

The winter conference

for GB's children and youth leaders

3 November 2018

St Luke's Church Centre,
Great Colmore Street, Edgbaston, B15 2AJ

Including

volumise

Volumise – a resource for equipping leaders

GB is a place for all of God's people: promoting kindness, inclusion and a sense of belonging

What's this resource?

This resource for equipping leaders is based on the Volumise equipping session held at GB's conference in November 2018 focusing on how we can support children and young people with additional needs in our GB groups.

The session was led by Mark Arnold, Additional Needs Ministry Director at Christian children's and youth organisation Urban Saints. Mark is also the Co-Founder of the Additional Needs Alliance, a vibrant and fast-growing online community. He's an enthusiastic national and international advocate for children and young people with additional (special) needs or disabilities and is passionate about enabling everyone engaging with them to be inspired, trained and well resourced.

This resource has been produced to help you as leaders to multiply the learning from this session with others leaders in your group, local area and region. It's also accompanied by another resource which can help you run a session exploring kindness, inclusion and belonging with your GB group.

Why is it important?

There are many children and young people living with additional needs and disabilities in the UK. Here are some key facts:

- There are approximately 193,707 children of school age in the UK who have a learning disability (MENCAP)
- Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are twice as likely as other children to be bullied regularly (IoE 2014)
- Over 90% of the families that include a child or young person with additional needs have no contact with a church – this is a massive door of opportunity for GB to reach out to families.

How should I use it?

Our God is an all-inclusive God and we want to ensure our work with young people in GB is equally as inclusive and accessible.

The resource contains four sections to help you do this including:

1. Engage: To help you understand the different forms of additional needs that children and young people can experience
2. Equip: To equip you with practical tips to promote accessibility, inclusivity and belonging for all in your GB group

3. Empower: To explore how Jesus's encounters with disabled people were transforming

4. Embrace: To celebrate everyone's worth in Jesus.

These sections are complemented with four video clips of Mark Arnold equipping and inspiring you as you share and engage with the material. Do check out the Volumise section within the GB leaders' online resource base to access these supporting videos.

The resource is flexible and can be used in a variety of settings:

- With your local GB leadership team
- In regional and district leadership meetings
- Individually online

Below are some suggested questions which can be used to equip leaders in your local, district or regional teams. In total, this session could last been 1 hr 30 – 2 hours depending on the number of activities and questions you engage with. Feel free to pick and choose activities depending on time and relevancy.

Let's equip other leaders to continue to raise the volume of hope among girls by enabling them to explore how we can promote a sense of belonging for all (and for all abilities) in GB.

GB Europe Additional Needs resource

The revised edition of the GB Europe's Additional Needs resource was launched in 2017 with the aim of equipping and resourcing GB leaders in their important ministry to children and young people.

This new revised edition includes:

- Definitions, impact and practical tips for working with children and young people who have additional needs like ADHD, Autism and Tourette's Syndrome
- New topics like mental health
- New sections on how to engage young people with faith and ideas of inclusive games and sports
- Up-to-date language
- Up-to-date further information links.

The resource is free and easy to download here: www.gbeuropeprojects.jimdo.com. If you attended GB's November 2018 conference, you can also find it on your USB stick. Please do circulate it to your GB leaders. You may find it helpful to have a copy when you're facilitating the sessions below.

INTRODUCTORY VIDEO

To introduce the topic, watch the new koko film on kindness.

Discuss with the group:

- Is there a word or phrase which stood out from the film?
- What would be the benefits of showing these videos to your GB group?
- How could you encourage your GB group to 'dare to care'?

ENGAGE

This section enables us to understand the range of additional needs and disabilities in the UK and how they may impact the children and young people we work with.

Do the 'Walk apart – walk together' activity in the Engage section of the Volumise resource for children and young women.

Before watching Mark's video, complete this activity to help us understand a range of additional needs and disabilities in the UK. Print out Resource Sheet A with names and definitions of a variety of additional needs. Cut out the names and definitions and mix them up. Invite the group to match the name with the definition.

Before watching Mark's video, discuss together:

- On a scale of one to 10, how equipped does the team feel to assist children and young people with additional needs?

- What are the areas that people don't feel confident about?

After watching Mark's video, discuss together:

As Mark highlighted, there is a wide spectrum of disabilities that some children and young people face in the UK. As GB leaders, do you find it more difficult to manage 'invisible' additional needs like Autism and Dyslexia rather than visible needs? Why? Why not?

- Mark mentioned that many children and young people who have additional needs experience bullying. How do you ensure that your GB group is a safe environment and place of belonging for all?
- Over 90% of the families that include a child or young person with additional needs have no contact with a church. How can GB use this as an opportunity to make a difference in the local community?

Pray together:

- Thank God for the privilege of being able to journey with the young people in our GB groups

Ask God to help you model that Church and GB is for all of God's people in your everyday life.

EQUIP

This section equips us with practical tips to promote accessibility, inclusivity and belonging for each and every child and young person who is a part of our group.

If you have time, complete the 'Build and learn' activity in the Equip section of the Volumise resource for children and young women.

Before watching Mark's video, discuss:

- What are some of the sensory challenges that a child or young person with Autism may experience coming to GB? List the challenges on one half of a sheet of paper
- How can we make practical changes to the programme and atmosphere in GB to help support that young person more effectively? List some ideas on the second half of the sheet
- Please note: If this is a difficult activity, make sure that you have a copy of the GB Europe Additional Needs resource as a talking point – turn to pages 10-11 which focus on Autism.

After watching Mark's video, discuss together:

- An inclusion champion is an appointed leader with the role to assist with any needs that children and young people may have. What would be the advantage of appointing an inclusion champion in your GB group?
- Mark mentions a number of practical ideas to help support children and young people better including a one-page profile, one-to-one helper or peer buddy, a visual timetable and GB Europe Additional Needs resource. Discuss as a leadership team, if there is one relevant idea that you can commit to implementing in your GB group.

Pray together:

- Thank God for all the girls and young women in your GB group and the opportunity to be used by Him to show them life in all its fullness
- Ask God to give you and your team wisdom and discernment to make practical changes to promote accessibility, inclusivity and belonging to all.

If you have time and space, try some of the inclusive games described in the Equip section of the Volumise resource for children and young women. While having fun and being active, this would also help equip people to run more inclusive games.

EMPOWER

This section explores how Jesus's encounters with disabled people were transforming and how this can teach us that the Church is a place for all of God's people.

Delving into God's word:

Read the story of Bartimaeus in Mark Ch.10:46-52. Discuss:

- What do you think life was like for Bartimaeus? How did other people treat him?
- Is there anything surprising about the first question that Jesus asked to Bartimaeus?

After watching Mark's video, discuss together:

- 'Jesus met lots of disabled people during His ministry, and His interaction with them was always positive, although sometimes we only focus on the healing that took place and not on the other really important messages that Jesus taught us during those encounters.' Do you agree with this statement?
- Referring to the story of Bartimaeus, Mark explained 'Jesus didn't assume and neither should we. We should always ask children and young people with additional needs and disabilities how can we serve them.' What does this teach us today when we encounter children and young people with additional needs?
- Referring to the man who was lowered through the roof by his friends, Mark shared 'The most important to Jesus wasn't the fact that the man was disabled; the most important thing was his faith... The most important thing was the person rather than their disability.' What do we see first, the person or the disability?

Pray together:

- Thank God for the life-transforming power, example and love of Jesus – pray that we may become more like Him each day
- Write out the names of the girls and young women in your GB group on small pieces of paper. Give a few names to each GB leader and ask them to spend some time praying for them.

EMBRACE

Let's celebrate Jesus' love for each one of us.

After watching Mark's video, discuss together:

- On a scale of one to 10, how equipped does the team feel to assist children and young people with additional needs? Compare answers to the first activity.
- What was one thing that you learned from this equipping session?
- What is the one practical thing that you'll implement to ensure that your GB group is a place of belonging for all?

Watch the Apostles Creed film, presented by people of all ages, abilities, genders: www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFuZpFJ5q0Y&frags=pl%2Cwn

Finish with the 'Shine your light' creative prayer activity from the Embrace section of the Volumise resource for children and young women.

Further GB resources

We hope that your GB group finds this session helpful and enjoyable. Our regular programmes unpack themes like diversity, kindness and belonging in more detail – why don't you delve in further? Here are some examples...

- **n:vestigate** – *Helpful People, Our Group, Our Friends, God's Family.*
- **n:gage** – *Dorcas, Jonathan, Pharaoh's daughter, Ruth.*
- **n:counta** – *Working Together, Relationships, GB Values.*
- **n:spire** – *Love, Community.*

Additional resources

www.additionalneedsalliance.org.uk - Additional Needs Alliance helps churches and youth organisations to include, support, create places of belonging for, and spiritually grow children, young people and young adults with additional needs or disabilities. It has a great resource dropbox.

www.mencap.org.uk – Mencap is the leading voice of learning disability UK. They aim to support people with a learning disability, and their families and carers. Their vision is a world where people with a learning disability are valued equally, listened to and included.

www.thinktwiceinfo.org - ThinkTwice assists others in their own struggles, and those who stand beside them. Their aim is to increase awareness and decrease stigma so that people are able to be open about their mental health. They provide training courses, consultancy and speakers and writers.

www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/108634/Mind_and_Soul.aspx - In many churches and health-care settings Christianity and mental health are kept deliberately separate. Mental health is rarely discussed in churches and Christian spirituality is seen as having little to offer the world of psychology. Mind and Soul aims to change this.

RESOURCE SHEET A

Autism	A life-long developmental disorder that affects a person's ability to communicate in a social context. It's recognised that the core difficulties experienced by the person are a qualitative impairment in: social communication, social interaction, social imagination and behaviour.
Asthma	A common disease of the lungs (on average one in 10 children are affected) where the air tubes go into spasm and the passage of air is reduced. It may be that it's easier to breathe in than out and this causes the lungs to become inflated and they can't be easily emptied.
Down's Syndrome	A genetic condition which is recognisable at birth and affects one in 700 births. The condition is caused by an extra copy of chromosome number 21 being present in the cells due to a chromosomal accident. People with this condition have some common features and a degree of learning difficulty but all are unique individuals with their own abilities and personality.
Dyslexia	A specific learning difficulty that primarily affects the ability to learn to read and spell. It may also affect spoken language and aspects of mathematics. It's a neurological difficulty for which, at present, there is no known cure. It's a difficulty independent of intelligence and is often hereditary. Some 10% of the UK population are affected.
Dyspraxia	An immaturity in the way the brain processes information. It's generally recognised to be an impairment of the organisation of movement. Associated with this may be problems of language, perception and thought.
Spina Bifida	A birth defect which occurs when the spine doesn't close properly during the first months of pregnancy. It's not a disease and unless medical science discovers a way to repair the nerve damage it won't get better. However, those with this condition can, and do, live long fulfilled and happy lives.
Tourette Syndrome	A medical condition affecting around one in 100 children. It usually starts between the ages of six and nine, gets to its peak in the mid-teens and tends to improve into adulthood. The main symptoms are motor and vocal tics. Tics are jerky movements or sudden noises that a person makes unintentionally. Most people who have tics describe a build up of tension before the tic (like an itch in your nose before you sneeze), which makes the tic difficult to resist. Usually, straight after the movement or noise, the person would feel better for a short time and then often the tension would build up again.