

Services and Programs Offered Through F.R.I.E.N.D.S.

- Techniques for Success—an annual conference giving local educators and assistants at all grade levels new and better techniques to teach children with Down syndrome in the main stream classroom
- Legislative advocacy—spearheaded the UDL movement in Maryland that was signed by Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley
- Scholarships are made available for students who want to continue their education in fields that will benefit individuals with Down syndrome
- Grant opportunities for families to help assist with medical, therapeutic or educational out of pocket expenses
- Coordinating awareness campaigns to educate the general population in the four-state area is a grant that will allow families or schools to receive an iPad for their child in the K-12 to help them enhance their learning skills (available soon)
- Informal monthly meetings to coordinate activities and to fellowship with other families with Down syndrome
- Quarterly meetings with professional speakers experienced in issues relative to Down syndrome
- Annual Buddy Walk organizer and promoter in the Frederick, MD area



- Monthly newsletters highlighting social and political awareness as well as a Kids Korner to highlight a special child each month
- Many social events through-out the year, geared towards all age groups of persons with Down syndrome and their family members
- Awareness and connectivity through social networks, Facebook and Twitter

Affiliated Organizations

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) works to increase public awareness about Down syndrome, to assist families in addressing the needs of children born with this genetic condition and to Partner and encourage research.

NDSS was founded in 1979 to promote a greater understanding of the scientific, medical and developmental aspects of Down syndrome. Since that time the NDSS has grown into the largest non-governmental supporter of research, education and advocacy.



The NDSS works with 130 affiliate groups to dispel the myths associated with Down syndrome, while helping people with Down syndrome achieve their full potential in community life. NDSS develops and disseminates timely and informative materials; encourages the activities of local parent support groups; partners both regional and national conferences and scientific symposia; and undertakes major advocacy efforts—all to increase awareness and acceptance of people with Down syndrome.

The NDSS is the leading source of private funds for research into the cause of and treatment for Down syndrome. In 1997, NDSS formed a partnership with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the National Institute

of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, branches of the National Institutes of Health. This \$3.9 million partnership funds new research in Down syndrome-specific cognition and behavior. In addition, NDSS has a Science Scholar Award program that each year awards research grants to promising post-doctoral scientists who have demonstrated extraordinary skill and achievement in seeking a better understanding of Down syndrome.

National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) provides information, advocacy and support concerning all aspects of life for individuals with Down syndrome. F.R.I.E.N.D.S. shares their vision of a world that has equal rights and opportunities for all people with Down syndrome. It is the purpose of the NDSC to create a national climate in which all people will recognize and embrace the value and dignity of people with Down syndrome.

As an affiliate of NDSS and NDSC, F.R.I.E.N.D.S. continues to work at the grassroots level in the Mid-Atlantic Region to raise that awareness that both national organizations promote so well.

Get Connected to F.R.I.E.N.D.S.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Email Address: _____
Phone: _____

- Please check all that apply:
- ☐ I am a person with Down Syndrome
 - ☐ I am a family member or friend of a person with Down Syndrome
 - ☐ I am a service provider to a person with Down Syndrome
 - ☐ I am enclosing a donation to F.R.I.E.N.D.S.
 - ☐ I would like more information about F.R.I.E.N.D.S.

Please return this form to:

P.O. Box 641, Middletown, MD 21769
Or call: 240-415-0522
Or visit our website: www.friendsoffredco.org



Family Resource, Information & Education Network for Down Syndrome • Frederick County, Maryland

Small Steps... Giant Strides



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F.R.I.E.N.D.S of Frederick County

The mission of F.R.I.E.N.D.S. is to promote and enhance the quality of life for persons living with Down syndrome and provide support for their families. F.R.I.E.N.D.S. provides a wide range of services, including increased social awareness and acceptance throughout-reach programs and seminars; is an acting resource for information and education for families, as well as throughout the medical, educational and local business communities.

F.R.I.E.N.D.S. stands for Family Resource, Information & Education Network for Down Syndrome and was formed by a group of parents in June, 1999 in Frederick County, Maryland. In July 2007, F.R.I.E.N.D.S. became a federally identified 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization and listed in the Guide Star and the federal CFC publications.



Down syndrome... What does that mean to you?

To the majority of the population, just to hear that brings thoughts like retardation, incapable, slow learning, handicapped, different, and most of the time...not a perfect child.

F.R.I.E.N.D.S. was formed and organized to dispel all of the myths and labels and replace them with...



Everything Is Possible; Imagine the Possibilities; Small Steps... Giant Strides.

Down syndrome Myths and Truths:



Myth: Down syndrome is a rare genetic disorder.

Truth: Down syndrome is the most commonly occurring genetic condition. One in every 800 births results in a child with Down syndrome, representing approximately 5,000 births per year in the United States. Down syndrome affects more than 350,000 people in the United States.

Myth: Most children with Down syndrome are born to older parents.

Truth: 80% of children with Down syndrome are born to women younger than 35 years old. However, the incidence of births of children with Down syndrome increases as the age of the mother increases.

Myth: People with Down syndrome are always happy.

Truth: People with Down syndrome have feelings just like everyone else in the population. They respond to positive expressions of friendship and they are hurt and upset by inconsiderate behavior.

Myth: Children with Down syndrome must be placed in segregated special education classes.

Truth: Children with Down syndrome have been included in regular academic classrooms in schools across the country. In some instances, they are integrated into specific courses such as the Learning for Life program in the FCPS system, while in other situations; students are fully included in the regular classroom for all subjects. The degree of inclusion is based on the abilities of the individual; the trend is for full inclusion in the social and education life of the community.

What is Down syndrome?

Down syndrome is a genetic condition that occurs in approximately one in every 800 live births. It affects people of all ages, races and economic levels and is the most frequently occurring chromosomal abnormality. It occurs when there are three, rather than two, number 21 chromosomes present in every cell of the body. Instead of the usual 46 chromosomes, a person with Down syndrome has 47. It is this additional genetic material that alters the course of development and causes the characteristics associated with the syndrome. Down syndrome affects over 350,000 people in the United States alone. Recent advances in understanding of Down syndrome have resulted in dramatic improvements in the life span and potential of those who are affected.



This chromosomal disorder causes children to be different from others in many ways; however, there are many more similarities than differences. There is a wide range of mental abilities, behavior and developmental progress in all children. Children with Down syndrome also have their own personalities, talents and challenges. They will develop and learn in their own unique way and at their own pace. Just as the parent or care-giver of any child, there will be pride in their strengths and accomplishments, and there will be work required to deal with their weaknesses.

Parents of children with special needs frequently feel overwhelmed with concerns and anxieties. The job of parenting may seem complicated and unfamiliar. It is important to remember there are many resources available through **F.R.I.E.N.D.S.** and other partner out-reach organizations. The opportunities open to children with Down syndrome are greater than ever before. Loving encouragement, coupled with positive community settings, gives real hope for children with Down syndrome to gain an education and achieve a happy, independent life.

There are many local families who are ready to answer any and every question about real life with a child with Down syndrome. Please contact F.R.I.E.N.D.S. today to be put in touch with one of many caring, understanding parents who want to provide much needed support.

For more information about F.R.I.E.N.D.S. please visit our website at www.friendsoffredco.org or call **Denny Weikert** at 703-928-2494 or 240-415-0522 or via email at dweikert@friendsoffredco.org.



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