



Irresistible Church Training

For Disability Ministry

Presented by



Serving families affected by disability...

- 1. Pray** Ask God to prepare the hearts of church leadership, the congregation, and families with special needs. Ask God to send workers into this specific field of harvest. Ask God for wisdom and patience, waiting on the Lord for each step.
- 2. Engage leadership** Support from church leadership is necessary for integrating ministry to families affected by disability into the mission of your church. Programs come and go, but when this vision becomes integrated into the mission of the church it lasts. Ask for the blessing and support of your church leadership as you survey your congregation and community for the specific needs and desires of families living with special needs. Find out which church leader will oversee ministry for this group of people. Keep leadership informed as ministry plans develop and grow.
- 3. Ask those you will serve** You don't always know what you don't know! So, asking questions is key. How do you know what environment will be best for the eight-year-old girl with Down syndrome, or the fourteen-year-old boy with autism, or a middle-aged man who is nonverbal? How do you determine if they know Jesus? How do you know what programs would be helpful or in what ministries the family is longing to take part in? You ask.
- 4. Plan** You have asked the right questions of individuals, families, and leadership; you have listened to the answers and determined the needs and available resources. It is time to begin planning and organizing the implementation of a fruitful ministry. This step will look different from church to church. For many, beginning small is best. Your team size, organization, and responsibilities will depend on church size, culture, mission, and existing programs. Remember, great things often start small and grow with time.
- 5. Gather a team** Every ministry model you implement will benefit from having a team. By starting with a team from the very beginning, you reduce the risk of burnout and minimize ministry lapses as staff and volunteers change.
- 6. Train your team and church family** There are typically three groups of people that require training for a church community to become inclusive: the disability ministry team, church leadership, and the congregation.
- 7. Launch** With plans in place and training completed, pick a launch date. Small trial runs before a public launch can be helpful. Remember, there will be surprises—this is the nature of all ministry. Trust God, knowing He loves those you serve even more than you do.
- 8. Adjust and grow** The needs of children and adults with disabilities are ever changing, just like everyone else. Be ready to adjust to those changes, helping each person