



Balancing in the Holy Mess

Voices of Special Needs Parents

Quotes about being the Parent of a Child with Special Needs

Compiled By Sara Borgstede

"Please talk to my child. I don't know how he feels or what is going on in his mind. He does have a voice, and if you sound like you care about him, he will use it."

"I hate when parents say they admire me....it makes me uncomfortable. I do what any parent does for their child, I care for his needs and love him, just like I do for my son without special needs. I am a parent."

"My child matters and is worth it."

"Different isn't bad, different is just....different!"

"Be patient."

"This is what I always say. 'Motherhood itself is a full time job, having a special needs child is another full-time job on top of that.'"

"Please stop saying I am a saint and ask me what you can do to help instead! I NEED it, and seriously, if someone sincerely recognizes that this is hard, I will know that they get it if they come and fold the laundry, or help me make dinner once a week."

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“Some disabilities can't be seen. Maybe the kid having the meltdown is Autistic. Would you be able to tolerate being trapped in a room with someone scratching their fingernails down a chalkboard over and over? That's daily life for my child.”

“Be a friend, recognizing that sometimes our activities are limited because of our child. But mama needs laughter and love, too! Don't stop inviting me places!”

“Don't whisper and stare and make useless comments such as, "If that were my kid, I'd beat his ass," or "What a spoiled brat." He's an idea, sympathize and ask how you can help. ”

“We hold things back; others aren't always seeing the full extent of the challenges we face. Love and grace are sunshine to the soul, and sometimes crucial for getting through the day.”

“Please don't tell us 'stronger discipline' would straighten it all out.”

“IF I make it to church, help me as much as you can. You can't believe what it took to get here.”

“Amen about church attendance! I'm always late no matter how early or how hard I try to get there. The Lord blessed though because finally some other people have always welcomed me with a smile.”

“It is OK to ask if I need help. It is not OK to tell me how to parent my child. This goes triple about suggesting I hit him, yell at him, or 'put him in timeout.'”

“It is OK to ask about autism. It is not OK to suggest I do something to 'cure' him, or tell me about the latest fad woo you heard about.”

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"If it is rude to do something to a non-special-needs person, it is likely rude for a special needs person. Staring is rude. Making ugly comments is rude. Muttering under your breath about someone is rude. Using derogatory terms to refer to someone is rude."

"If someone else is offering help, don't criticize them for what they offer. It is OK to make a counter-offer or co-offer that you think more appropriate. The parent or guardian will take the offer they need, and can turn down unwanted assistance for themselves."

"Be practical and pragmatic. If you have a friend with a special needs loved one, offer things you might like done if you were tired, very busy, and overwhelmed. Offers for cooking, cleaning, and respite are usually very welcome, even if they are refused. Offers for just listening and hanging out are usually very welcome, even if it never happens."

"Here's what I want you to know about true acceptance: It's the difference between talking to my child because she is in a wheelchair and getting to know her well enough that you no longer see the wheelchair." – Lisa Bonnema,
<http://ourlittlemiracle.blogspot.com/>

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