

Latest News from Down Syndrome WA

Newsletter 3 April 2020



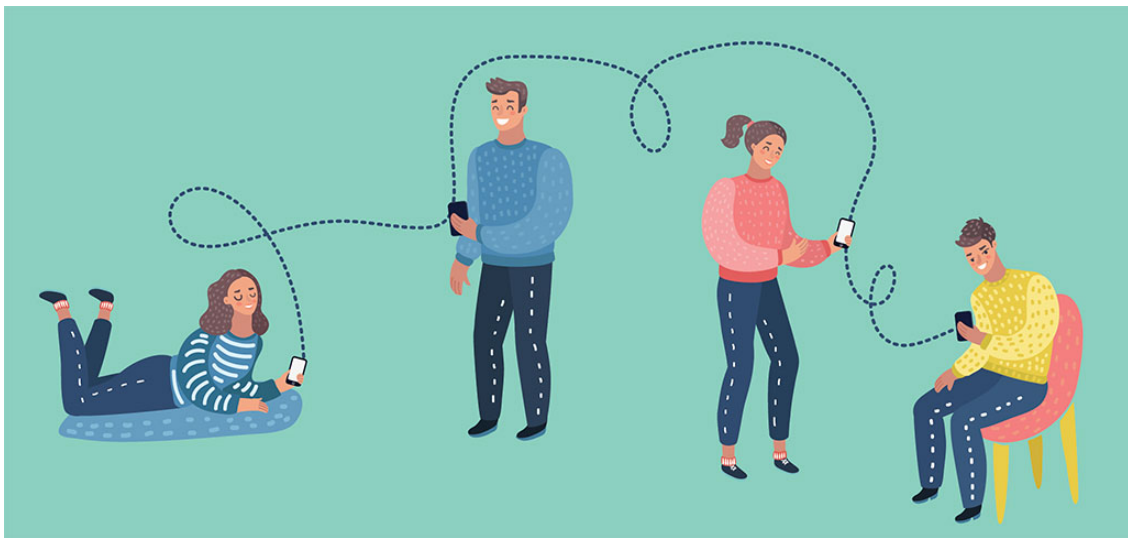
Whilst the e-news is usually sent out fortnightly, we felt there was more information to share during these rapidly changing and unusual times. Practical information, suggestions for connection and strategies will be the theme of this e-news as we are all being further confined to our homes. We hope you are all adjusting to change and are keeping well and safe.

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What is happening at the Association?

We are working hard to accommodate the recent changes with new service offerings and are adjusting our current social programs to bring our Down syndrome community together through digital connection. We are hoping to reach people from all over the state as physical distance is no longer a factor with these digital catch ups. We are of course still available at our office if you need to talk to us. **Please phone: (08) 9368 4002 from 9:30am - 2:30pm Monday to Friday.**



Social Connection

Aim High Club for 18+: First Zoom meeting this Saturday.
A message from Suzanna:

Good news, everyone!

Aim High will be launching a series of weekly, online meetings via Zoom, the first of which will be held this Saturday 4th April at 1:00pm. The link to join this meeting is below, along with the Meeting ID and Password which you'll be required to enter. These meetings are open to all adults from the Down syndrome community, including those who haven't yet attended an Aim High event.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2835414335?pwd=RzNWREVxcW92VW9uVTIsRGR5QnMrZz09>

Meeting ID: 283 541 4335

Password: aimhigh123

At this meeting, we will be discussing ideas about how to keep busy and calm during this time, as well as sharing gratitude affirmations. You can say as little or as much as you'd like. Should you experience any issues connecting with us, please call my work mobile on 0422 795 160.

Lastly, if have any activity suggestions for these online meetings, please email me at aimhigh@downsyndromewa.org.au 😊 "Teamwork makes the dream work!"



New parents, Playgroup, kiDS club and FriendS for life

Hi everyone, I am the family support worker at Down syndrome WA and have been in this role for nearly 10 years. My role usually gets me out into our community to meet new families, right from birth through to our teens group. With the COVID-19 situation at the moment, I am really missing the face to face interactions. With that being said I am working hard (from the safety of my home) to stay connected with everyone during this crisis.

I would love to hold a New Parent 'online Zoom Catch-up'. If you have a new baby 0-2 years and would like to connect with myself and other new parents, please send me an email at nikki@downsyndromewa.org.au

Zoom catch ups

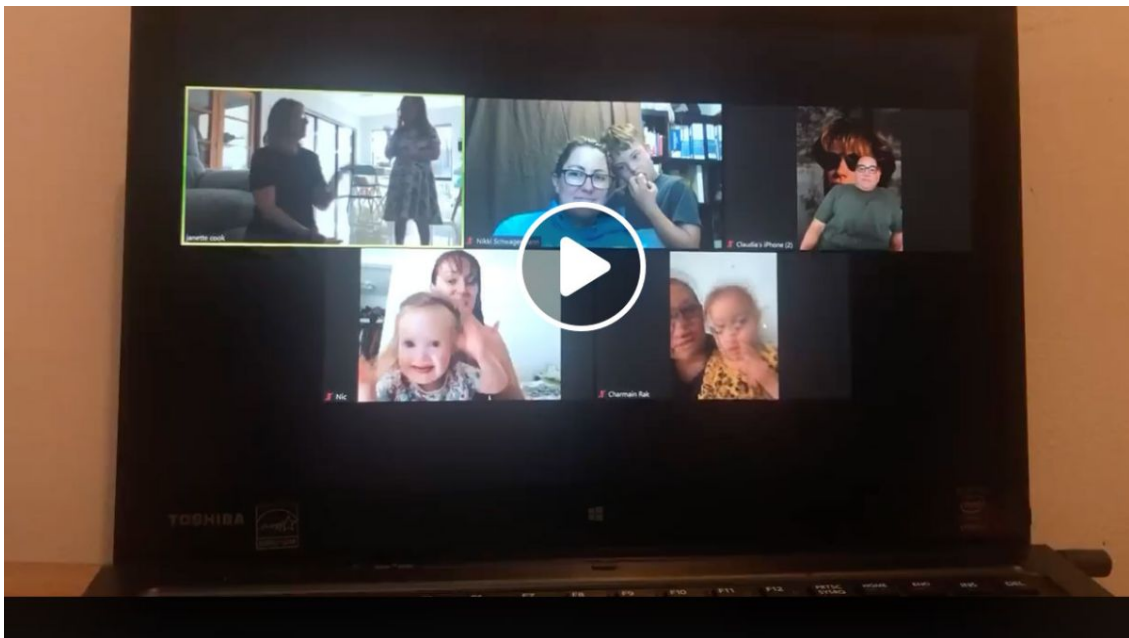
I will also be holding Zoom catch-ups for the other programs I am involved in. Playgroup (0-5years), KiDS Club (5-11 years) and FrienDS for Life (11-17 years) These will be organized through each groups Facebook pages.

If you have not registered your child for their age group, please send me an email with the age of your child and I will send you the forms to sign them up to the relevant group, and add you to the relevant Facebook groups.

Come join us!

I look forward to staying connected with everyone online and then being able to keep connected in real life once the Coronavirus crisis is over. Enjoy this **short video from our Monday South Metro zoom playgroup** singing the morning song they would normally do when together.

Nikki Schwagermann



Regional Zoom chats:

Emily from DSWA is keen to start some social catch ups via zoom with those in our Down syndrome community in regional areas. She would love to hear from you if you would like to have a zoom get together with peers and even a virtual cup of tea to stay connected. Please email her: Emily@downsyndromewa.org.au

Emotional Health supports

As mentioned in our last e-news, DSWA's Registered Counsellor Nicola Burton will be available for emotional support during these difficult times, with up to 30 minute sessions available on Tuesdays via phone. Please email Nicola at Nicola@downsyndromewa.org.au and she can schedule an appointment and provide phone details. There is no cost involved. She invites people with Down syndrome, their family members and carers to register for these sessions.



NDIS support

Our NDIS manager and former LAC Elise Anstey is available to answer **any** queries you have on your plan and can be contacted by email: NDISsupport@downsyndromewa.org.au or by **phone: 0480 263 107**. Elise works Tuesday to Thursday.

Elise invites you to join her for upcoming zoom workshops:

1. **Wednesday 15th April 2020, time 10:30am:**
Understanding and using your NDIS plan in the time of coronavirus.
2. **Tuesday 21st April 2020, time 10:30am:**
Your first Planning meeting? How to prepare and what to expect.
3. **Tuesday 28th April 2020, time 10:30am:**
What happens with the plan review.....considerations.

Please RSVP to elise@downsyndromewa.org.au with your name, age of family member with DS and whether you live in city or regional areas. If there are any specific questions/topics you would like to be covered in these sessions, please let Elise know before the scheduled workshop.

Social Media support

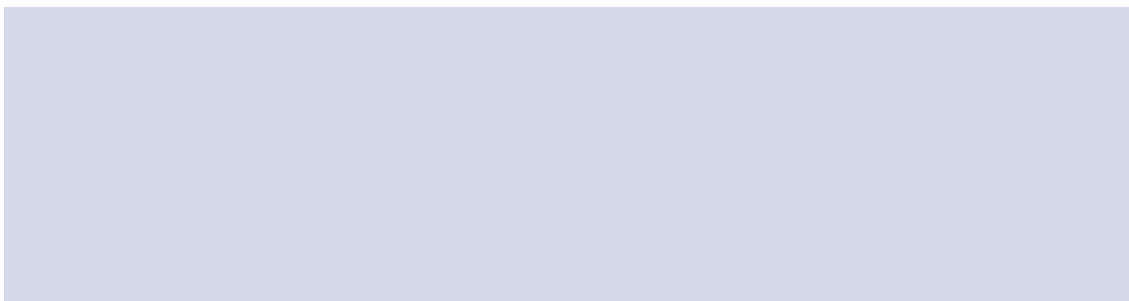
Don't forget our Facebook pages are a great way to connect with each other and find out what other people are doing. A great resource for information.



Corona virus information

First the good news with a positive spin and sunshine.

Click play icon to see the video:



Did you know there is a new Gov't App to keep you informed on the latest information about Coronavirus?

This can be done through the **Australian Government's WhatsApp Channel for guidance and information on Australia's response to Coronavirus**. Download WhatsApp and search title. The app has an interactive link to information using a number or emoji to link you to concise and up to date information.



Is our Down syndrome Community at greater risk of Coronavirus?

The Association has had queries as to whether their family member with Down syndrome is at greater risk from Coronavirus. DS Australia has an informative page on this topic with medical resources commenting on the question of increased risk. There is commentary from UK and USA with findings so far.

<https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/resources/coronavirus.html>

Resources for children

Our kids may feel bombarded with lots of scary information. This link talks to kids and teenagers about what you can do if feeling worried and also comes up with great ideas for activities. It is upbeat and practical.

<https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/coronavirus-mental-health/12094046>



Health

The Australian Government Department of Health has created a new website Head to Health. This site can help you find digital mental health services from some of Australia's most trusted mental health organisations. Head to Health brings together apps, online programs, online forums, and phone services, as well as a range of digital information resources. Whether you are trying to improve your own sense of wellbeing, looking for help with something that is bothering you, or helping someone you care about—Head to Health is a good place to start.

<https://headtohealth.gov.au/service-providers>

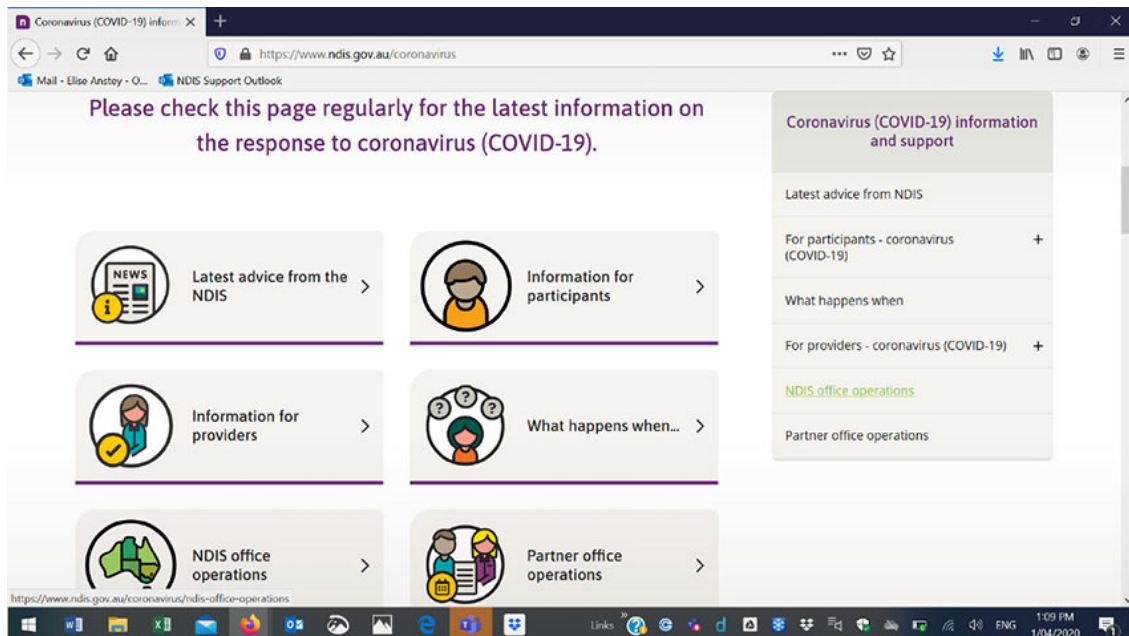


Latest NDIS News

The NDIA has continued to produce resources to help navigate and answer questions in

relation to Corona virus. This link was updated 1st of April . *What happens when....* is a useful page as it answers many practical questions about NDIS plans including plan flexibility:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus>



With changing circumstances, you may be using your plan budgets differently. Responses to practical questions can be found following the link:

https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/participants-coronavirus-covid-19/using-your-budget?mc_cid=0f5af57d3a&mc_eid=def9255afc

Considerations for support workers (SW) to keep your person with Down syndrome and your SW safe:

- **Suggest your support workers complete the Dep't Health COVID-19 Infection Control Training.** <https://covid-19training.gov.au/>
- Consider reducing the number of SW's in your home.
- Suggest to your SW to work outside the home as much as possible. Outdoor life skills: learn to care for dog, gardening, outdoor maintenance, learn to BBQ, Walks in park etc..
- Have an outdoor hand washing station with specific hand towel per support worker or paper towels.
- Social distancing.
- Wipe down all handles and gate latches.
- Consider trying to restrict SW to fewer areas of your home.
- Core creativity: including support workers picking up consumables and scripts from the pharmacy and run essential errands.



Activities

Going a little stir crazy being at home? Let's share ideas!

We would love to hear from you so please share your ideas with our Facebook groups or send ideas into DSWA for us to share in the next E-news. Please send to:

elise@downsyndromewa.org.au

Routines: Routines have changed for so many, so creating a new routine and schedule helps create a new normal. You can create a colour coded schedule or you can ask your therapists to put together a visual schedule.

Ensure there is down time and outside time ie. Family bike rides

Ask your therapist for some 1:1 programs that can be done remotely or in the open air at parks or the beach etc...

Exercise: Special Olympics have put together a great program called **Fit 5** covering exercise, nutrition and hydration. It is full of many colourful and visual images with exercises that can be done in the home or back yard. http://www.specialolympics.com.au/images/soaweb/files/Fit-5-Guide_low.pdf

Online live streams of zoos and aquariums:

<https://www.sydneyaquarium.com.au/explore/live-stream/>

<https://www.zoo.org.au/animal-house/>

<https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams>

Arts and Crafts ideas

Create a Vision board

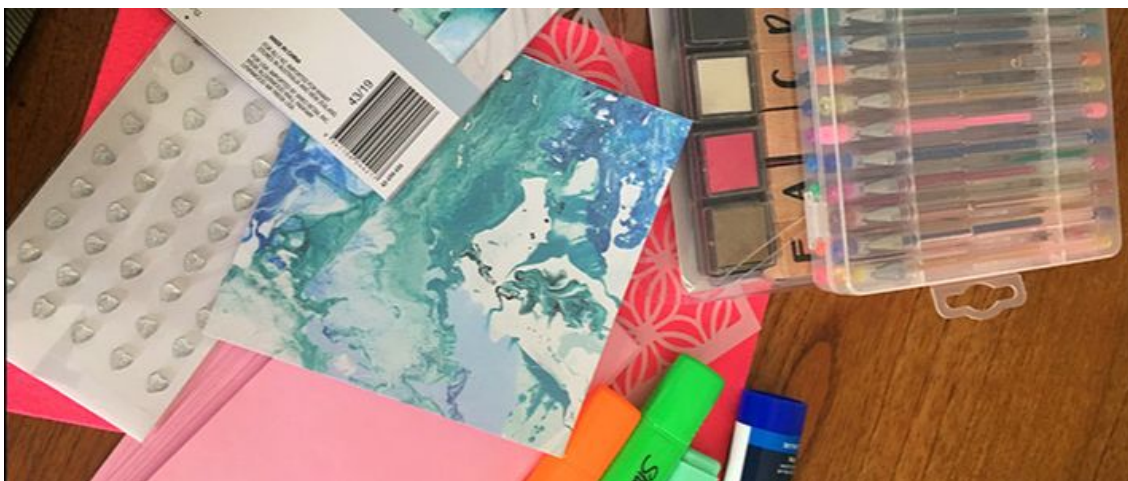
This is a collage of images, pictures, and affirmations of one's dreams and goals, designed to serve as a source of inspiration, empowerment and motivation, and to use to reach your goals

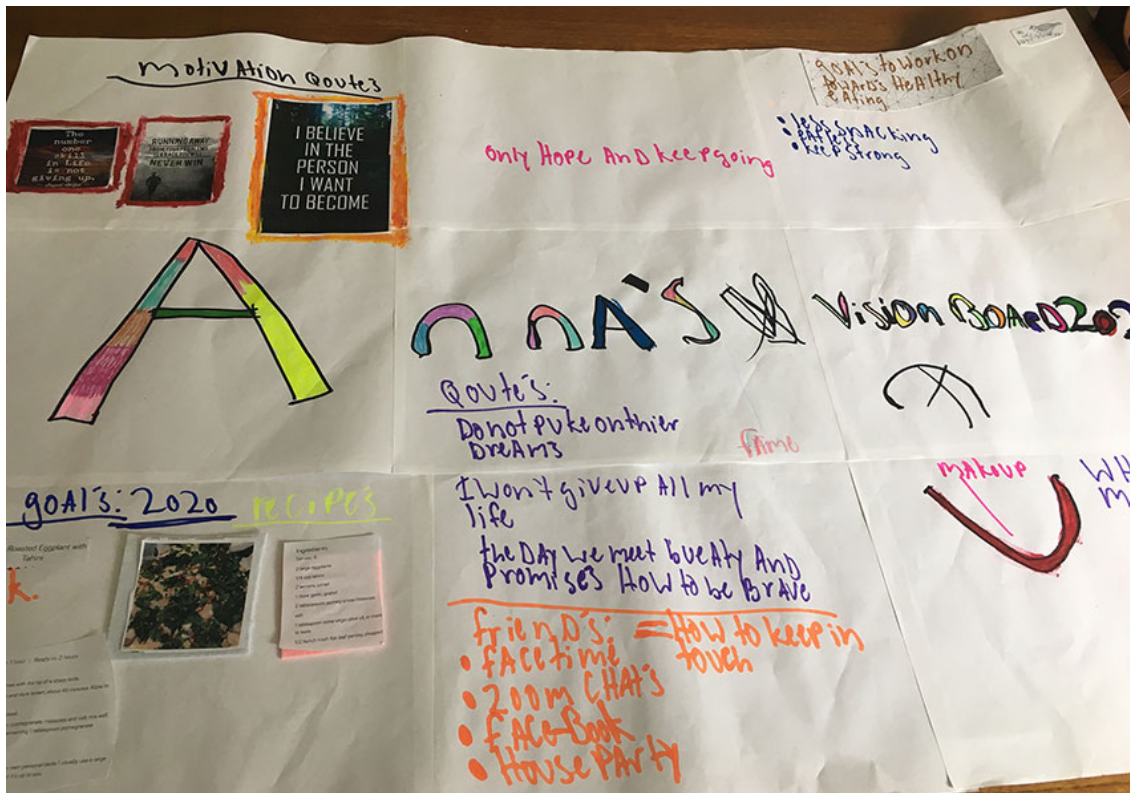
What do you need?

Magazines, images, phrases and words, craft materials, markers, paints, scissors and glue

- Glue everything onto the board. You can add writing with colourful markers, paint on it and get creative.
- Leave space in the very centre of the vision board for a fantastic photo of yourself where you look radiant and happy. Paste yourself in the centre of your board.
- Hang your vision board in a place where you will see it often.

Anna shared an image of a vision board she is working on and plans to hang it on her bedroom wall:





Stay well everyone and please contact us if you have any questions. We are here to support, inform and connect our Down syndrome Community.



If you know anyone who can benefit from this newsletter, forward this email and ask them to subscribe. Thank you!

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