

Loving the Family Through the Diagnosis

By Amy Fenton Lee

Avoid common and well-meaning sentiments that may come across as dismissive.

Families share that the following phrases often do not provide comfort:

- "God doesn't give us more than we can handle."
- "Special needs children are a blessing."
- "God chose this family for this child."
- "Everything happens for a reason."
- Any statement that begins with "At least."

Quote Bible verses sparingly.

Hearing a Bible verse such as Romans 8:28 can feel like a trite attempt to put a bandage over the pain.

Refrain from offering unknown assurances unless you have experienced something similar.

Request permission from the family before you reveal the diagnosis to others.

Do not suggest that either parent join a support group until they have expressed an interest.

"Leading a Special Needs Ministry – a practical guide to including children and loving families" by Amy Fenton Lee, Orange, 2013, pg. 122 and from www.TheInclusiveChurch.com.