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## Latest News from Down Syndrome WA



### CEO's Corner

There is a lot going on in the disability space at the moment, notably the Hon Bill Shortens recent announcements regarding changes to the NDIS. The Minister clearly articulated the need for change to get the NDIS "back on

track." He spoke of the difference between surviving and thriving and after ten years the system needs a reboot so it can thrive. The Minister, spoke of six key reform areas, The NDIA workforce, Long Term Planning, Addressing Spiralling Expenses, Better Outcomes from Supported independent living, Eliminating Unethical Practices and Increasing Community and Mainstream Supports. It was also heartening to hear the Ministers passion and also his direct reference to Down Syndrome. You can read the Ministers address to the National Press Club here - <https://ministers.dss.gov.au/speeches/10911>

Migration continues to be a major topic of discussion and one that we receive a number of calls about each month. This week's announcement that changes to migration laws mean that those from New Zealand may automatically be entitled to citizenship, and hence have access to services and benefits, that are currently unavailable such as the NDIS. The current government is allowing all New Zealanders on Special Category visa to apply for citizenship without becoming permanent residents first if they've lived in Australia for at least four years. Read more on ABC News - <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-04-21/australian-government-new-path-citizenship-for-kiwis-new-zealand/102253684>

As you are mostly likely aware from recent newsletters, we have a number of members experiencing some form of regression. The formation of a group of parents who are noticing regression in their teen or adult children was formed to share their experience, provide support to one another, and share what they have tried including what has worked and what has not. Through this group, we have now created a resource page on the DSWA Website, with a large number of resources including seminars and workshops we have recently attended. Regression does not only relate to Down Syndrome Regression Disorder, but also in the form of dementia and other health concerns. Whatever the basis for the changes the impact on our members and their families is significant, it is debilitating and deeply concerning. The resources are for all to share, and we hope that they may help and support your family. If your family is affected by regression, and you would like to join this group, please reach out to me directly. Regression resource page link: <https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wa/services-and-supports/resource-downloads/down-syndrome-regression-disorder/>

This week also saw the launch of the first ever Barbie Doll with Down syndrome. A welcome inclusion into the suite of Barbie dolls, with Mattel working to foster greater inclusion. Steps like this support greater inclusion, understanding and belonging in our community. We believe a number of our members have already got their Barbie from Kmart, Woolworth and Target.

Last week we held a housing workshop provided by Nesti. The workshop was informative and we appreciate the support and partnership of the Nesti team.

It did leave us with a lot more questions on housing and we will be running a follow up workshop, to discuss more about the range of options for our adult members to find the most suitable home arrangements for them. My thanks to Dannie for arranging the workshop and to the parents that attended.

The team is very excited about the upcoming Gala dinner. Colour and Connection is this years theme. We have seen a wonderful early uptake of tickets with more than 200 tickets already sold. Early bird tickets close on Friday 28th, and then ticket prices will revert to their original price of \$90. I personally hope you will consider joining us. Over the last six months we have seen the reengagement of a number of members who have been with the association for some time, and I hope to see more of you at the Gala. This is an event for all, and you are welcome. It is also a 16+ event to allow those older teens, getting ready to transition into the adult social groups to attend with their family. Anyone who is under 18 must be identified and will be issued with a wrist band, and must be accompanied at all times by their parent/carer. I hope to see you there. You can book at [Trybooking](#), and this year it is so easy, choose a table, book your seats. You can choose where to sit and who to sit with.

Shortly you can expect to receive a consumer survey from Down Syndrome Australia, I would encourage members to complete the survey. Your responses do genuinely matter, and do impact and influence decision making and service delivery.

Wishing you a wonderful May, and to all our mums and carers, I wish you a very happy Mothers Day. I look forward to seeing all your mum pictures on our Mothers Day facebook post. Thank you for all you do.

Cassandra

Cassandra Hughes  
CEO Down Syndrome WA  
0432 407 527  
ceo@downsyndromewa.org.au

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## Upcoming Meetings and Association Events

22nd May Board Meeting  
27 May DSWA Gala Dinner  
19th June Board Meeting

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# DSWA GALA DINNER

The Gala Early Bird count down is now on. With just 5 days until early bird closes on Friday 28th.

Get your tickets now - <https://www.trybooking.com/CGXUF>

Gala News  
Early Bird count down is on...  
It's just 5 days until  
Early Bird tickets close on 28 April.  
All reserved tables are due for payment by  
Friday 28th  
Get your tickets now - just \$80 each



## HOW TO BOOK

This year Trybooking has made it even easier. You can book to sit on the table you want.

If you want to reserve a table so different guests can book to sit on your table, please call us to reserve your preferred table number. All reserved tables must be fully paid by 28 April.

Then... your guests can go on and book the table you have chosen.

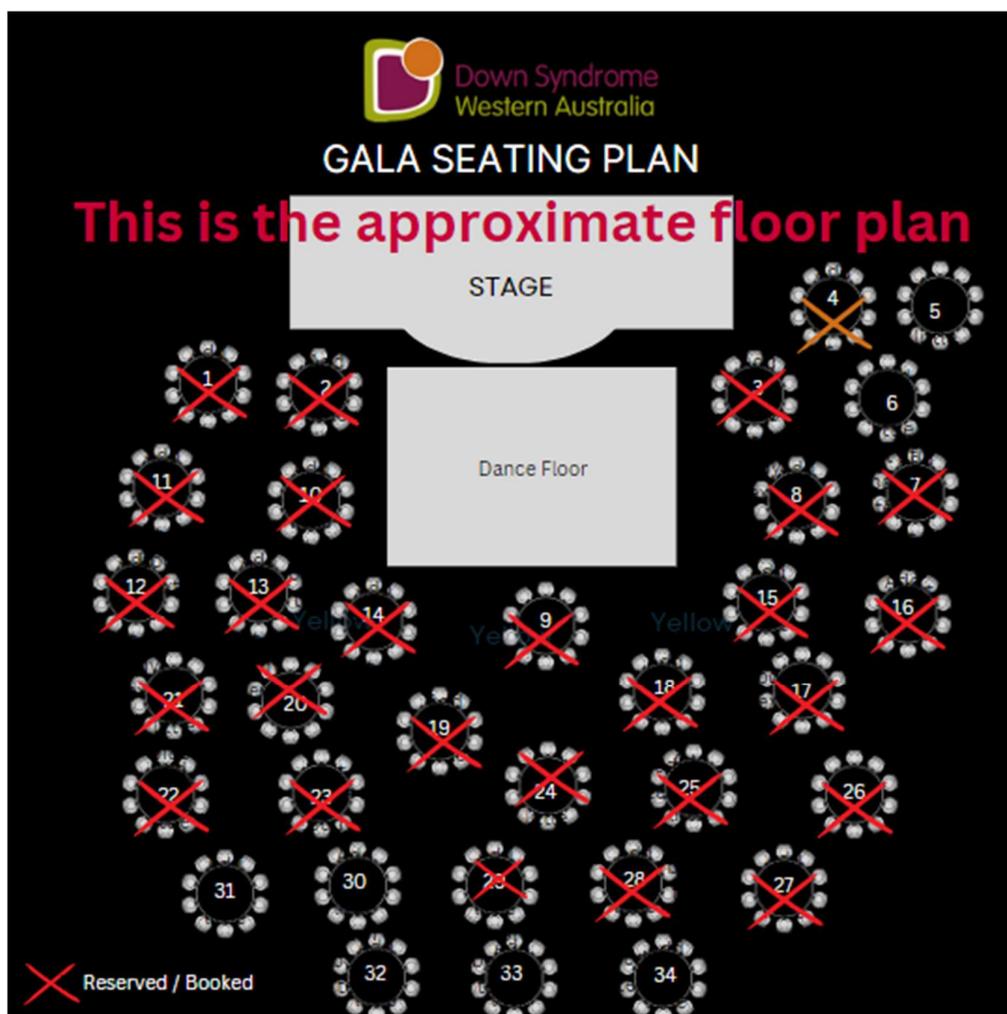
If you are booking for a whole table or others you are sitting with, you will need Names and Dietary Requirements for all guests.

If you dont have a group to sit with, choose your preferred table and it will be filled with others in the same situation.

We can't wait to share this fabulous night with you all.

Book here: <https://www.trybooking.com/CGXUF>

The seating plan is below and indicates those tables that are already reserved or sold.



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## Members Story - Pink Hair Award

Our members Jocelyn and Eve recently submitted this lovely story about Eve's inspiration to the teachers at her school at Leeming Ed Support unit. (Thanks for Leeming Education Support School for sharing this story from their newsletter.)

It's a domino effect that starts with a school. A school that offers families a place to learn for their kids that sees them for who they are. It does this by having staff who care. It has these caring staff because they are chosen with care. These staff care because they are cared about and seen for who they are. They may 'roll' differently, but that is wonderful because that is part of how our kids are 'seen' and see themselves in others, and feel safe and connected, and from there other connections and friendships are made and on and on it goes. That is humanity, community, love, care. It needs to be honoured and honoured far more than society honours academic achievement or sporting ability. So...therefore, the Pink Hair Award. Thank you to Beth Harcourt the artist/creator of 'Mooshi' who is the award 'trophy'. Beth was so touched about the award she made time to travel from the other side of Perth at short notice to attend the assembly.

The inspiration and first winner is Leanne Carter. It is from the fun, warm relationship that developed between my daughter Eve and Leanne. Hearing Eve laugh so loud and hard, the joy on her face and her talking whenever she saw Leanne was magic. Leanne has bright pink hair. I asked Eve one day; would you like pink hair? She immediately said 'YEH!'. Not the usual.

So, I reached out to a new hairdresser just around the corner (logistics are important for us) to see if they could help me give Eve pink hair. Bindi did not hesitate and worked with us to help Eve feel safe and comfortable in the process. It was so wonderful – the joy! Eve, Bindi, me, other staff, and customers.. everyone was grinning. The conversations between Eve and all sorts of people since the pink hair have been many and profound. They mostly wouldn't have happened without the pink hair. It offers a clue to who Eve is, that is not easily known. It's a conversation starter when starting a conversation may be feared. Pink hair has made Eve visible in ways she wasn't before. It's going to keep her safe and included. It's going to encourage inclusion by others. It doesn't need expensive programmes and supports, it needs love, care, and connection. And it started with someone seen for who they are, seeing someone else who can be hidden. Thank you Leanne.



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## Donation from Grill'd

DSWA was nominated, at Grill'd Cannington, for their Local Matters program and received the most votes.

Sian and Sue visited the Cannington store and were presented with our cheque.

A big thank you to Grill'd and everyone who voted for us!



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## NDIS Updates

### **Good news regarding New Zealand Citizens access to NDIS**

The Australian Government has announced that New Zealand citizens resident in Australia for a certain period can, from 1 July 2023, become Australian citizens without having to go through process of applying for permanent residence.

For further information see the following links to the [DSA CEO's announcement](#) and the [Prime Minister's announcement](#).

### **Bill Shorten's plan for the NDIS**

On Tuesday, NDIS Minister Bill Shorten spoke at the National Press Club on the 'future of the NDIS,' where he outlined his 6 policy priorities for the Scheme.

See the [dsc website for a summary](#).

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# Regional Outreach



## Midwest Regional Catchup

The DSWA Midwest Regional Support Group met for a picnic at the Geraldton foreshore and enjoyed the sounds of Sundays by the Sea.



**PLAYGROUPS**



**NORTH METRO PLAYGROUP**

Term has come to an end at Playgroup North, Danica and I would like to thank all our parents, carers and kids for coming along and having so much fun with us. We spent the last couple of weeks crafting some beautiful Easter creations and going on fun egg hunts. The joy of watching our kids develop strong friendships with each other has been so wonderful.

Our term two activities have already been planned and we can reveal that it will be fun, messy, informative and inspiring. Our guest line up includes the team from Messy Mat Perth, Girl Guide leader Kim from Girl Guides WA and our guest Speech pathologist who will host a morning to answer questions you may have on your child's speech development.

Danica and I are so excited to watch your little ones enjoy the range of activities we have planned them this term, we hope to see you all then.

Tracy and Danica

[playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au)



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**SOUTH METRO PLAYGROUP**

What a beautiful April at Playgroup South. We've had fun getting creative with Easter crafts and we have started our Mothers day crafts with a little surprise in store for our mums 😊 😊 xx

Renee

[playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au)



## Kids Club

KiDS club enjoyed an amazing morning at the zoo for our April event! Families enjoyed a morning tea and catch-up, then everyone had a fabulous time exploring the zoo for the afternoon.



In the coming months we have a dance class, a drumming session, and a circus. For more information and to sign up to the events head to the KiDS Club calendar [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SEfA4cro7BU3kN5dVOpDM\\_NpLssK5iUuwsEyEtBaX8/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SEfA4cro7BU3kN5dVOpDM_NpLssK5iUuwsEyEtBaX8/edit?usp=sharing)

If you have a child aged 5 to 11 with Down syndrome and would love to connect with other families to encourage peer relationships, social skills and networking for parents, please contact Siobhan at [kidsclub@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:kidsclub@downsyndromewa.org.au) for registration details.

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# DANCE SESSION



Join the KiDS Club for a group class with Dance Inclusion! After the class enjoy a play and parent catch-up in the playground attached to the venue. BYO lunch.

Arrive: 9:30am

Dance class : 10:00am-11:00am

Parent catchup: 11:00am-12:00pm



**Saturday 6th of May**



**9:30am-12:00pm**



**Victoria Park Community Centre**

(248 Gloucester St, East Victoria Park WA 6101)

**\$15 per  
child**

**Tickets:** <https://www.trybooking.com/CGWIV>

*For more information contact Siobhan at  
[kidsclub@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:kidsclub@downsyndromewa.org.au)*



Down Syndrome  
Western Australia

Book at <https://www.trybooking.com/CGWIV>

## Friends For Life

DSWA's Friends for Life group had a great morning out on the Swan River with the team from Sailability WA at RPYC on Sunday.

This was a great opportunity for the teenage group to experience sailing and they even had a turn at steering the Yachts.

We think the smiles in these photos says it all!!



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Put your dancing shoes on and warm up those vocal cords.  
Friends for Life is having a Disco and karaoke night.  
Come along for a fun evening of dancing, games, food, singing and friends.

Do you have a friend or family member with Down syndrome aged 12-17 who isn't part of the Friends for Life group yet?

Please contact [friendsforlife@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:friendsforlife@downsyndromewa.org.au) for more information about this group and to get the forms to register them now.

(All participants must be registered and have signed a service agreement to attend events)

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Book at <https://trybooking.com/CHQUJ>

A vibrant poster for a 'Disco and Karaoke' event. The background is dark purple with colorful light beams and a central disco ball. The text is white and bold, providing event details. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner of the poster.

**DISCO AND KARAOKE**

**FRIENDS FOR LIFE**

**MAY 6TH**

**5.30-8.30 P M**

**Venue: Loftus Community Centre**

99 Loftus Street Leederville

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

If your child is not a Friends for Life member yet, please email [friendsforlife@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:friendsforlife@downsyndromewa.org.au) to register them so they don't miss out.

Book at <https://trybooking.com/CHQUJ>

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## *AIM HIGH*

It was great to see so many people that got dressed up as their favourite superhero. We danced and sang the night away to all our favourite tunes. We enjoy learning new dances from friends .



In May, Aim High will be going to Archie Brothers and York - see the details

below.

As always please get in touch if you have any questions or ideas for our Aim High Program.

Dannie  
0422 795 160  
[aimhigh@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:aimhigh@downsyndromewa.org.au)

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Book for Archie Brothers at <https://trybooking.com/CFWRG>

**Aim High**  
**Archie Brothers, Kaminyup**

There is so much to do including  
mini golf, bowling and karaoke

Date: Sunday 21st May

Time: 3-6pm

Meeting location East Perth Train Station

Book at <https://trybooking.com/CFWRG>



Book for Archie Brothers at <https://trybooking.com/CFWRG>

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Book for York at <https://www.trybooking.com/CFWRY>



Aim High

York day trip

**Aim High is going on an adventure to York!**

Date: 9th May Tuesday

Time: 10 - 4pm

Meeting Location: East Perth train station

Book at <https://www.trybooking.com/CFWRY>



Book for York at <https://www.trybooking.com/CFWRY>

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## **Compliments and Complaints**

We always welcome your feedback and suggestions. Send your feedback to [admin@downsyndromewa.org.au](mailto:admin@downsyndromewa.org.au) or use our [online form](#).

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