



What is the Next Gen Disability Ministry?

Mission: For children and youth of all abilities and their families to experience and be transformed by the power of the gospel.

Next Gen Disability Ministry is our special needs and disability ministry at Berean Baptist Church. For many families with disabilities, attending church together, or at all, can be a great challenge. It can be isolating and difficult. We want Berean to be a place where families who have children with disabilities are welcomed, loved, and cared for.

Three Key Areas of Focus:

Fully Accessible

The gospel will become fully accessible to all children and youth, regardless of their special need or ability.

Wonderfully Accepted

Celebrate all children and youth and their abilities. Help them enjoy worship, learn about God and form friendships. Other kids will grow in love and compassion and learn how to embrace those with differences with Christ's love.

Lovingly and Safely Supported

Assist families to have the opportunity for respite and time for gospel growth and learning while their child is doing the same in a loving and safely supported manner.

Leadership

Next Gen Disability Ministry is led by Katie Putt, Next Gen Disability Coordinator.

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Receiving Services Next Gen Disability Ministry

Next Gen Disability Ministry is able to be a ministry of Berean Baptist Church because of our volunteers. The following pages explain the services that Next Gen Disability Ministry offers, how to receive those services, responsibilities as a parent/guardian, and Berean Baptist Church's responsibility to you and your child.

Services Offered in Next Gen Disability Ministry

Inclusion Model

At Berean, we follow the Inclusion model. Our goal is to make it possible for children with special needs to participate alongside children without special needs within the Berean Kids and Youth programs. We will strive to welcome each child to the program that corresponds to their peer age-group. With reasonable volunteer support, we will partner with parents to accommodate every child to the best of our abilities for the services. In some cases, we may not be able to offer assistance, and we reserve the right to decline volunteer services in those rare circumstances.

Services Currently Provided:

- Two sensory rooms: one geared towards kids in Berean Youth and one geared towards kids in Berean Kids.
- Care and programming while a parent/guardian attends a worship service onsite.
- Trained, screened, secure volunteers who love kids with special needs.
- Next Gen Disability Ministry services are currently available on Sunday mornings during the 11 AM service, Wednesday evening programming, and limited Berean Kids events. If you have any needs outside of these times, please discuss the options with the Next Gen Disability Coordinator.

Services Not Currently Provided:

- Separate classes for kids with special needs.
- Respite care or drop-off care.
- Professionals who do therapy or behavior modification programs.
- Medical intervention or diapering/toileting children over 5 (parents will be paged).

Volunteers

Next Gen Disability Ministry offers two types of volunteers within the Berean Kids and Berean Youth ministries, depending on the level of need:

- **Buddy:** A Buddy provides one-on-one assistance, support and friendship to a child with a disability in an inclusive class setting. Ideally, 1-2 volunteers will be assigned to the individual, rotating when they serve.
 - **Personal PCA:** *If a family has a PCA they hired for their child's care, we will meet with them to discuss that PCA attending with the child in our programs.*
- **Class Assistant:** The Class Assistant supports the Room Leader and the classroom environment by specifically overseeing kids that may need basic help with attention, sensory needs, redirection, or social interaction.

How to Receive Assistance through Next Gen Disability Ministry

A request for assistance is made.

This request can come from the parent/guardian, Berean volunteers, or Berean staff members.

An Intake Form will be completed by the parent/guardian.

- <https://bereanbaptist.churchcenter.com/people/forms/843859>
- This form gives staff and volunteers the information needed to care for the child. It covers the needs, triggers, and strengths of the child.
- *No diagnosis information is required to receive assistance through Next Gen Disability Ministry.*

The Next Gen Disability Coordinator reviews the intake form and schedules an in-person meeting or phone conversation to gather more information.

- The Next Gen Disability Coordinator will discuss the needs, triggers, and strengths of the child from the intake form. They will determine what type of assistance the Next Gen Disability Ministry can provide.
- We encourage parents to bring their child to the same church service/ministry program each week. This allows consistency for all involved.
- A regular schedule will be needed in order to match volunteers with the child. The Next Gen Disability Coordinator will discuss scheduling options before searching for matching volunteers.
- Medical or behavioral needs may be beyond the capability of our volunteers and staff. In some cases, we may determine that we are unable to offer the needed assistance, and we reserve the right to decline volunteer service in those circumstances. We will work with the family to find a solution before declining volunteer service.

The Next Gen Disability Coordinator searches for a volunteer that matches the needs of the child.

- The parent/guardian will be updated as this step progresses.
- If a Buddy is needed but not immediately available for a safe, positive experience, we ask that the child does not yet attend kids programming until a match is found. (A parent, family member, or another person can attend with the child once a background check and volunteer application is completed).
- We do allow the parent/guardian to provide a Personal Care Assistant (PCA). Berean Baptist Church will run a background check before allowing the PCA to volunteer in our spaces. The PCA will need to work within the established guidelines of the Berean Kids, Berean Youth, and Next Gen Disability programs.

Volunteers are matched to the child based on experience, willingness, and schedule.

- The Next Gen Disability Coordinator will arrange a meeting between the volunteers and the family. At this meeting, the family and the volunteers need to confirm that this is a good match. They will also discuss the child's needs and resources that are available or needed.

A child is paired with a volunteer.

- We request that a parent or guardian remain with the child on the first day with a volunteer to provide a smoother transition and make the child, parent and volunteer feel at ease. If a Class Assistant is the type of assistance determined, we request that a parent attends the first 10 minutes of programming.
- Scheduling and communication with the Buddy will be maintained between the family and volunteer(s). The Next Gen Disability Coordinator should be notified in case of a volunteer/family transition or when requesting additional resources.
- The parent/guardian establishes with the volunteer the type and frequency of communication regarding their child's experience and progress during programming.

Personal and Medical Care

- If diapering is required beyond age 5 or in special circumstances, parents will be notified and must agree to handle this for their child.
- If medication needs to be administered during a Next Gen Disability program, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the medication storage and administration. If assistance is required, the Berean SAFE team can be contacted.

Sensory Supports Available

Next Gen Disability Ministry offers a variety of sensory supports for children. If additional supports are needed for your child, please discuss options with the Next Gen Disability Coordinator.

Proprioceptive Supports: Our Body in Space

Items that support awareness of the position and movement of the body. Added pressure on the body, and from within the body, can be helpful for regulation.

Some examples include:

- Weighted lap pad or blanket
- Heavy work activities
- Stretching
- Crash pads

These can be found in the Sensory Rooms.

Vestibular Supports: Our Inner Motion Detector

Items that support needed spinning or motion in the vestibular system.

Some examples include:

- Trampoline
- Swing
- Wobble Seats
- Motion breaks

These can be found in the Sensory Rooms.

Interoceptive Supports: Our Internal Body

Interoception is the sense we receive from inside our body. It involves messages regarding hunger, fullness, and thirst. It gives us feedback such as discomfort in the gut, a faster beating heart, or the need to use the restroom. Interoception helps keep our body in balance internally.

Some examples include:

- Sand timer
- Zones of Regulation scale
- Brain breaks

Auditory Supports: Our Sense of Hearing

Items that reduce sounds or help block background noises.

Some examples include:

- Noise-reducing headphones
- White noise machine

Tactile Supports: Our Sense of Touch

Items that support touch and twisting.

Some examples include:

- Tangle toy
- Wacky Track
- Stretchy String
- Fidgets

Other Supports Available:

- 2 Sensory Rooms
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Toolbox
- Visual Schedules
- Resource Bin in each classroom, for ages 3 and up.
- Buddy Bag: a backpack containing headphones and fidgets

Next Gen Disability Ministry does not offer snacks. If frequent snacks are needed, please consult the Next Gen Disability Coordinator regarding options that may be available.