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CEOs Corner



It has been a whirlwind return from Annual leave which I spent in beautiful New Zealand. A huge thank you to my wonderful team who did a stellar job whilst I was away and to Nikki for stepping into the acting CEO role.

We completed our midterm NDIS audit on 17/18 February with a very positive outcome. Thank you to the families who were interviewed by the auditor, we appreciate your candour and feedback. There is always something to learn and something we can do better. We are continuing on our path to constantly improve. Please remember if you do have feedback, we do value it, and where it is constructive feedback about what we can do better, we look at ways to do so. Did you know you can give your feedback following our link to our form

- https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wa/about-us/feedback/

On Feb 20 we held our long-awaited Founding and Early Members morning tea. We had a lovely morning with more than 30 people attending the event. Everyone shared a little about themselves and their family. It was a heartwarming day, and we look forward to holding another one, later in the year. We were all having such a lovely time, we all forgot to take a photo. Thank you to everyone who attended, it was lovely to meet those we had not met before and share your stories.

Nikki and the team delivered another outstanding Educator Professional Learning Day on Friday 21st, with more than 47 teachers with approximately half attending online from regional WA and also from South Australia. This is such an important day, and we are very grateful to the presenters who share their experience, knowledge and skills. Thank you to DSWAAN member Brooke Canham for attending and providing an excellent presentation on her schooling experience.

The office opening was on Monday afternoon 24th, with 28 people attending from our community and stakeholder group. Thank you to our two DSWAAN members, Adam Chrisp and Jessica Toster who attended and spoke with the stakeholders. A couple of new employment connections were made with possible employers and we enjoyed understanding more about how we can engage with some of our external partners.



The office opening was followed by a DSWA Board meeting.

Today, as I write the eNews, we are about to head out the door to the launch of the new DSWA Peel Region. The launch has approximately 40 people attending, from local government, the Down Syndrome community and other local stakeholders. We will be sharing the work of DSWA and hoping to engage more people to join the new Peel facebook page, and to bring people together more, creating a stronger Peel Ds, community.

I met with the DSWAAN group on Tuesday night via teams. We had an amazing conversation about World Down Syndrome day and the supports that support us. The DSWAAN have come up with some great questions for our interviews for the leadup to World Down Syndrome Day and spent quite a bit of time with Alyssa, the new Adult project coordinator talking and codesigning the new Life Skills Lab – Empowering pathways to independent lives project. As a result of their input, we have put together two surveys, one for parents/carers and one for members with Down syndrome. See more later on in the eNews.

I am now into full planning of 2025 and the beginning of 2026 and about to commence work on the 2025/2-2026 budget. The year brings additional children's and teens workshops and activities, the new Life Skills Lab project, more work and engagement for our wonderful DSWAAN team, possible collaborations with two universities and a new parent wellbeing focus.

Right now we are focussing on a large program of activities, as well as World Down Syndrome Day and the Gala 2025 which is already more than 50% sold. You can book your tickets via Trybooking using this link:

https://www.trybooking.com/CXYJW

As always, please reach out to me with any feedback, concerns or questions. Cassandra

Cassandra Hughes CEO



Upcoming Board Meetings

17th March 14th April 19th May



In 2025 the gala theme is "The Difference Support Makes." This aligns with the 2025 World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) theme.

It's all about celebrating the incredible value of community and recognising everyone who supports us, our members, and the wider community.

m When: Saturday, 3rd May 2025

Where: Pan Pacific, Perth

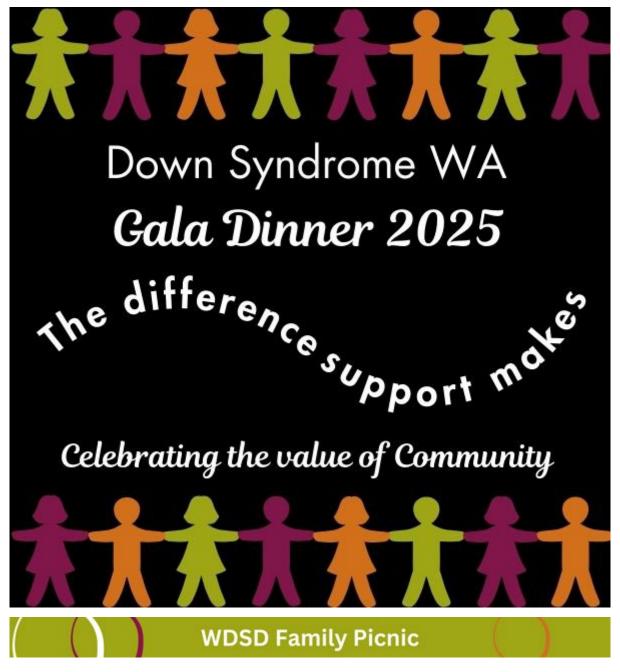
Tickets are now on sale! Don't miss out—book yours

here: https://www.trybooking.com/CXYJW

We can't wait to see you there for an unforgettable night of connection, celebration, community and a bit of a boogie!

There are a few things that are important to know.

- Your ticket includes a 3 course meal, live band and lots of fun. Drinks can be bought at the bar.
- In the past, DSWA has charged cost price for tickets to cover food. As we all know costs for everything have increased and as such, ticket prices have increased.
- There are discounted fixed price tickets (at cost) for people with Down syndrome - \$115/each
- Early Bird tickets are available until 23 February \$150. There can be NO extension on Early Bird, even if you have held a table.
- Table Holds please send a table number request to admin@downsyndromewa.org.au. Holding a table, doesn't hold the early bird price.
- Full price after early bird \$175
- Until we can upload a floor plan, please assume that Table 1 is at the front of the room and table 42 is at the back.
- DSWA cannot provide companion card exemptions.



Join the Down Syndrome WA team at our family World Down Syndrome Day Picnic!

The Family Picnic is for DSWA members new and old. It is a great opportunity for members across all ages to interact and connect, while celebrating our loved ones with Down Syndrome.

Register for your free ticket at https://www.trybooking.com/CYXDZ

BYO picnic blanket/chairs and food.

World Down Syndrome Day -Family Picnic

Join the DSWA community to celebrate WDSD with a picnic in the park.

This is a casual catch up for the whole of the association old and new.

BYO picnic, rugs, chairs and lawn games.





DATE Saturday 22nd March

TIME 10am-1pm

VENUE Perry Lakes Reserve

Playground,

Perry Lakes Drive, Floreat.

https://www.trybooking.com/e

vents/landing/1351427



RSVP





Lots of Socks

World Down Syndrome Day is on the 21st March 2025 and is the day we celebrate the uniqueness and contribution of our community with a Lots of Socks campaign. Join the international campaign and host a Lots of Socks Day.

People can wear their brightest and most interesting socks and donate a gold coin to Down Syndrome Western Australia.

All funds go directly to DSWA and provide vital support for individuals with Down syndrome and their families in WA. All funds can be deposited directly to DSWA. Please contact us for the details -admin@downsyndromewa.org.au

Please see below for detailed information and an A4 poster:
Detailed Information - https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/DSWA-Lots-of-Socks-Information.pdf
A4 Poster - https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wa/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2024/10/DSWA-Lots-of-Socks-A4-Poster.pdf



DSWA's Annual Educator Professional Learning day was attended by 46 Teachers, EA's and Deputy Principals across WA and South Australia.

The full day PL included presentations by DSWA staff members Nikki and Cassandra, with specialists in other areas of learning and behavioural support across the day.

DSWA Ambassador Network (DSWAAN) member Brooke Canham presented about her schooling journey, what she has achieved since leaving school and what her dreams for the future are.

Its amazing to see so many dedicated Educators, willing to learn and grow their skills for our Down Syndrome community.





Nikki was excited to meet the gorgeous Myrtle at PCH while she was there for an appointment. Nikki supported Myrtle's mum during pregnancy after she had a prenatal diagnosis, and it was lovely to catch up with her and Dad and see how well she is going.



PCH Outreach

Don't forget, Thursday is PCH Outreach day!

If you are at Perth Childrens Hospital as an inpatient on the ward, or just there for an appointment, make sure you let me know by emailing familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au or 0480311739.

I look forward to supporting you and buying you a coffee.

Regional Outreach

What is regional outreach you might ask.

The regional outreach program was created to connect families in regions. Hold catch ups, dinners, share information and build a supportive network. DSWA come and visit the regions during the year, and while we are there, we meet with potential employers and groups to join together.

Join your region here:

DSWA Great Southern Support Group

https://www.facebook.com/groups/562813961781133

DSWA South West Support Group

https://www.facebook.com/groups/677923213272854

DSWA Midwest Support Group

https://www.facebook.com/groups/2502984533353870

DSWA Peel Support Group

https://www.facebook.com/share/g/fUhrnQvNdyS11U3Q

DSWA Regional Rural and Remote Support Group

https://www.facebook.com/groups/357663433068076

Interested in a group in your region? Send us an email admin@downsyndromewa.org.au

Parents & Bubs Morning Tea

Join us for morning tea hosted by Nikki and Paula from the Family Support Team.

All parents and carers of bubs aged up to 2 years are welcome!

Free registration at https://www.trybooking.com/CZIOF

Parents & Bubs

Meet up and Morning Tea

Are you a parent of a little one aged 0-2 with Down syndrome? Join us for a warm and welcoming morning tea hosted by Down Syndrome WA's Family Support Team, Nikki & Paula!





DATE Wednesday 5th March 2025

TIME 10am - 12pm

VENUE Turquoise Wanneroo

10 Conlan Ave, Wanneroo WA

RSVP https://www.trybooking.com/CZIOF







Playgroups



Playgroup South

It's been a busy and beautiful start back to Playgroup South this year. We've enjoyed water play, bubbles and edible paint.

We chatted about our Xmas holiday's over a warm drink and welcomed two new families through our doors xx

Renee and Nicole playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au



Playgroup North Happy Faces All Round!

We've had a fantastically fun start to February at Playgroup North. Our kiddos have had a ball decorating colourful rainbow cupcakes for rainbow week, they've iced delicious heart shaped cookies for Valentine's Day and learned how to sign farm animal names at "Old MacDonald's Farm".

Anita and I have loads planned for the next few weeks, kicking off with an "At The Beach" themed playgroup, followed by a "Cozy Coupe Sprinkler Carwash", Harmony Day Food Sharing and World Down Syndrome Day Celebrations this next month is sure to be spectacular!

We hope to see all our families there. Karina and Anita playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au



Supported by



The Kids Club joined Circus WA for a morning in their big top for our February event.

During the workshop children had a go at the trapeze, aerial silks, tight-rope walking, and lots more!

The next Kids Club event is a yoga class with Sacred Yoga.

Date: Saturday the 15th of March

Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Location: Victoria Park Community Centre Price: Members with DS Free, \$5 per sibling

Book here: https://www.trybooking.com/CZNLX

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.



Teens and Adults

As you will have seen, we are changing the way that our Teens group (Friends for Life) and our Adults group (Aim High) are running. See below for the information for the March and April events.

March Event

Get ready for an exciting Aim High & Friends 4 Life adventure! This March, we're heading to Perth Zoo for an up-close education session featuring live animals—and after that, we'll explore everything the zoo has to offer!

When? Saturday, March 8th at 9:30 AM Where? Meet out front of the zoo, and we'll head in together.

Please book tickets through: https://www.trybooking.com/CZHBJ

Important Info:

- Carers and support workers must stay with participants at all times.
- Perth Zoo is cashless, so bring a card for any purchases. If you have a Companion Card, bring it for free entry for your support person. Otherwise, they'll need to pay \$38.10.
- We can't wait to see you there for a wild day of learning and fun!

Any queries please email admin@downsyndromewa.org.au



April event

Join us for a morning sail in our accessible keelboats. We will have 3 accessible keelboats available for participants to try out sailing! Not sure what a keelboat is, Sailability will show you.

This is joint event with Down Syndrome WA peer support and Sailability WA.

Book at https://events.humanitix.com/social-sailing-sunday-with-down-syndrome-wa-and-sailability-wa-9tcj7v9n



Disabled Surfing Australia

Friends for Life and Aim High joined together for the February event with Disabled Surfing Australia.

It was a beautiful calm day down at Leighton Beach in Freo. So calm in fact that the wonderful volunteers had to push our surfers in at some stages. It was a great opportunity for our surfers to try new skills like standing up and going on the board together.

Annabelle came away with the award for best surfer of the day, and Kailee won the best wipeout!

Disabled Surfers Association have one more event this season on the 22 March!

Register at https://events.humanitix.com/dsa-wa-perth-let-s-go-surfing-day-22-march-2025



Employment

DSWA is seeking your support! Do you own a business, or do you know someone who does? Will you connect us to the Diversity and Inclusion representative at your place of employment.

We have a list of wonderful young members who are looking to work in open employment, and we are in need of job positions – employers to jump on board to work with us in this wonderful program.

Please reach out to us at employment@downsyndromewa.org.au.

Barista Course

If you are interested in signing up for a Barista Course please reach out to us at employment@downsyndromewa.org.au



REMINDER: Cooking and Kitchen Skills program - Registration of Interest

In the interest of building your employment prospects or just your independence, if you are keen to build your kitchen skills. Register your interest in a Cooking and Kitchen Skills program by emailing employment@downsyndromewa.org.au.

Grow your competence, and foster your talents with:

- Safety in the kitchen
- Food safety and hygiene
- Knife skills
- Cooking simple meals



Hi everyone!

I'm Alyssa, the new Senior Coordinator for the Adult Project at DSWA. I'm excited to introduce the Life Skills Lab – Empowering Independent Lives, a two-year project running from 2025 to the end of 2026. Through this initiative, I'll be working closely with DSWA's adult and older adult members, as well as their families.

Starting in April 2025, we'll be hosting forums and workshops designed to support independent living skills. We'd love input from parents and carers at https://forms.office.com/r/GXXLrD4sPA

There will also be a participant survey which will be sent out soon!

If you'd like to join our forums or workshops, feel free to reach out to me at Alyssa@downsyndromewa.org.au. I look forward to connecting with you!



Best, Alyssa



Tennis Fundraiser

The Parker family is hosting a fundraiser at the Bullcreek Tennis Club for DSWA! Enjoy an afternoon of social tennis, a free sausage sizzle and drinks for purchase.

Suitable for all ages, abilities and skills. Everyone is welcome! Registration fee is \$50 which will be donated to DSWA.

Bookings at https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1288840





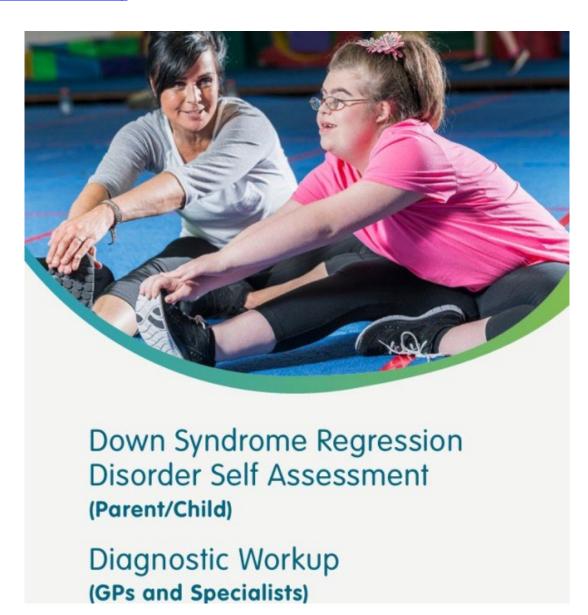
Down Syndrome Regression Disorder Self Assessment and Diagnostic Workup

Down Syndrome Regression Disorder (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.

The checklist is designed for parents and carers to take to appointments with medical professionals.

This is a reformatted version of the WA developed checklist.

https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/blog/resource/down-syndrome-regression-disorder-checklist/





Sleep apnea is the temporary stoppage of breathing while sleeping. Sleep apnea is common in people with Down syndrome.

Read the informative Advocate Medical Group article written by Brian Chicoine, MD - Medical Director, Adult Down Syndrome Center.

https://adscresources.advocatehealth.com/sleep-apnea/



Life Changes Workshops

Life Changes, is a new workshop series designed to empower siblings and people with disabilities to help strengthen their family relationships.

The program is delivered by Siblings Australia and Kaleidoscope Focus and offers free workshops to teach valuable skills for supporting loved ones and navigating major life changes together.

Register your interest at https://siblingsaustralia.org.au/services/life-changes/



Safe and Secure Forum

Future Living Trust is running a Safe and Secure Education Forum on March 6th. It will provide information about planning for future support and protection for your loved one with a disability, for the time when family is no longer around.

9.30am - 12.30pm Floreat Boulevard Centre

For more information and to register, please visit https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/safe-secure-education-forum-tickets-1210426421009

Contact Karyn at Future Living Trust with any questions – info@futureliving.org.au or 6183 1943.



Disability Health Conference

National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health Conference 2025!

The theme for the Conference is Working together every step of the way. The conference is in-person in Sydney and online.

Download the information in Easy Read.

Visit the website at https://nceidh.org.au/conference-2025



Does your child love to perform and be in front of a camera? If they do, this will be perfect for them!

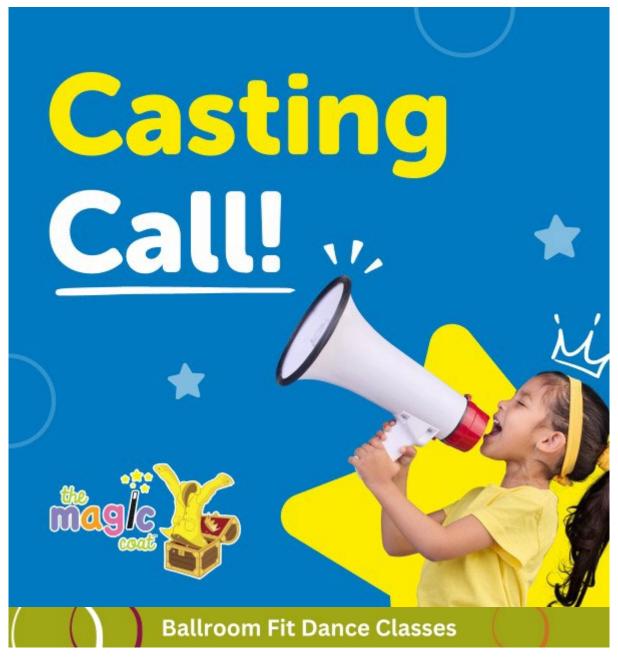
We're looking for children aged between 5-11 years old to feature in videos for our new and improved app The Magic Coat Hospital Adventure!

This is a fun opportunity for kids to visit Perth Children's Hospital and act out a hospital visit, helping other children understand what to expect during their stay.

We are looking for a diverse range of children to include;

- Children with disability
- Children with different skin colours
- Children of different ages
- Children from different cultures

If your child may be interested in being part of our new app please contact hannah@magiccoatfoundation.com.au for further information.



The Perth Ballroom Dance Classes offered by Ballroom Fit are a joy for our students and coaches. Helping students tap into their creative side and express themselves through movement is incredibly fulfilling. Students love Ballroom Fit!

Dancing is not just a physical activity; it positively impacts mental and emotional well-being. In essence, teaching dance is a privilege beyond the dance floor. It's about connecting with people, fostering personal growth, and contributing to a community bound by the love of dance.

Ballroom Fit is an NDIS-registered provider for Community and Civic Participation Activities. The hour-long sessions are \$17 or free depending on the session

For further information, please email info@ballroomfit.com.au

Ability Dance Classes

Monday, 6 pm to 7 pm Belmont Community Hub (213 Wright St Cloverdale)

Tuesday, 6 pm to 7 pm VisAbility Perron Place (61 Kitchener Ave Victoria Park)

Wednesday, 10 am to 11 am All Saints Floreat Uniting Church (48-50 Berkley Crs Floreat) FREE

Wednesday, 10:30 am to 11:30 am Cannington Leisureplex (233 Sevenoaks St Cannington)

Wednesday, 6 pm to 7 pm Hillview Intercultural Community Centre (1-3 Hill View PI Bentley)

Thursday, 10 am to 11 am
Person Advocacy Service Catholic Archdioses (28 Holdhurst Way Morley) FREE

Thursday, 7 pm to 8 pm Bassendeen Community Centre (50 Old Perth Rd Bassendeen)

Friday, 10 am to 11 am Hamersley Recreation Centre (20 Belvedere Rd Hamersley)

Friday, 10:30 am to 11:30 am Leisurefit Melville (431 Canning Hyw Melville)

Saturday, 10 am to 11 pm Inglewood Community Centre (895 Beaufort St Inglewood)

Saturday, 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm Manning Senior Citizens Centre (3 Downey Dr Manning)

info@ballroomfit.com.au

0439 460 487.

www.ballroomfit.com.au



NDIS Advisory Committee

Expression of Interest

Please be advised that following the Commonwealth Government announcement in May 2024 to establish the NDIS Reform Advisory Committee (the NDIS RAC) to monitor and advise on the implementation of reform to the NDIS, Disability Ministers have agreed to an Expression of Interest (EOI) process which seeks representation from the disability sector and people with disability. This includes advice on :

- governments' responses to the Independent Review into the NDIS (NDIS Review)
- NDIS-related recommendations from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission).

The EOI is seeking nominations for representatives from the disability community to join the NDIS RAC through an open process.

- Nominees may choose to be considered as a representative for their state or territory (one per jurisdiction), and/or as one of three community members appointed by the Commonwealth.
- Nominees may choose to be considered for both opportunities. Successful
 candidates will be appointed to the NDIS RAC by the Commonwealth Minister
 for the NDIS, following consultation with the NDIS RAC Co-Chairs and states
 and territories. NDIS RAC members will be appointed in a private capacity, as
 representatives of any organisation.
- Where nominees consent, applications made through this process may also be used to select people to participate in other relevant working groups, roundtables or focus groups.

More information about the NDIS Reform Advisory Committee, the EOI and to support applications, can be found at the Department of Social Services (DSS) Engage page: NDIS Reform Advisory Committee Expression of Interest - https://engage.dss.gov.au/ndis-reform-advisory-committee-expression-of-interest/

The EOI will be live until 11:59pm on Monday 24 March.



Tennis Open

2025 WA Intellectual Disability and Autism Tennis Open

Alexander Park Tennis Club 29 and 30 March Registrations close Saturday 22 March 2025.

For more information and to register go to https://tournaments.tennis.com.au/tournament/b95a5cb7-d453-4fba-b2f7-8793faeeb5a7

Contact Tennis West - bradley.ladyman@tennis.com.au



Supported Accommodation

Supported Accommodation in Duncraig

The gorgeous complex is purpose built and reserved for NDIS participants only. It offers live in "on call" Support Workers, security of full CCTV and key card accessing, a communal outdoor balcony living area with kitchen, designated therapy room and a wonderful sense of community. It has incredibly convenient access to a large shopping complex, Carine Regional Space and a bus stop right outside the building. Clients can live with others, or just themselves depending on their allocated funding.

There are a variety of options and flexible funding arrangements including:

- Core Daily Living with private sublet
- SIL

- SDA
- MTA
- STA/Respite for independent living and transition skill building

For further information contact courtney.whiteman@mysupports.com.au



Compliments and Complaints

We always welcome your feedback and suggestions. Send your feedback to admin@downsyndromewa.org.au or use our <u>online form</u>.



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(08) 6182 3690 complaints@downsyndromewa.org.au

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