

I. Introduction

A. Korene Lanxon, SN Coordinator

B. 5 years ago Dave asked me ...to be a part of SN Ministry

- a. Even though I knew this was a needed ministry...felt unqualified
- b. The Lord showed me through his word-he doesn't always call the "on paper" qualified...He just calls and my journey in this has been surrendering myself to Jesus and following His lead
- c. With that...I am not an expert. And SN at Grace is not perfect
- d. But we are moving in God's timing and leading

C. Agenda

- a. I am going to share why SN Ministry is important and how to get started
- b. Time for questions at the end...and I will share some of my resources

II. Why SN Ministry

A. According to WHO

- a. 54 million Americans are affected with disabilities
- b. California and FL
- c. 1 in 5...I have also seen recently 1 in 4

B. Families affected

- a. Devote themselves educating themselves
- b. Therapies
- c. Emotional and medical costs
- d. High rate of divorce, stress
- e. Siblings are also affected

C. One of the most unreached people groups

- a. Lots of reasons...
 - i. Schedules-therapies, behaviors, lack of sleep
 - ii. So many battles of explaining

- iii. Tried church before...
 - iv. Parents might alternate coming...not coming as a family
 - v. Do not know Jesus...
 - b. Secular help
 - i. Schools, camps, therapies
 - ii. All very good to have but leaves families thinking that is all there is or a world's perspective of their child
 - iii. Church like with most does not seem important...one more place
- D. So why should a church have a SN ministry
 - a. Be careful not to be a silo ministry...spread throughout all ministries
 - b. National Council of Churches wrote a document that outlines foundation for SN
 - i. God created all people in his image (Genesis 1:26)
 - 1. All tribes and nations-throne room
 - ii. God calls all people (Matt 11:28)
 - 1. Disabilities do not keep someone from being valued by God
 - 2. We can teach. The Gospel to all
 - iii. All people have special gifts (1Cor 12:4)
 - 1. All people collectively need the gifts God has given each person, and no one is unnecessary
 - a. Mercedes
 - b. J and J writing poems

vi. Jesus called children to himself without exceptions
(Matt 19:14)

1. There's nothing Jesus ever said or did to suggest that children who are on crutches or in wheelchairs, intellectually disabled, or victims of abuse should not come to him
2. Can churches do less?

From Joni and Friends Ministry: asked people with disabilities what they desire in a church...they overwhelming share two dreams: accessibility to Existing structures, programs and acceptance with a sense of belonging extended from others who also use and benefit from the structures, programs, and fellowship of the church is Equally necessary

E. Keep this in mind as you begin thinking of SN ministry...I agree...my families

III. How to start a SN ministry

a. Prayer

- i. Seek God
- ii. Read His word
- iii. Ask him to prepare hearts of leadership, church body, and families with SN
- iv. It is God's ministry-His mission for God's eternal purpose
- v. Keeping God at the center is so important

b. Ask

- i. How all people with different needs and abilities have accessibility to existing structures and programs
- ii. Ask families about their lives....the good the bad and the ugly
 1. Engage with them-

- a. find out their dreams for their children
- b. how they want their child to grow in their faith
- c. serve in the kingdom
- d. be included in the body of the church

2. Intake form

a. Items on form

- i. Likes/dislikes
- ii. Strengths
- iii. Struggles
- iv. Allergies
- v. Triggers

b. Sit down and have a conversation

- i. Take. Into account. The. Entire family

c. Remember that the church is. Not. An. Extension of the. Services they receive outside church...

- i. Place for. Worship, community, service, growth

c. Look:

i. For ways to. Prepare

1. Intake forms
2. Classrooms
3. Recruiting/training volunteers
4. Learn about disabilities

d. Plan

i. Start small

1. Focusing on people while creating programs
2. Immediate needs
 - a. Allergies
 - b. Medical needs

- c. Classroom improvements
 - i. Schedules
 - ii. Arrangement
 - iii. Using tools to help children to be successful
- d. Sensory space
 - i. Breaks
 - ii. Self-contained

- e. Respite events
 - i. At their home
 - ii. At church
- 3. Training
 - a. Volunteers

 - b. Other ministries
 - i. Safety/Security/staff
 - 1. Vision

 - c. Etiquette
 - i. How can I help
 - ii. Tell me about your child
 - e. Outside the Church Walls
 - i. There are organizations that serve SN population
 - 1. Their needs
 - 2. They can help with training at church
 - a. Arc/Child Serve
 - f. Launch
 - i. Hot Air balloon
 - 1. Not a rocket

IV. Conclusion

When we embrace people

No matter their special needs or extraordinary abilities, no matter their cognitive Abilities, verbal communication, behavioral struggles, or physical ability, no matter their addictions, background, no matter their marriage status, employed or unemployed, young, old. No matter the sin... no matter their weakness...we make our churches irresistible. This draws all people to church to experience Jesus.

Recommended Resources:

Joni and Friends Ministry ---www.joniandfriends.org

Key Ministry----www.keyministry.org

Wrestling with and Angel: A Story of Love, Disability, and the Lessons of Grace by Greg Lucas

Mental Health and the Church by Steven Grcevich

Special Needs Ministry for Children by Pat Verbal

Disability and the Gospel by Michael S. Beates