FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
RESOURCE LIST

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

INTERNET RESOURCES

Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the United States of America
Statement on Disability and Communion: Embracing People with Disabilities

Department of Stewardship, Outreach, and Evangelism
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Special Needs and Disabilities Outreach
http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/disabilities-outreach

Koinonia for Exceptional Orthodox Families
A place for mutual support for Orthodox Families with exceptional family members
https://www.facebook.com/Koinonia-for-Exceptional-Orthodox-Families-278401088958981/

Arms Open Wide – Orthodox Christian Disability Resource
This site is one person’s effort to bring together disability resources for Orthodox Christians and those interested in Orthodox Christian offerings concerning disability.
https://armsopenwide.wordpress.com

BOOKS AND DOWNLOADS

The Ascetic Lives of Mothers
By Annalisa Boyd (2014)
This prayer book offers a wide selection of prayers mothers can use to intercede for their families and to grow in virtue. Orthodox prayers for every occasion are included with specific prayers for the many stages and types of motherhood including those for mother of children with special needs.

The Body of Christ: A Place of Welcome for People with Disabilities
By Fr. John Chryssavgis (2002)
Ministry to those with special needs is an important statement of our calling as members of the Church. This booklet is a helpful guide to a difficult topic facing many people in families and parishes everywhere.

Embracing All God’s Children: Orthodox Theology Concerning Disability and Its Implications for Ministry with Special Needs Youth in the Orthodox Church
By Wendy Cwiklinski (2014)
A research paper for the graduate School of Religion and Religious Education at Fordham University. Can be downloaded.
https://fordham.academia.edu/WendyCwiklinski/Papers
ARTICLES

The Church and the Child with Invisible Disabilities
By Matushka Wendy Cwiklinski

Parenting a Child with Special Needs: One Mom’s Perspective
By Presvytera Melanie DiStefano
Orthodox Observer, May 2015.
http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/family/articles/specialneeds

Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the American’s with Disabilities Act
By Dr. Vicki Pappas
http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/disabilities-outreach/ada-twenty-five-years

Some Practical Suggestions for Parish Ministry To People with Special Needs
By Fr. Stephen Pumbee
http://oca.org/parish-ministry/parishdevelopment/some-practical-suggestions-for-parish-ministry-to-people-with-special-needs

Children with Special Needs and the Orthodox Christian Family
By Fr. Steven Tsichlis
http://www.stpaulsirvine.org/specialneeds.html

Ministry Profile: The Challenge Liturgy
http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/ministryprofiles/challenge

VIDEO

Angel and Autism: Finding Faith for the Autistic Child. Produced by the Philoptochos of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Euless Texas.
http://stjohnndfw.info/Files/autismdvdorderform_1.pdf
NON-ORTHODOX AND SECULAR RESOURCES

INTERNET

The Arc
http://www.thearc.org
The Arc’s mission is to promote and protect the human rights of all persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Arc provides a wide range of services for parents of children with intellectual and development disabilities.

Autism Research Institute
http://www.autism.com
The Autism Research Institute’s mission is to meet the needs of the global autism community through research, networking, education, and support for families and people of all ages on the autism spectrum.

Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)
http://www.parentcenterhub.org
The CPIR serves as a central resource of information and products to the community of Parent Training Information (PTI) Centers and the Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRSCs), so that they can focus their efforts on serving families of children with disabilities.

Children’s Disabilities Information
http://www.childrensdisabilities.info/
This site contains resources and articles to empower parents of children with disabilities and special needs. Examples of articles include (but not limited to) the following: sensory integration, autism, asthma, allergies, hospitalization, specific disabilities, and travel.

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
http://www.cec.sped.org/Tools-and-Resources/For-Families
CEC’s mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities and their families. They have develop a list of resources for parents and care with evidence-based tools and information needed to effectively advocate for exceptional children and partner with professionals to provide special education services.

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Service (OSERS)
http://www2.ed.gov/osers
OSERS is a part of the U.S. Department of Education. They are committed to the values of inclusion, equity and opportunity for infants, toddlers, children, youth and adults with disabilities. While promoting these values, OSERS strives to improve results and outcomes for children and adults with disabilities.

National Alliance of Mental Health (NAMI)
http://www.nami.org
NAMI is the largest grassroots organization that provides support and information about all issues related to mental health in the USA. Some of the resources provided include family-to-family support, parent and teacher information, family support group, peer support and public education about mental illness.

**National Council on Disability**

http://www.ncd.gov/about

An independent federal agency charged with advising the President, Congress and other government agencies on policies, programs and issues related the lives of people with disabilities.

**Pacer Center**

www.pacer.org

The *Pacer Center’s* mission is to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life for children and young adults with disabilities and their families, based on the parents helping parents. The site contains many resources than can be downloaded for free for parents, siblings, and general disability awareness.

**Support for Families of Children with Disabilities**

http://www.supportforfamilies.org

The purpose of *Support for Families* is to ensure that families of children with any kind of disability or special health care need have the knowledge and support to make informed choices that enhance their children's development and well being. Through fostering partnership among families, professionals and the community our children can flourish.

**TASH**

http://tash.org/

The mission of TASH is to promote the full inclusion and participation of children and adults with significant disabilities in every aspect of their community, and to eliminate the social injustices that diminish human rights. Some of the issues they address include: parenting issues, resource information and transitioning from childhood into adulthood.

**Books**

*Let All The Children Come To Me: A Practical to Including Children with Disabilities in Your Church Ministries*

By Malesa Breeding, Jerry E. Whitworth, and Dana Hood (2013)

Ministry leaders will find inspiration and information, reminding them that God calls us to include all children, no matter the challenge. In addition, the book includes practical elements with many ideas that can be easily integrated in to ministry activity.

*Changed By A Child: Companion Notes For Parents of a Child with a Disability*

By Barbara Gill (1997)

Raising a child with a disability can often be more isolating and frustrating than any parent ever imagines. This book honestly describes the inner needs and range of
issues parents face. Each of the brief readings offers comfort and hope as they capture the unique challenges and joys of raising a disabled child.

By Jim Pierson (2002)
This book was reviewed by Anton Vrame, director of the Department of Religious Education of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. He states this book “is most comprehensive and systematic, and describes a full range of physical, cognitive, and health-related disabilities.”

*The Special Needs Ministry Handbook: A Church’s Guide to Reaching Children with Disabilities and Their Families*
By Amy Rapada (2007)
A helpful guidebook for any Christian interested in reaching out to young people with special needs and their families.