

Our Mission

Down Syndrome Foundation of Orange County is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization whose mission is to serve people with Down syndrome through educational, social and support programs delivered in partnership with individuals, families, professionals and communities.

Our Vision

A world in which people with Down syndrome live as valued members of their communities.

Our Beliefs

- We believe in the civil rights of people with Down syndrome. Protecting and promoting the rights of people with Down syndrome expands independence and choice.
- We believe in inclusion. Including people with Down syndrome in neighborhood schools, community activities and the business world benefits both the individuals and their respective communities.
- We believe that knowledge empowers. By sharing information regarding best practices, current research and effective tools, we serve both people with Down syndrome and those who support them.
- We believe in collaboration. Working with Down syndrome groups and community partners on the local, state, national and international levels enhances our ability to serve people with Down syndrome.



**DOWN SYNDROME
FOUNDATION**
OF ORANGE COUNTY

Value. Teach. Celebrate. Serve.

What Is Down Syndrome?

The most common genetic variation, Down syndrome occurs in one of every 733 live births, or about 5,000 births per year. Approximately 400,000 people living in the United States have Down syndrome. Although researchers have not determined its cause, we know that Down syndrome results from an extra 21st chromosome and affects people of all ages, races and economic levels.

Most children born with Down syndrome will experience delay in physical, cognitive and/or language development. Like all people, however, individuals with Down syndrome vary widely in their mental and physical abilities. Children with Down syndrome also have a higher risk for certain medical conditions, but most of them can be eliminated or minimized with early detection and treatment.

With loving homes, available therapies, advanced medical care, better education and greater social acceptance, people with Down syndrome can live full and satisfying lives. Each year, more teens and adults with Down syndrome graduate from high school, attend college, find employment and live independently. Awareness and acceptance continue to grow, providing increasing opportunities for people with Down syndrome to develop abilities, discover talents and realize dreams.

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Our Work

Delivering services in Orange County since 2001, Down Syndrome Foundation (“DSF”) is best known for its innovative work in developing and implementing The Learning Program™.

Guided by an expert Advisory Board as to evidence-based approaches to teaching children with Down syndrome, The Learning Program™ has become a nationally-recognized model for parent-focused educational intervention. Preschools and elementary schools have also begun to recognize the program’s value and resources.

DSF also works toward supporting and shaping the national Down syndrome movement. In collaboration with national organizations and Down syndrome affiliates, DSF contributes to awareness campaigns, policy change and regional organizational growth.

DSF’s newest venture involves collaboration with DownsEd International (www.downsed.org) and DownsEd USA (www.downsedusa.org). Working with DownsEd, world-recognized leaders in cognitive research for children with Down syndrome, DSF is helping to change the way education is delivered by bringing research-based expertise, training and materials to the United States.

Our Programs

The Learning Program™ - Orange County

- Parent and Student Classes
- Tutoring and Consultations
- Teacher and Paraprofessional Education and Materials
- Support in Accessing Curriculum
- Local and Regional Conferences
- Education-Based Recreation/Social Events

The Learning Program™ - National

- Train and Mentor Learning Program Partners across the United States
- Conference Presentations to Parents and Teachers

The Learning Program™ – Worldwide

- Online Store Offers Educational Resources for Students with Visual Learning Strengths
- Online Learning Communities and Email Groups Provide Worldwide Education Support

Fitness And Friendship

- Inclusive Sports-Based Program Focused on Athletic and Social Skills development

DSF Summer Series

- Literacy, Math and Writing
- Speech and Social Skills
- Small Group Tutoring

Advocacy and Awareness

- Community Awareness Presentations
- Educational Placement Support and Guidance



The Learning Program™

Since 2004, DSF has partnered with researchers, educators, and therapists to develop The Learning Program™. The result is an innovative program that delivers evidence-based educational support to children, parents and teachers. The program aims to improve overall development and academic success for students with Down syndrome.

Students in the program receive monthly classroom instruction focusing on skill development for literacy, mathematics, fine motor and language. Students also benefit from tutoring, therapy, special workshops and customized home-use materials.

Parents in the program receive monthly instruction on a wide range of topics such as “Teaching Your Child To Read,” “Introduction To Math,” and “Creating An Effective Learning Session.” Parents also benefit from team consultations, seminars and The Learning Program’s private email support group.

With our newest program component, teachers affiliated with the program receive information about effective teaching strategies and cognitive, developmental and educational research. The Learning Program™ team also provides teachers with free program materials for use in the classroom and telephone, email or on-site consultations.

Get Involved

- Enroll in The Learning Program™. Join other families as we work to improve educational outcomes for children with Down syndrome.
- Sponsor a child in The Learning Program™.
- Volunteer for DSF.
- Participate in the Visions Gala as a sponsor, donor, attendee or committee member.
- Shop at the DSF Online Store.
- Underwrite the printing of learning resources.
- Support us through Ralph’s Community Program, Escrip, Albertson’s Community Partners Program or Cars4causes.



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