

Special Needs in Daycare

Inclusion Quick Tips



Inclusion helps every child feel safe, welcome, and able to participate in daycare routines and play. The goal is **belonging**—not doing things “perfectly.”

What does inclusion look like in daycare?

Inclusion means children can join routines, activities, and play with supports that match their needs.

Examples of inclusion:

- A child uses pictures to communicate choices.
- A child joins circle time for 2 minutes, then takes a break.
- A child participates with a helper job instead of sitting still.

What are easy ways to include every child?



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Try these simple supports:

- Greet each child by name.
- Give **two choices**: “Blocks or cars?”
- Use **short directions**: “Hands wash. Then snack.”
- Add pictures to routines (schedule, cleanup steps, bathroom steps).
- Praise effort: “You tried!” “You stayed with us!”

How can I adapt activities without changing the goal?

Use “same goal, different way”:

- Coloring → stamping → dot markers
- Cutting → tearing paper → stickers
- Group game → partner game → solo version nearby
- Longer activity → shorter turns

What should I track to help children succeed?

Keep it simple:

- What happened right before the challenge?
- What helped the child calm down or participate?
- What the child enjoyed (motivation matters!).



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