

Project Description & Sites

Areas of Study: (1) Program and policy development (2) Leadership
Population: Children and families within the church with special needs, church staff and volunteers
Sites: Christian Life Center & Triangle Therapy Services, LLC
Description: My doctoral capstone project has focused on developing a special needs ministry within the pediatric population at a church in Dayton, Ohio. During my project, I developed a special needs ministry through creating sensory rooms, resource bins, staff and volunteer training, individual child profiles and classroom inclusion materials. The church can now provide children with special needs and their families a safe place to actively participate in the church with full inclusion.



Needs Assessment | Literature Review

Needs assessment: I consulted a church and families within the church about the need for classroom inclusion, sensory room development, and training for children with special needs within the church.

Literature Review: One in six children within the age of 3-17 are diagnosed with developmental disabilities, showing that nearly 17% of the childhood population has some form of disability (Center for Disease Control, 2021). Parents of children with special needs reported successful inclusion as providing emotional support, development of social skills, and effective behavior management while also having volunteer, staff, and family support (Dyer, 2016). The current literature supports that designing a multisensory room within the church can help children with sensory issues regulate their specific sensory needs (Challis et al., 2020).

Christ | Scholarship | Service

"For it was You who created my inward parts; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I will praise You because I have been remarkably and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, and I know this very well" - **Psalm 139:13-14**

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." - **Ephesians 2:10**

Project Completion and Outcomes

Outcome Measure 1: Student will create a training program for staff and volunteers for the purposes of increasing caregiver education for children with special needs.

❖ **Related learning objectives:** Complete at least 2 evidence-based educational resources, develop a training protocol, and gain 30 hours of observation within the pediatric setting

Outcome Measure 2: Student will create a designated room for children with special needs to attend church with the purpose of equipping the church with the necessary equipment and tools to support children within the congregation.

❖ **Related learning objectives:** Create resource bins & generate a list of current/common needs

Mission & Vision Statements

❖ **Project Mission Statement:** To encourage the church to become a place where children with special needs and their families are included as full participants in the church through education, awareness, training, and classroom modifications.

❖ **Project Vision Statement:** By holding to the biblical principle that all humans have value because we are created in the image of God. The aim is to provide children with special needs and their families a safe place to actively participate in the church with full inclusion.

Deliverables

- ❖ Special Needs Ministry Training Program
- ❖ Photos of 2 sensory rooms
- ❖ Completion of 10+ educational resources
- ❖ Training protocol for special needs ministry
- ❖ 36 hours of recorded observation with professionals experienced in working with children with special needs
- ❖ Photos of completed resource bins
- ❖ List of current/common needs at primary site



Future Implications for OT

Impact on OT: 2 sensory rooms, training program, training protocol, child profiles, inclusive classroom tools, volunteer recruitment, marketing and advocacy, & educational presentation

Impact on my career: My capstone has solidified my passion to specialize in pediatrics, while also sparking a desire to continue assisting churches in creating special needs ministries. Throughout my project, I have gained specialized knowledge that I hope to build on in the coming years.

Student may be contacted at marieewing98@gmail.com

KEY REFERENCES

*Full reference list and image reference list available upon request