



What exciting news!!

On behalf of the Board and the wider community of members and friends, I'd like to congratulate Nikki and Cassandra on their success at the recent WA Disability Support Awards.

Nikki won her category of Emerging Leader and Cassandra was awarded the Outstanding Leader award.

It is testament to their hard work and dedication to our Association that they were successful in what is always a large field of very worthy nominees. Our employment team were also Award Finalists.

Recognition within the Disability Sector is a valuable way to showcase our desire to be the very best at supporting our members to live lives full of possibilities.

Nia Parker,
Board Chair



Quick Links

Association Updates

[CEO's Corner](#)

[DSWA Gala](#)

[Meetings and Association Notes](#)

[Mental Health Training](#)

What's On

[Calendar](#)

[National Survey](#)

[HBF Run for a Reason](#)

[Mega Movie Outing](#)

[Open Employment](#)

[Life Skills Lab](#)

Get Involved

[Family Support](#)

[Parents & Bubs Morning Tea](#)

[Regional Outreach](#)

[Playgroups](#)

[School Age Disco](#)

[Kids Club](#)

[Teens and Adults](#)

Stay Connected

[PCH Care Circle](#)

[Right to Work Campaign](#)

[Supporting Siblings Webinars](#)

[Equity in Cervical Screening](#)

[Inclusive Health Workshop](#)

[Compliments and Complaints](#)



CEOs Corner

Dear Members,

May has been a wonderful and productive month at Down Syndrome WA , filled with community events, sector collaboration, and some fantastic achievements.

I was thrilled to attend the Wheatbelt Regional Launch in Northam with Nikki, where we met new and existing community members, along with the Shire President and Local Government CEO. It is very positive to see our regional connections growing. Budget planning for the next financial year is well underway, ensuring we continue to deliver meaningful support and services.

We also visited Halls Head College for their information event and spoke with three families about the future for young people with Down syndrome.

It was an honour to meet with Lena Constantine from the WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry to talk about employment opportunities for people with Down syndrome for their Webinar: <https://vimeo.com/1083777315?share=copy>. These conversations are so important in changing perceptions and creating real inclusion.

I joined the Family Support team for our Parents and Bubs morning tea, where I welcomed three new mums and reconnected with some of our regional families – such a lovely way to start the day.

Our team also completed a Take Charge wellbeing course, giving us some great strategies to support our own wellbeing and that of our community.

I also attended an informative online webinar on Ageing in Adults with Down Syndrome, which highlighted the importance of planning and wellbeing for people as they age.

Finally, we continue to engage with researchers on projects that matter. This month we met with Curtin University about an exciting new research initiative and with The Kids Research Institute about RSV immunisation for children under 2, especially those with additional health needs.

Two standout moments this May:

1. Annual Gala Dinner

On May 3, we hosted our Annual Gala Dinner at a beautiful new venue – the Pan Pacific Perth. It was an incredible night, with over **350 guests**. The event was led by our *Advisory Network (DSWAAN)*, and they did an amazing job. Our favourite band, The DryCleaners, had everyone on the dancefloor! We are proud to have raised approximately **\$35,000**, which will help us to continue to deliver our programs and services across the state.

2. WA Disability Support Awards

Presented by NDS, the *Disability Support Awards* recognised excellence across the sector – and DSWA had a strong showing. We had **four nominations, three finalists**, and **two category winners**!

- Congratulations to our Employment Team for their continued innovation and dedication.
- A special congratulations to Nikki Schwagermann, who received the **Emerging Leader Award**. Nikki has given 13 years of committed service to DSWA and this award is a well-deserved honour.
- We were also incredibly humbled to receive the **Outstanding Leader Award** – a reflection of the strength of our team and the support we receive from you, our wonderful community.

Thank you for being part of everything we do. I look forward to an equally exciting June ahead.

Warm regards
Cassandra
Cassandra Hughes



DSWA Gala 2025

The 2025 Down Syndrome WA Gala Dinner was another wonderful evening filled with joy, generosity, and celebration. With 350 guests in attendance, the event was a sell-out success and a true reflection of the strength and spirit of our community.

We were incredibly proud to have the Down Syndrome WA Advisory Network (DSWAAN) host the evening. Their leadership and presence added warmth and meaning to the night. A huge thank you also goes to our wonderful staff who helped to set up, Paula, Zali and Nikki, and our 16 volunteers whose hard work and dedication behind the scenes on the night brought everything together seamlessly.

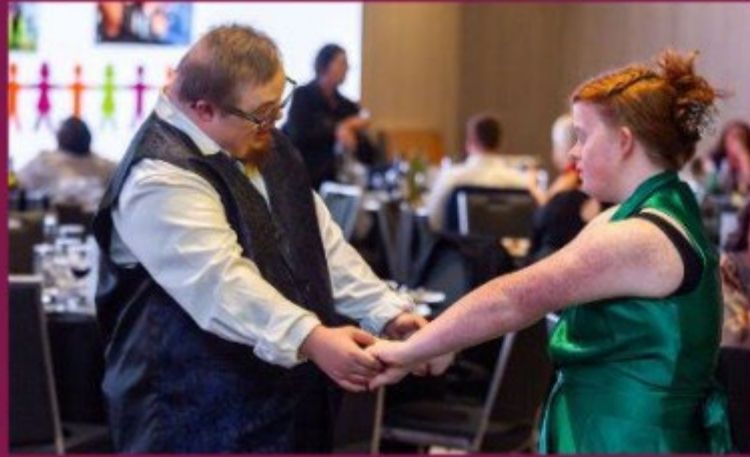
The Drycleaners Band kept the dance floor packed all night—thank you for your ongoing support and for bringing such fantastic energy to the event. We also acknowledge Dylan J King for his support on the night, helping everything run smoothly.

Thanks to our generous sponsors, prize donors, and everyone who participated in the auctions, raffles and games, the event raised over **\$35,000** — an incredible result that directly supports our work across the state. And our thanks to the PanPacific team for their wonderful service and support.

Photobooth photos from the night are available [here](#), and official photographer images will be posted on our Facebook page by the end of the week.

We're already looking forward to doing it all again. Save the date—**6 June 2026**—and keep an eye out for Early Bird tickets early in the new year.

Keep an eye on our public Facebook page for all the photos!



Meetings & Association Notes

Upcoming Board Meetings

23rd June

21st July

18th August
22nd September

Mental Health Training

In May the DSWA Office staff attended a mental health and well being course run by Darren Petersen from Take Charge.

Darren is an experienced blue-collar and ex-FIFO worker who has lived through his own mental health battles. And also one of DSWA's wonderful volunteers!

We all left the course with some new tools to help manage our own wellbeing and some tips to help friends, family and our community.

We are grateful to Darren for his support of the DSWA team.

Find out more about Darren's courses at:

<https://www.facebook.com/takechargewellbeing>

<https://takechargewellbeing.net/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/darren-petersontc/?originalSubdomain=au>



School Information Nights

Our team have been invited to two school information nights this month. Halls Head ESC- Autumn Extravaganza and Belridge Secondary ESC- Beyond School Information night.

These are great opportunities to talk with members of the community about the programs we have running and how we can support our members after leaving school.



HBF Run for a Reason

Congratulations to all the DSWA members who braved the rain at this year's HBF Run for a Reason! And a big thank you our members who raised funds for DSWA, a total of \$2,898.92!



Thank you!

In this year's HBF Run for a Reason our community raised
\$2,898.92 for DSWA!

hbf run
FOR A REASON

What's On		
29 May PCH Outreach	30 May Playgroup North	2 June Playgroup South
5 June Playgroup East	5 June PCH Outreach	6 June School Age Kids Disco
6 June Playgroup North	7 June The Life Skills Lab Forum	9 June Playgroup South
12 June PCH Outreach	29 June DSWA Community Movie Event!	23 July Parents and Bubs Morning tea

National Survey

Have you completed the National survey?

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.](#)



Survey Reminder!

Your feedback will help improve Down syndrome resources for families across Australia.



Mega Movie Outing

DSWA Movie Day – Sunday, June 29th

In late June, the whole association is invited to join us at Reading Cinemas for a private screening of the new live-action *How to Train Your Dragon*! We've booked out the entire cinema for DSWA and are aiming for a great turnout to ensure it goes ahead.

This event is open to all members and their families, whether you've been with us for years or are just getting started. It's a great way to catch up, make new connections, and enjoy a relaxed afternoon together.

Tickets are \$20 per person (no concession cards sorry). You will also receive a small popcorn and drink that is included in your ticket price.

Please note: Attendees must be DSWA members or accompanied by someone who is.

Date: Sunday, June 29th

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

Location: Reading Cinema Belmont, Cnr Knutsford Ave, Fulham St Belmont

Tickets: \$20 per person, <https://www.trybooking.com/DBELY>



Book Now

Bring your family and friends to the movies to see How to Train Your Dragon – Live-Action! Join us for a afternoon of fun, and community. Enjoy the movie and a chance to connect with others in a supportive, inclusive atmosphere.	DATE	Sunday 29th June 2025
	TIME	1:30pm for 2pm start
	VENUE	Reading Cinemas Belmont Cnr Knutsford Ave, Fulham St Belmont
Must be a member of DSWA to attend (or be attending with a DSWA member.)	Booking:	https://www.trybooking.com/DBELY
Limited seats available. Book now to avoid missing out	Price:	\$20pp includes Small Popcorn & Small Drink (sorry no companion cards)
We can't wait to see you there!		



Open Employment Program

Join the Down Syndrome WA Employment Program!

The Down Syndrome WA Employment Program continues to be a great success, and we're so proud to see many of our members thriving in meaningful and rewarding roles across a variety of workplaces.

It's always inspiring to watch our members grow in confidence, build new skills, and truly shine in their jobs.

If you or a family member is interested in being part of our Employment Program, we'd love to hear from you!

Get in touch at employment@downsyndromewa.org.au to find out more.

We're always looking for more members to join the program and take the next step toward fulfilling employment opportunities.

Let's keep building inclusive workplaces—together!

Lara
employment@downsyndromewa.org.au



As we edge closer towards the end of May, I am extremely excited for the Life Skills Lab Forum to come to life.

Over the last few weeks, we have worked closely with our DSWAAN members, our speakers and the community in WA & SA to put our program together.

We are almost at full capacity for our physical tickets, so do grab the last few tickets! (Online tickets are still available, especially for our SA community).

Date: Saturday 7 June

Time: 8.30am – 4.00pm

Venue: Belmont Hub, Level 2, 213 Wright St, Cloverdale WA 6105/ Online via Zoom

Cost: FREE

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

If you are still wondering if you should join, here are some reasons for you below!

A poster for the Life Skills Lab Forum. It features a yellow banner at the top left that says "FREE". The main title is "Life Skills Lab Forum" in large purple letters, followed by "Why Attend?" in green. Below this are three orange boxes, each with an icon and text. The first box has a plant icon and says "Learn Essential Life Skills" with subtext "Develop communication, problem solving, financial literacy, and more". The second box has a speech bubble icon and says "Engage in Real Conversations" with subtext "Share experiences, ask questions, and get advice from peers and mentors". The third box has a person climbing a mountain icon and says "Get Ready for the Future" with subtext "Gain skills to face life with independence and resilience". To the right of these boxes are three icons with text: a calendar icon for "Saturday, 7 June 2025", a location pin icon for "Belmont Hub/ Online via Zoom", and a group of people icon for "Open to Adults with Down Syndrome, Parents & Support Workers". At the bottom right is a QR code with an envelope icon in the center and the text "Scan to register" below it. The Down Syndrome Western Australia logo is at the bottom left.

Get Involved

Family Support



PCH Outreach

It has been pretty quiet for visits at PCH over the month of May (which is great knowing that not many of our kids have been sick in hospital)

Just a reminder with the cooler weather coming, Nikki will be at PCH on Thursdays. If you are there for an appointment or on the ward, be sure to reach out to her for a visit, coffee, something to eat and a chat - familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au or 0480311739

Mothers day Paint and Sip

Our very first Mother's Day Paint and Sip was a fabulous success, with 32 wonderful mums- of kids big and small - joining us for a night to remember!

There was delicious food, a few cheeky drinks, plenty of paint, and lots of laughter. The room was filled with chatter, creativity, and connection, as old friends caught up and new friendships blossomed.

Thank you to everyone who came along and made it such a special, joy-filled evening!



Parent and Bubs Morning tea - Belmont

This terms Parents and Bubs morning tea was very busy with 8 families joining the Family support team.

It was lovely to hear witness the connections between mums and watch the bubs all playing together.

We were also joined by Hannah from The Kids Research Institute, who shared some information about the RSV immunisation study that they conducting at the moment. She shared some valuable information about RSV with our new mums who have not had any experience with it.

If you have a child under 2 and are interested in taking part in the study, please email STAMP_RSV@thekids.org.au See the flyer below.

We need your help!

Researchers from The Kids Research Institute Australia are hoping to learn more about how respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, affects your family.

- RSV is a common cause of runny noses, coughs and fever. It can make young kids very sick and require treatment in hospital.
- We would like to speak with **parents and carers of young children at a higher risk for RSV infections**. Researchers will ask how RSV affects your family, and what information is important to you when learning about RSV immunisations.

If you have a child aged under 2 years who:

- was born very pre-term (32 weeks or earlier), and/or
- has a heart or lung condition, and/or
- has a chromosomal abnormality



we would love to hear from you!



Scan the QR code or click **HERE** to sign up, or contact **STAMP_RSV@thekids.org.au** for more information.





Parents & Bubs Morning Tea

DSWA is so excited to be bringing the Parents and Bubs Morning Tea to the southern suburbs.

This free morning tea offers an incredible opportunity to connect with other parents at a similar life stage to you. Please join our Family Support team, Nikki and Paula, and the Down Syndrome WA CEO, Cassandra, for this wonderful morning.

We invite you to bring along your bub (ages 0 to 2 welcome) and ask all the questions, connect with others, and enjoy our brilliant community.

Date: Wednesday, July 23rd

Time: 10am to 12pm

Location: Ellie's Café, Port Kennedy

Register for free: <https://www.trybooking.com/DCBDQ>

New Parent Morning Tea

We invite new parents (both mums and dads!) of bubs with T21 to join us for a beautiful morning tea. This is an opportunity to connect with other parents at a similar life stage to you as well as to meet the DSWA Family Support Team



DATE	Wednesday 23rd July
TIME	10:00am to 12:00pm
VENUE	Ellie's Cafe 3/397 Warnbro Sound Ave, Port Kennedy WA 6172
RSVP	Trybooking link



Down Syndrome
Western Australia

Regional Outreach

Wheatbelt Regional Outreach Launch

We were absolutely thrilled to officially launch our Wheatbelt Regional Outreach on Wednesday, 21st May!

Cassandra and Nikki had the pleasure of connecting with four wonderful families, as well as welcoming Northam Shire CEO Debbie Terelinck and Shire President Chris Antonio. It was a heartwarming day filled with connection, community spirit, and shared goals.

This launch marks an exciting step forward in strengthening our ties with members across the Wheatbelt region. We can't wait to bring people together more often—to share stories, offer support, and celebrate everything that makes our community so special.

Here's to new beginnings and growing connections!



Playgroups

Supported by



Playgroup East

We had a beautiful morning celebrating mothers for our first ever East Playgroup session this month. It was lovely to welcome new families and to see familiar faces too.

The children enjoyed singing, making flowers for mum with hand prints and playdough, navigating an obstacle course and more with a selection of toys from Belmont Toy Library.

Our next session will be on Thursday 5th June at 9:30am in Meeting Rooms 2/3 at the Rivervale Community Centre which means we will have a fantastic outdoor playground to enjoy as well.

Looking forward to seeing many beautiful faces there!

Anita

playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au





Playgroup South

What a beautiful few weeks we've enjoyed at Playgroup South.

We've celebrated Mother's day, enjoyed the sunshine and had some cereal sensory fun. Our fruit loop necklaces were delicious treat.

Mostly we enjoyed a space for where our families can engage and connect with each other by sharing our experiences and stories over a warm coffee and morning tea.

Playgroup South is held every morning 930am to 1130am of the school term in Baldvis.

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



Playgroup North

Playgroup North has had a Magnificent May!

Our gorgeous families have enjoyed making Anzac biscuits in our belated Anzac Day tribute, painted beautiful plant pots for Mother's Day, been on a Bear Hunt adventure, complete with ooey gooey mud and BEAR plus we've Rocked Out in our Playgroup Rockband!

We can't wait to see you all for our Dinosaur Dig, Sensorium Sessions and NAIDOC week celebration to finish off Term 2.

Karina and Anita
playgroup@downsyndromewa.org.au



School Age Kids Disco

Get Ready to Boogie – It's Disco Time!

We're cranking up the music and switching on the disco lights for a DSWA Kids' Disco Night – and it's going to be epic! This one's just for our school-age kids, and trust us, you won't want to miss it.

Kick off the night with pizza and drinks from 5:30 PM – 6:00 PM, then hit the dance floor from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM for non-stop tunes, laughs, and unforgettable fun!

Don't forget to strike a pose in our photo booth and snap some magical memories to take home.

Bring a friend, a sibling – or both! This party is for everyone who loves to dance, laugh, and eat pizza (no T21 required). The more, the merrier!

Dress to impress – sparkles, sequins, and funky outfits are highly encouraged.

Let's make it a night to remember!

Date: Friday, June 6th

Time: 5:30pm to 8:00pm

Location: Reabold Tennis Club, Floreat

Booking link: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1400933>



Kids Club

Supported by



STAN PERRON
CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION

For our May event the Kids Club enjoyed a drumming workshop with Drumming Fix. Drumming, singing, and dancing filled the afternoon with lots of fun (and noise). Children got a turn at all instruments, switching between them throughout the 1-hour workshop.

It was great to see everyone get involved, trying out the instruments and showing off their dance moves to the group. After the event we had an afternoon tea and a play at Braithwaite Park.

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

June - DSWA Movie Event!

Join the DSWA Community for a private screening of the new live-action How to Train Your Dragon! We've booked out the entire cinema for DSWA!

See all the [details here](#).

May Event- Movement with Mobius

On Saturday, the Friends for Life and Aim High crews headed over to Mobius Health and Performance for a group exercise physio class. We had a good turnout with nine people join in (we did miss a few who couldn't make it last minute)

We kicked things off with a warm-up on the bikes and rowers, then jumped straight into a relay race and a game of tunnel ball (made extra fun with a 3kg medicine ball).

After that, it was onto the main circuit: 10 different stations covering everything from ball slams and step-ups to squats and balance exercises. There was a bit of everything, and everyone gave it all of their effort.

Big thanks to Dan and Leon from Mobius for running the session - they really brought the energy and made it a great experience for everyone.

Once we wrapped up, we headed across the road to the café for a well-earned drink and a bit of downtime to catch up and relax.



Stay Connected

PCH Care Circle

The Care Circle at PCH is an opportunity for parents of children who are inpatients to find some time to recenter and replenish their energy levels. This is time for self-care, mindfulness and meditation.

It will be held in the Multi-Faith Centre on Level 5 at PCH (entrance via the green lifts) and is open to all caregivers.

Sessions will be three times a week and run for an hour. For more information people can contact the Pastoral Care team on care.cahs@health.wa.gov.au or 6456 0507.



Right to Work

The Down Syndrome Australia Right to Work petition has reached over 10,000 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/bfsWDOC>



Thank you!

Celebrating over 10,000 signatures on our petition!



Down Syndrome
Australia



Supporting Siblings Webinars

Siblings Australia and Belongside Families are bringing families of children with disability a FREE five-part webinar series focused on supporting siblings.

Each session combines expert guidance with lived experience through practical presentations and open conversations with professionals, parents, and carers. You'll gain tools and strategies to build resilience, strengthen sibling relationships, and support the needs of every child in your family.


The five-part webinar series will cover:

- Understanding the Sibling Experience: Tuesday, May 27
- Supporting Relationships & Resilience: Tuesday, June 3
- The Sibling Role: Now & Into the Future: Tuesday, June 10
- Building School & Community Connections: Tuesday, June 17
- Sibling Support in Medically Complex Families: Tuesday, June 24

All sessions run from 12pm-12:45pm for those in NSW, QLD and VIC, 11:30am-12.15pm for those in SA or 10:00am-10.45am for those in WA.

Register to attend live or receive a recording:


<https://collections.humanitix.com/siblings>



Free 5-Part Webinar Series

Understanding the Sibling Experience

SUPPORTING SIBLINGS WEBINAR SERIES

 Session 1:
Tue 27 May
12:00PM NSW Time

**Belongside
Families**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Siblings ²⁵
australia inc
for siblings of children and adults with disability/illness

Equity in Cervical Screening

Researchers at the University of Sydney are conducting a consultation about accessing cervical screening for women and people with a cervix with lived experience of disability and their supporters.

We are looking to talk to people who meet the following criteria:

- Women and people with a cervix who have lived experience of disability (and their paid and informal supporters);
- Aged between 24 and 75 years old; and,
- Eligible for cervical screening.

Participating in the consultation is voluntary. You will be asked to complete the following research activities:

- One focus group interview that will take about 60 minutes. The participant can choose whether they participate in the interview via video call or in person. They can stop the focus group at any stage.

To thank the individuals for participating, they will be provided with a \$60 voucher.

To participate and, for further information, contact Emily Gosden-Kaye: emily.gosden-kaye@sydney.edu.au



The Council for Intellectual Disability (CID) invites health professionals to a free online Inclusive Health Workshop.

Why this workshop matters:

Many people with intellectual disability have worse health outcomes in Australia. This workshop supports the NSQHS Standards and shows how health services can be more inclusive and person-centred.

By joining, you will:

- Hear from people with lived experience
- Learn inclusive communication tips
- Understand how to make reasonable adjustments
- Get free tools and resources to use in your work
- Find out about our free online training

Workshop Details:

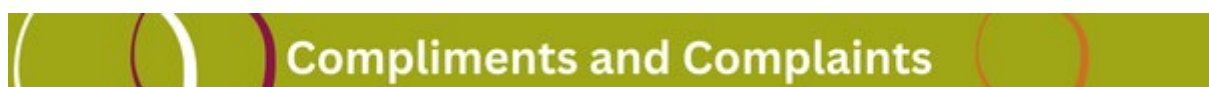
Date: Thursday 26 June 2025

Time: 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM (AEST)

Where: Online

Cost: Free

Register here: <https://cid.org.au/event/just-include-me-jun/>



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



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<http://downsyndrome.org.au/wa/>

(08) 6182 3690

complaints@downsyndromewa.org.au

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