Accessibility and Inclusion in Ministry

Presented by Erin Jeffries and Marian Knueven
at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish
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“[Evangelization] involves the active participation of every Christian in the proclamation and demonstration that the Christian faith is the only fully valid response to the problems and hopes that life poses to every person and society”

NDC 19
NCPD defines disabilities as,

“The normal, anticipated outcomes of the risks, stresses, and strains of the living process.”

(Mary Jane Owen, NCPD, 2000).
Looking at Language...

- Impairment
- Disability
- Handicap
The Reality...

One person in every 5 has some form of disability, one family in every 3 has a member with a disability (per US Census Bureau)

One person in 68 is born with autism (per CDC 2014) (though some numbers given are as high as 1 in 50)
“All persons with disabilities have the capacity to proclaim the Gospel and to be living witnesses to its truth within the community of faith and offer valuable gifts. Their involvement enriches every aspect of Christian life. They are not just the recipients of catechesis— they are also it’s agents.”

National Directory of Catechesis 49
St. Malachy’s Story
You do NOT need to be a special education teacher to effectively reach out to those with special needs—you just need to be OPEN and WILLING.
What can Parish Professional Staff Do?

• Evaluate the accessibility of the liturgy and sacraments, training, workshops, faith formation opportunities etc.

• Encourage parish groups and committees to do the same.

• Include persons with disabilities in committees
What Can Parish Professional Staff Do?

• Evaluate the Sensory Accessibility

• Evaluate the Cognitive Accessibility

• Evaluating the Physical Accessibility
Identifying Individuals and Needs

Relationships

- Personal outreach
- Use networks
- Utilize parishioners
- Remember the families
Identifying Individuals and Needs

Planning Ahead

- Registration forms
- Be aware of environmental factors
- Allow for some flexibility
Identifying Individuals and Needs

Some Basic Questions...

- For Religious Education Programs
- For Adults

You don’t necessarily NEED to know a diagnosis to learn how to assist someone in participating as fully as possible.
Where to Find Resources...

Archdiocesan Staff

• Training and strategies
• Can help in the development of an inclusion team at a parish
• Information on different needs, adaptive resources and specialized programs
Where to Find Resources...
Where to Find Resources...

www.archindy.org/specialneeds
Where to Find Resources

Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Ministry

Interpreted Masses in the Archdiocese

9:00 am Sunday Mass at St. Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis

Sacramental Preparation Resources

Program for First Reconciliation in ASL from NCOD *Available in office for review!
Program for Confirmation in ASL from NCOD, featuring Fr. Mike Depock *Available for review!
Fr. Shawn Carey explains the steps in making a good confession, including the Act of Contrition

Resources for Interpreting the Mass

YouTube Playlist: New Roman Missal for Interpreters (from the Archdiocese of Washington)
NCOD DVD Resource: Liturgical Signs and Prayers
YouTube Video: New Roman Missal Translation (from the Archdiocese of Boston)
Interpreter Resources/ASL videos (from the Archdiocese of Boston)
Interpreting the Mass: Decision Making, Preparation and Practice (workshop)

Signing the Scriptures, Year A, B and C by Joan Blake: It is important to note that these books do NOT provide pictures of the signs, but the word order for the readings, using the ASL syntax. *These are available in the office to review
Religious Signing: A Comprehensive Guide for All Faiths by Elaine Costello, Ph.D: A good, visual dictionary for religious signs. *Available in the office for review
Where to Find Resources...
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Faith, Family, and Children with Special Needs
How Catholic Parents and Their Kids with Special Needs Can Develop a Richer Spiritual Life
David Rizzo

Spirituously ABLE
A Parent’s Guide to Teaching the Faith to Children with Special Needs
David Rizzo and Mercedes McBride Rizzo
Dealing with Difficult Behavior
• Behavior has a purpose
• Behavior is communication
• People tend to continue doing things that get results

So the most important question to ask is "why"
Behavior is like an iceberg

What you see...

Am I safe?
Am I loved?
Do I matter?
I feel angry.
I feel sad.
I feel scared.
I feel hungry or tired.
I am feeling overwhelmed.
I have developmental delays.
I can't communicate any other way!
I feel overstimulated. I have sensory needs.
I need understanding or help!

(What they're really saying)

www.consciousdiscipline.com
www.ignitelearningllc.blogspot.com
The *Brain State* Model

Our internal emotional state affects our behavior...

- **Survival**: “Am I safe?”
  - I need to know I am safe.

- **Emotional**: “Am I loved?”
  - I need a connection.

- **Executive**: “What can I learn from this?”
  - I am ready to learn and use problem solving/critical thinking skills.

Cf: http://consciousdiscipline.com/about/brain_state_model.asp
Observations

Put Behavior In Context

- **Setting** (where, what time of day, who... etc.),
- What occurred immediately **before** the behavior
- An **objective description** of what the behaviors are
- What happened immediately **after** the behavior—including the individual’s response
Who: Start as small as possible: the individual, their parent(s), caretaker, and/or advocate, and you.

Utilize: interests, likes, dislikes, motivators, learning strategies, and possible triggers

Be clear as to what the undesirable behavior is, and what the expected behavior is.

Determine positive and negative Consequences
Difficult Adults...

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Most people do simply want to be heard, and understood- even if you are disagreeing.

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The same physical and emotional states that affect children are still affecting us as adults, and in difficult situations we have a tendency to revert to instinctual responses.
Intellect and Free Will...

You cannot force a person (adult or child) to change their behavior-but you can always control your own.
Positive Intent:

Asking yourself “why” and not assuming the worst...

Seeing things from the others perspective