

## We Are Limitless!

### Join us in Raising DS Awareness!

October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month and DSACO is pumped to celebrate whenever and however we can all month long! Here are just a few of the ways we are recognizing the unlimited abilities of our loved ones with DS.

- **Read all about it with DSACO Book Bundles!**

DSACO will help your family celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month by sending age-appropriate books and an awareness package to your child's school. Materials will be delivered or mailed to the school to display during the month of October. The package will be sent on behalf of the students in the school who have Down syndrome and their families. There is no cost to you to have an awareness package sent to your child's school.

- **The power of the post!** This month let's flood social media with positive posts featuring the ACCOMPLISHMENTS of our loved one with DS. Our new **I AM LIMITLESS** campaign will show the community that there are no limits when it comes to the potential of people with Down syndrome. *To submit your accomplishment, please send stories along with a supporting photo/video to Morgan Halterman at mhalterman@dsaco.net. We'll feature submissions during the entire month of October on DSACO's social media accounts. Make sure to follow us so you can help us celebrate all the amazing individuals in our DSACO family.*



- **Join us for these October Down Syndrome Awareness Events**

DINE & DONATE AT MELT BAR AND GRILLED  
EASTON ON OCTOBER 3

DINE & DONATE AT BJ'S BREWHOUSE (EASTON &  
POLARIS LOCATIONS) ON OCTOBER 6 FROM 4-11 PM

GIVE BACK AT KENDRA SCOTT EASTON FROM  
4-9 PM ON OCTOBER 14

DINE & DONATE AT CHIPOTLE (6590 SAWMILL  
ROAD) FROM 5-9 PM ON OCTOBER 15

DINE & DONATE AT BUFFALO WILD WINGS (2386  
TAYLOR SQUARE DR.) FROM 5-9 PM ON OCTOBER 19

PURCHASE A BEER/HARD SELTZER AT SEVENTH  
SON BREWING ON OCTOBER 23 FROM 5-11 PM

Get involved. Help spread the word. And show the world that there are no limits when it comes to what people with Down syndrome CAN do!

Fall 2022

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# 3 / 21 UPDATE

When you talk, DSACO listens. Then we turn your words into action that makes a difference for you and your loved ones. Here are just a few ways we're using your voices to make meaningful change:

**3** As we embark on building out our next three-year Strategic Plan, we encourage you to participate in the process by completing a stakeholder survey you'll find in your inbox (or mailbox!) this October. What better way to advocate for the Down syndrome community than by letting us know where we should aim our focus? We can't wait to hear from you!

**2** If you're wondering how your feedback has already impacted the work we do here at DSACO, know that Learning Aid Ohio was born from your voices. Without you sharing your worries about your children falling behind in school during the early days of the pandemic, we never would have created an initiative—impacting thousands of children on IEPs throughout Ohio—to supplement education through free tutoring services! What's on the horizon? Well, thanks to your voices, DSACO is actively working to address equitable, high-quality childcare and accessible transportation. We will continue in our pursuit to bring your voices to the tables of influence and decision-making.

**1** If you'd like to join us more formally in our policy work, we hope you'll consider signing up for our Grassroots Advocacy Network! You'll learn about pieces of legislation that impact the DD community, become equipped with templates and scripts for advocacy alerts, and offered opportunities to share your personal stories with legislators and other state decision makers. Learn more and sign up at [www.dsaco.net/advocacy](http://www.dsaco.net/advocacy).



**DSACO**  
President and CEO



## **ALLISON (KERMAN) MILLER**

### ***Program Coordinator of Public Policy and Family Coordinator for Learning Aid Ohio***

Allison comes to DSACO from the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business where she served as a Policy Assistant. Her work included promoting policy to celebrate and uplift people with Down syndrome. She even worked with The National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC), The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), and Sean McElwee from *Born This Way* to highlight the success of small business owners with Down syndrome! Allison is eager to bring her same ideals and energy to her new position at DSACO where she will work to expand the public policy influence of our organization. She is excited to see what we can do together to advocate for and share the voices of people with Down syndrome, their families, and their communities.

Allison graduated from Capital University in December 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, International Studies, and a minor in Spanish. Allison is originally from Warren County and lives in Columbus with her husband, Josh, an Ohio State track and field athlete, and their dog, Teddy. Allison is the proud older sister of her triplet siblings: Erica, Ryan, and Lauren, who has Down syndrome. In her spare time, Allison enjoys hosting her family and friends, attending track and field meets to support her husband, and volunteering as an advisor for her sorority, Alpha Sigma Alpha.

# DSACO Is Growing to Serve You Better!

Please help us welcome the newest members of your DSACO team.



**KATIE GARCIA**

## *Program Coordinator of Medical Outreach*

Katie is not new to the DSACO family—but she does have a brand-new role with us! Katie has been a DSACO volunteer since November 2016. She previously worked with DSACO in the Marketing and Events department and recently rejoined the DSACO team in May 2022 in her new medical outreach role. As the Program Coordinator for this critical position, Katie will leverage medical marketing and logistics expertise gained during her career working at a medical device company and in account services for a local advertising agency. Katie takes significant pride in her work and is excited for the opportunity to further develop the Medical Outreach program at DSACO.

Katie lives in Delaware with her husband, Andrew, and their twins, AJ and Aviana. She enjoys traveling, music, working out, drinking wine, and spending time with her family, friends, and her two dogs.



**MARTIN HOPKINS**

## *Family Navigator for Black and African American Outreach*

As a realtor and property investor, Martin is very involved with and in touch with his community. He is bringing his intuition and commitment to nurturing inclusive, welcoming communities to his new role with DSACO. As Family Navigator for Black and African American Outreach, Martin will be working to expand and improve outreach to Black and African American families impacted by Down syndrome by providing cultural expertise and support. He comes to DSACO from OhioHealth, where he worked as a case manager. His skills in understanding needs and connecting people to the right supports will be invaluable in furthering DSACO's critical work and mission.

Martin was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio. He lives in North Linden with his wife, Sherrice, and two children, Parker and Martin Jr. Martin Jr., who was born in 2021, has Down syndrome. When Martin and his family received the diagnosis, Martin became determined to find a way to be involved with this community and to be of service to other families navigating similar circumstances. In addition to being a family man and one of his son's greatest advocates, Martin enjoys cooking on the grill, playing video games, and watching anime.

# The Latest in DS Research - Coming Soon to a Device Near You

Join us for the Virtual Down Syndrome Research Symposium this October

If you've ever been interested in learning more about research and its impact on the Down syndrome community, now's your chance to get the scoop from the comfort of your own home. DSACO, in partnership with Down Syndrome Ohio and The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), is hosting a Virtual Down Syndrome Research Symposium throughout the month of October. Join us from your laptop, phone, tablet, or other connected device for eight virtual presentations from national, regional, and local researchers as we learn about current research studies and how those studies can enhance the overall quality of life for individuals with Down syndrome. Sessions will take place on Tuesdays during the lunch hour and Thursday evenings. DSACO families can use conference scholarship funds to help cover the cost of registration.

**Learn more and reserve your spot.**

For more information on the symposium or DS research opportunities, please visit: [dsaco.net/dsresearchsymposium](https://dsaco.net/dsresearchsymposium) or contact Katie Garcia at [kgarcia@dsaco.net](mailto:kgarcia@dsaco.net).

## SYMPOSIUM *sessions* -----

**Session One:** Sensory Processing Strategies to Support Community Participation in People with Down Syndrome Throughout the Lifespan

**Tuesday, October 4 | 12 - 1 PM**

**Dr. Katie Frank**

Has anyone ever suggested that your loved one with Down syndrome has sensory processing deficits? Can transitioning between activities or places be challenging? Are certain medical procedures difficult to complete? Sensory processing impacts all of us to some degree, but for many individuals with Down syndrome, the inability to control sensory needs can impact independence and community participation. This presentation will describe sensory processing and the different ways it can affect individuals with Down syndrome throughout their lives. Dr. Frank will share practical sensory activities that can be incorporated daily as well as affordable equipment suggestions during this insightful presentation.

**Session Two:** Down Syndrome and ADHD

**Thursday, October 6 | 7 - 8:30 PM**

**Dr. Anna Esbensen**

Children with Down syndrome have a three-to-five times greater prevalence of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) than typically developing children. Despite this higher risk of ADHD, rates of stimulant medication treatment are disproportionately low in children with DS+ADHD even though stimulants are the most efficacious ADHD treatment and are recommended by consensus guidelines for use in children with intellectual disability and comorbid ADHD. Come learn about our recent research in DS+ADHD including what symptoms to watch for and medication and behavioral treatment options.

*Down Syndrome Ohio consists of the following associations: Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati, Miami Valley Down Syndrome Association, Down Syndrome Association of Greater Toledo, Down Syndrome Association of Northeast Ohio, Down Syndrome Association of the Valley, and DSACO.*

**Session Three:** Interim Analysis of the Effects of JAK Inhibition for Alopecia Areata in Down Syndrome

**Tuesday, October 11 | 12 - 1 PM**

**Dr. Angela Rachubinski**

Individuals with Down syndrome display consistent activation of the interferon response, hyperactive JAK/STAT signaling, and chronic dysregulation of the immune system. This may explain the high prevalence of immune skin conditions in people with DS, including alopecia areata. Dr. Rachubinski will describe the preliminary results of the use of the JAK inhibitor Tofacitinib (Xeljanz, Pfizer) in a Phase 2 open label clinical trial enrolling individuals with DS ages 12-50. Participants in the trial have moderate-to-severe alopecia areata, hidradenitis suppurativa, psoriasis, atopic dermatitis, and/or vitiligo over 16 weeks.

**Session Four:** Sleep and Aging in Down Syndrome

**Thursday, October 13 | 7 - 8:30 PM**

**Dr. Sigan Hartley**

In this presentation, Dr. Hartley will discuss sleep problems in adults with Down syndrome and their connection to aging and Alzheimer's disease. Join us to learn more about strategies for screening and managing sleep problems as a way of promoting healthy aging in people with Down syndrome.

**Session Five:** Down Syndrome and Celiac Disease: What is the Latest?

**Tuesday, October 18 | 12 - 1 PM**

**Dr. Steven Ciciora**

Individuals with Down syndrome are at an increased risk of developing celiac disease. During this presentation, Dr. Ciciora will review the risk in individuals with Down syndrome as well as in the general population. He will discuss how to screen for celiac disease and how best to diagnose it. He will also review a gluten free diet and examine therapies that are being investigated to treat celiac disease.

**Session Six:** Neurocognitive and Behavioral Regression in Children and Young Adults with Down Syndrome

**Thursday, October 20 | 7 - 8:30 PM**

**Dr. Jonathan Santoro**

Children and young adults with Down syndrome have been described as having a sub-acute (weeks to months) period of developmental and cognitive regression for at least 80 years. Symptoms include insomnia, catatonia, anorexia (decreased eating), hallucinations, delusions, aggression, and the sudden development of autistic features in otherwise healthy persons with Down syndrome. Onset is relatively quick, and symptoms cause a rapid reduction in the ability to perform activities of daily living. Over the past two years, Dr. Santoro has worked on phenotyping and treating this rare disease. This discussion will focus on natural history, symptoms, and potential treatments for this disorder.

**Session Seven:** Defining Health – What Does it Mean to Be Healthy?

**Tuesday, October 25 | 12 - 1 PM**

**Dr. Stephanie Santoro**

In this presentation, Dr. Santoro will discuss new research focused on the definition of health, how we think about health, what it means to be healthy, and what matters when we think about how healthy we feel. The presentation will share data focused on work to develop an instrument to measure health for individuals with Down syndrome including data from a study of mental health and family history.

**Session Eight:** Understanding and Responding to Anxiety and Depression in People with Down Syndrome

**Thursday, October 27 | 7 - 8:30 PM**

**Dr. Ruth Brown**

Mental health concerns like anxiety and depression are common in people with Down syndrome. For many, the pandemic has increased these concerns. In this presentation, Dr. Brown will describe her research on mental health in people with DS and provide practical strategies for supporting people with DS who are experiencing anxiety or depression symptoms.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

SCHOOL AGE

TEENS

ADULTS

## Get Connected to the Fun!

DSACO is so much more than the team who works in our offices every day. We are an organization made up of families across central Ohio who share a special bond. One of the most meaningful ways DSACO supports the families we serve is by fostering connections between them and creating a community of caring and support. In addition to our regular resource groups (see pages 18-19), we offer special events every season for moms, dads, siblings, and entire families to come together and enjoy getting to know each other.

You're invited! So mark your calendars. And plan to join your DSACO family for the many fun things in store this season.

## Get Pumped for Pumpkins

With fall in the air, it's time to channel your inner Linus and head out to the pumpkin patch to spend some time enjoying the season and getting to know other DSACO families. DSACO has lined up fun visits to the pumpkin patch for our early childhood and school-age play/social groups this month. Bring the whole family to join in the festivities and go home with a Great Pumpkin of your own!

### Little Buddies Playgroup *Birth through Preschool*

**Saturday, October 15**  
**2 - 4 PM**

**Lynd Fruit Farm**  
9851 Morse Road SW  
Pataskala

### School Age Social Group *Ages 5-12*

**Saturday, October 8**  
**1 - 3 PM**

**Circle S Farms**  
9015 London-Groveport Road  
Grove City

## Ross County Family Fun Day

**Saturday, November 5**  
**10 AM - 2 PM**

**Triple Crown Family Fun Center**  
1 Nancy Wilson Way | Chillicothe

Join other DSACO families for a fun and fabulous afternoon at Triple County Family Fun Center! Enjoy entry to Super Inflatable Land, filled with everything from traditional bouncing fun to inflatable slides with all kinds of cool themes your kids will love plus special inflatables designed just for toddlers and young children. All that bouncing will work up an appetite, so DSACO is providing lunch, too! Make sure to check in with us to get your wristbands for Super Inflatable Land and lunch.

The event is free, but registration is required!

Please register at [dsaco.net](https://www.dsaco.net).



## Flowers for M.O.M.S.

*Petals that Inspire Event*

**Sunday, November 13**

**2 - 4 PM**

**Combustion Brewery & Taproom**

80 West Church Street, Suite 101

Pickerington

Every mom deserves flowers. But we think DSACO moms deserve them even more! Join us for a Sunday afternoon of beautiful blooms and great conversation with other DSACO moms as you build your own fresh flower bouquet to take home and enjoy.

This event is free to DSACO Moms, but registration is required, and spots are limited!

Please register at [dsaco.net/momsoutreach](https://dsaco.net/momsoutreach) by Monday, November 7th.



## Be IEP Ready!

### Register for an Empowering IEP Kit Today

DSACO recently launched an IEP Kit Program designed to help families prepare for these important meetings. Through our ongoing partnership with Ashley Barlow—teacher, lawyer, advocate, and mom of a child with DS—we've assembled kits with a variety of informational and motivational resources to provide encouragement and empowerment leading up to your student's IEP meeting. IEP Kits will be sent to registered families during the month of the student's scheduled meeting date.

You can request an IEP Kit by registering on the DSACO website. After completing the registration form, you will receive a brief survey. The survey must be completed to finalize your registration. DSACO uses the survey responses to improve and expand the program and ensure families get the most valuable types of support and information to help with the IEP process.

Register at: [dsaco.net/iepkit](https://dsaco.net/iepkit)

Questions or suggestions? Please contact Emily Callahan at [ecallahan@dsaco.net](mailto:ecallahan@dsaco.net) or 614-263-6020 ext. 1035.

## Black and African American Resource Group

Wednesday, November 16  
7 - 8 PM

Virtual on Zoom

Connections count! So mark your calendars and plan to connect online with other DSACO families during the next Black and African American Resource Group virtual meeting.

This event is free, but registration is required. Every family that registers and attends will get a shot at winning a \$35 gift card in our raffle. If you have any questions, please contact Martin Hopkins at [mhopkins@dsaco.net](mailto:mhopkins@dsaco.net), or 614.263.6020 ext. 1080.

Join our new Facebook group for DSACO's African American Community by visiting [facebook.com/groups/3405662016225747](https://facebook.com/groups/3405662016225747)



## Reunion Virtual Familias Latinas de DSACO

Jueves 17 Noviembre  
7 - 8 PM

Virtual en Zoom

¡Este grupo de apoyo brinda una oportunidad para que las personas compartan experiencias y sentimientos personales, recursos, estrategias o información, sigamos conociendo y creando lazos de apoyo en nuestra comunidad.

Con su registro y asistencia podrán participar en la rifa de una tarjeta de regalo de \$35 dólares.



## Mes de la Herencia Hispana

Desde mediados de septiembre celebramos la cultura y las contribuciones de los estadounidenses con raíces en España, México, América Central, América del Sur y los países hispanohablantes del Caribe.

En 1968, el Congreso autorizó al presidente Lyndon B. Johnson a que proclamara la Semana Nacional de la Herencia Hispana, que incluía 15 de septiembre.

Veinte años más tarde, el 17 de agosto de 1988, el presidente Ronald Reagan reiteró un reconocimiento más amplio de los estadounidenses de origen hispano y para ello el Congreso aprobó una ley que extendió la celebración por un periodo de 31 días al que se denominó Mes Nacional de la Herencia Hispana – desde el 15 de septiembre al 15 de octubre, fecha significativa por el aniversario de la independencia de algunos países latinoamericanos como Costa Rica, El Salvador, México, Guatemala, Honduras, y Nicaragua.

¡Feliz mes de la herencia hispana!



# Celebrate the Holidays with DSACO!

## Annual Family Holiday Party

Saturday, December 10  
9 AM - 12 PM

Ohio History Center  
800 E 17th Ave. | Columbus

**COST:** \$10/family

DSACO is thrilled to be back at the Ohio History Center for this favorite annual event! Join us for a delicious breakfast then spend some time strolling through the Ohio History Connection and its many fascinating exhibits. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on hand for visits and pictures. So, bring your wish list and come celebrate the season with your DSACO family and friends.

Register at [dsaco.net/holidayparty](https://dsaco.net/holidayparty) by November 30th.



## DSACO's 2022 Adopt-A-Family Program

The DSACO Adopt-A-Family Program helps bring joy to DSACO families who find themselves in need during the holiday season. In 2021, donors helped provide gifts, basic need gift cards, and other items to 65 families, all with a child with Down syndrome.

We are thrilled to announce that this program will be offered again for the 2022 holiday season! DSACO families who would like to provide assistance as a donor are welcome to submit a donor application beginning on October 24th. DSACO families in our service area who are requesting assistance are welcome to submit an application beginning October 31st. The deadline to apply is Sunday, November 13. **Applications received after November 13 cannot be guaranteed.**

Please visit [dsaco.net/adoptfamily](https://dsaco.net/adoptfamily) for more information.

If you have any questions regarding the program, please contact Kirsti Osborne, LSW at 614.263.6020 ext. 1045 or [kosborne@dsaco.net](mailto:kosborne@dsaco.net).

## Improve Your Safety Sense with DSACO's Three-Part Safety Series

This fall, DSACO is putting the focus on safety in every sense of the word. We've lined up a three-part series with a different safety topic every month. In September, we will dive into online safety. In October, we'll tackle community safety. And we'll wrap up the series in November with a look at interpersonal safety.

Join us for one, two, or all three sessions to boost your safety savvy and find out the best ways to protect yourself in any environment. Watch your email and DSACO's Facebook page for more details and additional registration information!

### **SESSION ONE: Internet, Email, and Social Media Safety**

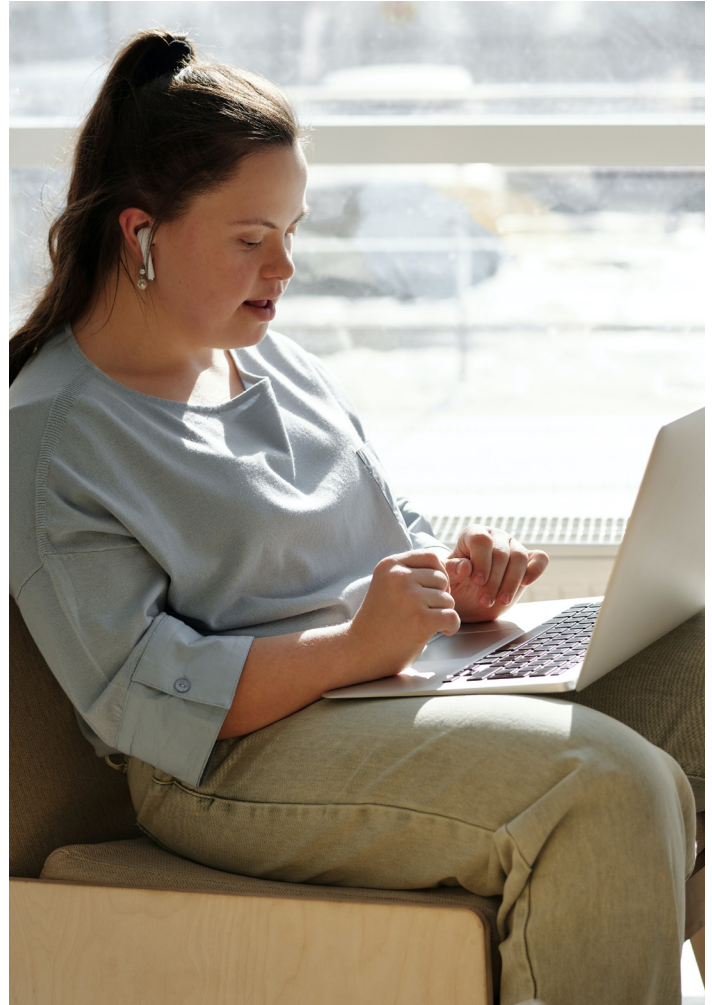
**Call Me Maybe**  
*with Allison Salamone*

**Thursday, September 29**  
**7 - 8 PM on Zoom**

Call Me Maybe examines ways in which we can safely use social media and other technology to communicate with our family, friends, and others located in our own neighborhoods and around the world. We'll discuss the issues and best practices at the forefront of safely navigating the social media landscape, including:

- Privatizing profiles
- Understanding who you are talking to and why
- Choosing when to send and accept friend requests
- Monitoring the type of information we provide to others

Join us to learn how it is possible to have safe and meaningful conversations and relationships with loved ones using technology and social media.



### **SESSION TWO: Community Safety**

**Pickerington Police Officer Brad Frost**  
*and other first-responders*

**Date, Time, and Location TBA**

*Stay tuned for more information!*

### **SESSION THREE: Interpersonal Safety**

**IMPACT: Safety**  
*with Matthew O'Brien and Olivia Caldeira*

**Date, Time, and Location TBA**

*Stay tuned for more information!*



# Medically Speaking

*with Dr. Praveena Dhawale*

## Let's Get Physical: Physical Activity Is Important All Year Round

With the dog days of summer wrapping up and cooler fall weather approaching, thoughts of snuggling up on the couch with a warm blanket can be pretty appealing. But as tempting as it is to start hibernating, it's ideal to come up with a plan for how to stay active this fall and winter. It's a little easier to get your exercise in when it's nice outside, but physical activity is important year-round. Remember that the many benefits of overall fitness and physical activity still apply, regardless of how low the mercury drops.

According to [mayoclinic.org](http://mayoclinic.org), some of the benefits include controlling weight and fighting health conditions like high cholesterol and heart disease. Exercise can also lift your mood and boost your overall energy, which can be especially important on those dark and dreary days. Sometimes the best thing to do when you're feeling overworked and stressed is to get out for a good walk or workout. This can

lead to better sleep, and who couldn't use a few more Zs? Of course, exercise in any form can also be a great way to meet other people, parents, or caregivers that share your interests. So, it's not just good for the body. It's good for the heart and soul, too.

**For kids and adults with Down syndrome, the benefits of physical activity may be even more important and wider reaching.**

Surprisingly, not many studies have been conducted to define exactly how powerful and important the benefits of physical activity are in people with Down syndrome. But it is known that there are some additional advantages. There can be improvements with balance and muscle strength as well as benefits for overall daily living skills.

**Is there a specific type of exercise that is better than others?**

Honestly, any activity is good activity. Pick activities that you or your child enjoy—that is the best way to ensure

it becomes a habit! Setting a goal of 60 minutes of activity per day is a great target, but remember, this doesn't have to be done all at once. And, if it doesn't happen daily, that's okay, too! Mix things up a bit and do some activities that involve balance, strength, and coordination in addition to some cardio-based exercises. Keep it interesting to keep it going!

**Need some help getting started?**

Want some suggestions for activities that would be fun for you and your family? DSACO can assist you with your search! DSACO can point you to the many great organizations in the central Ohio area that have an inclusive attitude, making them great choices and a little less intimidating when you want to try something new. But you certainly shouldn't feel limited to these organizations or activities. Bottom line: If you or your child want to try it, go for it! And enjoy the experience of finding activities you love!

## Not Sure What to Expect on Your Down Syndrome Journey? Start with Expecting Something Extraordinary.



### Emilio's Story - Why Not Us?

When we found out we were expecting our second baby, my husband and I were so excited! We were told that we had a five percent chance of conceiving naturally, so to find out we were having a second child was nothing short of amazing.

During a routine ultrasound, however, we were told that our baby possibly had Down syndrome. Hearing this was hard, and I felt saddened by this unexpected news.

At 39 weeks, our sweet Emilio was born. His birth was a whirlwind of emotions and shortly after we received the official diagnosis of Trisomy 21. I remember going through a roller coaster of emotions during that first month with such feelings of sadness and worrying about the unknowns. My husband and close friends were so supportive during that time and soon my feelings of “why me” and “why us” turned into “why not us?”

Connecting to DSACO early on was such an important part of this journey. I’ve been able to connect with moms who are just like me, who felt feelings like I did, and I learned more about their stories as well. It has been so amazing to have a support system and other mom mentors who are walking a similar path.

### See Our Stories on Instagram @expectingextraordinary

When you first receive your child’s diagnosis, it’s normal to not know what to expect. It’s brand-new territory. It can be a little scary. And a lot overwhelming. But while every journey is different, we are certain that you can expect something extraordinary each step of the way.

DSACO’s new Instagram page is designed to be a resource for new parents just starting their Down syndrome journeys as well as seasoned parents who are looking a little further ahead. While people with Down syndrome are just like everyone else when it comes to not knowing exactly what will come next, it does help to hear the stories of people who have been down this road before you.

Our page takes you through the stories of some of our DSACO parents—the highs, the lows, and all the in-betweens on their extraordinary rides. Whether you’re looking for reassurance or inspiration, these stories have it all. Make sure to give us a follow so you don’t miss a thing!



*My husband and close friends were so supportive during that time and soon my feelings of “why me” and “why us” turned into “why not us?”*

If I could say one thing to another mom expecting a child with Down syndrome, I would tell her that it’s okay to cry. It’s okay to be upset and to question things. Allow yourself to feel those feelings, but make sure to reach out for support. Being a part of this amazing DSACO community has helped me to openly accept that our life with Emilio might look a little different, but now I can see a bright and thriving future for him and our family. ~EMILIO’S MOM

# Voting Is Your Superpower!

Hey adults 18+, do you know you have the power to change the world? When you vote, you can make a difference in the way your world runs. Interested? Great! Then let's get started.

There are many amazing resources to help you prepare to vote. Keep in mind that whether it is your first time or hundredth time, the voting process can be a bit confusing. Never fear! DSACO is here to help. Check out the tips below to get registered and make informed decisions. Then go out there and exercise your superpower. You got this and you CAN make a difference!

## VOTING CHECKLIST:

### 1. Get registered

- Go to your local county board of elections or go to [olvr.ohiosos.gov/](http://olvr.ohiosos.gov/).
- Register by **October 11, 2022** to vote in the November 2022 election.

### 2. Find your polling place—or take advantage of absentee and early voting options

- Many people receive literature in the mail with their polling location. You can also go to [www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/toolkit/polling-location/](http://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/toolkit/polling-location/) to find your location.
- Early in-person voting begins October 12, 2022, and is available through November 7, 2022, at your local County Board of Elections. Be sure to check online or by calling your local County Board of Elections to verify hours and location.
- Absentee ballots must be completed and postmarked by November 7 or returned to your County Board of Elections on November 8.
- Voting early or absentee can take the pressure off on election day and can make the process more accessible for many. You can often get in and out more quickly, feel less rushed at the poll, and adjust when you will vote based on your schedule.

### 3. Research the issues (topics and candidates on the ballot)

- Check out [www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/toolkit/sample-ballot/](http://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/toolkit/sample-ballot/) to view your specific sample ballot.

## DATES to KNOW



### October 11

Deadline to register to vote

### November 5

Deadline to request an absentee ballot

### October 12

Absentee and early voting begins

### November 7

Early voting and absentee mailing deadline

### October 29

Early voting extended hours

### November 8

General election and absentee ballot drop off

- Sample ballots are available now through election day. This may vary by county and ward. Be sure to look up your sample ballot with the mailing address that you used to register to vote.
- This is a great way to find out who or what YOU will be voting on and gives you a chance to research things you may want to know more about.
- There are many websites and resources to help you discover what your ballot may look like so you can prepare for the voting experience. There are also many websites that can assist you in determining which candidates you want to support with your vote.

#### 4. Know your rights

- You have the right to vote in Ohio if you are an American citizen, over 18 years of age, and are registered. It's your superpower!!
- You are guaranteed an accessible ballot and accessible conditions. If these conditions are not met, please contact Disability Rights Ohio and/or the voter helpline.

#### 5. Make a plan

- After you register to vote, you can begin planning and researching. These sites can help you plan a successful election day:
  - » [www.voteriders.org/freehelp/](http://www.voteriders.org/freehelp/)
  - » [www.sos.state.oh.us/elections/voters/](http://www.sos.state.oh.us/elections/voters/)
  - » [www.disabilityrightsohio.org/voting](http://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/voting)
  - » [ddc.ohio.gov/resources-and-publications/voting/voting](http://ddc.ohio.gov/resources-and-publications/voting/voting)
  - » [www.usa.gov/voter-research](http://www.usa.gov/voter-research)
- Many rideshare services and nonprofits offer assistance for getting to your polling location on election day.

- You can bring someone with you to help you fill out your ballot, but they cannot tell you how to vote. The person you bring cannot be your employer, a member of your union, or a candidate on the ballot.



#### 6. Cast YOUR VOTE!

- You will need a valid photo ID, proof of residency at the address where you are registered to vote, and the confidence to affect change!
- Remember, you do not have to vote for each position or issue.
- You must fill in circles completely and use only blue or black ink.
- You must sign and date the ballot correctly.
- By exercising your right to vote and using your voice, YOU can make a difference!

## SAVE *the* DATE

April 17 - 19, 2023 | Washington D.C.

### 2023 NDSS Down Syndrome Advocacy Conference

Are you interested in developing the skills to be a successful self-advocate? Do you want the opportunity to affect change for your community? Do you want to meet new friends, mentors, and more?

If you answered YES to any of the above, then you may be interested in joining The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) in Washington, D.C., for the Down Syndrome Advocacy Conference.

Replacing the Buddy Walk on Washington, this conference may look familiar! It includes an optional pre-conference learning day, a legislative training day with information on NDSS's legislative priorities and advocacy trainings, and a Hill Day with the opportunity to advocate to members of congress and their staff!

Scholarships may be available to cover the costs of this conference thanks to DSACO's Marge Barnheiser Public Policy Scholarship Fund!

For more information visit [www.ndss.org/down-syndrome-advocacy-conference](http://www.ndss.org/down-syndrome-advocacy-conference).

## A Look Ahead

The leaves are barely starting to change, but DSACO is already looking ahead to an exciting 2023! Here is a sneak peek at what's on our calendar for the first quarter of the new year.

### Guardianship and Estate Planning with Derek Graham

Saturday, February 23, 2023  
10 - 11:30 AM

**Southeast Library, Meeting Room**  
3980 S. Hamilton Road | Groveport

Join attorney and DSACO parent Derek Graham, Esq., for an overview of guardianship and estate planning. Derek's presentation will focus on information important to people with disabilities and their families, including:

- Special Needs Estate Planning (why it is so important and when you should do it)
- Medicaid and Social Security (what benefits are available and why they are so important)
- When guardianship of an adult is necessary
- The various types of guardianship
- Alternatives to guardianship

Watch for more information and registration details to come soon at [dsaco.net](https://www.dsaco.net).



### Applications for DSACO's 2023 Post-Secondary Scholarships Opening Soon!

Thanks again to the generosity of the GLOW Foundation, DSACO is offering college scholarships to assist siblings, parents, cousins, and other relatives of individuals with Down syndrome who are planning to pursue careers that will positively impact the lives of their loved ones and all people with DS. Individuals with Down syndrome who are currently enrolled in a college program are also eligible and strongly encouraged to apply!

**APPLYING:** Applications open Friday, January 6, 2023. Completed applications must be received no later than Monday, January 30, at 5 PM. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Applicants must reside in one of the 23 counties in DSACO's service area.

**WINNING:** Scholarships will be awarded the week of February 27. All scholarship winners will be recognized in March and celebrated in the weeks leading up to World Down Syndrome Day. Funds can be used to pay for education expenses such as coursework, tuition, materials purchased for academic need, or other expenses approved by the institution.

For more information and to apply, visit [dsaco.net](https://www.dsaco.net).

Questions? Please contact Emily Callahan at [ecallahan@dsaco.net](mailto:ecallahan@dsaco.net) or 614.263.6020 ext. 1035.





## 2023 Dancing with Our Stars Gala

Saturday, February 4, 2023  
6:00 PM

**Hilton Columbus at Easton**  
3900 Chagrin Drive | Columbus

Save the date and join the Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio at the 2023 Dancing with Our Stars Gala for an experience like no other. This signature annual event highlights more than 40 adults with Down syndrome performing professionally choreographed dance routines for the viewing pleasure of all guests.

But guests don't just watch the dancing. They get to participate, too! Attendees can join in for a dance lesson hosted by Arthur Murray Dance Studio at the beginning of the evening and can later show off their newly learned

**STARS NEEDED!** If you are interested in performing at the Dancing with Our Stars Gala on February 4, 2023, then DSACO wants to hear from you! Visit **page 19** for more information!

dance moves once the dance floor opens to all following the presentations and performance.

This memorable evening also features a silent auction, wine pull and gift card grab, and delightful hors d'oeuvres and dinner. Proceeds support DSACO's many critical programs and services.

**Gala Ticket Sales open in November at [dsaco.net/gala](https://dsaco.net/gala).**

For additional information, including hotel accommodations, please visit **[dsaco.net/gala](https://dsaco.net/gala)** or contact Evanthia Brillhart at [ebrillhart@dsaco.net](mailto:ebrillhart@dsaco.net) or 614.263.6020 ext. 1015.

## Resource Groups

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### **D.A.D.S.**

Meets once per month | 6 PM

Monday, October 3  
Monday, November 14  
Monday, December 12

#### **Brian Stumpo**

bstumpo@columbus.rr.com

#### **Justin Whitley**

whitleyj@icloud.com

Visit DSACO D.A.D.S. Facebook group for meeting details:

[facebook.com/groups/273810587540605](https://www.facebook.com/groups/273810587540605)

### **M.O.M.S. Athens**

Saturday, October 15 | 4 – 6 PM

#### **Larry's Dawg House**

410 West Union Street | Athens

#### **Erica Williams**

ecopela1@kent.edu

#### **Gena Hendrickson**

rascals5420@yahoo.com

### **M.O.M.S. Chillicothe**

Thursday, October 6 | 6:30 PM

#### **Tumbleweed**

1150 North Bridge Street | Chillicothe

#### **Keely Wescott**

redmnm0607@hotmail.com

#### **Michelle Wallace**

michelle\_rn@outlook.com

### **M.O.M.S. – Marion**

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month | 7 PM

Saturday, October 8  
Saturday, November 12  
Saturday, December 10 (See you at the Holiday Party!)

#### **Chelsea Johnson**

chelseamjohnson1217@gmail.com

#### **Dawn Brookes**

dawn.m.brookes@gmail.com

### **M.O.M.S. – Marysville**

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month | 6 PM

Saturday, October 15  
Saturday, November 19

#### **Katie Furr**

katiel617@hotmail.com

#### **Lauren Roush**

lauren.roush1107@gmail.com

### **M.O.M.S. – Northwest**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month | 6:30 PM

Tuesday, October 18  
Tuesday, November 15

#### **Kelly Kuhns**

kellykuhns4@gmail.com

#### **Hannah Reid**

hannahreid329@gmail.com

### **M.O.M.S. – Southeast**

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month | 6 PM

Wednesday, October 12  
Wednesday, November 9  
Wednesday, December 14

#### **Yirha Torres**

dtefamily4@gmail.com

#### **Whitney Garrett**

wpwalker86@gmail.com

### **M.O.M.S. – Westerville**

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month | 6:30 PM

Thursday, October 6  
Thursday, November 3  
Thursday, December 1

#### **Beth Stanley**

bethstanley321@gmail.com

#### **Lucy Pagán**

lucillepagan@gmail.com

Visit DSACO M.O.M.S. Facebook group for M.O.M.S. meeting details:

[facebook.com/groups/297727160607506](https://www.facebook.com/groups/297727160607506)

### **Adult Stamping Club**

This social group works on paper crafting skills to create one-of-a-kind greeting cards to give to family and friends.

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month | 6:30 PM

Wednesday, October 5  
Wednesday, November 2  
Wednesday, December 7

#### **Stamping Club Contact:**

##### **Sue Leppert**

sdlbuckeye@aol.com

### **Little Buddies Parent Resource Group**

Little Buddies Parent Resource Group is a monthly group for expecting and new parents or families of children with Down syndrome in the Central Ohio area. We offer support and information for families prenatally through preschool. Dinner and childcare are provided at the meetings. Join us to discuss these upcoming topics:

Thursday, October 20 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM  
575 Diley Road | Pickerington  
[DSACO Scholarships and Resources](#)

Kirsti Osborne, DSACO's Family Engagement Manager, will be joining us this month to share about all the different scholarship programs that your family can access through DSACO as well as other resources you may not yet know about. Our scholarships can be used for camps, therapies, swim lessons, and more! There's something for everyone, and we are excited to help you explore these opportunities for your family!

Thursday, November 17 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM  
575 Diley Road | Pickerington  
[Let's Talk About Speech!](#)

This month we'll be joined by Chelsea Swain, a licensed Speech/Language Pathologist. She has worked in the Pickerington Local School District for 15 years with students in grades K-4 with various needs. She will be sharing tips and tricks to help develop speech and language skills in your child at any age. Chelsea will also answer your questions on therapy at home and in the school/preschool setting.

**No Meeting in December, we'll see you at the DSACO Holiday Party!**

### **Little Buddies Parent Resource Group Contacts:**

#### **Jen McGhee**

jenny.a.mcghee@gmail.com

#### **Whitney Garrett**

wpwalker86@gmail.com

Visit the Little Buddies Down Syndrome Parent Resource Group on Facebook for meeting details:

[facebook.com/groups/339782022866623](https://www.facebook.com/groups/339782022866623)

**High School Social Group**

Food! Games! Fun! Sounds like the perfect high school get together. Every month, the DSACO high school social group plans an exciting outing at a different location for high school age teens with DS. These events are designed to build friendships and foster independence in a safe and fun environment. They are perfect for older teens that are mostly independent and looking to connect with peers. The events are hosted by DSACO with the support of volunteers. Families are welcome to gather in their own space at the location or to drop off and pick up. DSACO provides food and drinks for the teens.

**Sports & Game Night**

**Friday, September 16 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM**  
Glen's Sports Barn | Westerville

**Boo-Tackular Halloween Party**

**Thursday, October 27 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM**  
Brookstone Club House | Westerville

**Bowling & Dinner**

**Thursday, November 15 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM**  
Star Lanes | Columbus

**High School Social Group Contacts:**

**Mandy Peterson**  
mandy\_6862@yahoo.com

**Mary Elliott**  
columbuselliotts@gmail.com

**Facebook Groups:**

DSACO D.A.D.S.

DSACO "Lending" Library

DSACO M.O.M.S.

DSACO Parents of Adults with  
Down Syndrome

Familias Latinas de DSACO

DSACO Families with Medcially  
Complex Needs

DSACO's Black and African American  
Outreach Group

Little Buddies - Down Syndrome  
Parent Resource Group

DS-ASD Parent Resource Group

# HELP WANTED!

**Dancing with Our Stars Gala****Stars Needed!**

If you are a self-advocate (18+) and you are looking for a new and exciting way to shine, then the Dancing with Our Stars Gala is for you! If you are interested in performing at the Dancing with Our Stars Gala on February 4, 2023, then DSACO wants to hear from you! You will have the opportunity to join DSACO and the Arthur Murray Dance Studio for lessons over the next few months to learn choreographed ballroom dances. Then you will show off your moves in a live performance on Gala night. No prior dance experience is necessary.

Practices take place on Saturdays throughout November, December, and January. If you are interested in the 10-week commitment, please email **Boo Krucky** at [ekrucky@dsaco.net](mailto:ekrucky@dsaco.net).

## Be an Adult Literacy Tutor!

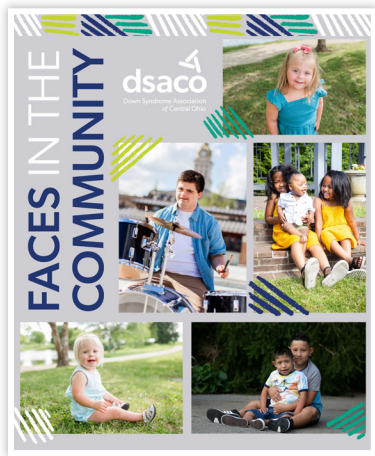
Are you a licensed educator with a passion for literacy? Do you want to be part of a life-changing initiative designed to help adults with Down syndrome improve their reading skills and build self-confidence? Then consider joining DSACO's Adult Literacy platform! This paid 1:1 tutoring opportunity allows educators to set their own flexible hours and manage their own bookings while working to empower some incredible individuals to reach their full potential.

Here is what some current tutors have shared about their experience with the program:

- "Tutoring for DSACO is the highlight of my week. I am assigned to an awesome young man who is 22. He is a delight, and his family has been amazingly supportive. I believe I am making a difference in his life, and I hope to be able to continue to work with him."
- "I cannot tell you how proud I am of the progress that my learner has made and continues to make. My eyes teared up yesterday listening to her use the learned skills. Amazing!"

For more information and to apply, visit [www.dsacoliteracy.com](http://www.dsacoliteracy.com). The application can be found under the "More" Tab! Questions? Email Rachel at [rheber@dsaco.net](mailto:rheber@dsaco.net)

*Return Service Requested*



## Get Your 2023 Faces in the Community Calendar

Looking for the perfect holiday gift for friends and family? Surprise everyone on your list with the gift that keeps on giving all year long.

The Faces in the Community Calendar features an entire year's worth of smiling faces with a whole lot of cuteness each and every month.

To order your calendars, please visit [dsaco.net/calendar](https://www.dsaco.net/calendar).

## Stay Connected!

Stay up-to-date on all the events in your area by visiting [dsaco.net](https://www.dsaco.net).

We are also active on social media! Find us by searching these platforms:



**Our Mission:** The Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio (DSACO) was incorporated in 1984 with one purpose in mind: to accomplish our mission. We exist to support families, promote community involvement, and encourage a lifetime of opportunities for people with Down syndrome. We believe this can be achieved by providing families and individuals living with Down syndrome with meaningful, convenient, and unique opportunities to discover independence and to celebrate their achievements. *Keeping Up* is a publication of the Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio (DSACO), reporting items of interest related to Down syndrome. DSACO does not promote or recommend therapy, treatment, institutions, or professional systems. Any editorials are the opinion of one person and not meant to represent the exclusive opinion of DSACO. DSACO is a 510(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are fully tax-deductible.

