

UP!Club Policy and Procedure

Contents

Introduction.....	2
Membership	2
Eligibility Criteria	2
Process to becoming a UP! Club member.....	3
Individual Needs.....	3
Participation and integration	4
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Service	4
Privacy, dignity and confidentiality	5
Maintaining confidentiality	5
Record Keeping	5
Gaining Consent	6
Duty of care / risk assessment	6
Incident Reporting.....	6
Complaints and disputes	7
DSNSW Staff and Volunteer Roles	8
Event Cancellation Policy	8
NDIS Service Delivery Costs.....	9
UP! Club Rules	10
Communications.....	11
Transport of UP!Club Participants.....	11
Attendance at Camps	11
Exiting UP! Club	12
Document Control.....	12
Roles and Responsibilities	12
Associated Documents	12

Introduction

UP!Club welcomes all people aged over 18 years with Down syndrome. We also have open sessions for people aged over 18 years with a disability. Our UP!Club is a capacity building, social and recreation group lead by the UP! Club Coordinator, and supported by UP! Club Facilitators and Volunteers. All staff and volunteers have valid Working With Children Checks and NDIS Workers Screening. We also have a person trained in First Aid at all events.

Membership

The target group for UP!Club is adults over 18 years of age who have Down syndrome. Participants must be a member of Down Syndrome NSW and registered to participate in activities. This information is required to ensure adequate support is provided. Membership rules are to be provided for all new members.

A meeting, either by phone or face to face, with the UP!Club Group Coordinator will be organised for new members. At the conclusion of this meeting, participants will be asked to sign their acceptance of the Up!Club Rules. Parents/carers may also be asked to join in this meeting. Meetings can be organised prior to a group activity.

Eligibility Criteria

To participate, participants need to exhibit self-managing behaviour and have a reasonable degree of independence. "Self-managing behaviour", in this context, represents a person with Down syndrome who can look after their personal care, stay with the group (i.e., not wander off), and whose behaviour falls within the UP! Club rules.

Down Syndrome NSW asks that parents/carers do not attend UP!Club activities unless under exceptional circumstances. Anyone attending UP!Club in a support capacity should be properly inducted and registered with Down Syndrome NSW.

Down Syndrome NSW provides support within its own staffing resources, and in most circumstances ensures there is a participant to staff/volunteer ratio of 1 to 3 or 1 to 4, depending on the nature of the activity.

UP!Club is not a respite service. Down Syndrome NSW is not obligated to support those persons who do not fit the eligibility criteria for UP!Club or who do not abide by the membership rules. Down Syndrome NSW will refer applicants to other services as appropriate if they do not fit the eligibility criteria.

Please note Down Syndrome NSW does not allow animals, with the exception of those accredited as assistance animals under the Companion Animals Act 1998 in NSW, to attend Up!Club activities or events.

Process to becoming a UP! Club member

As a first step, you must be a member of Down Syndrome NSW to access the UP! Club. Membership is free. All UP! Clubbers are required to have a Service Agreement and Schedule of Supports. This must be completed prior to engaging in any activity. All UP! Clubbers are required to fill in a schedule of supports form to enable us to support you best. This must be completed prior to engaging in any activity. We do provide some activities that are open to all people with disability, not just Down syndrome. This is great for friends, partners and others to join the fun. These participants are also required to be members of Down Syndrome NSW, have a Service Agreement and Schedule of Supports and a Profile Form.

On the form above, you are asked to give consent to appear in our photos for brochures, social media and other applications. Monthly programs are released on the second Wednesday of each month. All bookings are to be made online through Eventbrite and Humanatix. We accept bookings in writing via email or through social media.

Individual Needs

UP!Club will meet the individual needs of its participants within the limits of its resources. For participants with individual dietary and medication requirements, it is important that the participants (and their families/carers) let Down Syndrome NSW know of these special needs. Down Syndrome NSW staff and volunteers cannot provide medication assistance, and it is the responsibility of participants (and their families/carers) to confirm arrangements for medications at UP!Club Camps, where participants stay overnight.

If participants display inappropriate behavior, an individual plan will be formed by the Group Coordinator to enable staff and volunteers to support that participant so they can participate independently in the group. Support may also be obtained from Behaviour Support staff.

Participants will be encouraged to contact Down Syndrome NSW for information about support for all aspects of their lives.

Participation and integration

The UP!Club promotes meaningful participation and integration with the community through the organisation of group activities for its members. The UP!Club provides opportunities for its members to develop independence through gaining experience in accessing community services e.g., using public transport, accessing entertainment venues.

UP!Club aims to bring together people with a shared experience to promote social connections, self-esteem, friendships and a sense of belonging. UP!Club aims to provide its members with the opportunity to experience new activities in the community which are age appropriate. The UP!Club will respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds of its members as needed.

To ensure a diverse range of activities are included in the UP!Club program, a range of themes have been created that cater for a broad range of interests and skill development. These are:

Speak Up: Activities focused on improving communication skills such as public speaking and leadership workshops.

Healthy Me: Participants learn about healthy food choices, how to cook and get involved in a range of physical activities.

Participate: Social activities that involve getting out and about in the community. Activities are wide ranging and include eating at restaurants, going to the movies and singing Karaoke.

Give Back: Activities are purpose based allowing participants to actively contribute to their community. Volunteering brings a tremendous sense of satisfaction and purpose.

Create: Participants are encouraged to unleash their creative genius through painting, photography, music, drama, pottery, craftwork and dance. Creating builds confidence and gives a sense of accomplishment.

Independent Living: Assisting those who have goals to live more independently. Activities include grocery shopping, use of public transport and learning money management skills. Practical activities help participants learn and build confidence.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Service

Down Syndrome NSW is a registered NDIS provider under the following classes:

- Participation in community, social and civic activities (*relevant to UP!Club*)
- Group and centre-based activities
- Development of daily care and life skills

As a service provider funded under the NDIS, the NDIS Code of Conduct applies to our work, and therefore Down Syndrome NSW will:

- Act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making in accordance with relevant laws and conventions.
- Respect the privacy of people with disability.
- Provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner with care and skill.
- Act with integrity, honesty, and transparency.
- Promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that might have an impact on the quality and safety of supports provided to people with disability.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual misconduct.

Privacy, dignity and confidentiality

The UP!Club respects its members' right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all their dealings with the UP!Club.

Maintaining confidentiality

Staff and volunteers will respect the confidentiality of information obtained during their involvement with the UP!Club. This relates to their present involvement and extends to when their involvement with the UP!Club has ceased.

Any personal information staff or volunteers learn about a member through their involvement with the UP!Club is confidential. Permission must be given by the participant before any information is disclosed except in a situation of abuse.

The Group Coordinator is required to report any serious incidents (see examples of reportable incidents described below) that occur before, during or after an UP!Club activity. In managing these incidents, Down Syndrome NSW will do its utmost to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the participants involved, unless there is a duty for Down Syndrome NSW to report the incident to the relevant authorities.

Volunteers will be provided with information about specific support strategies for individuals on a need-to-know basis. If a volunteer is unsure how to respond to a situation, they are to discuss it with the Group Coordinator or Down Syndrome NSW Behaviour Support specialist.

Personal contact details will not be passed on to other participants without permission.

Record Keeping

The UP!Club will only hold information recorded on participant forms, and statistics on participation in activities. Further information may be gathered to collect data and/or information regarding outcomes measurement, via surveys or other methods, with prior consent from the participants.

All items on registration forms must be completed to determine an applicant's eligibility for membership.

In the event of an accident or incident, a report will be written and held by Down Syndrome NSW as per the incident reporting policy.

Reports pertaining to an individual may be accessed by that individual, the Group Coordinator, and management staff. Any other person wishing to gain access to an individual's report must gain the individual's permission, as well as permission of the CEO.

Gaining Consent

To pass on any personal information, consent must be given by the individual participant, except where required as part of mandatory reporting. Consent means that the individual fully understands any consequences of the information being passed on. The individual needs to understand that they may withhold consent. There must be no pressure placed on the person to consent. There must be an indicator (verbal or written) that consent has been given.

Duty of care / risk assessment

Down Syndrome NSW has an ethical commitment and legal obligation to ensure Duty of Care to all participants at UP!Club events. Group Coordinators and volunteers have an obligation to provide care in a safe and appropriate manner.

Duty of Care is the responsibility of all Group Coordinator's and supervising volunteers for avoiding unreasonable risks that may cause injury or harm to an UP!Club participant, volunteer, or person of the general community. This means using common sense to judge situations and/or any potential issues that may arise during an activity. It is the responsibility of the Group Coordinator and volunteers to exercise appropriate care towards the participants.

Whilst a Duty of Care exists for all UP!Club activities, there may be certain activities whereby it is deemed a Risk Assessment report should be completed prior to the activity. Such instances may include an activity that is new to the members or an activity that involves higher risk factors than general activities, for example a theme park visit or an UP! Club camp. It is the responsibility of the Group Coordinator and UP!Club Manager to evaluate the risk, complete an UP!Club Risk Assessment report prior to the activity, and plan to mitigate risks if they deem necessary. It is the responsibility of the CEO to sign off on risk management plans.

Incident Reporting

Accidents or incidents will be managed in a professional manner, in accordance with Down Syndrome NSW policies. Incidents will be reported in accordance with the Participant Incident Policy and Procedure, via the Up!Club specific Incident Report Form. Group Coordinators are required to immediately report incidents relating to medical, behavioural, injury or other events that have potential to cause harm to participants, staff or members of the public.

Examples of such incidents include members refusing to follow direction, injury due to uneven walking surfaces, illness that requires a member to leave an activity early.

Group Coordinators are also encouraged to report minor events that, if properly addressed, may improve the quality of activities. Examples of this include members arriving without adequate money or equipment, miscommunication regarding meeting points, unexpected issues that arise.

Registered NDIS providers, such as Down Syndrome NSW, are required to notify the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission of the following incidents (including allegations) affecting NDIS participants in connection with the provision of NDIS supports and services. Reportable incidents include:

- the death of an NDIS participant
- serious injury of an NDIS participant
- abuse or neglect of an NDIS participant
- unlawful sexual or physical contact with, or assault of, an NDIS participant
- sexual misconduct committed against, or in the presence of, an NDIS participant, including grooming of the NDIS participant for sexual activity
- the unauthorised use of a restrictive practice in relation to an NDIS participant.

Complaints and disputes

Members of the UP! Club are free to raise any complaints or disputes regarding the UP!Club without fear of discrimination or retribution.

For external complaints and feedback please refer to the Down Syndrome NSW Managing External Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure.

For internal complaints refer to the Down Syndrome NSW Grievance and Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure.

DSNSW Staff and Volunteer Roles

DSNSW are the only staff members and facilitators. No UP!Clubbers are facilitators of any events. We ask that UP!Clubbers use their first names only on their zoom. The UP!Club will engage staff and volunteers that are suitable to attend UP!Club activities and support Group Coordinators and participants. Staff and Volunteers may be approved to attend UP!Club activities after satisfying all criteria included in the Volunteer Eligibility Checklist:

- Volunteer application form
- Interview by the Group Coordinator and/or UP!Club Manager
- NDIS Check, Working with Children Check and Photo ID provided before attending Up!Club.
- Volunteer induction training manual, including the Code of Conduct and Client Protection Policy and Procedure
- Down Syndrome NSW overview
- First Aid check / certification
- CPR check / certification
- Reference check

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to support participant's individual choices providing they are reasonable in the group context. Participants have a right to make their own decisions whilst participating in the UP!Club. Staff/volunteers have a responsibility and duty of care to discuss any decision that may result in a participant getting hurt or being asked to leave the activity. Staff/volunteers must warn members about the potential consequences of their decisions, rather than making decisions on behalf of participants.

Event Cancellation Policy

Some activities require payment during the registration process. All payments are to be made to Down Syndrome NSW via the website. All cancellations are to be made in writing to upclub@dsansw.org.au only.

Online activity cancellations are to be made within 72 hours and in writing to upclub@dsansw.org.au ; Face to face activities are to be cancelled within 7 business days and in writing to upclub@dsansw.org.au We do not accept cancellations over social media, in person at events or over the phone. Over the phone is only in the event of emergencies, as our staff work part time so aren't always in the office to receive your call, but our emails are monitored daily. Just because you have sent an email, without confirmation your cancellation has not been approved.

We do need minimum numbers for our events to go ahead, so we can be viable and sustainable and give everyone a great time! Where we may need to cancel an event due to minimum numbers not being reached, we will let affected participants know as soon as possible by phone and in writing. We certainly try to minimise our cancellations; they are very rare.

NDIS Service Delivery Costs

Each UP!Club generally runs activities three times per month, however this varies between UP!Club groups. Down Syndrome NSW will send details of activities run throughout the year via a program. The program, available on the UP!Club website, lists the activities that Down Syndrome NSW proposes it will run during the following calendar months.

To attend an UP!Club activity, participants must make a booking with Down Syndrome NSW by the closing date for bookings. Bookings can be made with Down Syndrome NSW by phone or via the online booking form on the UP!Club website. The participant may choose to participate in as few or as many activities as they like.

The cost to attend UP!Club activities is a service cost claimable under the NDIS. Down Syndrome NSW requires all participants to have in place an NDIS Service Agreement with Down Syndrome NSW, and pay a service cost to attend UP!Club which provides for the sustainability of the entire operation and is shared equally amongst participants.

The focus is not so much on who needs more or less support, rather the service cost covers delivery of the service as a whole. The service cost covers a broad range of direct service delivery costs that includes staffing and administrative expenses. Participants are expected to pay for additional ticket costs not covered by NDIS.

The cost of each UP!Club activity depends on the duration of the activity. Hourly rates for the UP!Club activities are set out in the Service Agreements. All prices are GST inclusive (if applicable) and include the staff costs for running the activity. Down Syndrome NSW provides fund allocation guidelines which will help participants to consider the costs of participating in 12, 24 or 36 UP!Club activities and/or an UP!Club camp during a 12-month period. Participants will be charged a minimum of three hours attendance whether they choose to arrive late or leave early.

Additional activity costs must be met by the participant and are not included in the hourly rates. Examples of these activity costs include entrance fees, event tickets, meals, travel etc. UP!Club participants are asked to provide their NDIS plan goals, and Down Syndrome NSW provides an annual summary of how the UP!Club activities contribute to an individual's NDIS plan goals.

Down Syndrome NSW invoice our service fees fortnightly, charging your NDIS plan and any additional out of pocket costs which are clearly stipulated on the program when booking and on your invoice. Any invoicing queries should be directed to accounts@dsansw.org.au. You have 7 days to pay us upon receipt of the invoice, and we appreciate prompt payment.

Overdue payments are charged at 2% compounded daily.

It is our expectation that all UP! Clubbers have enough funds in their plans to account for the activities they engage in, as we do not have visibility over this. Where there is an issue, it costs Down Syndrome NSW time and money to chase this up, which we reserve the right to charge for.

UP! Club Rules

UP!Club is a place where everyone can enjoy themselves in a safe environment. To ensure this happens, it is important that all participants act in a responsible and mature way and follow the UP!Club rules.

- **Be Respectful:** It is important to be respectful to both Down Syndrome NSW and other individuals supporting or taking part in UP! Club. If someone is upsetting the group, they may be asked to discuss this before participating in further activities.
- **Be punctual:** Being on time maximises our time together!
- **Follow instructions:** Follow instructions set by Down Syndrome NSW before each session, this also includes forms, safety and adhering to policies and procedures.
- **Communicate to us:** Communicate your needs and concerns clearly to Down Syndrome NSW. This will help us to understand how best to assist you.
- **Respect privacy:** Respect the privacy of other individuals who may be receiving the same service.
- **Follow the Rules:** You may be sent home from an activity if you are breaking the rules.
- **No using phones during zoom session** as it causes disruption.
- **No bullying or harassment towards members or staff.** Bullying, in any form is unacceptable at Down Syndrome NSW.
- **Payment:** Please ensure that you are aware of the cost of services and the payment process before joining an activity.
- **Feedback:** Provide feedback to Down Syndrome NSW after UP! Club services, this will help improve our services and meet the better needs of participants.

Follow-up: it is important to follow up Down Syndrome NSW to ensure that any issues or concerns have been addressed.

Down Syndrome NSW can support people who want to learn more about how to act in a responsible and mature way.

- Listen to the Group Coordinator and Volunteers when they are talking to you and follow all their instructions.
- Talk to the Group Coordinator or Volunteers if something is upsetting you.
- Respect other people's personal space. No unwanted touching.
- Act in a responsible and mature way always.
- Always stay with the group. You must never wander off on your own.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- And most importantly, try to always have fun!

What might happen if someone is not acting in a responsible and mature way?

Other members may get upset, offended and feel uncomfortable. Acting in an irresponsible way can put people's health and safety at risk.

The consequence for inappropriate behaviour during an Up!Club activity is the following:

1. Initial verbal warning
2. If the member continues to display inappropriate behaviour and has already been given a warning, then they will receive a 5-minute time out from the session.
3. If the member continues, they will receive a second warning and a 10-minute time out
4. If the member continues:
 - a. they will be removed from the entire session. The member will be asked to return home
 - b. Parents/carers will be contacted and will be required to collect members or pay for suitable transport.
 - c. A formal letter will be sent out to the parent or guardian including the UP!Clubber.
5. The incident will be reviewed in accordance with our Participant Incident Policy and Procedure. This may result in potential cessation of participation in future activities.

Please refer to the Participant Incident Policy and Procedure for more information.

Communications

DSNSW communications are to be via email to upclub@dsansw.org.au

Our staff work part time so we will do our best to get back to you.

You can also call between Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 4.00pm on (direct line)

Transport of UP!Club Participants

Down Syndrome NSW staff and volunteers may only transport UP!Club participants in a personal vehicle in the case of an emergency, unless express permission is granted by Down Syndrome NSW CEO (or delegate) or the parent/carer prior to travel.

Attendance at Camps

Ideally, a member must participate in at least two activities prior to attending an UP!Club camp. For participants outside of the Sydney metropolitan area, a telephone interview will be conducted with the person and their carer to determine eligibility.

Exiting UP! Club

Members may leave the UP!Club in the event that:

- they choose to exit the UP!Club.
- they are no longer exhibiting self-managing behaviour and choose not to take the recommended actions to assist them.

Where it is deemed that a person is no longer self-managing, the person can request a meeting with the Group Coordinator or the UP!Club Manager to explore opportunities for remaining in the UP!Club.

In such cases where members are unable to remain in the UP!Club, participants and their parents/carers will be referred to Down Syndrome NSW Information and Support team for other appropriate services.

Should either party wish to end this Service Agreement they must give at least 4 weeks' notice to the other party. If either party seriously breaches this Service Agreement, then the other party may end this Service Agreement immediately upon giving written notice to the other party.

Document Control

Policy review every: 3 years

Version	Date Commenced	Policy Owner	Change Description	Review Date	Policy Approver
V1.0	August 2022	Up!Club Coordinator	New Policy	August 2025	CEO
V2.0	June 2023	Up!Club Coordinator	New Policy	June 2026	COO

Roles and Responsibilities

CEO	Oversee the implementation of this policy and procedure. Ensure compliance of this policy and procedure. Manage non-compliance of this policy and procedure.
Management	Ensure compliance of this policy and procedure. Report non-compliance to the CEO.
Workers	Comply with this policy and procedure.
UP!Club Participants	Comply with this policy and procedure.

Associated Documents

- Code of Conduct
- Managing External Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure
- Participant Incident Policy and Procedure
- Client Protection Policy and Procedure
- [NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators – November 2021](#)