

# Modifications & Adaptations

**Unique Abilities.** To be an effective teacher, remember and act with the knowledge that each child is unique. Every child is different and has special skills to be considered. Teaching methods and strategies should be matched to the needs of the individual. It is important to choose suitable modifications and adaptations that support and enhance the learning needs of each child. However, regardless of an individual's abilities, children are first and foremost children, and best practices for any young child are best practices for all young children (Brillante, 2017; Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; PED, 2019; Sandall, Schwartz, Joseph, & Gauvreau, 2019).



**Planning for Inclusion.** To be successful in modifying and adapting activities and materials for young children with differing abilities, planning is important. Planning for children with unique abilities in daily activities is called inclusion. Inclusion ensures that all children and families feel supported and belong. An inclusive classroom celebrates what every individual brings to the classroom and provides each person with the support needed to be a successful member of that classroom community (Brillante, 2017; Sandall, Schwartz, Joseph, & Gauvreau, 2019). The following charted information provides ideas that are good classroom strategies for all young children. The ideas are not meant to be exhaustive.

Environment	Routines	Peers	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange furnishings so that all children can easily maneuver around the room by themselves</li> <li>• Remove clutter</li> <li>• Remove or fix unstable flooring</li> <li>• Label classroom objects and areas with words and pictures</li> <li>• Reduce classroom noise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure activities have predictable beginnings, middles, and endings</li> <li>• Use visual supports, such as pictures and props</li> <li>• Refer to the posted visual schedule throughout the day</li> <li>• Provide breaks from noise and activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate everyday routines.</li> <li>• Model positive, prosocial skills</li> <li>• Model good communication skills</li> <li>• Act as helper</li> <li>• Provide encouragement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place student materials within view and easy reach</li> <li>• Ensure objects are stored, so they don't topple</li> <li>• Enlarge materials to kid-friendly size</li> <li>• Add pencil grips to crayons and markers</li> <li>• Add small knobs to puzzle pieces</li> <li>• Slide jumbo paper clips onto book pages</li> <li>• Provide dress-up items with multiple means of fastening</li> </ul>

**References:**

Brillante, P. (2017). *The essentials: Supporting young children with disabilities in the classroom*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (2009). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs: Serving children from birth through 8*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

PED. (2019). *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines*.