

DOWN'S SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

# Right beside you

A Down's Syndrome Association publication

# Who we are, what we do and why we need you.

The Down's Syndrome Association (DSA) supports all people who have Down's syndrome, their parents and carers and the professionals who work with them, throughout their lives. We are committed to improving the quality of life for people who have Down's syndrome, promoting their right to be included on a full and equal basis with others.

Established in 1970, the DSA has evolved from a parent member organisation into a leading charity, raising awareness of the condition and improving the lives of people who have Down's syndrome.

Over the last 50 years, significant advances have been made in the lives of people who have Down's syndrome and their families. Life expectancy has improved because of developments in healthcare, and we now live in a society where there is an increasing expectation of inclusion for our community, in education and the workforce.

We provide extensive training and support to people who have Down's syndrome, their families and carers, professionals in schools, and health and social care settings. We also provide assessments and advice services for children and adults.

At the heart of the DSA is self-advocacy. Our Voice is a network of people across the UK who have Down's syndrome, supporting and advising us on national initiatives, research and resources. Our Voice also help to influence policy for those who have learning disabilities.

The DSA relies almost entirely on donations to generate income. You can help to support our vital work by becoming a member, fundraising for us, making a donation or playing our new lottery!

For more information please visit our website:

**downs-syndrome.org.uk**

# Training and Support

We offer a wide range of co-produced training events and support meetings for individuals at every stage of their lives and in a variety of formats for people who have Down's syndrome, parent carers and professionals:

- Tell it Right® training for maternity services
- education
- speech, language and communication
- behaviour
- complex needs
- autism
- employment
- inclusion in sports and leisure activities
- adolescence
- preparing for adulthood supporting adults
- housing
- well-being
- ageing
- dementia



# Information

**We publish a comprehensive range of information resources, most of which are free to download from our website. These resources are being constantly refreshed and updated and are authored by a wide range of specialists and experts.**

**The topics cover every aspect of having Down's syndrome – from before birth right through to old age, and provide information from many perspectives – from the person who has Down's syndrome, their parents and carers, siblings and professionals.**

**The resources are widely used by our members in the UK and are so unique and comprehensive, that they are accessed by people around the world.**



# Friendship



**Our online activities, whether for people who have Down's syndrome or for parents and carers, provide a wonderful way for people to connect from around the UK. Our Facebook groups also provide a way for people to share their experiences and support each other.**

# Advocacy

**Our team of Information Officers and specialist advisers are always happy to write letters on the behalf of our members and supporters in cases where they may be struggling to get the support they need.**




“I would just like to say a massive thank you for your amazing help; I really appreciate everything that you have done for us as a family.

Times are difficult for all at the moment but when you have a child with additional needs things can feel so much more difficult. I am just doing my best as a mum and doing everything in my power to ensure my son gets a homely environment that will help with his development and every day life, I can only jump certain hurdles with the support from people like yourself and your team, you’re all amazing.
Thank you beyond words!”

# Activity and Health Promotion



Our DSActive DSEngage programme aims to provide as many opportunities as possible for people who have Down's syndrome to lead active and healthy lives.

Taking part in any activity, whether it's sporting, recreational or leisure, can benefit physical and mental health and the well-being of everyone involved.

We want everyone who has Down's syndrome to be able to find an activity that suits their need and interests, whether that's on the football field, via an online dance class or by joining their local walking group.



WorkFit is the DSA's employment programme. We match jobseekers who have Down's syndrome with employers who have jobs to offer.

A team of dedicated WorkFit Officers support jobseekers and employers at all stages of the process.

WorkFit listens to the business needs of employers and matches them to the hopes and ambitions of jobseekers, supporting them to be more independent, learn new skills, meet new people, earn money and increase their self-esteem.

# Employment



Our Helpline is unique: we are the only service that anyone can contact on any topic related to Down's syndrome.

Our knowledgeable Information Team are on hand to answer all kinds of questions that may arise throughout the whole lifespan of a person who has Down's syndrome.

## 0333 1212 300

Monday to Friday
10am - 4pm
info@downs-syndrome.org.uk

# Helpline

> Thank you so much for listening to me earlier today and for your gentle and thoughtful words. Talking to someone has given me a new perspective and you will never know how much I appreciate what you did for a complete stranger today.

# Our Voice

Our Voice is a network of hundreds of people who have Down's syndrome who live in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our Voice works on projects, helps to guide our work and tells us what they think about the work we do. Some members meet weekly and some work on projects in focus groups.

At the DSA, we create an inclusive environment where everyone can participate and contribute towards our work.



# Did you know?

Around one in every 1,000 babies born in the UK will have Down's syndrome.

There are approximately 40,000 people in the UK with the condition.

People who have Down's syndrome are all unique individuals with their own personalities, family backgrounds and preferences that make them who they are.

Down's syndrome is caused by the presence of an extra chromosome in a baby's cells. Down's syndrome usually occurs because of a chance happening at the time of conception.

Anyone can have a baby who has Down's syndrome.

People who have Down's syndrome will have a learning disability.

Like most of the population, people who have Down's syndrome learn at school, have interests, hobbies and talents, friends and relationships.

Today the average life expectancy for a person who has Down's syndrome is between 50 and 60, a small number of people living into their 70's, and a very small number living into their 80's and 90's.



**The Down's Syndrome Association provides information and support on all aspects of having Down's syndrome.**

**We also work to champion the rights of people who have Down's syndrome, by campaigning for change and challenging discrimination.**

**A wide range of Down's Syndrome Association publications can be downloaded from our website.**


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Down's Syndrome Association WORKFiT

DOWN'S SYNDROME ASSOCIATION DSActive DSEngage

LANGDON DOWN CENTRE


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