



Able Differently

P.O. Box 9757 | Salt Lake City, UT | 84109

"Sowing Seeds For Positive Experiences"

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Dear Parent,

At Able-Differently, we hope to provide your child with the opportunity to participate in a wished-for, or meaningful, favored activity. By enabling your child to participate in this rewarding experience, we hope to give your child the opportunity to follow their hopes and dreams through positive engagement of a chosen activity. We will work together, hoping that you will share this information with your child's teacher, primary health-care provider, and other chosen agencies that are working with your child to provide him/her the best possible experience within the community.

If your child has not expressed any particular interests so far, you can observe your child's play, drawings, books, videos etc. to gain a sense of what they might like to pursue. In addition to this, you and your child can click on, and complete the [Child's Strength Checklist](#).

You may have wanted these special activities but have been unable to obtain them. The special activity you are seeking for your child can work together with other treatments your child is receiving and can help build self-esteem, confidence and problem solving for acting-out behaviors, sadness and loss. There can be a combined effect with other treatments and school interventions you already are using.

A parent may see recreational or talent building experience for the child as leisure time with adult supervision and a parenting break. However, these experiences can also provide new skill acquisition with better understanding of rules of play and group interaction. New friendships can be developed. Recreation and talent building experiences benefit healthy brain, mind, and body.

Our philosophy has been to expand this experience so that both parent, and child have an opportunity to join together, and discover more of the child's interests. This also provides the experience to start a new tradition of having fun, celebrating your child's new adventure, and broadening how you use and view helping the child grow. As a parent you will find the community has wonderful programs to offer your family, yet you may have felt undeserving or set-apart from this part of the community, so a friend or support person can help.

To build on your strong commitment to help your child, a family member, church member, school person, or friend can help you complete the information needed for this application.

Also, see *Connections in My Life* under “Paperwork” Form 1 under Scales to aid in this process of helping him/her define who he/she is, his/her interests, desires, wants and how he/she fits into her world. With his/her permission, his/her wishes can be shared with his/her teacher, counselor or psychologist to help understand himself/herself better—a must if difficult learning is occurring. These passions and sparks about him/her can float up story threads as he/she tells her story later. Also, this information can go into his/her portfolio in the future.

The Application Process

We understand that application processes can be daunting or confusing. In this section, we hope to provide you with the necessary information to help you complete this process with the least amount of stress. The process will include identifying the necessary paperwork, a visit to the organization, what to do when the activity begins/ends, and the activity cost.

Paperwork & Preparation

(Check Form 1 on application for necessary forms)

To begin the application process, you will need the following forms found on our website:

- Form 1 (to be completed at the beginning of the process)
- Form 2 (to be completed at the end of the process)
- Daily Child Strength Scale (to be completed with your child)
- Past Weeks' Quality of Family Life (to be completed by parent)
- *Connections in My Life* (child identity to be completed with your child)

You may also download [*What's My Story: A Brief Guide to Story Development*](#). Although it is completed at the end of the activity, this guide will assist you in organizing the story, and keeping notes of events that transpire over the activity.

Visit to the Organization

As part of the application process, it is important to visit the organization that your child wishes to participate in. During this visit you will meet your contact within the organization (your child's care coach). It is also recommended that you go with your child, and speak with the owner/teacher/coach to see how the experience can be individualized to best fit your child's needs. Suggested questions to ask include:

- How can the experience be customized for the child?
- How will they work with you and your child?
- What is their philosophy of the child's development (discipline, limits etc.)?
- How will a shy child be encouraged to participate?
- Will extra attention be given to the child if needed?
- How many children usually participate in the activity (smaller groups allow more attention to be given to your child)?

Activity Cost

In alignment with our philosophy, we hope that parents will be able to match part of the fee that Able-Differently will pay. However, we do not want a lack of money to prohibit your child from participating in their desired activity. To address this concern, whatever monetary amount your family can contribute will be greatly appreciated, and Able-Differently will pay the difference. We understand you will be paying for transportation, maybe snacks, or uniforms/costumes and this can be an in kind contribution.

Preparing for the Activity

Able-Differently recommends using the following as a mindfulness tool while getting ready to experience what is going to be a fun happening so his/her focusing skills can be strengthened and experience a positive activity using mindful awareness tools. More in depth articles, and or a little book on mindfulness based stress reduction and a CD of fun practices is also available upon request. It will take a bit of time to teach yourself and child, doing these only 5 or so minutes of daily practice. You can share this with teacher, therapist, or health provider to educate the child through IEP or 504 to receive this instruction since it relates to improved learning, concentration, and awareness everywhere.

- *Teaching Relaxation, Breathing, and Focusing to Children in School*
- *Mindfulness: Helping My Child Learn*

Please consider being involved in teaching your child this new skill of mindful attention (download available on form 1).

When the Activity Begins

Once the activity begins, the parent can begin reflecting on the activity by talking with your child about the first day. Ask your child about their experiences. Was the first day what you expected? What fun things happened; can you help the child see and talk about at least three positive things about the experience. (Mindfulness can help you do this). Was it fun? Hard? Did you make any new friends? What do you think about the teacher/coach?

In order to fully experience you child's story, we highly suggest taking daily notes, or photographs of you child participating in the activity with a camera or smartphone. These photos can also be used to help create your child's storybook at the end of the program.

When the Activity Ends

At the conclusion of your child's activity, it is important to complete Form 2. During this time, both you and your child may wish to create your child's story using your notes of daily cuing. To do this, you can download "What's My Story? A Brief Guide to Story Development" from our website to aid in this process.

Once your child's activity ends and if your child wants to continue the activity or a new one, we may be able to help. If you wish, you can download on FORM 2 ways your child can enter and take in the experience and savor it after the activity is completed. So make sure you can still access FORM 2 in the future.

By choosing Able-Differently, we hope to give you, and your child the best possible experience—all while creating lasting memories, and stories.

Sincerely,

The Able-Differently Team