and strengths](#).
- Use simple and concrete phrases to teach key concepts. Re-phrase as needed.
- Add hand and arm movements to Bible lessons, including sign language. Use [handspeak.com](#) as a resource.
- [The concept of salvation can be taught](#) to all age groups and all abilities. Follow the tips from our website.

Music / Worship

- Limit using flashing lights to reduce overstimulation and seizures.
- Prepare hand motions for worship songs.
- Offer instruments, streamers or flags to encourage participation.
- Have ear plugs or sound reducing headphones available.
- Offer the option to worship in the back or outside the door if needed.
- Focus on key worship movements, less is better.