

Newsletter 22 December 2021

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A Note from the DSWA Board of Directors

I am pleased to say that our association has successfully navigate its way through another Covid-19 pandemic year. The Board and Staff of Down Syndrome WA are to be congratulated on their resilience and capacity to maintain and build on services to our community during this challenging period.

During 2021 there has been several highlights and achievements that we are exceptionally proud of:

- Grants are in place for 2022 to fully fund our playgroups, kids club and community outreach at both Perth Children's Hospital as well as an to expand services offered to members in regional Western Australia.
- NDIS Service delivery has expanded to provide a variety of social clubs for members as well as weekend getaways for our members who are 18+.
- The Employment Program is thriving with members being supported to gain on-going placement in mainstream employment in both metropolitan and regional W.A.
- The development of two Board sub-committees to provide direction on Finance and Risk and Fundraising and Events. I thank the Chairs of these committees (Sarah Levy Finance and Risk and Jessica Davies Fundraising and Events) who are taking on the additional responsibility along with the members who will sit on each committee.
- An amazing Gala dinner was held in August attended by over 300 people and raising over \$18,000 for the association.
- We were the only State to hold a face-to-face Step Up Event

Early 2022 will see the Board meet to develop a new Strategic Plan that will determine the associations direction for the next 5 years. There are many exciting initiatives being explored.

I sincerely thank our committed staff, volunteers and Board members for their effort and passion that ensures Down Syndrome WA offers services and support across the lifespan and that members feel valued and supported.

On behalf of the Board I wish all our members the joy of the Christmas season. We are truly blessed. May 2022 bring an abundance of love and laughter.

Kathryn Salt

DSWA Board Chair on behalf of the Board of Directors

What is happening at the Association?

CEO's Corner



Well, here we are Christmas already. I don't know about all of you, but for me the last 2 ½ months have flown by. November/December has again been full and vibrant for our team. We are excited to have been able to put together the beginning of the 2022 Calendar for you. Planning will be something we are focussed on for 2022, ensuring we give you, our members as much notice as possible for those big events throughout the year, as well making it easier for you to plan for the regular social activities.

I've now been here for ten weeks, and I want to thank our team and board for their support and a lot of hard work over the last 10 weeks. We have made a lot of changes and our team have been willing to take on everything asked of them. Also, a huge thank you to you our members, who have reached out, given feedback, suggestions and ideas for 2022. I really appreciate your communications... please keep them coming.

Currently we are applying for a range of small grants to supplement our activities and provide seed funding for the fundraising activities for 2022. If anyone has any contact, grant information, connections to donors, I would love to hear from you.

What's new for 2022?

- In early 2022 we will be sending out member surveys across the membership. It would be fantastic to get a great response to the survey so we can benchmark where we are today, and then again in January 2023 to measure our progress.
- For the staff team 2022 will be about planning, budgeting and ensuring we are delivering the best possible service and communication to members. We will focus on fundraising, grants and financial sustainability and growth.
- We will support the board in their strategic planning in February and March with ideas and implementation suggestions

There will be a big focus on building our profile and story telling across a range of media platforms. If you have a great story to tell, please let me know. Our communications strategy will see us increase our communications on all social media platforms, deliver full and rich newsletters and increase our media presence.

Finally, from myself and my family, I wish you all a beautiful, joy filled Christmas and a safe and enjoyable festive season into 2022. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Cassandra

Office Hours During Festive Season

Tis the season to be relaxing...

CHRISTMAS CLOSING HOURS

The office is only closed
from 1pm 24 December 2021 –
Reopening at 08.30am
Tuesday 4th of January.

DSWA My Voice My Health Web App



The DSWA My Voice My Health web app is now available for members! More functionalities will be added in the next couple of months, but we would appreciate our community's feedback before the formal launch. Please use the Feedback button in the web app or email rachel@downsyndromewa.org.au

What is it?

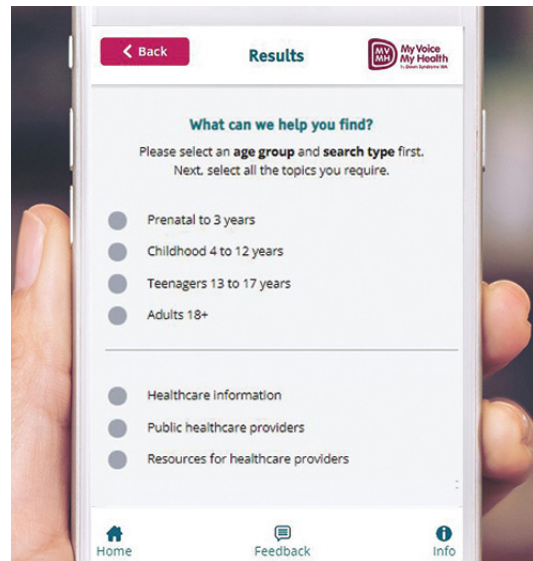
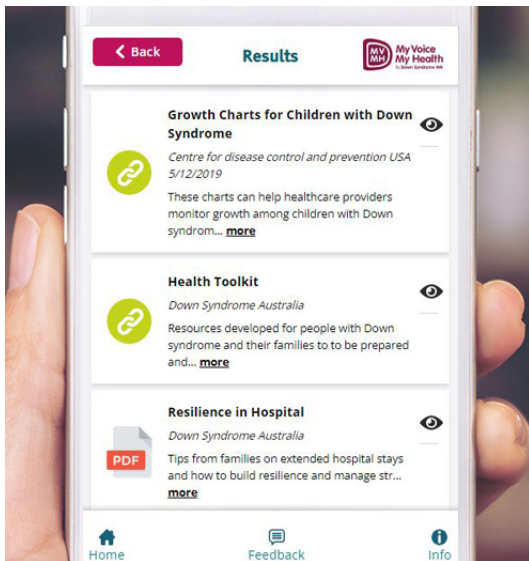
The web app was funded by the Department of Communities, Western Australia. It aims to support better health outcomes for people with Down syndrome by providing a health resource hub.

It provides:

- health information resources, sourced from Australia and around the world on health topics that are more relevant to people with Down syndrome through their life stages.
- a list of public health providers, peak bodies and not for profit organisations in Western Australia which may provide support for a variety of these health conditions, and
- resources and health checklists for health professionals to consider when an individual with Down syndrome enters their specialty.

How to use?

1. Open a browser and go to <https://www.myvoicemyhealth.org.au/>
2. Select an Age Group
3. Select the information type - Healthcare information, Public healthcare providers or Resources for healthcare providers.
4. Select one or more health topics.
5. Click Search



Board Meetings

The board met on Monday 6 December 2021
Dates for 2022

- Monday January 17th
- Monday February 28th
- Monday April 11th
- Monday May 9th
- Monday June 13th
- Monday July 11th
- Monday August 8th
- AGM Wednesday September 21st 6.30pm

Board Meeting minutes are available on request to the CEO 21 days after the meeting.



thank you!

A HUGE shout out to Toy World Midland who were fantastic in our time of need to get out Christmas presents ready for Santa to give out at the 0-12 Christmas party. You showed such amazing generosity and support. Thanks so much to Tina, Eliza and the crew on Saturday morning. Thanks too, to family and friends for wrapping all the presents.

Our deepest gratitude to the businesses, individuals, members of our community and total strangers who made donations to the Christmas fundraising appeal. We are incredibly grateful for the wonderful response we got to our fundraising request. We raised a total of \$2190. Thank you for all the smiles you bought to little faces. Check out the 0-12 Christmas party story.



PCH Family Outreach

Nikki Schwagermann – Family Support Officer

March 2021, saw the introduction of Family outreach at Perth Children's Hospital, with me working at PCH on a Thursday every week.

In this time, I have been able to meet with and support 30 families. The ages of the children have ranged from 1 week old up to 12. I have visited families who's baby is having a heart operation, are in NICU, on the ward with an illness or just visiting for an appointment on the day. It has been so beneficial to be working at the hospital as I have been able to support members who I might not have been able to see otherwise.

I am looking forward to continuing to work from PCH on Thursdays in 2022 so make sure you let me know if you are there.

Nikki nikki@downsyndromewa.org.au 0480311739



2022

What's happening in 2022

An exciting glimpse for things to come - this is just the beginning.

<p>JANUARY</p> <p>Mon 17 Jan Board Meeting</p> <p>Starting 20 January AIM HIGH – A Healthy Day 4 Week Workshop – Book NOW</p> 	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>Fundraiser – Sausage Sizzle – day and location to be confirmed</p> <p>Wed 16 Feb NDIS Audit</p> <p>Fri 25 Feb Teacher Professional Learning Day</p> <p>Mon 28 Feb Board Meeting</p> 	<p>MARCH</p> <p>World Down Syndrome Day Celebrations</p> <p>Sat 19 Mar High Tea Fundraiser</p> <p>Sun 20 Mar WSDS Family Fun Day – South Perth Foreshore</p> <p>WSDS – 21 Mar Formal Launch of Health App.</p> <p>Week long WSDS Workplace Morning Tea Fundraisers</p> <p>Fri 25 Mar AIM High Getaway 1 for 2022</p> 
<p>APRIL</p> <p>Mon Apr 11 Board Meeting</p> <p>Fri Apr 15 Good Friday</p> <p>Mon Apr 25 Anzac Day</p> 	<p>MAY</p> <p>Wed 4 May Aim High Mid Week Getaway</p> <p>Mon 9 May Board Meeting</p> <p>Sat 21 May Fundraiser – Quiz</p> 	<p>JUNE</p> <p>Mon 6 Jun WA Day Public Holiday</p> <p>Fri 10 Jun Aim High Getaway 2</p> <p>Mon 13 Jun Board Meeting</p> <p>Sat 25 Jun Movie Night Fundraiser</p> 
<p>JULY</p> <p>Mon 11 Jul Board Meeting</p> <p>Wed 27 Jul Mid Week Getaway</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>Mon 8 Aug Board Meeting</p> <p>Sat 20 Aug GALA Dinner</p> 	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Fri 2 Sep Getaway 3</p> <p>Wed 21 Sep DSWA AGM</p> 
<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>Step UP 2022 Date to be confirmed</p> <p>Wed 12 Oct Midweek Getaway</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>Sausage Sizzle</p> <p>Fri 25 Nov Final Getaway</p> 	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>Social Group Christmas Parties</p> <p>Sun 11 Dec</p> 

Friends for Life – 2022 Meeting Dates

- Saturday 15 January
- Saturday 19 February
- Saturday 5 March
- Saturday 16 April – Easter to be confirmed
- Saturday 14 May
- Saturday 11 June
- Saturday 9 July
- Saturday 13 August
- Saturday 10 September
- Saturday 8 October – To be confirmed with Step UP
- Saturday 12 November
- Sunday 11 December Christmas Party

KiDS Club – 2022 Meeting Dates

- Saturday 5 February
- Saturday 5 March

- Saturday 2 April
- Saturday 7 May
- Saturday 4 June
- Saturday 2 July
- Saturday 6 August
- Saturday 3 September
- Saturday 1 October
- Saturday 5 November
- Sunday 11 December Christmas Party

Aim High Event Date to follow.

Events to watch out for

Key Word Sign Courses – We intend to run 4 Courses in 2022

Participant and Family Workshops – Topics and dates to be announced in January.

We plan to run one workshop per month from February to November.



Educating the Student with Down syndrome – Professional Learning



EDUCATING THE
STUDENT WITH
DOWN SYNDROME
-Professional Learning-
25th February 2022
8.30am-4.30pm

DSWA staff will be joined by guest presenters who are specialists in the areas of:

- Classroom adaptations
- Pre-reading and pre-numeracy
- Boundary setting and protective behaviours
- Understanding behaviour and classroom and playground management
- IEP's

Face-to-face and Online live streaming
event options available.

<https://www.trybooking.com/BWCMJ>



**World Down Syndrome Day 2022 –
A time to celebrate and raise awareness**

This will be a big celebration for DSWA. Some DATES TO SAVE

On Saturday 12th or 19 March (Date to be confirmed) we are hosting a Formal High Tea. This is a fundraising event which will be marketed widely throughout our networks to raise money and awareness for the association. If you know of a business that could donate suitable raffle and silent auction prizes or other donations such as sparkling wine, for this event please contact fundraising@downsyndromewa.org.au. Be on the lookout for the booking link and more information in the January eNews.

Sunday 20 March will see us host a Family Fun Day on the South Perth Foreshore. This is going to be a fantastic day for our members and the broader community. There will be some fundraising, awareness campaigns as well as a picnic and fun filled afternoon. For members with Micro Businesses there will be an opportunity to display and sell your artworks, products and services.

Business owners, food trucks and coffee vans will be able to attend with a donation to DSWA for their space at the event.

On Monday 21 March, World Down Syndrome Day we will formally launch the My Voice My Health App. Location of the launch to be confirmed.

For this day and throughout the week, we will have Merchandise and Donation boxes for you to take to your workplaces to raise money and awareness. The new Merch boxes will contain a variety of Merchandise which can be sold including Travel mugs, Key Rings, Stress Balls, Pens and more. For those that don't cook, we are working on getting a supplier for cupcakes that can be ordered in advance for you to take to work for the morning tea.

Please contact us for more information on Micro Business displays/stalls, business opportunities or fundraising and donation opportunities. Please email: fundraising@downsyndromewa.org.au

It going to be a very busy few days in March, and a great time to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day and our amazing members.

All the details to follow in the January eNews.

What's happening in our Team



Nikki Schwagermann: Many thanks and Congratulations

After ten years as Playgroup Coordinator and Family Support Officer, Nikki Schwagermann is stepping down from the role as Playgroup Coordinator and moving on to new roles within DSWA. Nikki has provided amazing service, compassion, leadership and commitment to our members and organisation. In her much loved role as Playgroup Coordinator she has reached out and supported so many new families with genuine kindness and support. We know how much Playgroup means to Nikki and how much she means to them, but there are great new

opportunities for Nikki.

New SUPPORT COORDINATOR!

From 1 January, Nikki will continue in her role as Family Support Coordinator and has agreed to start the Support Coordination Service for DSWA. We are so lucky to have Nikki in this role with her extensive knowledge of the organisation and it's many members. Nikki will develop the support coordination role and as it grows, we will look to employ more in the support coordination team.



Tracy Bicker: Congratulations

Tracy has been supporting Nikki and Playgroup North so brilliantly over the last few years and we are delighted that she has agreed to be the play group coordinator for Playgroup North. We know Tracy will do an amazing job in this role with her beautiful and joyful energy she brings.



Jibu Mammen; Our thanks and Best Wishes

Jibu leaves us on 24 December 2021. In the time Jibu has been with DSWA he has made an outstanding contribution to the Employment Connections program and to our participants that are seeking employment. We are very sad to be losing Jibu from our team and we wish him well in all of his endeavours.

Watch out for some staff profiles in 2022 so you can get to know the team.

WE HAVE SOME WICKED JOB OPPORTUNITIES

INTERESTED IN BEING PART OF OUR AWESOME TEAM?
.....EMAIL OUR CEO TODAY
CEO@DOWNSYNDROMEWA.ORG.AU

Job Opportunities

Employment Connections Coordinator – What is that?

.....well you will do amazing, rewarding work and join a wicked team. In this role you will;

- Discover the unique skills of our participants seeking work in open employment.
- Work with the participants to understand their goals and aspirations of the work they would like to do
- Connect with incredible, forward thinking employers to fill roles they need
- And then carve out a role specific to the Employer and Employee.

Then, see the smiles all around...

This is a contract role for 6 months initially, 20 hours per week. The role funding currently ends June 2022, however further funding is being sought.

If you are joyful and optimistic and have experience in an area such as recruitment, public relations, relationship management, training development or other related experience, and have an interest in supporting the futures of people with a diagnosis of Down Syndrome then we want to hear from you.

Applications for this role close 29 December 2021.

Kids Club Coordinator

Would you like to be the next KiDS Club Coordinator? This is a funded program which is funded for the next three years. KiDS Club runs once a month, providing important social networks for children and families. You can create the program, have loads of fun, and provide an amazing network for the members in the 6-11yr old age group.

This is a rewarding role, and we have had some great coordinators so far, so will you be next.....

Casual Position – 8 Hours Per Month. 3 years funding guaranteed.

Applications for this role close 5 January 2022

Project Coordinator – The Capacity Building Project

Would you like to join our awesome team of project and program coordinators? And get to

work on one of our most important projects. The Capacity Building Project – Pathways to Independence.

The program coordinator will be responsible for delivering workshops to our members. There will be at least 10 workshops in 2022. The workshops are co-facilitated with the program coordinator a participant or family member to provide relevant information to our members.

This project is funded for 12 months and will deliver outstanding service to our membership. You will need to liaise with Participants and Family Members, your co-facilitators, to design and develop each topic specific for DSWA members. This is an opportunity to display your creativity, empathy, training, and coordination skills. This is a very important project to DSWA and we are looking for someone special to co-ordinate year two of this project for the next 12 months. 15 hours per week, with additional hours where required to meet program needs. It is expected that two days per week will be spent in the DSWA office with additional hours to meet with Co-facilitators.

Applications of this role close 7 January 2022.

Support Worker – Employment Mentor

The employment mentor support workers, work directly with our members who are new to an employment role. You provide on the job support and training, work with the employer to understand needs, concerns and skill development required, and work one on one with the employee to provide them support to succeed in and enjoy their role. This is such rewarding work. It is a key role in the successful placement of our members in meaningful, rich and fulfilling open employment roles. Expressions of interest for this role close on 5 January 2022.

Please NOTE:

- All employees and volunteers of Down Syndrome WA are required to have the mandatory COVID vaccination. From 1 January 2022 double vaccination status is required.
- All successful candidates require an NDIS Working Screening check be completed and
- Must hold a full Western Australian Drivers licence.

Please email our CEO, Cassandra Hughes for a copy of the position descriptions, ceo@downsyndromewa.org.au or phone 62534730 for more information.

Employment Connections

December 2021

- **Traineeship Programme: Brooke Canham and Laura Williams**
 - December was quite eventful with two of our participants, Brooke Canham and Laura Williams, signing up for the Traineeship programme which gives them the opportunity to complete a Certificate II – Workplace Skills in 18 months while working 15hrs per week.



- **Employment Ambassadors**

- Our Employment Ambassadors - Jessica Toster, Kenichi (Ken) Gray, Naomi Lake and Claire Robinson, have started their training sessions this month, along with their counterparts in other states, run nationally by Down Syndrome Australia (DSA) via zoom meetings.

- **ABC News – Open Employment @ Abbey Beach Resort**

- The ABC were really inspired when they came to know of the open employment opportunity at Abbey Beach Resort where three participants were recently placed into part-time paid employment. They spoke to two of the participants; Claire and Emma, and also to the Assistant General Manager at Abbey Beach Resort, Mark Barham; and have run it on radio and published it online. It's due to come on TV soon.
- Radio (47 sec onwards) <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/southwestwa/programs/breakfast/south-west-breakfast/13649550>

Online Article:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-12-02/wa-open-employment-program-for-down-syndrome-workers/100666638>

We want to acknowledge the Department of Social Services and Down Syndrome Australia for the funding of the Employment Connections Program.

DSWA is looking for the right candidate for the Employment Connections role:

If you know of someone within your network who you think would be equally or more passionate about creating employment opportunities for adults with Down syndrome, please encourage the person to write to Cassandra, our CEO, (ceo@downsyndromewa.org.au) at the earliest possible.

- Australian Government releases new Disability Employment Strategy – Employ My Ability
 - For details go to: https://www.nds.org.au/news/australian-government-releases-its-new-disability-employment-strategy-employ-my-ability?_cldee=amlidUBkb3duc3luZHJvbWV3YS5vcmcuYXU%3d&recipientid=contact-c9af1e640cbdeb1180f4005056ac7853-4ecc7449becb4859ac3cb0afd88e1ed6&esid=fc79ef57-7156-ec11-8100-005056ac7853
 - Employ My Ability: <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/disability-employment-strategy>

Social Connection

DSWA Playgroups

Our 0-12 Christmas party, including both Playgroups and KiDS Club members, was held on Sunday the 12th of December. It was great to see so many families attend the Jo Wheatley all abilities play space for a sausage sizzle, face painting, a visit from Santa and the opportunity to catch up with other families.

With the floods effecting the delivery of our presents, DSWA did a last minute campaign to raise funds so Santa would be able to give each member and their siblings a present. We are so happy to say that the campaign raised \$2190 and we were able to deliver gifts to all.

We would like to say a big Thank You to all of the individuals and businesses that contributed to the campaign.



See more Christmas party photos

Aim High Club

As the year wraps up, I'd like to warmly thank all of our members, their families and our team of supports for contributing to what has been a memorable year, like no other!

The last 12 months has seen Aim High Club divide into its two groups (i.e., 18-30 years and 30+ years), launch our first series of weekend getaways to destinations outside of Perth, grow in its number of memberships and continue to expand in the range of activities we've explored! I feel incredibly lucky to coordinate this amazing group at Down Syndrome WA and look forward to an even better year ahead of us.



[See more photos](#)



What can you expect in 2022?

- Starting from January 20th, we will be trialling a new four-week program on Thursdays from 10am to 4pm in Floreat, focusing on living healthy. The program will incorporate food purchase and preparation, fun forms of physical activity, building independence, social skills and more! Make sure you're on our mailing list by early January to find out more.

- We are hoping to develop our getaways, such that we can accommodate for more members per getaway and also offer one-night getaways during the week. There will be more information released to members about this following the Christmas break.

- Aim High Club will continue to engage in and enjoy activities that members themselves have suggested throughout the year. If you'd like to put forward some of your ideas, stay tuned for a *Member Survey*, coming to you soon via email!

Please enjoy the selection of photos taken at events within the last two months below. To you and your loved ones, stay safe this festive season, make time for yourself to recharge and do the things you like doing and see you in 2022, everyone.

Suzanna
(Coordinator)

Creative Corner

Super moist Gluten free cake

Christmas means parties! If you need to bring something to share and want to impress the Christmas socks off everyone, try this recipe. Cassandra, DSWA CEO, baked this beautiful taste-bud dancing cake for Nikki's farewell party. This gluten free cake recipe will sure to please everyone at your next party.



This recipe is from thebigmansworld.com website.

The base cake is a little light on taste I add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup frozen raspberries and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of white chocolate bits. Its super easy, and as you know, delicious!! Enjoy. 🍷🌲

Cassandra Hughes
Chief Executive Officer

[Download cake recipe](#)

*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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