



Down Syndrome
Western Australia

Supporting a Life of Possibilities



NOVEMBER



CEOs Corner

Dear Members,

This month has been full of fantastic engagement with and for the DSWA community. We began November at the Darlington Arts Festival with eight DSWA Artists putting their work on display for sale. All Artists sold pieces, with some completely selling out. A huge congratulations to Martin Cahill, Angelina Kell, Rachel Parker, Shanti Fielding, Callum Spickett, Naomi Lake, James Hooper and Anna

Collis. Your art was very popular and bought a fantastic addition to the Festival. We have been invited back for 2025 and we look forward to displaying works by more of our talented artists next year.

The following weekend we held the brilliant inaugural Teens Camp sponsored by Telethon7. Twenty Teens had the most amazing time, challenging themselves and showing great courage, stepping outside of their comfort zone. The staff all left feeling inspired by the members. See our article on camp later in the e-News.

We have participated in a number of discussions around the new proposed Foundational Supports. The change to funding, with a focus on both General Foundational support and Targeted supports is still in consultation around Australia, and we are making comment where possible. We encourage members to attend workshops and events on Foundational Supports to provide your input on what, where and how, general foundational requirements such as support, information, capacity building, peer support would best be achieved. We will keep you updated. You can read more on foundational supports here: <https://engage.dss.gov.au/foundational-supports/>
The closing date for submissions is 5 December.

On Saturday 23rd, I attended two meetings, the first meeting was with the inaugural Down Syndrome WA Advisory Network, we talked about the role of the Advisory Network, got to know each other a little better, and everyone shared what they thought a Leader was. Over the next 6 months the team will undertake leadership training, will attend DSWAAN meetings, discuss key topics of interest from the board, and will in the new year be working alongside me at several meetings. The DSWAAN members are Andrew Denton, Anna Collis, Adam Chrisp, Matilda Geoghegan, Rachel Parker, Patrick Ricciardo, Naomi Lake, Jessica Toster and Brooke Canham. Following their meeting, the DSWAAN met with the DSWA Board, telling the board more about their lived experience and why they are on the DSWAAN. Once our DSWAAN members left, the DSWA board met to discuss the strategic objectives for the next 18 months.

A couple of times a year I make time to join the Parent and Bubs morning tea. This month, I had a lovely time meeting 5 families. This event was held in the Eastern suburbs, and was warmly regarded by those families who live along the scarp, making travel easier for them. It was a beautiful morning and always gives me an opportunity to learn more and find out how we can best support our new families.

It is with great excitement that we can announce we have been successful with two grants, one that will fund the Kids Club and other activities for the 6-17years groups for a period of five years. This is an outstanding outcome, and we are grateful to the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation for their ongoing support of the work of DSWA and our young members. We also received notification on Friday last week that we have been successful with a Peer and Capacity Building grant provided by the NDIS for a period of two years to deliver a project we called The Life Skills Lab - Empowering Pathways to Independent Lives. This is a two-year project, for Adults and Older Adults with Down syndrome and their families. We will be recruiting for a Senior Coordinator – Adult Programs to design, coordinate and deliver this project. It is an exciting project, and the members of the DSWAAN will have a strong engagement in designing the 2-year program.

This month we received a wonderful donation from Paper Crafters W.A. and we are very grateful for their support.

Finally, I look forward to seeing you all at the All of Association Christmas Party. Please join us to celebrate the year, meet up with old friends and enjoy a picnic, games and fun with our wonderful community. See the article from the team later in the e-News. I would love to see you all there.

Cassandra

Cassandra Hughes
CEO Down Syndrome WA
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New Office Information

DSWA is proud to announce our new office space!

We are so excited to be moving to The Belmont Hub (213 Wright St, Cloverdale) and we will be open fully operational in the New Year.

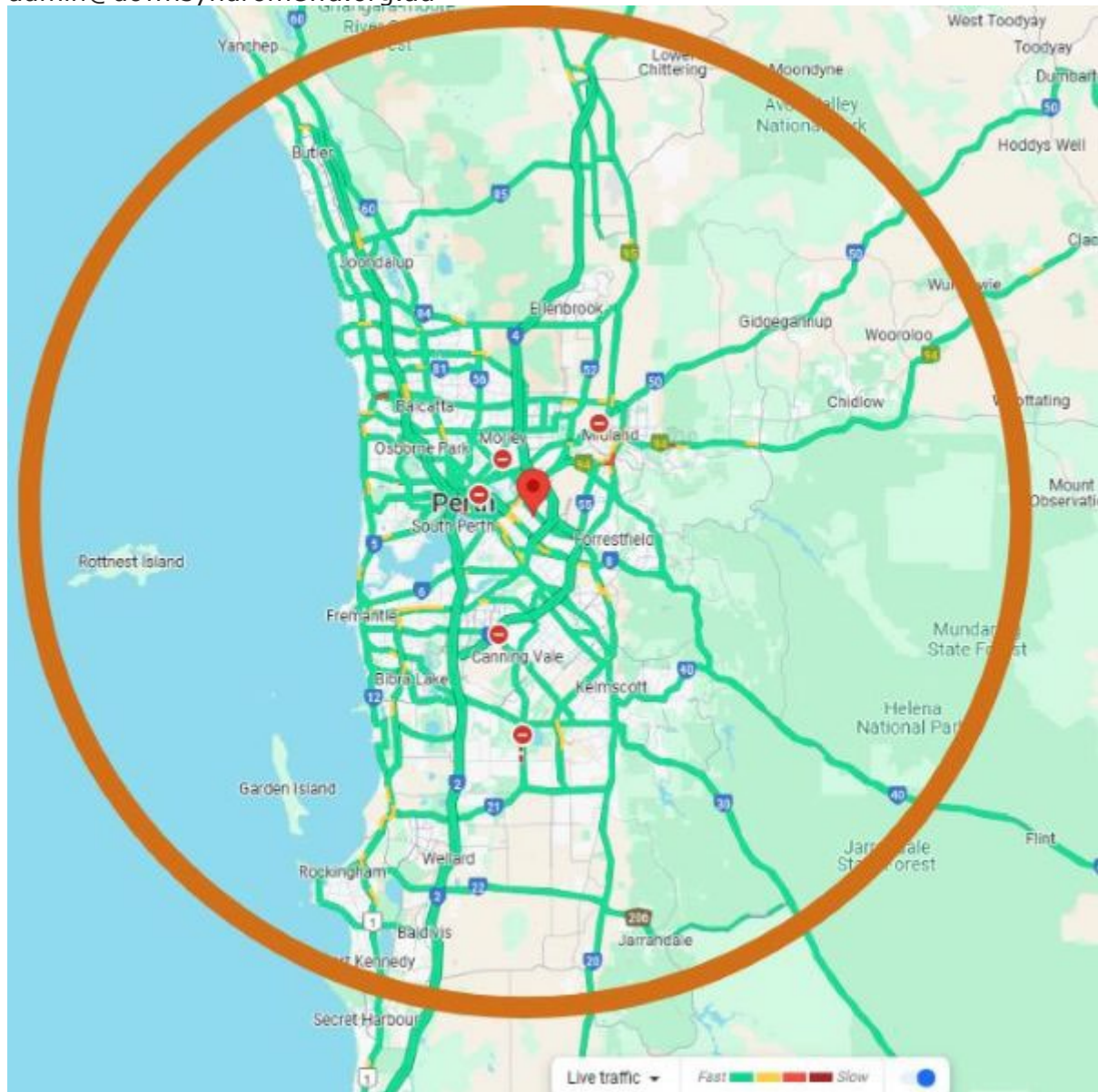
This shift comes with many new and exciting things

- Accessible building

- Bigger office space
- A Long term lease
- Central location
- Good parking and access
- And much much more

The map below depicts the central location of our new office.

If you have any questions about the move let us know by reaching out via email at admin@downsyndromewa.org.au



Christmas Events and Closures

Office Closure

Our staff will be taking a well deserved break over Christmas and New Years.

The office will be closed from Friday **20th** and reopening on Monday **January 6th**

Association Christmas Party

When: Saturday December 7th from 2pm to 4:30pm

Where: Forster Park Community Centre (130 Keane Street, Cloverdale)

What: This is a whole of association event and we welcome all families and ages to attend. Let's come together to enjoy an afternoon together for a festive celebration of the past year and welcome the new. Play games, bring a picnic, catch up with friends, have a dance, listen to some music and say hi to Santa

Registration: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1302827>

Remember - If you register before November 30th you get a free snack box on arrival! (registrations after Nov 30 can't be catered for but you are still invited to attend)



JOIN DSWA
FOR AN END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

ALL AGES

Christmas

PARTY

SATURDAY, 7 DECEMBER

2:00 PM - 4:30 PM

REGISTER NOW

FORSTER PARK COMMUNITY
CENTRE
130 KEANE STREET
CLOVERDALE

What's On

Educator Paid Learning

Our annual **Educating Children with Down syndrome Professional Learning Day** is back in 2025, and it's the perfect professional learning opportunity for teachers, education assistants, and school administrators. This full-day professional development will focus on practical strategies for supporting students, including:

- Classroom adaptations
- Pre-reading and numeracy
- Boundary setting and understanding behaviour
- Classroom management

When: 21st February 2025

Where: **In Person** at the Belmont Hub, 213 Wright St, Cloverdale (includes morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea) or **Online** via Zoom.

How to Register: <https://www.trybooking.com/CWYOB>

Help us spread the word! Share this with your school and encourage your teachers to join us for this incredible day of learning.

For more info, contact the DSWA Team at admin@downsyndromewa.org.au or 0861823690.

Educator Professional Learning

A full day workshop, with multiple presentations to support Educators, Education Assistants and Administrators to teach and support a child with Down syndrome in their classroom. (May have relevance to children with other similar Intellectual Disability)



DATE Friday February 21st, 2025
TIME 9:00am to 4:30pm
VENUE The Belmont Hub
213 Wright St, Cloverdale, 6105
TICKETS <https://www.trybooking.com/CWYOB>



Down Syndrome
Western Australia

School Holiday Program

Our teens holiday program is making a return this January!

Each day will be a different activity and will be filled with laughter, fun and friends (don't forget capacity and independence building as well!)

We are finalising all of the activities, and they will be available soon, but for those that want to book in Now, please jump in, as numbers are limited to 8 per day due to staffing.

Week 1:

Monday 13th - In house activity
Wednesday 15th - Excursion day
Friday 17th - Incursion

Week 2:

Monday 20th - Incursion
Wednesday 22nd - Excursion
Friday 24th - In house activity

When: 8:30am to 3:30pm, each day

Where: Meeting at Lesser Hall, Mount Hawthorn, even on excursion days.

If you want to book for just one day or multiple you can head to the link below
<https://www.trybooking.com/CXCRL>

Down Syndrome Western Australia

JANUARY TEENS SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Bookings Open Now!

- Monday 13 Jan
- Wednesday 15 Jan
- Friday 17 Jan
- Monday 20 Jan
- Wednesday 22 Jan
- Friday 24 Jan

Vacant Position

Vacancy at DSWA

With the success of the new grant, we are seeking a Senior Coordinator – Adult Programs for a 2 year period commencing 6 January 2025.

This is a senior role at DSWA working alongside the CEO and Senior Coordinator for the 0-17 programs.

To express your interest in this role you will seek the Position Description by emailing admin@downsyndromewa.org.au. Once reviewing the position description, your application will include, Cover Letter, Resume and Statement to address the

Selection Criteria. Applications that do not provide all three will not be considered.

The full position description will be available from Wednesday 4 December.

The overarching requirements of the role will be;

- Design, Create and Deliver The Life Skills Lab -Empowering Pathways to Independent Lives project, including reporting and budget management of the project.
- This project will involve working closely with the members of the Down Syndrome Advisory Network
- Delivering two 1 day forums for people with Down Syndrome and their family members
- Work closely with families and stakeholders to bring expertise to all workshops and events
- Researching, Creating and Delivering a range of workshops over the two years
- You will be required to create graphics for advertising the courses, use Facebook, Instagram and Linked In
- You will contribute each month to the DSWA ENews
- Supervise the Adult Social Group program leader
- Work closely with the CEO

More information and the position description can be found (from 4 December) at <https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wa/get-involved/career-opportunities/>
Applications close 4pm Wednesday 18 December 2024.



We Are Hiring!

Senior Coordinator - Adult Programs

Applications close 18 December 2024 at 4pm. Late applications will not be accepted.

Morning Tea for Early Members

The DSWA board would like to meet and celebrate the founders and early members of Down Syndrome WA with a morning tea in February 2025. We invite all founding members and early member families of the association to join us for morning tea at our new premises at The Belmont Hub, 213 Wright St Belmont. The event can be found on Trybooking where you can book a place so we can determine numbers and manage the RSVP's please click this link - <https://www.trybooking.com/CXNRC> For enquiries please contact admin@downsyndromewa.org.au. Many early members of the association are no longer connected with DSWA and we are keen to locate and invite as many of the early families as possible. If you are reading this, and think of an early family that may not receive the E-News, please forward the information to them.

We hope to bring you together, to share your history of the association and to share with you the new Adult project which we hope will offer beneficial resources and activities for older members living with Down syndrome. We would also like to discuss the 40th Anniversary which occurs in 2026. <https://www.trybooking.com/CXNRC>

INVITATION TO

Founding and Early members Morning Tea



The DSWA Board invite founding
members and early member families
to join them for morning tea

Thursday 20 February 2025



Get Involved

Family Support



This month, we held another wonderful Parent and Bub Morning Tea, which brought together new and long-standing families. The atmosphere was filled with warmth and connection as parents shared their experiences, stories, and tips while their little ones played and bonded. These events are such a special opportunity for families to connect with others who truly understand the unique journey of raising a child with Down syndrome.

With five successful New Parent Morning Teas held across Perth this year, it's been amazing to see our community grow stronger with each gathering. We are excited

to continue these events throughout 2025, extending our reach and fostering even more meaningful connections.



PCH Outreach

While Nikki is enjoying her well-earned long service leave, our Family Support Officer, Danica, has been stepping in to ensure our important PCH outreach continues. This includes providing support to families in the NICU and those attending outpatient appointments.

Our PCH outreach will remain available throughout December on Thursdays. However If you have an upcoming appointment, find yourself admitted on the ward, or simply want a phone call check-in while at PCH , please don't hesitate to contact us at familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au.

This month, we've welcomed several new families into our community. It's been a joy to meet these families, share resources, and see them join our vibrant network. We are here to support you at every stage of your journey and look forward to seeing you at future events.

We've seen a steady stream of inquiries and referrals this month, showing how our community and external providers are utilizing our Telethon-sponsored 0-17 Family Support Services. We're proud to offer guidance and connection to families across WA.

Regional Outreach

This month has been filled with connection, sharing, and meaningful discussions across our regional groups.

Great Southern Catch-Up – November 16th

Twelve members gathered for a fantastic catch-up where stories and ideas were exchanged. Highlights included hearing about Naomi's latest travels and engaging in important discussions around guardianships and wills. These catch-ups continue to be a wonderful opportunity for brainstorming, sharing resources, and building strong connections within our community.

South West Catch-Up – November 16th

Families in the South West came together at Eaton Tavern for a heartwarming event. Thanks to the Sheppard family, Down Syndrome WA was put forward for Eaton Tavern's Beer with Benefits initiative, resulting in a generous \$1000 donation. Family Support Officer Danica and her family joined a couple of families to celebrate the donation. Over food and drinks, we connected, shared experiences, and discussed how Down Syndrome WA can continue to support families in the South West region, including the possibility of regular online teen events and all abilities sporting and activities for primary aged children.





SOUTH WEST NOVEMBER MEET UP



Join Your Regional Facebook Group

Stay updated on community events and connect with other members in your area by joining your regional Facebook group:

- Great Southern Support

Group: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1ETShkZJF9/>

- South West Support Group: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/14KH38qq7t/>
- Midwest Support Group: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/12BKZhUmR59/>
- Regional Rural and Remote Support

Group: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/18Mwix1WZh/>

- Peel Support Group: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/19Uwy3CjkW/>

Get Involved in Your Region

We love seeing our regional communities come together. If you'd like to host an event in your area, please reach out to us at familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au. Together, we can create more opportunities for connection and support across WA.

Stay tuned for more updates and events in the months ahead!



Our wonderful Senior Coordinator, Nikki has been on well-deserved long service leave since November, continuing through December. After 12 years of dedication at DSWA, she's definitely earned it!

We're incredibly grateful to have such an awesome Family Support Coordinator, and we hope she's enjoying every moment of this much-needed break!



Celebrations and Independence for Sian

After leaving school it was always a dream of Sian's to be independent and work in an office. And now she is working Independently as an administration assistant for the School of Allied Health at Curtin University.

Sian commenced working at Curtin University in November last year. Ever since she began at the University she has thrived. The team have been super impressed with her capabilities and enthusiasm, hence over time her role has expanded and developed to include more and more challenging tasks.

Over the past twelve months Sian has worked in the Learning Centre, helping with student customer service and student resources, for the School of Nursing compiling student kits and training packs and in the administration office for the School of Allied Health managing stationery supplies, archiving and many other administrative tasks.

Claire Otway, Business Manager for the School of Allied Health said "Sian is a pleasure to work with and mentor. She is enthusiastic, hard working and a valued member of the team". We are pleased to have been able to help her achieve her dream of working independently.

Down Syndrome WA (DSWA) runs an open employment program for its members who are looking for work.

DSWA works with businesses to create roles that fill a need for the business and suit/fit the interests, skills and talents of a person living with Down syndrome. Once a candidate is matched with a suitable employer, DSWA provides a mentor to work alongside the employee until they are confident in the task and role to work independently.

If you are an employer or have a business and are interested in the program or would like further information, please contact employment@downsyndromewa.org.au



Playgroups



Playgroup South

What a lovely November we've had at Playgroup South. We've enjoyed the sunshine with some water play, painted some paper plates all kinds of colours and we've gotten festive and creative with our reindeer biscuits and most of all we've enjoyed each other over a nice warm cup of coffee

Renee xx



Playgroup North

Playgroup Metro (North) has been keeping busy with fun crafts that challenge our kids OT skills this term. We have been using dried pasta to practice our threading skills and colour matching.

The joy of helping our kids to reach their milestones in a safe and encouraging environment is something Danica and I love to witness each week.

The last few weeks of playgroup will be filled with festive fun as we start some Christmas baking and crafts. We must be having fun at playgroup because this term has flown by!

Tracy and Danica



Kids Club

Supported by



STAN PERRON
CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION

DFES

The KiDS Club November event was an early access session at the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. Everyone had a go getting dressed up, and the fire truck was a big hit.

It was so interesting to hear the history of firefighting, and to listen to all the tales of firefighter antics.

Thank you DFES Education and Heritage Centre for having us!

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 Painter at kidsclub@downsyndromewa.org.au for registration details.



KIDS CLUB X DFES



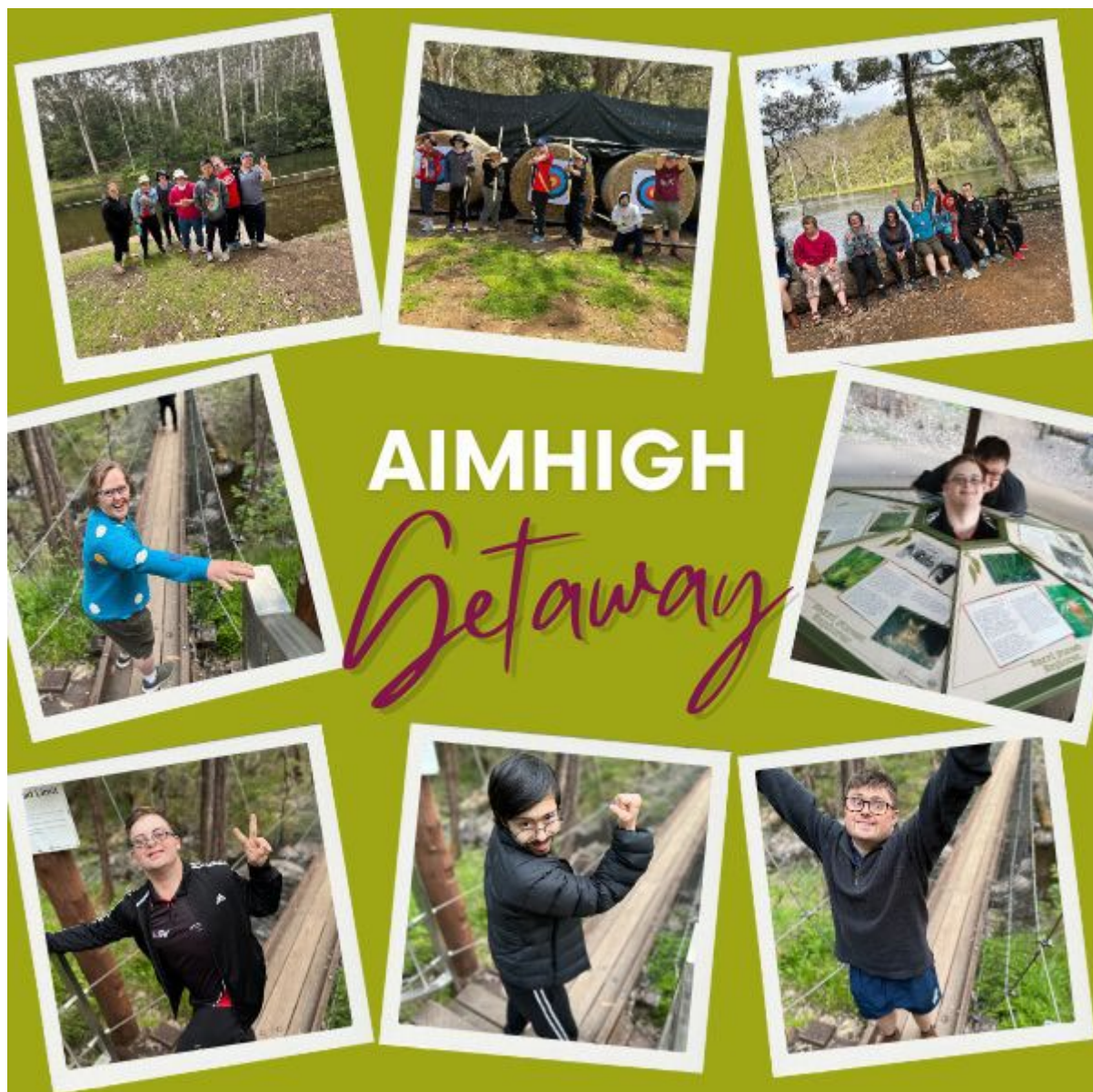
Getaway

This month our Aim High club adventured on down to Pemberton. We stayed at the beautiful Karri Valley Resort which was nestled in the heart of nature. Friday afternoon we took a walk from the resort to Beedelup Falls. Some participants challenged their fears and were very courageous at the very wobbly suspension bridge. It was amazing to watch them all give it a go with some making it to the other side and some getting to as far as their bravery allowed but we were all so proud to watch them all give it a go. Saturday's adventure included a drive to Gloucester tree, Pemberton Pool and Big Brook Dam. We settled at the dam for a BBQ lunch, some had a quick swim and a game of cricket. Archery was our Sunday activity and for some this was the first time ever!

The weekend was full of laughter, connection, friendships, courage, bravery and nature. This was the last getaway for 2024 and it has been an amazing year of meeting new participants, watching friendships bloom, witnessing personal challenges being overcome.

It has been a pleasure to have organised and run these getaways to watch your loved ones grow. Be sure to look out for the 2025 getaway dates so you can be a part of the Getaway team.

Contact our team - aimhigh@downsyndromewa.org.au or 0422 795 160



Teens Camp

What a Blast! Teen Camp Shenanigans

There was excitement and maybe a little trepidation in the air as twenty boys and girls arrived at the Ern Halliday Recreation Camp in Hillarys, for the inaugural Down Syndrome WA Teens Camp on Saturday 9th December.

Supports and campers scurried around as they settled into their dorms for what was to be a weekend of fun, laughter and personal growth.

Activities commenced with participants demonstrating their artistic skills with the decoration of their own calico bag.

The morning continued with the creation of some amazing kites. The proof was in the pudding when all 20 kites successfully took to the air. There were squeals of delight as some of the not so confident teens surprised themselves with triumph!

At lunchtime the dining room was full of chatter as the hungry mob revisited the events of the morning while constructing the sandwich of their choice – some interesting combinations for sure.....

It was then off to the Flying Fox for some instruction and harnessing before our brave comrades climbed the tower and stepped off the ledge to glide through the air

like a bird on the flying fox.

The weary group went back to base for some down time, kicking the footy, colouring in and listening to music.

Reinvigorated it was time for showers and dinner before an evening of dancing at the camp disco. The participants busted out the moves, shimmying, shuffling, hip hopping and moonwalking until they could dance no more.

Off to bed with some storytelling, giggling and tale telling until lights out and tired teens finally went to sleep.

It was up bright and early, and the new day began with breakfast then packing and tidying up before completing the weekend with a combination of art and craft and sport.

Loved ones arrived to happy, tired and fulfilled teens.

The weekend was a huge success with new friendships forged and existing ones rekindled and cemented. It wouldn't have been possible without the support of Telethon7 who kindly funded this awesome experience.

**** We do have some lost property from camp, please reach out if it is yours ****



Teens

Camp

Broader Community Information

International Day of People with Disabilities

International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPwD) is on December 3rd 2024. Many local governments host events during this time. If you are looking for an event or something to do, look up your local governments events page and see what is on.

Events through this time promote inclusion and acceptance of all members of our community.

City of Rockingham has many events from November 25th to December 8th

<https://rockingham.wa.gov.au/community/people-with-disability/inclusive-events-and-programs>

City of Mandurah

<https://www.mandurah.wa.gov.au/explore/whats-on/calendar/community-event/international-day-of-people-with-disability-2024>

Community Fundraising Efforts

Inspiring Hearts: How Riley and Jordan Are Making a Difference to DSWA

Riley (8) and Jordan (6) embarked on their third annual fundraising campaign this year, pouring their hearts into raising awareness and funds for DSWA. The journey began with an incredible cupcake drive alongside their friends Toby Larkin and his family. The result? An incredible \$1,969 raised from delicious baked goods!

But the boys didn't stop there. Fuelled by their passion to make a difference, they organised a toy sale and recycling drive, bringing in an additional \$275. These efforts reflect not only their commitment to DSWA but their belief in the power of community to create change.

In addition to DSWA, the boys have been working tirelessly for another cause close to their hearts, HeartKids, where they have already raised an impressive \$2,500 in just one week! Their dedication to these causes is a testament to their growing philanthropy and their desire to inspire others to give back.

Want to see why Riley and Jordan support DSWA? Take a moment to [watch this short video](#), which highlights their fundraising efforts. It's not just about asking for donations—it's about spreading kindness and making a difference in the lives of others.

This year, Riley and Jordan has partnered with Camera House Leederville to create 2000 beautifully designed Christmas and greeting cards featuring their artwork. There's no set price—just a donation to their [fundraising campaign](#). These cards make a thoughtful gift while supporting a great cause.

Riley and Jordan's inspiring efforts have earned them a nomination for the SchoolAid Young Philanthropist Award, which celebrates young changemakers. If selected, they'll have the honour of attending a special ceremony with a SchoolAid Patron and the Governor-General.

While raising money is a key focus, Riley and Jordan's mission is bigger than that. They aim to inspire others—kids and adults alike—to get involved and give back, showing that even small actions can create ripple effects of kindness and generosity. Thank you for supporting them on this incredible journey. Together, we can make a difference, one cupcake, card, and kind act at a time



Resources

Down Syndrome Regression Disorder (DSRD)

DSRD is a condition where a person with Down syndrome loses skills and abilities they had previously learned. DSRD is rare and not all people with Down syndrome experience DSRD.

On the DSWA website we have information including papers, resources, webinars and key contacts. <https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wa/resources/resource-downloads/down-syndrome-regression-disorder-dsrd/>

Our list of key people has recently been updated with WA based medical experts. <https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wa/resources/resource-downloads/down-syndrome-regression-disorder-dsrd/key-people/>

Need further information? Contact the DSWA
Team admin@downsyndromewa.org.au or 08 6182 3690

Comprehensive Health Assessment Process (CHAP)

The Comprehensive Health Assessment Process (CHAP) tool for annual GP health assessments which includes questions focused on health conditions common in people with Down Syndrome.

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/comprehensive-health-assessment-program-chap-annual-health-assessment-for-people-with-intellectual-disability?language=en>

Depression Checklist

Addressing mental health challenges is so important, yet is often quite complex. People with intellectual disabilities may be unable to describe their feelings or experiences.

The Depression Checklist is a valuable tool designed to aid this process. It allows caregivers and support networks to provide critical insights, enabling doctors to screen for issues that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Access this resource for free on the Centre of Developmental Health Victoria website - <https://cddh.monashhealth.org/index.php/depression-in-adults-with-intellectual-disability-checklist>



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

