

# SPECIAL NEEDS

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RAISING A SPECIAL NEEDS CHILD

**HOME FIRST**

PARENTING POINTER

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Parenting a child is hard work under the best of circumstances. Then when you add the needs of a child with physical or mental disabilities, it can bring a new level of physical/emotional stress for the parents. However, this same child can bring a level of joy and love to their family and others.

Whether you have just recently received a troubling diagnosis, or are moving into a new stage of care, or just started attending this church, we want to be a source of encouragement and hope as you fulfill your calling to parent a child with special needs.

We believe every child is a gift of God made in His image. We also consider those caring for children with special needs worthy of special honor and support. To become intentional about your unique situation, we encourage you to reflect on your BLESSINGS, your CALLING and your CHALLENGES.

## YOUR BLESSING // A SPECIAL CONNECTION

Those nurturing a child with special needs will be encouraged by the heart of God as you care for your child. While these children may be unable to participate in certain physical or academic pursuit, they can thrive in the most important arena of life – **God's Love**. Even those who cannot understand the written Word of God can experience God through the love given by the parent and others. Those honored to serve these children are given a unique connection with the God whose image they bear – seen in a gazing smile, a shrieking laugh, or an unspoken moment of delight that proclaims to all “the refreshing water of God’s joy is available to us all”. (Isaiah 12)

## **YOUR CALLING // BELIEVE IN GOD'S PLAN**

You have one of the most difficult yet vital callings in the kingdom of God. How can you maintain the ongoing and passion needed to parent a child with special needs? By believing Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

## **YOUR CHALLENGE // REST & REPLENISHMENT**

Whether your child has mild or severe needs, you require replenishment in order to stay faithful and avoid burnout. You need practical help and spiritual nourishment. You and your child need periodic breaks. Please know this church family is ready to reach out and support you and your child.

## GOING FURTHER RESOURCES

If you want to hear from or talk to a church member, Sharyn Dooley would love to connect with you. You can email Sharyn at [sjacksondoo@mygrande.net](mailto:sjacksondoo@mygrande.net) or contact Pastor Ivy Lassiter at [ILassiter@FBRichardson.org](mailto:ILassiter@FBRichardson.org).

The Heights Church has a thriving Special Needs Ministry called **Lifelines**. We encourage you to explore this ministry as it spans from preschoolers through adults with special needs.

Rightnow Media is an online video resource library our church provides to help you on your pursuit of Jesus. We encourage you to check out the Bible studies listed and look for specific topics using their search tool. To sign up for free visit [FBRichardson.org/rightnow](http://FBRichardson.org/rightnow) today.



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