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Dear members,

This month we have all had a little time off and hope that you have enjoyed the Easter period and commemorated Anzac Day, an important day for our family, and I am sure yours as well.

I was fortunate to attend the DDWA 40th Anniversary celebrations this month. It was a wonderful celebration of the incredible contribution that their Boards, CEO's and Members have made to the disability sector over 40 years. Congratulations to Mary Butterworth, her team and current board members on a memorable and lovely celebration of all you have achieved.

Professor Angus Buchannan and I met to discuss the outcomes from some pilot research on the Factors Influencing Play Participation of Children with Down Syndrome in Place Spaces. One of the wonderful outcomes of this thesis, will be a larger research project exploring the themes that arose in the paper. We are grateful to the families that participated in the pilot research project.

Child Safety is critically important to DSWA, and we are delighted to be working with a great team to inquire about how we realistically implement the Child Safety Principals. We look forward to working with our community on this as we progress.

Finally this month, with a group of other disability organisations here in WA, we met with the Department of Communities' new Deputy Director General Mhairi Cowden for a discussion about Foundational Supports.

The Life Skills Lab Project is in full thrust with Alyssa working with the DSWAAN members on the forum preparations and delivery. This project is for members with Down Syndrome, Parents and Carers. The first forum will be one of learning, sharing and interaction with presentations from both service delivery organisations and professionals, and most importantly with each other. Your participation and willingness to share will make all the difference. Throughout the workshop sessions of the forum, groups will be split into parents/carers and people with Down

Syndrome to allow each to discuss and express concerns, learnings and challenges. The forum will support the creation and delivery for the workshop series that will follow. What we learn will guide what we provide over the next 18 months. This peer support and capacity building project is for you, our adult families, and I encourage your participation and sharing. We have a number of parent and member panels and I believe this is the beginning of a fantastic 18 months of learning and development for our community.

Finally, we are in full flight for Gala with just a few days to go. We have 350 members, families, friends and supporters of DSWA attending the Gala. This years Gala will be MC'd by the Down Syndrome WA Advisory Network members. A huge thank you to all of our supporters, donors, our staff who are working tirelessly to bring this all together. Look our for our special edition ENews from the Gala.

Wishing you all a fabulous May, I can hardly believe it is already May and time to finalise budgets and prepare for another end of Financial year.

Warm regards
Cassandra
Cassandra Hughes
CEO



Meetings & Association Notes

Upcoming Board Meetings

17th May 23rd June 21st July 18th August 22nd September



We really need your help please.

Down Syndrome WA work closely with Down Syndrome Australia, and receive critical funding to run programs through their support. Down Syndrome Australia is running a National Survey for families and carers of individuals with Down syndrome and we would like your support in providing really important feedback to DSA to support the funding and programs it delivers.

This information gathered by survey is a required part of the national grant DSWA receives which helps us provide communications and resources to our community. This includes our monthly e-news, socials updates, closed Facebook groups, website and information brochures. Please help support the DSWA services by completing the survey.

It will take 15-20 minutes to complete and you will be in the running to win a gift card.

Complete the survey here.



HBF Run for a Reason

Support our DSWA community members in the HBF Run for a Reason!

Daisy Dimmick

Daisy is participating in Run for a Reason, supporting DSWA, as she wants to participate in everyday activities and get fitter. She is doing this with her friends from BuddiUp and SisterUp.



Support Daisy

at https://runforareason25.grassrootz.com/dsw a/daisy-dimmick



Joe Salt

Hi, I'm Joe Salt. I love to keep fit and be in the great outdoors with my friends.

I am part of the Buddiup crew; a group that supports the physical and mental well-being for men with a disability. As part of Buddiup I am doing the HBF Run for a Reason on May 25th to raise money for an association that also supports me; Down Syndrome WA.

If you can spare a few \$\$ to support my cause that would encourage me on the day!

Support Joe

at https://runforareason25.grassrootz.co m/dswa/joseph-salt



Life Skills Lab

NOW OPEN – Registrations for The Life Skills Lab Forum!

DSWA proudly presents its first event "The Life Skills Lab Forum"! The forum will focus on Empowering Pathways to Independent Lives.

The team has heard from its members and their parents/guardians through surveys that were sent out and have come up with an all-inclusive, full day forum that will touch on transport/safety, self-organisation and healthy eating.

Join us and grab this opportunity to work towards your own independence

Date: Saturday 7 June Time: 8.30am – 4.00pm

Venue: Belmont Hub, Level 2, 213 Wright St, Cloverdale WA 6105

Book your free tickets through https://www.trybooking.com/DAZIW





Mega Movie Outing

An opportunity for All DSWA members!!!

You are invited to come along to our How To Train Your Dragon Live Action movie day! Just \$20 for a ticket (including popcorn and a drink!) it is an absolute bargain. We will have the whole theatre to ourselves as well. Thank you to Reading Cinema Belmont for this epic opportunity.

You must be a DSWA Member to attend.

Date: Sunday, June 29th

Time: Meet at 1:30pm for a 2:00pm start

Location: Reading Cinema Belmont

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



Open Employment Program

My name is Lara, and I'm excited to introduce myself as the new Employment Coordinator at the Down Syndrome Association of WA. I'm incredibly passionate about supporting our members to find meaningful employment opportunities where they can truly thrive.

We've just wrapped up our 6-week Ready for Work program, which was a fantastic success, and we're already planning to run another round in the near future.

At DSWA, we're focused on connecting our members with workplaces where their skills, strengths, and incredible personalities can shine.

We're eager to build relationships with employers who share our vision of inclusive employment and are open to creating opportunities where everyone can succeed.

I look forward to working with DSWA and the wider community to make this happen!

Lara





April has been an incredibly busy time for the Family Support team. Not only providing support to families but also helping organise gala while taking on the teens and adults social groups as well. Nikki and Paula have had a busy and productive start to the month. In a single day they had three home visits, supporting one expectant parent and two families with newborns. We also had Three hospital-based visits at Perth Children's Hospital, including time spent with families in NICU, a ward stay, and at an outpatient appointment.

This range of support reflects the team's ongoing commitment to providing timely, responsive assistance to families in both community and hospital settings. Work continues across multiple locations to ensure that families receive the care and guidance they need throughout their journey.

PCH Outreach

Don't forget, Thursday is PCH Outreach day!

If you are at Perth Children's Hospital as an inpatient on the ward, or just there for an appointment, make sure you let Nikki know by emailing familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au or calling 0480 311 739.

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



Are you a parent of a little one aged 0-2 with Down syndrome? (including 2 year olds) Join us for a warm and welcoming morning tea hosted by Down Syndrome WA's Family Support Team, Paula, Nikki and sometimes Cas our CEO!

Whether you're a first-time parent or adding to your family, we invite you to connect with other families in a relaxed and supportive environment. Share stories, sip on hot coffee, and foster connections with fellow parents who understand the journey you're on.

This morning tea is an opportunity to come together, share experiences, and offer support within our wonderful community. We're here to provide a listening ear, valuable resources, and a sense of belonging as you navigate this new chapter.

This month, a staff member from Wanslea will join us and explain their services and supports in addition to what DSWA can provide for you.

Event details:

Date: Wednesday, May 14th Time: 10:00am to 12:00pm

Venue: Belmont Hub, 213 Wright Street, Cloverdale

Register for free at: https://www.trybooking.com/CZYWF



Playgroup East

Supported by



Thanks to a Community Contribution Fund Grant from the City of Belmont, DSWA is thrilled to launch an East Playgroup starting in Term 2!

This fun-filled monthly playgroup will be held at the Rivervale Community Centre, and the wonderful Anita will be leading the way!

Here are the dates:

- 8th May
- 5th June
- 3rd July
- 7th August
- 4th September
- 25th September
- 16th October
- 6th November
- 4th December

Keep reading below for an introduction from Anita, the Playgroup East Coordinator.

The launch of our New Playgroup East is just around the corner. The first session is from 9:30am on Thursday 8th May at Rivervale Community Centre. We will be celebrating Mother's Day with craft, singing, sensory play, morning tea and a gift for mums. I am excited to co-ordinate this Playgroup and meet some of our wonderful families with young children in the Eastern suburbs. Of course families from other areas around Perth are absolutely welcome to join us too!

A little about my background - I am a music teacher, singer and mum to three young girls who keep me on my toes! I have just finished a busy Easter season singing with the St George's Cathedral Consort which involved signing nearly every day for 12 days and our recent concert with WASO received 5 star reviews. I was a music teacher at Guildford Grammar School for many years before becoming a mum and I have found new ways to share my love of music more recently. I enjoy coordinating 'mainly music' at my church in Osborne Park and have had the privilege of assisting Karina with DSWA Playgroup North this year.

I am grateful to the City of Belmont for awarding DSWA a small grant to start our new Playgroup. This grant includes the use of Rivervale Community Centre which is a fantastic modern venue with a dedicated playground. The Belmont Toy Library has kindly given DSWA free membership, so our children will have a wonderful selection of toys to enjoy for each session. I have just picked up our first set of toys today and my kids approve of the selection!

Special thanks to Karina Best, Playgroup North Co-ordinator, who has put so much thought and creativity into ideas and resources for Playgroup North and has kindly offered to share these with us!

I look forward to seeing some new and familiar faces on 8th May!

Anita playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au





We are pleased to offer two Key Word Sign Workshops this year; the first of which is taking place May 28th.

This introductory key word sign course will teach you about the principles of key word sign and gesture, who it can be used with and how it can be used alongside other ways of communicating.

The workshop covers a range of topics including:

- Principles of Key word Sign and gesture
- How sign helps communication development and support verbal communication.
- Which signs to teach
- Basic vocabulary of signs to use everyday

Who is the workshop suitable for?

- **Parents**
- Carers
- Family
- Teachers
- Support workers
- Anyone supporting someone with hearing or speech challenges.

Can I use my Childs NDIS funds to attend? If self managed or plan managed, YES!

Can I attend if I don't have a child on NDIS? Yes, you can choose the 'Public' ticket option.

Date: Wednesday 28th May 2025

Time: 9am - 4pm

Venue: Belmont Hub Level 2, 213 Wright Street, Cloverdale

Cost: \$200 pp

Booking link: https://www.trybooking.com/DAWCS

Registrations close on the 21st May 2025. For more details contact: familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au or call 08 6182 3690

Key Word Sign Workshops

We are pleased to offer two Key Word Sign Workshops this year. Introductory key word sign course, you will learn about the principles of key word sign and gesture, who it can be used with and how it can be used alongside other ways of communicating

Can I use my Childs NDIS funds to attend?

Parents/carers build your capacity and skills to help

Can I attend if I don't have a child on NDIS?

If self managed or plan managed, YES!

- Morning and Afternoon tea (BYO Lunch)

Yes, you can choose the 'Public' ticket option.

your child achieve their goals.

- Key Word Sign booklet - Certificate of completion.

What does the workshop cover?

- Principles of Key word Sign and gesture
- How sign helps communication development and support verbal communication.
- Which signs to teach
- Basic vocabulary of signs to use everyday.

Who is the workshop suitable for?

- Parents
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Cost: \$200 pp

Registrations close on the 21st May 2025

For more details contact: familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au or call 08 6182 3690







Regional Outreach

Great Southern

There will a catch up at Eyre Park on Sunday May 4th for our Great Southern Community. Please RSVP through the link at the bottom to let us know if you are coming or not. There is a possibility that the location may change, based on the weather conditions so keep an eye out for any updates.

https://www.trybooking.com/DAWBY

If you live in the Great Southern Region and are not yet a part of the Regional Outreach group, you can join

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



Midwest

Over the Easter weekend, the Midwest Region hosted a wonderful morning tea picnic under the beautiful Geraldton sun. Nikki (DSWA Senior Coordinator) and Emily (Midwest Regional Representative) were joined by 28 attendees for a relaxed and joyful catch-up.

It was a fantastic opportunity for families with little ones to connect with more experienced parents, share stories, and build new friendships. We were also excited

to welcome a family who recently moved to the region — it was great to help them feel part of our community!

Adding to the vibrant atmosphere, we invited members from the new All Abilities Dance School, Beyond Beats, who joined us for the celebration. It was a morning filled with laughter, connection, and community spirit — a wonderful way to mark the Easter season together.

If you live in the Midwest and are not yet a part of the Regional Outreach group, you can join here https://www.facebook.com/groups/2502984533353870









Wheatbelt

We are deep in the planning for our Wheatbelt Regional Outreach Launch event which is taking place on Wednesday, May 21st, at 12:00pm. This event is a brilliant opportunity for our community in the Wheatbelt to connect with other families, professionals and other people within community. This will be a catered lunch time event with speeches from our brilliant CEO Cassandra Hughes and our wonderful senior coordinator Nikki Schwagermann. The event is aimed at creating more conversation within the Wheatbelt and engaging the broader communities participant. We hoping to facilitate increased connections between families, potential employers, service providers, members of local government and other families.

Date: Wednesday, May 21st Time: 12:00pm to 2:00pm Location: Lesser Hall, Northam

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

We have created a new Facebook group, just for the Wheatbelt members. Please request to join here https://www.facebook.com/groups/4003968903175615

Wheatbelt Regional Outreach Launch

Please join DSWA for a lunchtime networking event to celebrate the launch of our Regional Outreach program, proudly sponsored by Telethon 7



Date: Wednesday, May 21st Time: 12:00pm to 2:00pm Location: Lesser Hall, Northam Cost: Free, with lunch provided

Connection to regional communities is essential to supporting a life of possibilities for those living with Down syndrome





Playgroups



Playgroup South

Wow how quick did our first term go?

We had a fantastic start to the year with the wonderful sensorium theatre entertaining our precious babes with their theme "we're going on a bear hunt".

We welcomed new members, celebrated World Down Syndrome day then we finished the term with some Easter crafts. So much fun!

Love from your playgroup team Renee and Nicole xx playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au



Playgroup North

Playgroup North has had an Awesome April!

Our families had fun playing on our obstacle course and learning about our bodies, made cute nature framed crafts and celebrated Easter with a colourful egg hunt and yummy treats.

Anita and I hope you have an Eggceptional Easter break and we will see you next Term with a belated Anzac Day tribute.

Karina and Anita playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au



Kids Club

Supported by



Join Us for a Drumming Workshop with DSWA Kids Club!

Get ready to feel the rhythm at our May event!

DSWA Kids Club invites you to a high-energy, hands-on drumming workshop with Rhythm Fix, where kids will learn basic beats, explore different percussion instruments, and most importantly—have loads of fun!

When: Saturday, 10th of May | 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM. (Arrive at 1:15pm for a 1:30pm

start.)

Where: Mount Hawthorn Lesser Hall (197 Scarborough Beach Rd, Mount Hawthorn

WA 6016)

Tickets: Free for members with DS, \$5 for siblings

Book your spot now: https://www.trybooking.com/DBCJV

Join us for afternoon tea and a park at play at Braithwaite Park after the event. (The park is attached to the venue).



The Kids Club had a cooking class for our April event, with Parties for Friends. Children enjoyed cooking pizzas and making protein balls.

Thank you so much to Debbie and Daniel for hosting such a great event!

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

May's social event brings an epic gym sesh with the team at Mobius Health and Performance in Joondalup – This event will combine exercise and fun in the best way possible!

The experienced team at Mobius are full of joy, support and knowledge, this is not an event to be missed. Limited tickets available, get in quick.

Each participant needs to have their own support person present and attentive throughout the session.

Date: Saturday May 24th

Time: 1:00pm - 2:00pm (technically 2:00pm but we are going to find a coffee shop

nearby for a hangout after!)

Cost: \$15 for a participant, supports are free

Booking link: https://www.trybooking.com/DARBP

Movement with Mobius

Date: Saturday May 24th

Time: 1:00pm to 2:00pm session and

afternoon tea after

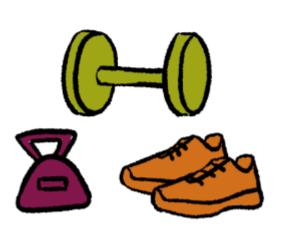
Location: Mobius Gym, 2/320 Joondalup Drive

Cost: \$15 per person

What to expect:

Circuit style, Exercise Physio class with the crew from Mobius Gym.

Lots of fun and laughter with your friends Cafe hangout after if you wish to stay



Important notes:

- You must bring your own support person.
 This could be mum/dad/siblings, support worker, etc.
- Supports are free but still need a ticket

April Event- Sailability!

Our April social event was an absolute blast, with it selling out! We are grateful to everyone who was able to come down and take part on the day. Thank you to Sailability for your expertise and excellence guidance for our members. It was great to see some new faces as well as our regulars.

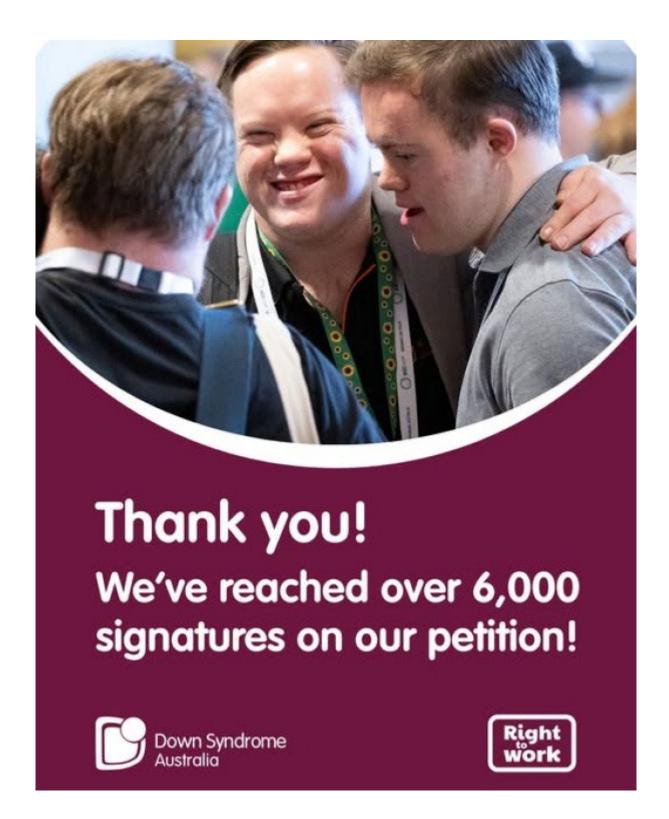


The Down Syndrome Australia Right to Work petition has reached 6,000 signatures!

Here's what we're asking for:

- Phase out the \$3 wage
- Fund programs that work
- Make the Disability Support Pension work for workers

Haven't signed yet? Add your voice today: https://buff.ly/bfsWD0C





Supporting Siblings Seminar

Siblings play an important role in the life of a person with intellectual disability. From being a person's first play mate to their longest supporter in life, siblings play a pivotal role in making sure that a person with intellectual disability lives a life that is perfect for them.

In this webinar we are joined by Shannon Schedlich, CEO of Siblings Australia. She will speak to the key role that siblings play in promoting the social inclusion, safeguarding and decision making of their siblings. This is particularly important as parents age or need support in their caring responsibilities. It is important to set a

foundation where siblings will flourish and feel empowered in their role as a carer regardless of their age.

This webinar is designed for both parents and siblings and will open up conversations to support this transition.

Please make sure to register to secure your place! Or you can send us an email at support@downsyndromeqld.org.au

Presented by Siblings Australia and hosted by Down Syndrome Queensland

Date: Monday 19 May 2025 Time: 7:00pm - 8:00pm (QLD) Location: Online via Zoom

Register

at https://dsa.powerappsportals.com/event/sessions?id=Siblings Australia Webinar 428762685

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Rockingham Libraries

The City of Rockingham libraries celebrated and supported World Down Syndrome Day with events in their libraries:

- the Mary Davies library hosted a design your own socks workshop.
- Rockingham Library displayed posters, had sock-themed colouring in and staff the wore their most colourful socks.
- and the Safety Bay Library had a display promoting WDSD and the Mary Davies workshop.





Ace Ballerz

Ace Ballerz offer basketball classes for people no matter their ability.

Classes run on:

- Tuesday and Thursday 5:30-6:30pm
- Wednesday 11-12pm

For further information or to enrol contact them on 0415545045. New Classes Added! All access all abilities sessions New price of \$25 per class for 10 weeks. Classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays 5:30-6:30!

Careers and parents
welcome! Enquire about our
all access academy now!!!
Call us today to enrol
0415545045

Ballroom Fit

Ballroom Fit offers weekly Community and Civic Participation Dance Activities for people with disabilities in the Perth metro area.

The Dance Activities are FREE or \$17 per hour group session.

Ballroom Fit is a Registered NDIS Provider and may be able to assist with paying the cost of the classes through the NDIS.

There is no need to pre-register; a simple registration form can be completed during the class. Participants can join at any time.

See a list of all their classes at https://www.ballroomfit.com.au/

For further information, contact Ballroom Fit:

Email: info@ballroomfit.com.au

Phone: 0439 460 487



My Perspective 2025 is now open!

It is an international photography and film competition for people who have Down's syndrome. Show people how you see the world and tell your story through the power of photography.

Since 2010, outstanding images by photographers from around the globe have been celebrated in this unique contest that enables people who have Down's syndrome to show us how they see the world.

https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/our-work/our-voice/my-perspective/

5 EXCITING PHOTO CATEGORIES



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

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