

Support

DSALA is funded by donations from individuals, foundations, corporations, grants, and fundraising events. As a non-profit organization, we are supported by the generosity of our fundraising sources in order to actively furnish our community with benefits and services.

Two significant fundraising events are the Buddy Walk (annual since 1994) and the Spring Event (annual since 1996). The **Buddy Walk** promotes acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome and celebrates October as National Down Syndrome Awareness Month, with over 275 walks across the country. Our **Spring Event** celebrates the lives and accomplishments of people with Down syndrome, their families, friends and the professionals who support them.

Community

Join our community and add your support to an organization that has made a positive difference for people with Down syndrome since 1976.

The Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles strives to develop and promote education, research, and advocacy programs to ensure that all people with Down syndrome fully realize their hopes and dreams. When you support the DSALA you partner with those we serve and help strengthen our common vision. You become a part of our community and database, allowing us to supply you with regular updates on our work and programs.

Benefits & Services

Information about the DSALA can be found at www.dsala.org.

Resource Referrals for services to individuals with Down syndrome and their families are available from our office and website.

Family Support Network (FSN) is comprised of groups that support parents, specific interests, activities and families by geographic areas. The FSN grows from the DSALA community and volunteers who meet the diverse needs of our families.

New Parent Packets are available in English and Spanish and include important information, books, and gifts.

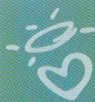
Peer Counseling Service offers parent to parent counsel for support and information about new challenges.

DSALA "Week Ahead" Emails are sent every Friday, informing our community of upcoming opportunities and activities by the DSALA and other service providers in the Southern California area.

Speakers are trained and available to professional organizations, classes, universities, hospitals, and other groups.

Advocacy Information is disseminated through monthly support groups, mailings and email alerts.

Heart and Halo Talent is a casting liaison service for actors and models with Down syndrome seeking employment.



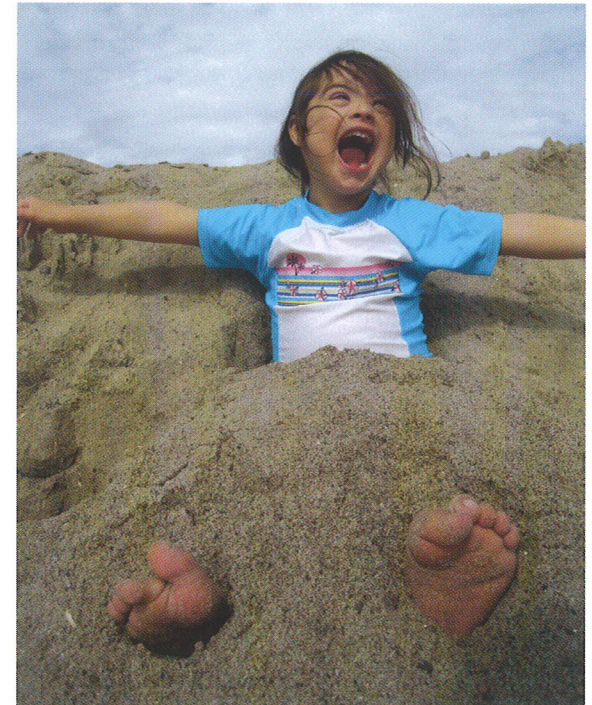
Down Syndrome Association
of Los Angeles, Inc.

Aviation Plaza | 16461 Sherman Way
Suite 180 | Van Nuys, CA 91406
818-786-0001 | www.dsala.org



Down Syndrome Association
of Los Angeles

connecting families for over 30 years



Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles

The Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles (DSALA) is a non-profit organization that provides services to individuals with Down syndrome and their families since 1976. The DSALA is an affiliate of the National Down Syndrome Society and the National Down Syndrome Congress.

Down Syndrome and its Effects

Down syndrome occurs when an individual has three, rather than two, copies of the 21st chromosome. This additional genetic material alters the course of development and causes the characteristics associated with Down syndrome.

Down syndrome is the most commonly occurring chromosomal difference. One in every 733 babies is born with Down syndrome.

There are more than 400,000 people living with Down syndrome in the United States. Over 4,000 live in Los Angeles County.

Down syndrome affects people of all ages, races and economic levels.

People with Down syndrome may have an increased risk for certain medical conditions such as congenital heart defects, respiratory and hearing problems, Alzheimer's disease, childhood leukemia, and thyroid conditions. Many of these conditions are now treatable, so most people with Down syndrome lead healthy lives.

A few of the common physical traits of Down syndrome are low muscle tone, small stature, an upward slant to the eyes, and a single deep crease across the center of the palm. Every person with Down syndrome is a unique individual and may possess these characteristics to different degrees or not at all.

Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles is to enhance the welfare of people with Down syndrome and their families through the development and promotion of education, counseling, employment and recreational programs. We strive to increase public awareness, understanding and acceptance of Down syndrome.



Life expectancy for people with Down syndrome has increased dramatically in recent decades - from 25 in 1983 to 60 years of age today.

All people with Down syndrome experience cognitive delays, but the effect is usually mild to moderate and is not indicative of the many strengths and talents that each individual possesses.

Quality educational programs, a stimulating home environment, good health care, and positive support from family, friends and the community enable people with Down syndrome to develop their full potential and lead fulfilling lives.

People with Down syndrome attend school, find work, participate in decisions that affect them, and contribute to society.

Research

Recent mapping of the human genome has created an unprecedented opportunity for Down syndrome research. For the first time, scientists now have tools, techniques, and Down syndrome mouse models that are making it easier to understand the biology of Down syndrome. The goal is clear - identify treatments aimed at improving learning, memory, speech and even the late-in-life neurological decline experienced by those with Down syndrome.

Education

Early intervention services for children from birth to age 3 include physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech/language therapy.

Since the degree of learning is based on the abilities of an individual, children with Down syndrome have options and the right to an education:

- Special Education classrooms generally have fewer students and greater supervision, to better fit a student's developing needs.
- Regular academic classrooms offer an integrated setting. In some instances they are integrated into specific courses or regular classrooms for part of the day. In other situations, students are fully included in the regular classroom for all subjects.
- Young adults with Down syndrome often attend programs at local community colleges. Various forms of community-based instruction develop independent living and employment skills. Studies have shown that students with intellectual disabilities (including Down syndrome) who participate in post-secondary education are more likely to excel in academics, employment and life.