



# SESSION 4

## HACKS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

MISSION:  
**DEEP SEA**

**BY KIMBERLY DORPENYO**

### HOW TO HACK THIS SESSION FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In kids ministry, you've got a wide range of ages you need to engage every week, but kids with special needs tend to get overlooked, so here are a few adjustments you can make to this week in order to keep your kids with special needs more engaged.

#### **ACTIVITY | Swimming Fish**

Have the completed bottles pre-made, but have extra balloons that kids can still draw a face on their whale and play with it outside of the bottle.

#### **ACTIVITY | Jump the Waves**

Provide a buddy to accompany them from line-to-line, let them march big instead of jump, and/or provide a similar activity in a different area.

#### **ACTIVITY | Spitting Jonah**

Make the origami fish ahead of time for our friends with special needs. Have kids decorate their fish however they want. As an alternative, make paper boats and have them play with a few pom-poms.

#### **SCRIPTURE | Jonah 1-3**

Provide a small bin that students can put their origami fish into and pretend to swim it around while listening to the story.

#### **THE BIG IDEA | My faith grows deeper when I share my story.**

Provide a buddy to hold and steady the pole. Have the Big Idea pre-written so they can match their fish to it.

**OBJECT LESSON | Dominoes**

Provide [cardboard blocks](#) that can work as dominoes. They need larger areas to draw and these will allow for a whole piece of paper to be stuck to them. Use large crayons instead of sharpies.

**DISCUSSION**

Create an emoji chart (like one you would see at a doctor's office to rate pain) and use them to discuss these questions. Here are some ways you might use emoji: 1) Jonah had to go tell the people of Nineveh about God (talking lips, surprised face, megaphone); 2) Jonah didn't want to go because he didn't like them and didn't think they would listen, so he ran away (angry face, monkey covering ears, boat, runner); 3) When Jonah got spit out by the big fish, he gave God's message to the people of Nineveh, and they all prayed to God (whale, megaphone, talking lips, prayer hands, happy face). Also, use a variety of expressions to help them communicate their responses for the application questions.

**RESPONSE | Sharing Your Story**

Provide pre-cut pictures (or stickers) with suggestions (e.g., mom, friend, neighbor, teacher, etc.). Let the students choose a picture and attach it to the fish. Provide a buddy to help them hang their fish on the net.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Kim serves as the Children's Minister at Wentzville Christian Church, where she has been creating a VIP program for friends with special abilities. They now have one-on-ones for kids, a sensory room, and she is looking at adding sensory-friendly services at least once a month.

She has been in ministry in some capacity for almost 20 years, and her experience involves community development, city-wide networking, empowering women to lead safe groups for teenage girls, and pioneering multiple facets of ministry throughout Africa.

Her daughter, Makaela, is 9 years old and the light of her life. Together they thrive on knowing God and making God known. They are constantly serving in their church and community, believing the church has no walls but lives in the heart of God's people. Their newest adventure, is become a foster family for a family of 3 siblings!

She loves to sing, travel, and drink coffee...lots of coffee.

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