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Acting CEOs Corner

Happy September, everyone!

It's lovely to see the warmer days arriving and to have more opportunities to get outside and enjoy the sunshine.

Firstly, I would like to extend a very special congratulations to our wonderful CEO, Cassandra, on her beautiful wedding. Cas and Dylan were married at the stunning Bell Tower last weekend, surrounded by family and friends.

Cas is now enjoying a well-deserved break with her new husband, and we hope they have a wonderful time celebrating this very special chapter together.

Congratulations again, Cas and Dylan, from all of us at Down Syndrome WA – our staff, Board and the wider DSWA community. We wish you both a lifetime of happiness together!

StepUP! and Dance for Down Syndrome

As many of you know, I have been involved with StepUP! for many years now – so many that I've honestly lost count! Some of you may even remember when it was called the Buddy Walk, and we would all meet up for a big walk around Lake Monger.

Over the years, the event has grown and evolved with feedback from our community. Today, StepUP! is all about coming together, dancing, having fun and celebrating the wonderful contribution people with Down syndrome make to our community.

It has been fantastic to see so many people already registered for this year's event, and even more exciting to see our fundraising teams getting behind the cause.

Fundraising is a really important part of StepUP!

The money raised directly supports Down Syndrome WA and the people and families we work with across Western Australia. It also helps us continue to grow and deliver events like StepUP! for our community into the future.

If you haven't already, we would love you to set up a fundraising page and share it with your family, friends, workmates and community. Every donation, no matter how big or small, makes a difference.

And imagine if every family registered for StepUP! raised just \$100 – together, that could make a huge difference to DSWA and help us keep this much-loved event going strong for years to come.

Sign up at <https://www.mycause.com.au/events/stepup2026>

So, let's not just StepUP! and Dance – let's fundraise together and make this year's event our biggest and strongest yet! I look forward to seeing you all there.

Telethon Family Festival

Down Syndrome WA is incredibly proud to be a beneficiary of Telethon, and we're excited to be part of the Telethon Family Festival again this year!

Join us on Sunday, 18 October for a wonderful day of family fun, community and celebration.

If you're heading along to the festival, make sure you come and find the DSWA stall, say hello and have a chat with our team. We'd love to see you!

We're looking forward to another fantastic day supporting Telethon and celebrating our wonderful WA community.

Nikki
Nikki Schwagermann
Acting CEO, DSWA
nikki@downsyndromewa.org.au

AGM

The DSWA Board invite you to the 2026 Annual General Meeting.

Date: Wednesday 21st October

Time: 7pm

Venue: The Belmont Hub, Level 2, 213 Wright St, Cloverdale

RSVP: secretary@downsyndromewa.org.au

Online: Please advise the Secretary that you wish to join online for link.

Join the Board to celebrate and reflect on 2026 and enjoy some light refreshments afterward.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 21 October

The Down Syndrome WA Board invite you to
the 2026 Annual General Meeting

DATE: Wednesday 21 October 2026

TIME: 7pm

VENUE: The Belmont Hub Level 2, 213 Wright St, Cloverdale.

RSVP: Secretary@downsyndromewa.org.au

Online: Please advise Secretary that you wish to join online for link

*Join the Board to celebrate and reflect on 2026 and
enjoy some light refreshments afterward.*

StepUP! and Dance

StepUP! is our annual fundraising event held every October during Down Syndrome Awareness Month. Every dollar raised in WA stays in WA, helping Down Syndrome WA provide vital support, advocacy, education and opportunities for people with Down syndrome and their families across our state.

Join us by dancing and celebrating at the StepUP! and Dance event, fundraising, making a donation, or getting involved your own way. Host a cupcake stall, take on a push-up challenge, organise a dress-up day, or create your own fundraiser. However, you choose to participate, you'll be making a real difference for WA families.

Book your tickets, register to fundraise, or make a donation at
<https://www.mycase.com.au/events/stepup2026>

StepUP! and Dance Community Event

Get ready to dance, connect and celebrate at our biggest fundraiser of the year. Invite your family and friends, everyone is welcome!

When: Sunday 11 October from 10am – 2pm

Where: Sir James Mitchell Park

(<https://maps.app.goo.gl/oohW8yxXLnNGxym68>), corner of Mill Point Road

and Coode Street, South Perth (**Please note the new location**)

Tickets: \$20 per person (children under 2 free)

Join us for:

- 🎵 Live music and dancing
- 🛍️ Market stalls
- 🍔 Delicious food vans including gluten free
- 🌭 Sausage sizzle
- 🎪 Activities for all ages

Whether you dance, fundraise or cheer from the sidelines, every dollar raised helps Down Syndrome WA continue supporting people with Down syndrome and their families across Western Australia.

Book your tickets or register to fundraise at
<https://www.mycase.com.au/events/stepup2026>

What's On



Get Involved

Family Support Team



PCH Outreach

We're Here to Support You

If you're attending an appointment or staying as an inpatient at PCH, we'd love the opportunity to meet you.

Nikki and Paula are at PCH on a rotating basis every Thursday, and we're always happy to have a chat, answer questions, share experiences, or simply be there for you and your family.

If you'd like to catch up with us while you're at PCH, please don't hesitate to get in touch. You can contact us directly on our mobile numbers or email us at FamilySupport@downsyndromewa.org.au.

We look forward to meeting you and being there to support you and your family.

Nikki: 0480 311 739
Paula: 0435 831 085

Key Word Sign Workshop

Our final Key Word Sign workshop for the year is coming up in November! You must have completed the Beginner's Workshop.

Intermediate Course

Ready to build on your key word sign skills? This intermediate course will help you learn more about Key Word Sign and using gesture in everyday life.

You'll learn how to:

- Choose and adapt signs for everyday activities and routines
- Use signs during games and songs
- Create a sign-friendly environment
- Encourage others to use Key Word Sign
- Use practical strategies, resources and supportive techniques

NDIS Information

Can I use my child's NDIS funds to attend? If you are self-managed or plan-managed – YES! This workshop helps parents and carers build the skills and capacity to support their child in achieving their goals.

Can I attend if I don't have a child on NDIS? Yes! Simply select the 'Public' ticket option when booking.

Workshop Details

- 📅 Date: Thursday 26th November
- 🕒 Time: 9:30am – 4:00pm
- 📍 Location: Belmont Hub, 213 Wright street, Cloverdale
- 🔑 Bookings essential - <https://www.trybooking.com/DKVPM>



- 📅 Thursday 26th November
- 🕒 9:30am - 4pm
- 📍 Belmont Hub
213 Wright St, Cloverdale



Toilet Training Workshop

Join our online Toilet Training workshop presented by Annie Hansen Senior Continence Nurse Consultant from Steady Steps for an informative workshop designed for family members, support workers, and caregivers.

This session will cover essential information about bladder and bowel functioning, recognize key red flags, and provide helpful training tips to support toilet training at home or in care settings.

Workshop Details

- 📅 Date: Wednesday 11th November
- 🕒 Time: 7:00pm – 8:30pm
- 📍 Location: Online
- 🔑 Booking: Essential - <https://www.trybooking.com/DPHDI>
- Cost: \$5

Online

Toilet Training Workshop!

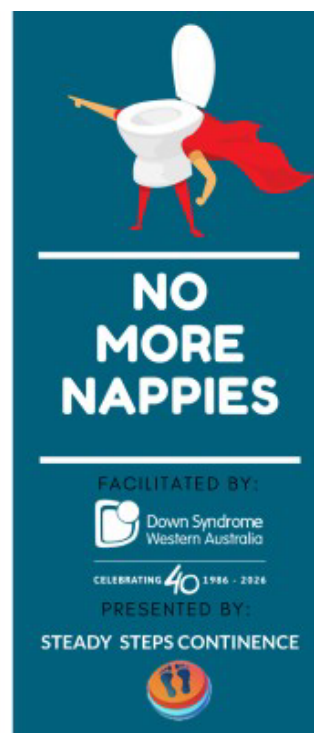
DATE: Wednesday 11th November
TIME: 7pm to 8:30pm
WHERE: Online via Teams
COST: \$5 per Family
PRESENTER Annie Hansen
Continence Nurse Consultant



BOOK NOW

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

CONTACT
familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au



Christmas Party

It's time to start getting excited because the annual DSWA Christmas Party is coming soon!

We're getting together to celebrate another amazing year with our DSWA community!

There'll be plenty of Christmas fun, laughs and, of course, a visit from the big man himself!

More details are coming soon, so pop the date in your calendar and keep an eye out for the booking information!

 Saturday 5th December 2026

 Time: 2pm-4pm

We can't wait to celebrate with you!



Regional Outreach

Regional October Catch-Ups

Our October Regional Catch-Ups are coming up! These will be our last catch-ups of the year before our regional Christmas parties.

Come along for a coffee, something to eat and a chance to catch up with other DSWA members living in your region.

Booking is essential so we know how many people are coming. We hope to see you there!

Great Southern Catch-Up

 Sunday 25th October

 2:00pm – 3:30pm

 Handasyde Café

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

South West Catch-Up

 Saturday 24th October

 2:00pm – 3:30pm

 Dome Café Koombana Bay

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

Peel & Surrounds Catch-Up

 Saturday 24th October

 2:00pm – 3:30pm

📍 Jamaica Blue Secret Harbour

🔑 Book here: <https://www.trybooking.com/DQELE>

Midwest Catch-Up

📅 Sunday 25th October

🕒 2:00pm – 3:30pm

📍 Dome Café Geraldton

🔑 Book here: <https://www.trybooking.com/DQELM>

If you have any questions, please email
familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au.

Regional Facebook Groups

We are working hard to increase the information we share with our regional families. Don't forget to join the Facebook community for your region:

- [Great Southern](#)
- [Midwest](#)
- [Peel and Surrounds](#)
- [South West](#)
- [Wheatbelt](#)

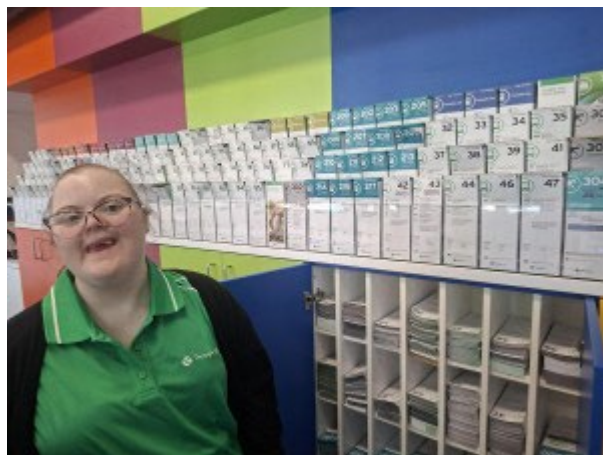
Open Employment Program

Congratulations Lileigh!

A big CONGRATULATIONS to Lileigh! 🎉

Lileigh has been doing work experience with Transperth.

She has been learning new skills, meeting new people and getting experience in a real workplace.



Employment Event

Isabelle and DSWA member Sian went to an Inclusive Employment Event in September.

Sian helped share what it is like to look for work and have a job. They spoke with businesses and other organisations about inclusive employment.



They were proud to have a DSWA stall and Isabelle facilitated a group discussion about creating meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Sian shared her employment journey and spoke openly about her experience working at Curtin University as a person with Down Syndrome. Sian shared what has helped her thrive in her workplace

and the importance of having the right support and opportunities.

One of the highlights of the evening was hearing Eliza's employment story. Eliza works at The Westin Perth, where she brings attention to detail and genuine passion for helping guests. Listening to her employer discuss how easy and rewarding the process has been makes me feel hopeful for the future of inclusive employment.

A big thank you to Town of Cambridge for creating a space to have these important conversations and bringing the disability community together.

Inclusive employment starts with an opportunity. Sometimes, all someone needs is the chance to show you what they can do.

Ready for Work is Coming Up!

Are you thinking about getting a job?

Our next Ready for Work program is coming soon!

Ready for Work helps you learn important skills for getting and keeping a job.

You can learn about:

- Getting ready for work
- Talking to employers
- Job applications
- Working with other people
- Being confident at work
- Workplace skills and expectations
- Interview Skills
- First Impressions

It is a great first step towards your employment journey!

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

To find out more or discuss employment opportunities, please contact Isabelle at employment@downsyndromewa.org.au.

READY FOR WORK COURSE - STARTING SOON!

Is your child leaving school this year?

Our Ready For Work program can help you take those first steps towards employment



Date: Monday 26th October

Time: 9am - 12pm

Venue: 213 Wright St,
Cloverdale WA



CELEBRATING 40 1986 - 2026

Dress for Success

Only 3 spots left!!

Are you a woman with Down Syndrome aged 16+?

Our Dress for Success workshop is nearly here and we only have 3 spots left!

- Make sure you book your spot so that you don't miss out on the following:
- Learn how to style outfits
- Choose outfits that suit your body type
- Learn what to wear for different events
- Enjoy a makeup masterclass

Receive a FREE outfit to take home

Book your spot at <https://www.trybooking.com/DOFYO>

DRESS FOR SUCCESS



Date: Thursday 8th October

Time: 9:00 am - 1:30pm

Venue: 1141r Hay street, West
Perth, WA, 6005

Presented by:



Western
Australia

Facilitated by:



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Adult Workshops and Events

Acting Course

Our second acting course was so much fun. Act Up WA helped everyone learn dance moves and words to songs that were acted out as a group.

People got more confident and made new friends. Everyone tried something new and we had lots of laughs.

Act Up WA are joining us at [StepUP!](#) in October, if you would like to take part in some acting fun make sure you come along.



Living My Best Life

Starting 7th October we are holding the living my best life course again.



6 hours of activities including healthy eating, kitchen skills and cooking as well as money management and online safety to name some of the things we will be doing.

We have 5 action packed days planned for people aged 16 and over. Hosted in the Belmont Hub where we have access to the library and a demonstration kitchen.

Last time it was a great success and we are offering all of this for free.

The sign up link is here - <https://www.trybooking.com/DOEXT>

Coffee Club

Our coffee club offers adults aged 35 and over a place to chat and enjoy a relaxing start to the week. The coffee club brings people together and allows friendships to blossom and events, news and ideas to be shared.



Due to the public holiday the next coffee club will be held on the 5th October.

It starts at 10am and will be at The Coffee Club Forrest Chase.

The sign up link is here - <https://www.trybooking.com/DJJAW>

Skills Through Dance

Our Skills through dance classes have begun and everyone is having so much fun!

Come see us perform at StepUp!!

Digital Community Champions Program

Down Syndrome WA is partnering with Digital Inclusion WA to help people become more confident with online safety and scams.

Digital Community Champions Program



This program trains young adults to run information sessions for their friends and family.

Could YOU be a Digital Community Champion?

- Do you like helping people?
- Do you enjoy using your phone or computer?
- Do you want to learn new skills and help your community?

As a Champion, you will:

- Learn new digital skills
- Learn how to run a group session

- Help your friends, family and community
- Become a leader and share what you know!

You will get training and support along the way.

Link: <https://www.trybooking.com/DPXPA>

Photography Workshop

Join us in October for an exciting workshop with Perth Centre For Photography.

In this workshop you will learn important photography skills and how to express yourself through art and photography.

They will teach you how to take portrait photos of other people. In November you will get the amazing opportunity to take the new DSWA Board members portraits, DSWA staff and DSWAAN members portrait photo which will be used for GALA and on the website.



You will also get the chance to capture video stories of DSWA members in the community.

If you love taking photos and capturing videos this workshop is for you! It will be run in King's Park where you can capture the beautiful nature and surroundings.

Saturday 24th of October : <https://www.trybooking.com/DPZNW>

Fremantle After Dark Tour

During this walking tour led by WA police, they will teach us about being safe at night, what to do in unsafe environments, how to handle anti-social behaviour, how to find help during an emergency and where to sit on public

transport at night.

Afterwards WA Police will answer any questions you may have.
This tour will provide you with the knowledge, skills and confidence to stay safe out at night.

Everyone will grab dinner together during the session at Old Shanghai in Fremantle, food and drinks for dinner will be at your own cost.

Link: <https://www.trybooking.com/DPZIQ>



Aim High

Aim High September – Arts & Craft

Join us in September for an evening of arts and crafts and get creative.

You can make earrings, paint watercolour, sculpt air dry clay or paint a tote bag.

We will be chatting, making things and having fun.

What better way to start the weekend?

When: Friday 25th September

Where: The Sunshine Lane, 89 Eighth Avenue, Maylands, WA, 6051

Cost: Free admission

Booking link: <https://www.trybooking.com/DOWIY>



We can't wait to see you all! Make sure you book your spot.

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Current Research Opportunities

How do people with neurodevelopmental conditions experience health information and healthcare?

Who can participate in our next study?

- Adults aged 18 years or older
- Currently living in Australia
- Identify as having a neurodevelopmental condition (such as autism, intellectual disability, ADHD, cerebral palsy, or others), whether formally diagnosed or self-identified

What does taking part involve?

- Flexible formats: You can share your experiences in the way that works best for you—including phone calls, video calls, in person (where possible), or email.
- Time: The interview takes about 30 to 45 minutes.
- Gift card: To say thank you for your time, participants will receive a \$50 gift card upon completing the interview.

[We want to hear about your experiences with health information. – Fill in form.](#)

Easy Read study information is also available to potential participants, on request.

How do people with neurodevelopmental conditions experience health information and healthcare?



We want to talk to adults who:

- are aged 18 years or older
- currently live in Australia
- have a neurodevelopmental condition, whether formally diagnosed or self-identified

We want to hear about your experiences with health information.



Share your experiences in the way that works best for you. Interviews can be done online, in person (where possible), or by email. We will work with you to make participation as easy and accessible as possible.

This project is being completed by a student researcher, Kirsty Haywood, as part of a PhD project at The University of Western Australia (Ethics approval: 2025/ET000873) under the supervision of Dr Kiah Evans, Dr Marya Angley, Dr Helen Wood and Dr Lisa Seubert. If you have any questions about this project, please email: kiah.evans@uwa.edu.au or kirsty.haywood@research.uwa.edu.au or phone 0405611543.

Playgroups



Welcome to our September update from Playgroup North, East and South! What a wonderful and busy month it has been. We've had lots of opportunities to come together, celebrate, create, learn and have fun with our Playgroup families.

This month we celebrated Father's Day with special crafts and goodie bags for our dads, grandads and special people. We also said a very fond farewell to our wonderful offsider Nicole, who has been part of our Playgroup family for the past four years. Nicole has now moved into a full-time role within her family business, and we wish her all the very best for this next chapter.

We were also excited to welcome Empower Dance Therapy for some fun, movement and shaking! Debbie from Signing Hands also visited our North Playgroup, giving families an opportunity to learn and explore Key Word Sign.





Over the past three weeks, we have been enjoying our spring theme with crafts, sensory play and learning Key Word Signs for insects and flowers. It has been a wonderful way to learn, play and connect together.

It certainly has been a busy September across all three Playgroups!

We wish all our wonderful Playgroup families a happy and safe school holiday break. We look forward to seeing many of you at [StepUP!](#) and welcoming everyone back for Term 4 in October.

Enjoy the break and stay safe!

Anita and Renee, Playgroup Coordinators
familysupport@downsyndromewa.org.au



Kids Club



STAN PERRON
CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION

Hi Kids Club Families!

It's nearly time for our annual [StepUP! & Dance for Down Syndrome](#) Fundraiser. We'd love to see all of our Kids Club families come along and celebrate with us!

It's always such a fun day, and this year at our Kids Club tent we will have lots of fun activities for the kids, including big bubbles, temporary tattoos and plenty more!

We really want to see you guys there!



Friends for Life



Thank you to everyone who attended our September event!

We had another chance to hit the bowling lanes and beat our scores from earlier this year.

We loved seeing the kids cheering each other on and showing off their competitive streak.

But the best part was seeing the new friendships starting to form. Some were confident enough to start their own conversations with new friends while others needed a little encouraging.

Those little moments are exactly what FriendDS 4 Life is all about! having fun, meeting new people and building friendships.

Don't forget to come and find the FriendDS 4 Life tent at [StepUP!](#)

We'll be bringing the vibes with a silent disco, so get ready to put on those headphones and BOOGIE!

Come say hi, have a dance and hang out with us! We'll see you there!



Out in the Community

NDIS Changes Webinar

Join us for a free webinar where we'll explain some of the key NDIS changes and how they may impact people with disability, families and carers in our community.

In this webinar, we will talk about:

- Some of the biggest changes to the NDIS
- When they will happen
- Where you can go for support and more information

 Date: Wednesday 30 September

 Time: 7.00 – 8.00 PM (AEST)

 Register: <https://buff.ly/ntYONaF>

This webinar is being run by the Down Syndrome Australia Consortium for members of our community. We represent people with intellectual disability caused by chromosomal variation, including people with high and complex support needs.

This webinar is for any person with disability, their family, carers or support person can attend. There will be a presentation followed by questions.



FREE WEBINAR

Changes to the NDIS: Information for people with disability and their families

Wednesday 30 September at 7PM AEST



REGISTER NOW



Down Syndrome
Australia

Mobile Cervical Screening

SHQ 2U is a nurse-led outreach pilot program providing mobile cervical screening to people with disability in metropolitan Perth in their homes.

Cervical cancer is preventable and highly treatable when found early, yet many people living with disability face barriers to testing, including transport, physical access, communication, stigma, and limited availability of person-centred health services.

SHQ 2U has been developed to help reduce these barriers by bringing safe and accessible cervical screening support closer to where people live and receive care.

You can book an appointment by phone or by filling out an online form

- 08 6375 7770
- [SHQ 2U Initial Service Request Enquiry Form - Sexual Health Quarters](#)

The service is free, but those without a Medicare card may have to pay pathology costs.

For more information about the service, including delivery areas, visit [SHQ 2U - Sexual Health Quarters](#).

This initiative received funding from the Australian Government. This pilot home-visiting CST service is supported by the WA Cervical Cancer Prevention Program.



Mobile cervical screening for people with disability

We come to you



Friendly
nurses



Private, safe
and easy



Self-testing
option



Your
choice

Make a booking - call or email us

Creative Inclusions Project Geraldton

Creative Inclusions – connecting with artists in Geraldton

Valued Lives' Creative Inclusions project is currently exploring opportunities to support artists with disability in Geraldton and the surrounding region. They are keen to hear from local artists with disability who are interested in developing their creative practice and exploring paid opportunities within their community.

This might include opportunities such as:

- Developing and facilitating their own creative workshops

- Exhibiting or selling their work
- Participating in community arts projects and events
- Connecting with other artists for mentoring or collaboration

Contact siaand@valuedlives.org.au for more information.



Compliments and Complaints

We always welcome your feedback and suggestions. Send your feedback to admin@downsyndromewa.org.au, use our [online form](#) or see the website for other methods - <https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wa/about-us/feedback/>



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