

Shaping the Hearts

of Kids with Special Needs



featuring



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A Square Peg in a Round Hole

For many years, I struggled to learn how to advocate for the disabled. I wish I could say it was out of an altruistic need to serve the “least of these” on principle alone (read Matthew 25:31-46). But I cannot. Honestly, I came to advocacy out of sheer desperation after my son was diagnosed with autism.

do. Assessment after assessment could list his deficiencies. But what were Noah’s strengths? He had an interesting sense of humor—mischievous really, just like his mother. Noah had, and still has, a remarkable memory. Despite his difficulties, he had a very compliant personality and genuinely wanted to please. And despite his impairments, he wanted to learn and experience new things. But it was difficult to look beyond his behaviors so that these parts of Noah could be seen. No one could see the shape of Noah’s heart the way I did.

“I knew that what Noah needed more than anything was a champion.”

—Vangie Rodenbeck, Georgia

We labored to keep Noah in *any* classroom environment. Even the most dedicated and saintly Sunday school teachers had moments of questioning: *Is any of the teaching getting through? Is he processing any of the lesson? Can Noah’s heart be shaped by the story?* And I often wondered: *What exactly is the shape of my son’s heart? He seems to be like a square peg that you try and fit into a round hole.*”

At school, his IEP (Individualized Education Plan) was to be designed around his strengths, but how could those be showcased when every measurement tool showed only what skills he lacked?

One of the most difficult pieces in all of this was finding a way to show people what Noah *could*

Please don’t misunderstand—I am thankful for tests that measured the places where Noah needed help, because we could target those areas once they were brought to light. But there was no voice telling the world that Noah was so much more than dyspraxia, autism, and dyslexia. He was so much more



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than what he was not. And I became desperate for a way to show the world that Noah was more than the sum total of his disabilities.

I was never comfortable with the term *advocate*. It intimidated me. Did it mean I had to become some sort of activist? I didn't feel educated enough to speak into a system teeming with legal terminology. But I knew that what Noah needed more than anything was a champion. He needed someone to support his cause. He needed someone to be his voice. So I developed a tool that offered people a glimpse inside Noah's heart—a heart that craved shaping and care.

The best way to demonstrate his strengths in a quick format was through pictures. I called them my victory stories. A shot of Noah standing in line at a theme park and overcoming his fear of crowds. A picture of him delighting in his favorite toys and food. Pictures of Noah enjoying friends like any other kid. All of these together painted a much bigger picture of Noah than the scores on his developmental assessments. I organized the pictures into a scrapbook and delivered them to his schoolteacher before the first day of school. This turned out to be the single best thing I have ever done to show the world the true shape of Noah's heart; I continue the practice to this day. Seeing a bigger picture of my son has changed every teacher or coach we have encountered. And Noah has been successful.

Sometimes it is necessary to take action and reframe the way our world views people who develop and learn differently. We can be assured that, as creatures made in God's image, their hearts are receptive to a message of hope. Often, these image bearers reflect a part of God we haven't even considered. And yes, these hearts can be shaped—even if they are square pegs.

For details on creating an All About Me! scrapbook, see page 15.

✍️ by Vangie Rodenbeck

Use these ideas for adapting activities included in Summer 2013 *Toddlers & 2s Teacher*.

Toddlers & 2s

More Than a Toy

Materials

materials listed in *Toddlers & 2s Teacher* for specific activities suggested

As teachers scan their lessons to find effective teaching strategies for children with developmental delays, occasionally the most useful tools are the last to be considered. Throughout this quarter's lessons there are a variety of materials suggested that are so much more than just toys. These objects have therapeutic value that can meet sensory needs in children whose nervous systems seek certain areas of input. Consider using the following activities that have tremendous sensory value:

"Squish Bag Fun," lesson 2—The bags suggested in this activity are much like stress balls that many adults keep in their desk drawers at work. Squeezing the ball provides tactile input that balances out a stressed nervous system. For toddlers who often mouth objects, cornstarch is the best option for filling these bags. Make extras to keep in your classroom for times when children who seek this kind of stimulation become distressed.

"Rain Shakers," lesson 8—When playing with this manipulative, children who seek auditory input and a variety of sounds can experience the sound of rain in a way they would not otherwise. Children who have a fear of water can experience rain in a way that feels safe to them.

"Crawling Course," lesson 12—While not a handheld toy, this obstacle course will be worth the effort if you have a child in your class who loves to move. Processing the life focus, "God cares for me when I'm playing," will have special meaning if active children can learn this truth in an active way.

This "Little" Light

Lights, especially fluorescent lights, are often a hidden sensory trigger. The noise associated with fluorescent lighting may seem to be only a little buzzing noise for most of us, but for the child with sensory sensitivity that noise can be very loud and distracting. The use of indirect lighting in the form of lamps provides a learning advantage for children who learn differently.

Take advantage the unit 3 emphasis on how God cares for us both day and night. Build a place where children can take therapeutic sensory breaks. Turn a large appliance box on its side to form a cave. Use a utility knife to cut small holes in the ceiling of the cave. Poke a few individual lights on a strand of holiday lights through the holes to create a night sky inside the box. Place the box near an outlet where the lights can be plugged in safely. This sensory cave can provide a retreat area for a child who becomes overwhelmed by the lights and noise of a busy classroom.

Activity adaptation for:

unit 3 lessons

Materials

materials listed in *Toddlers & 2s Teacher* for specific activities suggested

Difficulty with transitions is a hallmark of children with nervous systems that are developing atypically. Research indicates that as these children are developing at a different rate than other children, they will want to perform some activities for longer periods of time than other children. While it may look as though they just won't move on to the next lesson activity, in actuality these children are trying to finish learning. Helping these children finish, or satiate, their learning process can be as easy as 1-2-3.

1. *Determine what activities the child probably won't want to quit doing.* Is the child often engaged by parts of the lesson that include physical elements such as throwing or jumping? Does he enjoy seek-and-find activities (flipping cards, searching for hidden objects, etc.)? Does the child show long-term interest in reading books, coloring, or other seated activities? Pinpoint the kind of activities the child most enjoys.

2. *Strategically plan.* Offer a preferred activity directly in front of a non-preferred activity. This will allow the child to choose and continue an activity she enjoys until she "finishes" learning. Keep in mind that the child is satiating her desire to learn in a preferred way; allow her to complete the activity that is giving her so much enjoyment and meaning. For instance, if a child avoids coloring but enjoys throwing activities, allow her to continue a throwing activity while the rest of the class moves on to coloring.

3. *Be confident that everyone learns.* Allowing a child to continue a preferred activity rather than moving on may seem like you are giving in to a child's whims. It may also bother you, initially, that all of the children are not participating in the same activity at the same time. Remember, you are providing learning for each child at his or her level of need.

Activity adaptation for:

Consider the following lesson activities that can meet specific sensory needs. These may be activities you will want to offer first to children who are developing atypically.

"Peekaboo Picture Board," lessons 1, 2, 4, 7—Excellent for children who enjoy repetitive flipping or turning movements; can be made once and used multiple weeks

"Bunny Hop," lesson 3—Good activity for the movers and shakers in your class; especially effective for kinesthetic seekers

"Toss It In," lesson 5—Engages kinesthetic learners or children who enjoy categorizing and matching

"Load the Boat," lesson 7—Fun activity for children who categorize or who have a special interest in animals

Use these ideas for adapting activities included in *Summer 2013 Preschool Teacher*.

Preschool

Multisensory teaching requires that we become familiar with our five senses. Instructing children with special needs also dictates that we become familiar with the hidden senses as well: vestibular (balance) and proprioceptive (body position and awareness). One of the aims of this resource is to highlight sensory teaching in an effort to help classroom teachers and volunteers identify the learning strengths of children who learn and develop differently. These following activities highlight some opportunities you will have during this quarter to teach to three of these senses specifically.

Texture Teaches

Whether through grasping and mouthing (in infancy) or picking up and throwing (as a toddler), touch is one of the first means of exploration. For children with special needs, use of the tactile sense may be prolonged as they are developing at a different rate. Simple activities that bring the tactile sense to the forefront of your lesson may reach these children in a way a visual aid will not.

Materials

materials suggested for unit 1 center (*Preschool Teacher*, p. 8) and “Sand Tracing” (*Preschool Teacher*, p. 64)

Activity adaptation for:

Consider using the following activities that provide opportunities for tactile learning.

“Add-on Pictures,” unit 1—Set up the suggested center and assist children as needed in adding various textures to the Bible story coloring pages. Allowing children to add texture in the form of sandpaper, soft felt, and even grass or small pebbles gives them a learning advantage.

“Sand Tracing,” lesson 7—Drawing or writing in sand is an excellent way to provide a boost of sensation to the nervous system. The extra input from the sand on a child’s fingertips can integrate touch into an art activity and, in doing so, awaken multiple parts of the nervous system.

Blow, Fire, Blow

Materials

household fan with a base that pivots and allows it to blow straight up; crepe paper streamers in orange, yellow, and red

We often focus so much on removing stimulation for children who become easily overwhelmed that we do not think of ways to enhance lessons with extrasensory activities for children who are sensory seekers. Sensory-seeking children are the ones who cannot seem to get enough movement and touch. Occasionally this manifests itself in children who run at or press themselves against walls in order to achieve more sensory input.

You can meet the needs of sensory seekers through a lesson enhancement that brings fire to life in a fun and safe way. Use a household fan with a base that is designed to allow airflow to pivot 90 degrees upward (with the fan facing the ceiling). With the fan unplugged, tie orange, red, and yellow crepe-paper streamers to the grill of the fan. When the fan is turned on, watch the “flames” dance in the wind from the fan. Adding the extra sights and sounds from the fan and flames may be just the extra stimulation your sensory seekers need to stay focused as you talk about Elijah on Mt. Carmel, Daniel’s friends in a fiery furnace, and Gideon’s army holding up flaming torches.

Activity adaptation for:

Bible Time, lessons 4, 6, and 9

Heavy Work

Materials

blocks, books, or other heavy material that can be used to build a “wall”; a laundry basket

Proprioceptive sense refers to the sensory input and feedback that tells us about movement and the position of our bodies in space. Our body’s receptors are located within our muscles, joints, and connective tissues. Therapists often use activities they classify as “heavy work” to help children keep a balanced sensory system. The resistance that heavy work provides to the muscular system is generally calming and organizing for children. Examples of heavy work include pushing, pulling, and lifting weighted objects.

The story of Nehemiah rebuilding the wall is an excellent opportunity to incorporate heavy work into a lesson plan. Use the concept of building found in the “Building Blocks” activity, but add pushing or pulling in a laundry basket the objects used to build your wall. As children push or pull the heavy load, they are taking in sensory information that is necessary for a healthy nervous system.

Activity adaptation for:

“Building Blocks,” lesson 13

Use these ideas for adapting activities included in Summer 2013
Pre-K & K Teacher:

Pre-K & K

Slippery When Wet

Materials

rice, blue food coloring,
plastic gloves

Children with tactile sensitivity may avoid the sensation of water on their skin and hands. Additionally, children who wear assistive hearing devices (hearing aids and cochlear implants) may be excluded from water play activities because it means taking off their devices and losing their sense of hearing—even if only for a few minutes. But you don't have to lose the effect water has on a story if you'll make a slight accommodation to the lesson.

Using colored rice, you can simulate pouring water without the risks actual water brings to sensory-sensitive children or children with assistive hearing devices. Use blue food coloring to color a few bags of rice a beautiful blue. (Remember to wear plastic gloves when mixing the rice to prevent turning your hands a beautiful blue color as well!) Instead of pouring water, children can pour the rice without anxiety or fear. Objects can also be hidden in the "water" for more sensory hide-and-seek fun!

Activity adaptation for:

Splash Splash unit 1 center; "Dump on the Thanks," lesson 4 extra hour; "Water, Water Everywhere," lesson 11

Pincer Grasp Delays

Materials

yellow or orange construction paper, tape, hole punch,
elastic string

Between 9 and 11 months of age, typical babies will develop what is known as their *pincer grasp*. This is a technique most often noticed during self-feeding, when babies are able to grasp an object between their thumb and forefinger. However, with a child who has special needs, it is possible that the child as old as 4 years of age might still be working to develop this skill. Lack of a firm pincer grasp makes holding crayons, pencils, or scissors extremely difficult.

Instead of making bird beaks for the children to pinch with their fingers during the Bible Time, preassemble mock beaks. To make a beak, roll a cone of paper and secure the open edge with tape. Punch two holes (opposite each other) in the open end of the cone; attach a length of elastic string that can be stretched over the head and below the nose. Tell your story surrounded by a whole flock of little "ravens." (Did you know that a group of ravens is sometimes called an *unkindness* of ravens? Whoever created this term obviously had not read Elijah's story!)

Activity adaptation for:

More! Sing and Pray and Bible Time—Another Way!, lesson 1

Life-size Lessons

Materials

Pre-K & K Resources CD
Good Times/Hard Times
Activity Pages printable file,
desk chair that spins

One of the “hidden” senses is the vestibular sense, often associated with our sense of balance. Therapists have noticed that children with special needs sometimes develop a craving to spin in order to satisfy their need for vestibular stimulation. Combine two activities into one and allow children to be the spinner in a bigger-than-life prayer clock.

Borrow a desk chair that spins. Ask a child who enjoys vestibular stimulation to sit on the chair with his arms pointed straight out in front of him like the hand of a clock. Have other children form a circle around the chair, each holding one of the Good Times/Hard Times pictures. Gently spin the child in the chair, allowing him to come to a stop with his arms pointed at one of the pictures. **ASK: When is it time to pray to God?** Encourage children to answer based on the picture cue being pointed to. This game will be so much fun that every child will benefit from a good spin!

Activity adaptation for:

“Good Times/Hard Times” and “Ticktock Spin the Prayer Clock,” lesson 3

Rough 'n' Ready

Materials

sandpaper, scissors, finger
paint or water, wet wipes or
paper towels

Writing can be a struggle for children—even those without a diagnosed disability. Often therapists will integrate an extra sensation into the writing process by using sandpaper or another rough texture as a writing surface. The feeling of a fingertip across the rough surface awakens the senses and integrates multiple parts of the nervous system. This technique may be used to help children in the formation of letters that are difficult for them to reproduce using traditional writing implements.

Change the “Guess What I Wrote!” activity from something children will avoid to a novel way of writing that uses only one finger—just like the finger that wrote on the wall in the Bible story! With the pointer finger wet from water or finger paint, have each child trace the first letter of her name on sandpaper. If a younger child isn’t able to independently make the letter of her first name, draw the letter on the sandpaper and cut it out. The child can then trace over the letter multiple times with her finger. Note: If you plan to set up the suggested Read ‘n’ Write unit center, you can include this writing activity as a choice to repeat throughout the unit of lessons.

Activity adaptation for:

“Read ‘n’ Write (unit 2 center); “Guess What I Wrote!,” lesson 7

Use these ideas for adapting activities included in *Summer 2013 Early Elementary Teacher*.

Early Elementary

King Josiah Obeys

Materials

3" x 5" index cards (6 per student), *Early Elementary Activities* crown stickers for lesson 7, plain mailing labels, hole punch, book rings

Kids with learning disabilities often have difficulty with comprehension. They may have trouble identifying true or false statements, such as the ones on the lesson 7 activity page. Using a modification will allow all children to hear the correct answers and practice reading the story in sequence.

Before class, create a set of labels that includes the six true statements included in the activity. Make enough copies so each student can have a complete set. Punch a hole in the top left corner of each index card.

Explain that kids will be creating a story ring to help them remember the day's Bible story. Distribute supplies and have kids place a crown sticker on each of their index cards. They can number their cards 1 to 6. When all of the cards are ready, give each child the first label—"King Josiah loved and obeyed God." Have kids place the labels on their #1 cards. Continue distributing the labels in sequential order. When finished, kids can shuffle their cards and then put the story in order again, using the numbers or reading the statements and placing them in sequential order. With the cards in order, place them on book rings so kids can read through the statements and retell key points from the Bible story. If time allows, group the kids in pairs and let them tell the story to each other, using their rings of cards.

Activity adaptation for:

Bible Review Activity, lesson 7

Why Do Right? Poster

Materials

pictures from *Early Elementary Activities*, p. 24; construction paper; scissors; glue sticks

Word banks can pose difficulty for students who are emerging readers or who have language disabilities. You can make this activity less frustrating for those students, while still reinforcing the Bible story.

Talk about Job and how he did the right things even when it was very hard. Give each student a sheet of construction paper. Ask kids to write the title "Pleasing God" on their papers. Distribute the activity page and have children cut out the four "Why Do Right?" pictures. Each child can glue his set of pictures onto their paper. Under the appropriate picture, print these captions: tell about Jesus, forgive, obey parents, help others. When the posters are finished, talk about times when kids have chosen to do the things pictured. What was the result? Why did doing these things please Jesus?

Activity Adaptation for:

"Why Do Right?," Lesson 10

Early Elementary

Stand for What's Right

Materials

chairs, pictures that show children doing right (helping, giving, serving) or wrong (fighting, shoving, laughing at someone)

Note

Children's magazines can be a good source for pictures. If you can't find appropriate pictures in magazines, draw simple stick-figure pictures that depict doing right or wrong.

Some students with disabilities have trouble with directional cues, such as "Slide right." And many students struggle to keep their bodies in their own space. Providing a simple adaptation can give needed boundaries and allow all children to participate successfully.

Talk about the importance of standing for and doing what is right. Explain that kids will be playing a game to help them identify times to stand for what is right. Before starting the game, have kids practice standing and sitting. Remind them to stay in their own spaces and keep their bodies to themselves.

Show the pictures you have gathered or prepared. When kids see a person doing something right, they should stand. If the person in the picture is doing wrong, kids should remain seated. After showing all the pictures, let each student stand and tell one thing he or she can do that shows they are standing up for what is right.

Activity adaptation for:

"Slide Right," lesson 9

Use these ideas for adapting activities included in *Summer 2013 Middle Elementary Teacher*.

Middle Elementary

Stepping-Stones

Materials

Bibles, large stones, permanent markers, bucket with handle

Word puzzles can be difficult for some students with disabilities. This adaptation allows a multisensory experience that will help the students remember the main point of the story.

SAY: We have learned how Lydia had faith in God. Once she learned what God wanted her to do, Lydia obeyed God's commandments. We can build a strong faith like Lydia's when we know and obey God's commands. Have the kids form small groups, and give each group a large stone and a permanent marker. Tell kids you are going to read some Bible verses aloud. The kids should listen for commands of God they should obey. Read some or all of the following verses: Mark 16:16; Acts 3:19; Acts 13:7b, Acts 16:31; Romans 6:4; Romans 10:9; 1 John 5:3a. After you read each verse, let groups talk about the verse and write on their stones something the verse says to do. When you have finished reading the verses, have groups share what they wrote on their stones. Put all of the stones in a bucket and let students lift the bucket. Remind them that their faith in God can be strong and firm when they obey God's commands.

Activity adaptation for:

"Stepping-Stones," lesson 2

God Graffiti

Materials

butcher paper, tape, markers, Bible

Word scrambles can be very confusing for students with visual processing or language-based learning disabilities. This activity provides an alternative, while also allowing the students to work together and relate God's care for them to their own lives.

SAY: Let's read in the Bible about some ways God shows His power and care for us. Good readers can help read aloud the following verses: Psalm 103:2, 3; Matthew 6:25, 26; John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Tape to the wall a length of butcher paper. At the top, print "GOD . . ." Students should work together to create on the paper a graffiti wall that shows words and pictures of how God shows His power and cares for us. Encourage kids to illustrate or print on the wall words such as *forgives, heals, makes a way out of temptation, sent His Son, gives eternal life, gives food and clothes*. Display the finished graffiti in an entrance or a hallway where others will see it.

Activity adaptation for:

"Care and Power," lesson 4

Middle Elementary

You Earned It!

Materials

objects for discussion (report card, driver's license, chore chart with stars, money, prize ribbon), cross or picture of Jesus, felt or craft foam, permanent marker

Before class cut small crosses from felt or craft foam. Print the word "Free" on each cross. You will need a cross for each student.

The colors on the *Middle Elementary Activities* page could be confusing for some students as they try to match each action with its result. Also, the words "eternal death in Hell" may cause anxiety for students, particularly those with anxiety disorders. A visual presentation will be more concrete for kids and allow the teacher to guide the discussion.

SAY: I'm going to show you some objects, and I want you to tell me how you earn these things. Show the objects for discussion. Let kids tell how each item could be earned (good grades on report card—earned by studying, driver's license—earned by practicing and taking the test, stars on chore chart—earned by doing assigned chores, award ribbon—earned by practicing a sport and competing, money—earned by working).

SAY: Very good! Now what about this item? Show the cross or picture of Jesus. **How do we earn Jesus' love for us?** Discuss how we can't earn forgiveness of sin and God's love; they are free gifts. Give each child a small cross to remind them that Jesus' love is free to anyone who chooses to receive God's gift on His terms.

Activity adaptation for:

Bible Exploration—You Earned It, lesson 7

Use these ideas for adapting activities included in Summer 2013 PreTeen Teacher.

PreTeen

Obey Authority!

Materials

printed copy of the Scriptures referenced in “Words of Authority” in *Middle Elementary Activities, Lesson 3*, highlight markers or colored pencils

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) is a mental illness that can cause difficulty in the classroom. A student with this disorder may exhibit the following characteristics: temper tantrums, argumentative with adults, refusal to comply with rules, negativity, anger, aggressive behavior toward others.

When discussing obedience to authority, you may need to intervene on some negative comments expressed by a student with ODD. Knowing these students like to get a reaction out of the teacher, remember the following tips: 1. Always remain calm. 2. Do not engage in confrontation in the classroom. 3. Praise the student for positive behavior whenever possible. 4. Remove the student from the classroom if safety becomes an issue.

The “Words of Authority” activity in *Middle Elementary Activities* includes unscrambling words from various Scripture references. If you have students who struggle with finding verses and unscrambling words, give printed copies of the verses and have kids highlight or circle the key words about authority. This will help all students visually see what the Scriptures say about our obedience to authority.

Activity adaptation for:

Unit 1 “Responding to Authority” lessons; Bible Exploration—Words of Authority, lesson 3

God Can Use You!

Materials

Bibles

Throughout unit 4 the word *abilities* is used quite often. This is where a student with disabilities might feel inadequate. Instead of using the “How Did We Get the Bible?” *Resources* CD printable file, have a Bible drill that lets kids find in their Bibles examples of faithful men of God being used despite their disabilities. Examples to find could include: Exodus 4:10-12 (Moses, speech disorder), 2 Samuel 9:3-6 (Mephibosheth, physical disability), Mark 2:3-5, 12 (man who was paralyzed), Mark 10:46-52 (Bartimaeus, blind), Luke 19:1-10 (Zacchaeus, short in height), 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (Paul, physical discomfort).

Kids can work with partners or in small groups to find the Bible passages. ASK: **What is a disability? Can you always see a disability? What is the difference between a disability and a disadvantage?** Be sure kids understand that God can and does use people who have both disabilities and disadvantages.

Activity adaptation for:

Bible Skills Builder—Faithful Men Used by God, lesson 11

Anger Management!

Materials

Bibles, 11" x 17" drawing paper, markers, colored pencils, reusable adhesive

Anger disorder is a psychological condition that can be identified by sporadic outbursts of destructive behavior and violence. While teaching unit 2 on "Resolving Conflict" (and particularly lesson 5), you may want to add a study of Samson's life. SAY: **Samson was a man who had anger problems. He was a chosen child of God who was led astray by his willful disobedience to what his parents taught him. In the end, his outbursts of anger cost him his life.**

Provide eight 11" x 17" sheets of drawing paper. Label each sheet with a number, a title, and a Scripture reference: 1. Samson was born (Judges 13:5, 24), 2. Samson kills a lion (Judges 14:5, 6), 3. Samson and the fox tails (Judges 15:3-5), 4. Samson and a donkey's jawbone (Judges 15:9-15), 5. Samson carries a gate (Judges 16:1-3), 6. Samson tells his secret (Judges 16:17-19), 7. Samson is seized (Judges 16:20-21), 8. Samson's death (Judges 6:25-30).

Let kids illustrate what happened in each phase of Samson's life; display the pictures in story order. ASK: **What could Samson have done differently? What do you think went wrong in his life? What can we learn from the story of Samson?**

Activity adaptation for:

Unit 2 lessons, including "Keep Your Cool!," lesson 5

Tips and Encouragements

for families and
volunteers



featuring



“All About Me!” Book

If “a picture speaks a thousand words,” then a scrapbook highlighting the strengths of a child can speak into eternity. This is a great summer project to have ready for the school year. Here are a few ideas for pages you can create to celebrate the shape of your child’s heart.

A Note from the Editor



Welcome to *Shaping the Hearts of Kids with Special Needs*. We hope this resource will help you minister to the child with special needs. We were so excited about the possibilities suggested by creating an “All About Me!” book that we decided to offer a special resource to you this quarter. Besides this 15-page newsletter, you will find under Downloads/HeartShaper Special Needs on the 21stcc website a file titled “All About Me!” Book. The file contains ten pages of artwork and Scriptures that can be used for creating a scrapbook similar to the one described in this quarter’s opening article. Be sure to print copies and give a set of pages to parents of children who have special needs. Ask them to complete the pages with pictures and information that will be helpful to you as their child’s teacher. If a child is moving from your class at the beginning of the fall quarter, pass on the book to the child’s new teacher.

May God bless you as you teach
His beloved children.

Sincerely,

New Life Through His Word
Editorial Staff

- ✓ *A Memo About Me*—Include the child’s name, age, diagnosis, age of diagnosis, and ways your family takes joy in this child.
- ✓ *Introducing My Family*—Tell about the child’s home environment. Include photos of the child with favorite toys, pets, or hobbies.
- ✓ *Things I Can Do*—List things that are not a struggle for your child: running, climbing, and so on. Showcase motor skills and strengths that can be used in your child’s instruction.
- ✓ *Things That Are Difficult*—Make a list of skills you are working on with your child. Teachers are often eager to partner with parents who are actively trying to teach their child at home.
- ✓ *Things I Enjoy*—Include pictures of activities outside the home that the child enjoys. This information can help teachers connect children to others who share their interests.
- ✓ *Things I’ve Accomplished*—Choose a picture that captures a moment of victory in your child’s development. Include any recent achievements that were thought impossible for the child.
- ✓ *Dreams and Wishes*—Help caregivers see your child as a human being of great worth, value, and potential. Include three lists of dreams: hopes for the child in 1 year, wishes for the child in 5 years, and prayers for what the child’s life will be like in 10 years.
- ✓ *Ways You Can Help Me*—Alongside a picture that captures your child’s heart, list ways any caregiver can assist this child.

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