

# Their Voice: Kids On the Move event addresses religious inclusion

Their Voice: Mar 17, 2019 0



Monica Villar  
Courtesy

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There are places where we do well and some where we are not as flexible. In the areas of education, sports and other events, it is easier to make necessary accommodations. Ironically, however, it seems the one place where parents and caregivers feel their loved ones are least accepted is in their places of worship.

There are certain ideals about what it looks and feels like to worship and a lot of that includes solemnity and quiet. Even parents with small children find it difficult to attend services for fear of being disruptive and unwelcome. For parents of children and adults with special needs, this apprehension is magnified.

Recognizing the need for more open discussion on this important

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Recognizing the need for more open discussion on this important topic, Kids on The Move is presenting a forum, "Special Needs In Religion." This event will feature experienced professionals and scholars speaking about how to better teach and interact with children and adults who have special needs in a religious setting. This is a non-denominational event and open to people from all faiths.

The keynote speaker is Katie Steed, a Brigham Young University clinical professor of special education. Breakout sessions will include "Mental Health Inclusive Congregations: Supportive Understanding," presented by Jared Andes, and "Belonging at Church: Strategies for Promoting Positive Behavior," offered by Cade Charlton.

The hope is that this event will result in enlightenment for attendees as well as knowledge on how to create positive interactions for individuals with special needs, their families and their peers. To that end, anyone who is involved in religious education is also encouraged to attend. Refreshments and child care are included free of charge, but child care is offered on a first-come, first-serve basis. For this reason and limited seating, it is important to RSVP at [syoung@kotm.org](mailto:syoung@kotm.org) or call (801) 221-9930.

Thank you to Kids on the Move for delving in to such an important and personal topic. Perhaps as a result we will be reminded of the invitation, "let (all) little children come unto me ..."

I also want to inform everyone of the upcoming 10th annual dinner and auction for Giant Steps Autism Preschool. This annual event raises money to continue the services they provide to children in the autism spectrum. Various businesses and private donors provide wonderful items for the silent and live auctions. The \$25 tickets can be purchased at <http://friendsofgiantsteps.org>. The event will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 21 at the Provo City Library Grand Ballroom.