

Developmental Disabilities Awareness

Month Activities

Infants (Birth–12 months)

1) “Hello, Friend” Responsive Play

Goal: connection, social-emotional comfort

Materials: mirror, soft toy, board books with faces

Directions:

1. Sit face-to-face with the baby and mirror their sounds/expressions.
 2. Say: “I see you. You are safe. You belong.”
 3. Read a simple book with faces. Point: “Eyes... smile... happy.”
-

2) Sensory Choice Board (Comfort + Regulation)

Goal: noticing preferences, co-regulation

Materials: 2–3 safe options: soft blanket, textured fabric, gentle rattle, teether

Directions:

1. Offer two items at a time and watch the baby's choice.
 2. Narrate: “You chose soft.” “You like the rattle sound.”
 3. Use calm voice to model regulation: “Slow... gentle...”
-

Toddlers (1–2 years)

1) “All About Me” Choice Cards



Free resource developed by www.ChildCareED.com

Licensed Under [CCBY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Goal: respecting preferences, simple communication

Materials: picture cards (or drawings) of choices: ball/book/music/swing; “yes/no” cards

Directions:

1. Hold up two choices: “Ball or book?”
2. The child points or touches a card.
3. Respond immediately: “You chose the ball—great telling!”
4. Practice “yes/no” with silly questions: “Do you want a shoe on your head?” (No!)

Inclusive message: We can communicate with words OR pictures/pointing.

2) Turn-Taking with a “My Turn/Your Turn” Tool

Goal: social skills, patience

Materials: a simple “turn card” or a small object to hold (turn token)

Directions:

1. Give the turn token to the child whose turn it is.
 2. Say: “My turn... your turn.”
 3. Keep turns very short (10–20 seconds).
-

Older Toddlers (2–3 years)

1) Tools That Help Center

Goal: normalize supports

Materials: headphones (not plugged in), visual schedule cards, fidget, pencil grip, step stool, timer, picture choice board

Directions:

1. Show each item: “This is a tool that can help.”



Free resource developed by www.ChildCareED.com

Licensed Under [CCBY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

2. Let children try tools briefly during centers (with supervision).
 3. Practice asking: “I need help,” “Break please,” “More,” “All done.”
-

2) “Different Ways to Play” Station Rotation

Goal: flexibility, inclusion

Materials: blocks, cars, playdough, crayons

Directions:

1. Model: “Some friends build tall. Some build wide.”
2. Children choose how they play—no “right way.”
3. Reflect: “What did you try today?”

Inclusive message: Different ways are okay.

Preschool (3–5 years)

1) Read-Aloud + Belonging Talk

Goal: empathy, respectful language

Materials: inclusive book featuring differences (communication, mobility, learning)

Directions:

1. Read the book. Pause to ask: “What helps this character?”
2. List helpers on chart paper: “time, tools, friends, quiet space.”
3. Practice a class phrase: “Everyone belongs here.”

Inclusive message: We can notice support without judging.



Free resource developed by www.ChildCareED.com

Licensed Under [CCBY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

2) “Helper Signs” Classroom Visuals

Goal: accessible classroom communication

Materials: paper, markers, picture icons

Directions:

1. Make 6–10 signs together: “Help,” “Stop,” “Break,” “Bathroom,” “All done,” “More,” “Quiet,” “My turn.”
2. Practice using them during play.
3. Hang them where kids can access them.

Inclusive message: Visuals help everyone.

3) Sensory-Friendly Choices Menu

Goal: self-regulation, respecting sensory needs

Materials: chart with choices + simple tools (calm corner items)

Directions:

1. Teach choices: “quiet corner,” “headphones,” “squeeze ball,” “deep breaths,” “movement break.”
2. Role-play: “When I feel overwhelmed, I can choose...”
3. Let children practice choosing proactively before transitions.

Inclusive message: It’s okay to need breaks.

School Age (6+)

1) Accessibility Walk (Respectful Observation)



Free resource developed by www.ChildCareED.com

Licensed Under [CCBY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Goal: awareness of environment

Materials: clipboard/paper

Directions:

1. Walk around the building/playground.
2. Ask: "Is it easy for everyone to use this space?"
3. Look for: stairs/ramps, narrow doorways, loud areas, unclear signs.
4. Make a "We can help by..." list.

Inclusive message: Inclusion is built into spaces and routines.

2) "Inclusion in Action" Kindness Challenge (Week-long)

Goal: real-world practice

Materials: checklist

Directions:

1. Choose 5 actions for the week, such as:
 - invite someone to join
 - wait patiently while someone communicates
 - offer a choice
 - use kind words
 - help a friend find a tool (visual, timer, step stool)
2. Reflect daily: "What did we do that helped someone belong?"

Inclusive message: Inclusion is something we DO.



Free resource developed by www.ChildCareED.com

Licensed Under [CCBY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Whole-Group Activity (Works for Most Ages): “We All Learn Differently” Poster

Materials: large paper, markers, photos/drawings

Directions:

1. Ask: “What helps you learn?”
2. Add responses: “quiet,” “music,” “movement,” “pictures,” “help from a friend.”
3. Turn it into a poster: “In our class, we help each other.”

Tip: Keep responses general—no personal medical details.



Free resource developed by www.ChildCareED.com

Licensed Under [CCBY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)