

I am Me!

Things I like

- Touching, hugs
- Stuffed animals
- Milk, pop tarts
- Exploring
- Stories, music
- Things I can roll up

Things I don't like

- Surprises
- Loud noises
- Sudden change
- Too many choices
- Too much commotion

How do I talk?

- Verbal words (good luck trying to understand them)
- Sign language
- Lots of pointing and grunting
- www.hackerfamily.org/signs

When I get mad...

Sometimes you need to just give me my space. If I'm having a tantrum, it will probably make it worse if you join the throng of big people telling me what to do. Just ask if they need help (sometimes they will need it), then respect what they say.

Things you shouldn't do

- Give me things I can choke on
- Leave me alone...ever
- Let me eat by myself
- Try to "help" when I'm mad without being asked to help

Things you should do

- Say hi when you see me
- Be ready for a hug (but don't force one)
- Use the spirit to really understand me

So...how should you treat me...

...like a child of God. I don't fit the "normal" mold--I am truly unique. When I do things that make you uncomfortable, remember that they don't make me uncomfortable. I do them because that's what I know. Don't treat me like I'm dumb, just love me for who I am.

Why am I the way I am?

I have a genetic disorder. No one knows what it is or why I have it. No one knows what the future holds for me—we don't know how much my brain or body will grow. I also have lots of other physical health issues, but none that you will probably need to worry about.

Sign	Description
Bathroom	make fist, thumb between 1st and 2nd finger and twist; or make fist and twist
Candy	point pointer finger beside mouth and twist
Car	pretend you're driving a steering wheel
Cereal	slide whole hand under your chin from left to right
Chloe	make a "C" under your chin
Close	close your hands like you're closing a book
Cookie	left hand out palm up, right hand make cookie cutter shape
Cracker	make "C" under right elbow
Dad	thumb to head fingers, out (or fist)
Dog	slap leg like calling dog
Drink	Stroke your throat like water going down
Ethan	Make "e" with right hand and wag it like a tree
Garrett	make "G" on thump over heart
Help	Thump right fist on left palm
I'm sorry	Rub palm on chest
Milk	squeeze fist beside head
Mom	make fist, thumb on chin
Monkey	pretend you are a monkey
More	Tap fingers together in front of you
Music	stroke your left arm out and back
No	close fingers and thumb (like a mouth closing)
Off	make "F" and slide it out or snap fingers to thumb in a "hush" sign
Open	like you are opening a bag of chips or a bag
Please	rub chest with open hand
Raisin	bounce fingers up arm
Sad	Run finger down face like a tear
Sam	Run fist down side of face (like you're combing your hair)
Stop	left hand flat, right hand flat on side (thumb up) brought down on left
Thank you	Put open hand on chin/mouth and move it away from you toward person