

# Study: U.S. churches exclude children with autism, ADD/ADHD

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America's religious communities are failing children with chronic health conditions such as autism, learning disabilities, depression and conduct disorders.

And they have been doing it for a very long time, suggests a just-published national study following three waves of the National Survey of Children's Health.

The odds of a child with autism never attending religious services were [nearly twice as high as compared to children with no chronic health conditions](#). The odds of never attending also were significantly higher for children with developmental delays, ADD/ADHD, learning disabilities and behavior disorders.

Sanctuaries were much more sympathetic to children with health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or vision problems. Those children were as likely to be in the pews as youngsters with no health conditions.

But children with conditions that limit social interaction, those youngsters and their parents who are often excluded from other social settings and have the greater need for a community of social support, were most likely to feel unwelcome at religious services.

**Continue reading this article at the [Association of Religion Data Archives](#).**