

WE HAVE  
A PLACE  
FOR YOU!







TO SPECIAL EDITION!  
WE HOPE YOU AND YOUR  
CHILD, TEEN OR YOUNG  
ADULT FIND THIS MINISTRY  
TO BE A PLACE TO BEGIN  
AND BELONG. THIS IS A  
PLACE WHERE THEY CAN  
CONNECT, GROW AND  
LEARN THE LOVE OF GOD.

*Children, teens and young adults  
with Autism, Down Syndrome, ADHD,  
Cerebral Palsy or other physical/learning  
challenges will find a place to belong  
here at Grace Special Edition.*

# 1

## FAMILY WELCOME AREA/CHECK-IN

All families entering the Special Edition environment will be welcomed with open arms as they encounter a space designed specifically for their needs.

In this area, families and volunteers can:

- Meet/connect with other families/volunteers
- Give each child, teen or young adult a chance to acclimate to the Special Edition area
- Meet with Special Friends staff members
- Learn about the programs offered or fill out/update registration forms

# 2

## TRANSITION & CONNECTION AREAS

Transitioning to new environments can be a challenge for our Special Friends. Making an immediate connection with a volunteer helps to mitigate the anxiety of entering a new space. Here you can:

- Take the necessary time to help your child, teen or young adult transition safely
- Connect with a volunteer friend
- Store personal belongings in specified cubbies

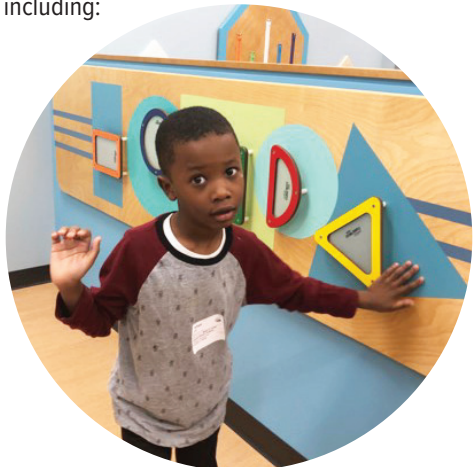
### **Play With a Purpose**

Once in the Special Friends space, participants are immediately greeted by an area designed with therapeutic, social and educational purposes in mind.

This space encourages exploration, play and adventure!

It contains body-regulating activities, including:

- A roller slide
- A therapeutic swing
- An exercise trampoline
- Training ropes
- Music cube
- Optic light and bubble tube room
- Tactile cube
- Cause & effect cube



### 3 WORSHIP AND TEACHING AREA

The Worship and Teaching area is designed to teach the Bible while appealing to individual learning styles. Accommodations and modifications are made to meet sensory, emotional and learning needs, allowing all Special Friends to fully engage. The Bible is taught visually, auditorily and with a hands-on approach, so that every Special Friend can learn and worship in a way that is meaningful for them.

The Special Friends curriculum parallels the teaching used in our GraceKids children's ministry and is adapted accordingly.



#### **The Worship & Teaching areas are equipped with:**

- Interactive technology
- Adjustable lighting
- Movable seating
- Tools to accommodate a variety of communication styles

If the worship time or teaching is overwhelming, our combination of partial walls with sensory spaces and a quiet room provide a safe and soothing environment for our participants, so that they are able to continue their worship and learning experience. It offers them:

- The ability to remain in the same area as their peers, with the opportunity to move around if needed
- The ability to engage and respond to teaching and worship
- Strategically chosen equipment and lighting that provides a calming effect
- Body-regulation activities that assist with participation in large-group activities



## **4** VOLUNTEER ACTION CENTER

The Special Edition ministry would not be possible without the dedication and willing hearts of our volunteers! Volunteer Central offers a place to:

- Pray for the upcoming service with our Special Friends
- Meet a volunteer team for pre-service huddles
- Prepare snacks for our Special Friends

## **5** RESTROOMS

Restrooms are designed to accommodate the physical and sensory needs of our Special Friends. Each restroom provides ample space and necessary equipment to ensure comfort and safety.

# 6

## INCLUSION MINISTRY

Our goal is to ensure that every child is able to fully participate in worship, learning, and fellowship as they grow closer to God, regardless of cognitive or physical ability. Parents who wish to keep their child with special needs in the GraceKids area can ask for accommodations to be made. An inclusion form will be completed for the child, providing us with key information to help that child in their spiritual journey. The child can then be paired with a special “friend” who is trained to work with their individual needs. The friend will accompany the child as they participate in GraceKids, and they will work to ensure that the individual’s experiences are positive and faith-forming.





GRACE  CHURCH

2695 Creve Coeur Mill Road  
Maryland Heights, MO 63043  
gracestl.org  
Michelle Carter: 314-292-8329  
mcarter@gracestl.org