

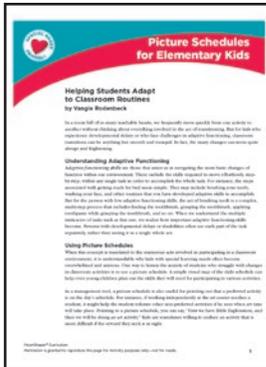


Making Your Class Special Needs Friendly

WHAT IS A BUDDY?

All kids can join the adventure of discovering God’s love if they have friends to help with their areas of weakness. The Friendship Model encourages that each special needs student has a Buddy who can be that extra help.

One boy with autism reported about the Buddy program at his church, “I can do it if my Buddy *tries with me*.” This is the spirit of a Buddy—someone who is willing to try alongside a person with developmental delays or disabilities in order to help that person succeed.



Help a Buddy get to know the student’s strengths and weaknesses by making the Sensory Inventory Form available ahead of class time. Then have the Buddy accompany the kid with special needs to activities alongside their typically functioning peers, helping the person to participate and feel like a part of the group.

If a student with special needs becomes overwhelmed, the Buddy can provide a sensory time out, participating with the student in a one-on-one activity. Buddies can keep a picture schedule available, helping the person know ahead of time what the activity choices will be and which activity will come next. Knowing what comes next can reduce a lot of anxiety. (See the **Picture Schedules for Elementary Kids** file provided in the *Resources CD Special Needs Helps* folder.)