

# Newsletter 30 September 2021



**Welcome to Spring! It feels like we've waited a long while for the warmer weather to arrive and we are so glad it's finally here!** To kick-start the Spring holiday, we are featuring plenty of good news and things to look forward to in October! The stunning photo above is by Tracy Bicker, one of many from our 2022 Down Syndrome WA (DSWA) calendar, featuring adorable Vanessa from our playgroup. Read on to find out more!

**We had an amazing turnout for the Gala Dinner!** It was a dazzling event with so much positive feedback received. At the opening of October, we warmly welcome Cassandra Hughes, our new Executive Officer. The AGM is also just around the corner and we encourage all our members to attend. Don't forget to check out All Things NDIS and so much more!

**Our main upcoming event is StepUP!** Please register and join in the fun and excitement. As ever, there is much to read about our social programs accompanied by a collection of uplifting photos from recent events. Do you struggle for fun ideas to keep your kids active over the holidays? Read on for a Things To Do list in our Creative Corner.

We hope this edition finds you and your family well 😊

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## Are you ready for Step UP! #21YourWay?

You may have noticed that we have a new event name and logo, but rest assured it is going to be the same amazing and fun-filled day.

The Down Syndrome Australia (DSA) federation of states and territories decided on the name change to include both the face-to-face and virtual aspects of StepUP! As we know, many states in Australia have ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, preventing them from being able to run a face-to-face event. For this reason, in 2020 the #21YourWay campaign was born. Members were invited to set themselves a challenge for 21 days and share on social media platforms to fundraise. This enabled all members throughout Australia to be involved.

Fortunately, here in WA we can go ahead with our face-to-face event again in 2021.

**StepUP! #21YourWay** is Down Syndrome WA's biggest event of the year. The day starts with a short walk along the foreshore, followed by a family fun day at Taylor Reserve in Victoria Park. There will be entertainment, free rides, bouncy castles, face painting, animal farms, food vans and more!

Come along for a great day of raising awareness and celebrating Down syndrome with the Down Syndrome WA (DSWA) community.

**Date:** Sunday 24th October

**Time:** 9.30am-1pm

**Location:** Taylor Reserve, Victoria Park

Register here: <https://stepupfordownsyndrome.org.au/events/30/stepup-perth>  
 StepUP! #21YourWay event on Facebook <https://fb.me/e/WjJBW7lj>



StepUP! Merchandise will be available for **presale on October the 4th** for collection at the event. It will also be available for sale on the day. Go to: [www.dsawa.bigcartel.com](http://www.dsawa.bigcartel.com)



## Gala Dinner

This year's Gala Dinner held on August 21st at HBF Stadium in Mount Claremont was, without a doubt, the highlight of the associations social calendar. During COVID-19 times, organising a social event certainly came with some challenges: Would it go ahead? Would people commit to attending? But commit they did with 302 tickets purchased by members, their immediate and extended family members, work colleagues and businesses who partner with DSWA. The crowd arrived for pre-dinner drinks and photos to the stunning styling donated by [Phenomenon Creative Event Services](#). People enjoyed a delicious three-course meal and drinks package and danced the night away to the live band sponsored by [Your Choice Disability Plan Management](#).

The William's family: Marie, Jim and Laura were attending their first DSWA event and shared some thoughts.

*"One enchanted evening sums up the Down Syndrome Gala. From the Chinese Warriors, the decorated archways and cherry blossoms to the stunning Chinese lanterns that decorated the dining area, we were transported to another place in time."*

*"It was a celebration not only for parents and friends but also for the young adults. It was a moment where everyone could celebrate what had brought us together as we laughed, danced and partied like there was no tomorrow."*

*"For us, one of the highlights was the video on Open Employment in which our daughter Laura featured alongside three other members working in open employment in the City of Perth. Pan Pacific Perth is a wonderful organization and has welcomed Laura into their community."*

*"Seeing Laura on the dance floor made us realise that she is no longer watching from the sidelines, she is participating in life. It was a truly magical moment watching, Laura embrace life, make new friendships, chase her dreams and take her place in the world."*

*"Laura added that she was happy she attended the gala. Although she felt a bit shy and embarrassed seeing herself in the video, it was nice to get the praise and comments from other people attending the gala and be welcome at her table. She enjoyed the dancing very much, made new friends and saw an old school friend. It was such a fun event because girls, 'just wanna have fun' and that was exactly what everyone on the dancefloor was doing!"*

This event had all the elements that you would expect from a function formulated with the assistance of a high-end event company with a large budget. The association had no such backing. The event was created entirely by Board Secretary Jessica Davies and her friend Emily Cutting. This was on top of both girls having full-time day jobs. We thank their employers for their understanding during July and August!

Mostly, we thank these two amazing young women who, along with DSWA Family and Event's Coordinator Nikki Schwagermann, created the enchanted evening raising over \$18,000 for the association.

Other comments about the Gala Dinner came from our Aim High Club members and are as follows:

[Read Gala Dinner Feedback from Aim High Club Members](#)

[Check out the Gala Dinner video](#)

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## What is happening at the Association?



### Curtin University

**This month, DSWA was invited to present at Curtin University to its second-year medical students. Rachel Parker, one of our Health Ambassadors and Nikki Schwagermann, our Family Support Officer both presented.**

Rachel talked about her life and all the amazing things she does. She also discussed how she would like to be treated when visiting medical professionals.

Nikki covered some of the health issues that may occur with a Down syndrome diagnosis, emphasising the importance of considering the individual from a holistic approach and not just from their diagnosis. In addition, the language used around the delivery of a diagnosis, whether it be pre-natal or post-natal, is extremely important.

Nikki was able to share the experiences of many families that she has supported over her 10 years at DSWA. The feedback from both lecturers and students was all very positive and we have been invited to present again in 2022.

## Welcome to our new CEO



The Board are delighted to announce the appointment of **Cassandra Hughes** to the position of Chief Executive Officer of Down Syndrome WA.

Cassandra will commence at the office on Monday 4th October. Cassandra comes from St John Ambulance where her most recent position was State Operations Manager for the Country Ambulance Service working alongside both staff and volunteers in the Great Southern and in the state office in Belmont. Prior to working for St John, Cassandra worked for a small country local government in

Cranbrook as the Manager of Economic and Community Development. She describes both roles as a place where she was able to *make a contribution to her community* which is important to her. She is looking forward to the opportunity to work with us here at DSWA and is excited to meet the team and get started.

During October, Cassandra will be out and about to meet as many of our members as possible. She will be present at both Aim High events on the 9th and 30th, StepUP! on the 24th, Leederville Playgroup on the 15th and Warnbro Playgroup on the 18th. She will also be joining in on the KiDS Club and FrienDS for Life groups in the coming months. Please don't be shy; go up and introduce yourself, share your dreams and aspirations for your association and share your story. Cassandra is truly looking forward to meeting you.

During the interview phase, it was heartening to receive over 33 applications from people passionate to lead our association. It demonstrates our strong reputation in the community.

## The Awesome DSWA Staff

Over recent months, I have had the privilege of spending more time in the office at DSWA and witnessing firsthand the dedication the staff have to their various roles at the association. It is a busy place with so much going on and it is evident how much the staff at DSWA truly love their jobs. This group work innovatively and tirelessly to provide amazing services to members, families, health care and education professionals they come in contact with.

*The Board thank them for their dedication and commitment to members.*

Members, please take time to thank the staff you interact with and let them know how much they are appreciated.

Kathryn Salt  
*Acting Board Chair*





## Annual General Meeting

**The association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for:**

**Date:** Wednesday 27th October 2021

**Time:** 6:30pm – 7:30pm

**Venue:** Zenith Room, 32 Burton St Cannington (DSWA/Nulsen Offices)

We would encourage all members to attend and meet our new CEO Cassandra Hughes. To assist us with planning, please RSVP to [office@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:office@downsyndromewa.org.au).

If you would like to nominate for a position on the Board or know someone who would be suitable, please contact current Acting Board Chair Kathryn Salt who will happily answer any questions you may have [kathryn@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:kathryn@downsyndromewa.org.au) or complete the nomination form by clicking the link below.

If any member would like to send an item of business or a notice of motion which they would like to be considered at the AGM, please advise Secretary Jessica Davies ([jessicadavies@iinet.net.au](mailto:jessicadavies@iinet.net.au)) by 4th October 2021.

## Nominations for the Board of Management 2021-2022

## Expressions of Interest to Work at Down Syndrome WA



**Down Syndrome WA are looking to recruit part/time casual staff to support our programs**

Please send your CV and a cover letter outlining the position you are applying for and the hours you are available to: Cassandra Hughes – [ceo@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:ceo@downsyndromewa.org.au)

**Education Support Officer:** To fulfill the requirements of this role you will ideally hold an Education Degree with experience in special education.

Duties include: Developing and running our Teacher PD in March each year, supporting parents and schools with Education enquires. Conducting Teacher Professional Development as requested. Initially this role is for a maximum of 8 hours per week.

**KiDS Club Coordinator:** this role could be combined with the Education Support Officers role. This role is for 8 hours per month coordinating our KiDS Club.

*Down Syndrome WA provides open employment, work experience support and mentoring to people with Down syndrome and other intellectual disabilities. We are currently looking for casual staff to support these programs.*

**Employment Mentors:** Casual positions are available with an immediate start supporting our

members in job readiness and on the job employment support. Transporting the participant in support worker's personal car or training the employee to utilise public transport may be required as well as money skills training and skill building in appropriate behaviours in the workplace. Previous experience working as a support worker, working in office administration and/or hospitality is desirable. This role could potentially suit allied health, education or commerce students or people returning to work after being a stay-at-home parent. Hours of work are often for three to four hours in the middle of the day two to four days per week but requires commitment of consistent availability when mentoring an individual in a particular workplace experience.

**Educator - Employment Pathways:** A part-time casual position is available to further develop and expand DSWA's NDIS employment programs. This includes running courses *in Finding and Keeping a Job*, *SLES* training as well as customised delivery of service to individual participants, supporting and implementing steps toward them achievement their employment goals. You have the ability to work with external stakeholders and employers to carve out/ customise work experience opportunities using a strengths based approach. To fulfill the requirements of this role you hold either a degree in Education, a Certificate IV in adult training and assessment or similar. Experience working within the NDIS framework of 'Finding and Keeping a Job', including reporting is desirable. This role could be combined with the Education Support Officer and Kids Club Coordinator if the applicant has the varied skill set required.

Further information and a confidential telephone conversation is available by contacting Acting Board Chair Kathryn Salt on 0411302636 or [kathryn@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:kathryn@downsyndromewa.org.au).

## Register your Micro Enterprise/Business with Down Syndrome WA

If you are a member of Down Syndrome WA and operate a micro-business we would love to hear from you! Please send details of your business to [Rachel@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:Rachel@downsyndromewa.org.au) for inclusion on our website and to be offered opportunities to promote your business and sell products at our various events and future market days. If your business has a website please include the link.



## Employment Connection Service

The Employment Connection service provides a tailored approach to achieving employment outcomes for people with Down syndrome by working with both job seekers and businesses. This includes:

- Working with businesses and employment agencies to promote the benefits of employing a person with Down syndrome, to identify positions and advice on job-carving
- Working with businesses to ensure that the workplace is conducive to successful employment outcomes
- Connecting interested businesses to people with Down syndrome who are looking for employment
- Delivering workshops in the workplace to assist current employees in understanding Down syndrome and how best to support the person in the workplace.

This service is one component of the national Employment Project, being implemented by Down Syndrome Australia, which aims to improve employment outcomes and opportunities for people with Down syndrome.

In recent months, we've helped one candidate commence employment with a health insurance company. Another candidate has also completed four weeks of work experience with a global HR consultancy firm and is commencing employment soon. A third candidate commenced work experience on Thursday 23rd September at a café in Scarborough, while a fourth is soon to commence her traineeship program with an international hotel in the CBD. We're in the process of helping a few local families connect with employers in Busselton. These are exciting times where business owners are coming forward wanting to engage with people with Down syndrome for work experience, a traineeship programme and/or paid employment.

For further information please contact Jibu Mammen, Employment Connections Manager [jibu@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:jibu@downsyndromewa.org.au)

The international video '[The Hiring Chain](#)' now has a Perth version. Click below to watch the Perth employment video:



Down Syndrome WA had a stall at the recently held 2021 Abilities Expo where we had a lot of engagement with children from several schools and Education Support Centres, parents and other disability agencies.



## Staffing Update

**Elise Anstey** has decided to step down from her position as NDIS Manager. We thank Elise for her tireless commitment to the association in setting up NDIS Service Delivery and her role in the production of The My Voice My Health App.

**Janette Cook** has decided to step down from her role in running the Kidz Club as she would like to now enjoy this club as a parent. Janette will still be coordinating the Southern Playgroup based in Warnbro.

Bye...





## Health topic: Dementia

DSWA has received several calls from individuals within our community, seeking information on dementia.

Alzheimer's WA have a comprehensive resource base on their website, including *About Dementia* help sheets. <https://www.alzheimerswa.org.au/helpsheets/>

**If the individual's carer has noted any signs of early onset dementia, a GP assessment would be valuable to establish a baseline and for ongoing monitoring. Ask your GP whether he/she has assessment forms which are specifically for people with an intellectual disability/Down syndrome.**

**Memory clinics** are specialised centres for the assessment of persons with cognitive disorders, including dementia and are attached to a number of Perth and regional public hospitals where individuals have access to high-quality dementia assessments.

See the link below to access *The Australia Dementia Network - Memory Clinics* initiative, which has a map of all clinic locations.

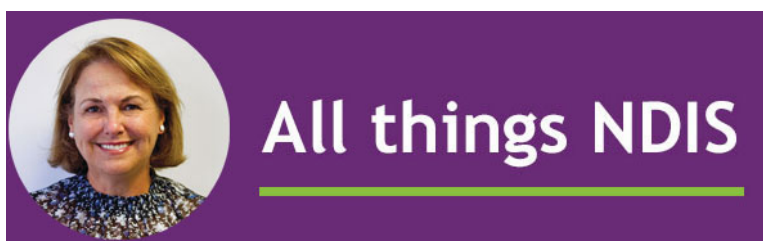
<https://www.australiandementianetwork.org.au/initiatives/memory-clinics-network/>

## Launch of the Safe and Found initiative by WA police



In August, DSWA were represented at the launch of the *Safe and Found* initiative. This is a joint initiative between the WA Police Force and Australia Medic Alert Foundation and is for those people in our community who have dementia or a cognitive impairment and may be at risk of becoming lost. Safe and Found allows police to act quickly when undertaking a search situation by using valuable information already supplied to them.

More information can be found at: <https://www.safeandfound.org.au/>  
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P92HcgyPifg>



**DSWA provides NDIS services in the following areas:**

- Social programs: Aim High Club and FriendDS for Life
- Getaways

- Employment support services (i.e., job carving, on-the-job training, ongoing workplace mentoring and skill building for open employment)

Please contact our office at **(08) 6253 4752** for more information

## **Information on younger onset dementia and the NDIS**

### **Considerations of NDIS supports and services when there is an additional diagnosis of *younger onset dementia***

**Documentation support:** Take any relevant documentation to the NDIS planning meeting, including GP or specialist letter/assessment reports outlining the diagnosis. This documentation can be useful as supportive evidence in a request for secondary diagnosis in the individual's NDIS profile. Discuss with your Local Area Coordinator (LAC). If the planning meeting is not due, this documentation could be useful as evidence in a *change of circumstances review* request.

### **NDIS supports to consider and discuss with your LAC:**

- Additional daily living support: Showering, dressing, cooking assistance, medication management, cleaning, gardening and shopping assistance;
  - NDIS may fund home modifications and assistive technology products to make your home feel safe and secure, and help you maintain a daily routine;
  - Capacity Building – Daily living funding for: Occupational therapy (OT) assessment, speech therapy, physiotherapy, dietary advice and psychology;
  - Capacity Building – Relationships for: Behaviour Support Practitioner funding;
  - Support Coordinator or Specialist Support Coordinator to assist with necessary independent living options (if a change of living circumstance is required). This is in conjunction with Specialist Disability Accommodation;
  - When needs become complex: a complex support needs pathway has been established by the NDIS to provide specialised support for participants with disability who have other challenges impacting their lives and need a higher level of specialised supports in their plan. This approach includes specialised planning teams, NDIA liaison and support coordinators – people who have the networks, skills and knowledge of government and community services to provide the support required for complex needs.
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# DSWA Calendar 2022



## **‘On the Farm’ theme for DSWA’s Playgroup Calendar for 2022.**

With 26 gorgeous models, from our South Metro and Perth Metro playgroups, you are sure to be smiling year-round with one of these calendars on your wall at home or at work.

**The calendars will be ready for distribution at this year’s StepUP! event on the Sunday 24th October.**

You can secure your calendar(s) by ordering in the pre-sale and collecting them at StepUP!

**Pre-sale opens on Monday 4th October.** Go to: [www.dsawa.bigcartel.com](http://www.dsawa.bigcartel.com)

Please note, this is strictly for collection at StepUP! and does not include delivery.

**Sneak peek to some gorgeous photos**

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## *Social Connection*

### **DSWA Playgroups**

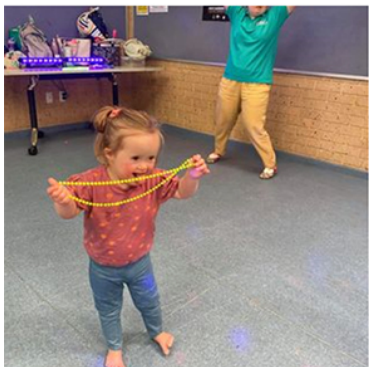
Our playgroups are up and running again so if you have a child with Down syndrome aged 0-5, we would love for you to join us.





### Perth Metro

Loftus Community Centre (corner of Loftus Street and Vincent Street). Fridays during the school term, 9.30am - 11.30am. We hope to see you there! Nikki and Tracy.



### South Metro

Warnbro Community and Family Centre (1 Moreton Crescent, Warnbro). Mondays during the school term, 9.30am - 11.30am. We hope to see you there. Janette and Claudia.

### KiDS Club

In August, our kids absolutely loved the movie and the whole experience, as did the adults. In September, everyone came to Pia's Place for our final catch-up for Term 3. There's nothing better than a sausage in bread at the park with your friends!



Next term, we have Step UP! and a Christmas picnic to look forward to... Can you believe we are heading into the festive season soon?! Keep an eye out for Step UP! registration details and we will create a KiDS Club team that you, your friends and family can register to join.

If you have a child aged 5-11 with Down syndrome and would love to network with other families while giving your children access to fun and exciting activities, please email [office@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:office@downsyndromewa.org.au) for more information.



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## FrienDS for Life

It has been three months since I commenced as Coordinator of FrienDS for Life, and I am loving getting to know all the members and their families. We have a great group of teenagers, volunteers and support workers.

The first event I ran was at *The Dance Collective* in Willetton and we had a massive turnout of members. Our dance teacher showed us lots of moves and it was lovely seeing so many smiles and much enthusiasm. Our August event was at *Zone Bowling* in Cannington. Again, a great turnout and it was lovely watching everyone participate, grow in their independence and continue to develop friendships within the group.

In September, FrienDS for Life will meet in North Perth for an African drumming session. This session will run for an hour and after the session, members can walk into North Perth to grab a drink and catch up with their friends.

I aim to hold events every four weeks and on a Saturday afternoon from 2pm – 4pm.

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to reach out and I will be very happy to answer them. Claire (Coordinator)  
[friendsforlife@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:friendsforlife@downsyndromewa.org.au)

**FrienDS for Life is an NDIS service.**

Please contact [office@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:office@downsyndromewa.org.au) for more information.



[See more photos](#)

## Aim High Club

We are happy that it is Spring! Members can expect more outdoor events before those hot Summer days come around later this year. As it's been a few months since our last e-newsletter edition, enjoy the following selection of photos taken during the months of July, August and September.



**Aim High Club events: Music Rocks, Sal's Pasta Deli, Chisholm Dance Studio, Pancho's Mexican Villa, BOUNCE, WA Museum and Grill'd, Goanna Golf and Lavender Bistro!**

[See more photos](#)

We have some great activities to look forward to in the coming months, including karate, horse riding, a picnic, kayaking, our final getaway of the year to Busselton and Margaret River, and of course... our Christmas Party! If you'd like to find out more, make sure you're on our member mailing list.

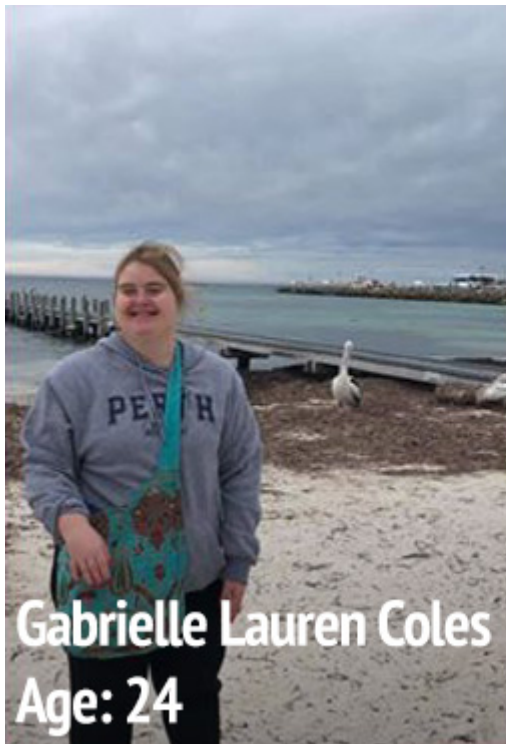
Want to find out more? It's as easy as emailing me at [aimhigh@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:aimhigh@downsyndromewa.org.au) and requesting to join our mailing list, if you're not already connected with us. 😊

Suzanna  
(Coordinator)

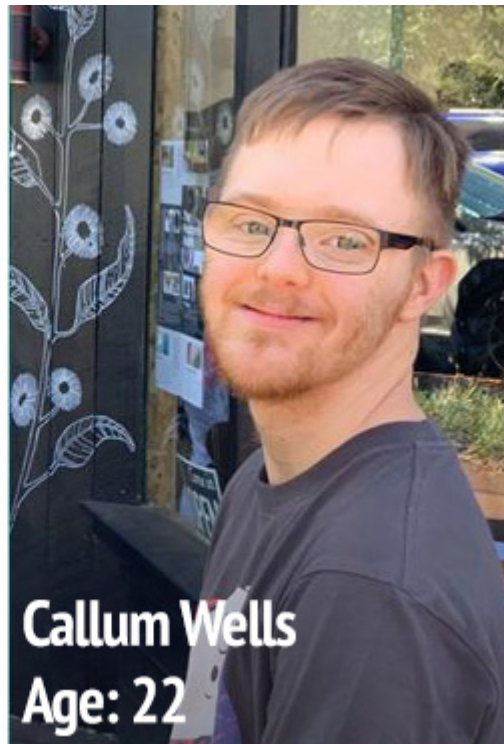
## Member Profiles



This month, I'd like to introduce you to Gabrielle Lauren Coles and Callum Wells!



**Gabrielle Lauren Coles**  
**Age: 24**



**Callum Wells**  
**Age: 22**

[Read more](#)

We welcome new members year-round so please send me an email if you or someone you know might be interested to join. We offer two groups; one for 18- to 30-year olds and another for those above 30.

**Suzanna** (Coordinator)

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## Creative Corner



It's school holidays, and there is nowhere more exciting than Perth to explore and enjoy your time with the family 😊 Are you wanting some inspiration? Below is a list of some fantastic places to visit!

This is a short list, but you can find some more awesome ideas in the link below.

- The [Perth Royal Show](#)
- Go Strawberry picking! [Find a list of strawberry farms open for picking around Perth here.](#)
- Discover one of Perth's latest playground additions, [Kingsford at Bullsbrook.](#)
- Check out Perth City's latest play space, [Wellington Square Playground.](#)
- Have fun at [Pia's Place Playground](#)

**Check out the link for more ideas**

<https://buggybuddys.com.au/100-school-holiday-ideas-perth/>

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## Good News

### Inclusive Children's Show

**BBC children's channel CBeebies House have appointed a guest presenter George Webster.**

The 20-year-old, from Leeds, who has Down syndrome, is an actor, dancer and ambassador for the charity Mencap.

Viewers expressed how important it was to see diversity on television channels which are aimed at the next generation.

Click below and watch George!



*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!

**Subscribe now**

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