

Cheers to 40 Years!

A rich history that drives us forward

1984.

In a time when

Gas was \$1.10 per gallon.

Apple released the first Mac.

***Ghostbusters* won the year at the box office.**

And Bruce Springsteen released *Born in the USA*...

Four courageous families began what is now the Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio.

The Wilkinses. The Andruses. The Browns. The Lawtons.

Their fierce advocacy and vision set the groundwork for DSACO today, which serves 1,200 families, offers numerous programs, and reaches 23 counties across Ohio.

"They truly were trailblazers and visionaries," said DSACO President and CEO Kari Jones. "We are so thankful for their drive and passionate to support families, which lives on in our organization today."

The founding families began DSACO when, according to founding member Evelyn Lawton, "there was no internet to research Down syndrome. Hospi-

tals and doctors did not provide information to new parents about [it]. There were no hospital welcome packets and gifts."

After participating in a program for families with Down syndrome at The Ohio State University Nisonger Center, the families felt an immediate need to form an organization where families could share information, resources, and begin the important work of advocacy. While their primary goal was to support young, new parents, they also wanted to educate people throughout their communities, schools, and government.

Their work reached hundreds of people throughout central Ohio, as they began:

- Testifying to the Ohio State Legislature for additional funding for special education.
- Providing parents with information about special education services and options at their schools.
- Creating the Columbus City Special Olympics Program.

"We all understood the importance of positively impacting children with special needs," said Lawton.

40 YEARS

1984-2024



While their work was widespread, their driving force was always their children. "When we received the news about our Ken's diagnosis, we never realized that accompanying him on his life's journey would be such an adventure," said Lawton. "Yes, it has often been challenging, but also immensely rewarding. Our biggest reward, is hearing Ken spontaneously say, in his own words, 'I love my life.'"

Their courage lives on in the work and spirit of the organization. "There is so much to celebrate and still so much to be done," said Jones. "We are so thankful for our DSACO families, who are our greatest resource and inspiration as we look to the next 40 years,"

Look for information coming soon about celebrating our 40th throughout the year!

3

DANCING WITH OUR STARS
GALA

4

PROGRAMMING
& EVENTS

10

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME
DAY CELEBRATION DETAILS

Winter 2024



3/21 UPDATE

Happy New Year and Happy 40th Anniversary, DSACO! It has been so inspiring and powerful to reflect on the history of our community. We have a strong and vibrant past, driven by passionate advocates. And that spirit remains today. We can't wait to celebrate this great milestone, and dive deeper into projects that support you and your families.

We have such a full and exciting year ahead! We've hit the ground running and can't wait to share all that is in store for 2024.

3 Our child care advocacy is a top priority this year. We presented the need for greater child care access and resources at the Statehouse in November, and will continue to elevate the voices of our families to effect system change that will create more opportunities and resources. We are so thankful for your input, which helped us to share data, research, and stories that support the need for more funding and access. We look forward to sharing more as we dig into more advocacy this year!

2 Learning Aid Ohio, which provides funding for in-person, supplemental learning support. This program was born from DSACO, benefits hundreds of students with Down syndrome, and also meets the needs of so many others throughout Ohio! In total, we have served over 4,000 students throughout Ohio. In 2024, we will be working hard to build sustainability with this program so that it can continue to benefit DSACO families and the broader developmental disability community on the road ahead.

1 And we are celebrating BIG this year! There are thousands of milestones and stories behind us, and a strong future ahead. We have a lot to celebrate and share in the coming months. And we can't wait to celebrate with you and your families, who inspire us each day. Thank you for being part of the growth, outreach, and change happening every day among our community. We are truly thankful for each of you!


DSACO
President and CEO

Governor DeWine Unveils Ohio PROMISE for Inclusive Support of Children with Special Needs

Governor DeWine has introduced the Ohio PROMISE initiative, a comprehensive statewide effort aimed at Promoting Resources, Opportunities, and Meaningful Inclusion through Support and Education. The initiative focuses on improving accessibility for children with special needs through the implementation of various measures, including:

- **Professional Development:** New programs to prepare and bolster the support for professionals working with children with special needs.
- **Program Designation:** Introducing a distinctive program designation to raise awareness among families and communities about the importance of supporting children with special needs.
- **Services and Supports:** Offering enhanced services and supports for both programs and families, complemented by the introduction of a new child care scholarship.

To learn more and/or apply for an Inclusive Child Care Scholarship: jfs.ohio.gov/child-care/resources/02-special-needs-child-care

Dancing with Our Stars Gala

DSACO's Dancing with Our Stars Gala Shines with Joy, Talent, and Unforgettable Moments!



Step into the Spotlight

DSACO invites you to join us for our renowned Dancing with Our Stars Gala—an enchanting evening filled with dancing, celebrations, and the creation of lasting memories. This one-of-a-kind event places a spotlight on the heart and soul of our mission.

Experience professionally choreographed ballroom dances, showcasing the incredible talents of 50 adults with Down syndrome. These individuals have eagerly mastered their routines and are excited to share their skills with you!

In a special moment during the gala, DSACO will proudly honor Ohio's Director of Developmental Disabilities, Kimberly Hauck, with the DSACO Impact Award. Director Hauck's dedication to supporting people with

developmental disabilities has made a profound impact, and we are thrilled to recognize her contributions.

As you revel in the joy of the evening, take the opportunity to discover more about DSACO's programs and initiatives that empower people with Down syndrome to shine. Get your dancing shoes ready and join us for an unforgettable night surrounded by stars—all while contributing to making their dreams come true!

Purchase tickets at: dsaco.net/gala.

Sponsorship opportunities are still available, please contact Evanthia Brillhart at ebrillhart@dsaco.net to learn more.

Dancing
with our **STARS** Gala

Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio

Saturday, February 3

6 PM | Cocktail Reception

7 PM | Dinner & Program

Hilton Columbus at Easton
3900 Chagrin Dr. | Columbus

Ticket Pricing:

VIP Registration | \$250

VIP registration includes access to the VIP Reception from 5-6 PM with open bar.

General Registration | \$150

General Registration includes dinner.

Table of Ten | \$1250

Table of ten includes dinner for ten guests.

Complimentary valet parking available for all guests, courtesy of Creative Options.

Details and registration at:
dsaco.net/gala

Can't attend? Please consider making a 100% tax deductible donation at:
dsaco.net/gala

Community Access Funds

Get out there and experience – everything!

There is an abundance of incredible events and activities within our communities. That's why we have introduced Community Access Funds, a program designed to offer financial reimbursement to people with Down syndrome. These funds can be utilized for inclusive activities in the community, with a maximum reimbursement of \$250 per year!

Important Dates for 2024:

- Q1** | Submit form & receipts by March 15 for payment by March 31
- Q2** | Submit form & receipts by June 15 for payment by June 30
- Q3** | Submit form & receipts by September 15 for payment by September 30
- Q4** | Submit form & receipts by December 15 for payment by December 31

More information: dsaco.net

Questions?

Contact Kirsti Osborne at kosborne@dsaco.net.

**We would like to express our gratitude to the Barbour family, who generously support Music & Performing Arts activities in memory of Ann Barbour.*

Fondos de Acceso a la Comunidad

Hay una gran variedad de eventos y actividades increíbles en nuestras comunidades. Es por eso que presentamos los Fondos de Acceso a la Comunidad, un programa diseñado para ofrecer reembolsos financieros a personas con síndrome de Down. ¡Estos fondos se pueden utilizar para actividades inclusivas en la comunidad, con un reembolso máximo de \$250 al año!

Proceso de envío:

El reembolso se realiza trimestralmente según el calendario de fechas límite a continuación:

- P1** | Envíe el formulario con recibos antes del 15 de marzo para el pago antes del 31 de marzo
- P2** | Envíe el formulario con recibos antes del 15 de junio para el pago antes del 30 de junio
- P3** | Envíe el formulario con recibos antes del 15 de septiembre para el pago antes del 30 de septiembre
- P4** | Envíe el formulario con recibos antes del 15 de diciembre para el pago antes del 30 de diciembre

Envía tus preguntas a Vanessa Armenta en varmenta@dsaco.net.

**Queremos expresar nuestro agradecimiento a la familia Barbour, que generosamente proporciona actividades de Música y Artes Escénicas en memoria de Ann Barbour.*

Activities that qualify for reimbursement include:

- Sports
- Swim lessons
- Gym memberships
- Personal trainer
- Gymnastics
- Summer camps
- Martial arts
- Education-based apps
- Auditing college courses
- Physical/Speech therapies (as prescribed)
- Dedicated communication devices
- Speech camp
- Art classes
- Music Classes*
- Dance*
- Instrumental lessons*
- Voice lessons*
- Theater classes*

2024 Summer Learning Academy

Enrollment Opens March 22, 2024

Mark your calendars for the upcoming DSACO Summer Learning Academy! Applications for the Summer Learning Academy will open on Friday, March 22 at 5 PM, and enrollment confirmations will be sent out by Friday, April 19. The program is scheduled to begin on Monday, June 10, and end on Thursday, July 11. Classes will run Monday through Thursday each week, from 9 AM to 12 PM daily.

Are you seeking opportunities to support your child's progress in math, literacy, and social skills during the summer months? Consider enrolling in DSACO's Summer Learning Academy! Our certified teachers employ one-on-one and small group instruction to assist students in working towards their math and literacy IEP goals, thereby minimizing summer learning loss.

To officially apply for an SLA classroom, complete a student application and submit a copy of your student's most recent IEP. Please note that incomplete applications will not be accepted. Given the limited space available, each application will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Stay tuned for more information on specific classroom locations, which will be announced soon!

To register: dsaco.net/sla

Questions? Contact Emily Callahan at ecallahan@dsaco.net or 614-263-6020 ext. 1035.



IEP Kits are Back!

Get your 2023-2024 DSACO IEP Kit

Don't forget, DSACO's IEP Kits are here to assist you with your upcoming IEP meeting. Register now to receive your IEP Kit for your student's spring and summer IEP meetings. Kits are mailed out to you the month preceding your student's IEP meeting, aligning with the academic calendar.

To receive an IEP Kit for the current academic year, please submit a registration at dsaco.net/iepkit.

Questions?

Contact Emily Callahan at ecallahan@dsaco.net or 614-263-6020 ext. 1035.



Get Your 2024 Faces in the Community Calendar

Start the new year off right with a 2024 Faces in the Community Calendar from DSACO! 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.

Calendars are \$20 each for pick-up, or \$25 each and include shipping.

To order a calendar: dsaco.net/calendar.



Post-Secondary Scholarships NOW OPEN!

Thanks to the generosity of the GLOW Foundation, DSACO is providing five \$5,000 scholarship opportunities! The Post Secondary Scholarship aims to provide crucial financial assistance to siblings, parents, cousins, or other relatives of people with Down syndrome who plan to pursue careers that will make a positive impact on the lives of people with Down syndrome. Current post-secondary students with Down syndrome are also strongly encouraged to apply!

Please include the following with your completed application:

- Completed DSACO Application, which can be found on our website
- Most recent academic transcripts
- Two letters of reference (can be professional or character)
- Completed essay on the given prompt

To be considered for a Post Secondary Scholarship, applicants must have their completed application submitted to DSACO by January 31, 2024. Applications sent in electronically must be received by 5 PM on January 31 and those sent by mail must be postmarked by the 31st. Please ensure that your application is comprehensive as incomplete applications will not be considered.

Scholarship recipients will be notified the week of March 1 and recognized March 21 for World Down Syndrome Day. Funds may be used to pay for education expenses such as coursework, tuition, or materials purchased for academic needs approved by the university.

To apply: dsaco.net/postsecondariescholarship

Questions? Contact Emily Callahan at ecallahan@dsaco.net or 614-263-6020 ext. 1035.



Couple's Date Night Kit

Cost: \$10

Pick Up: February 7 | 2-7 PM

DSACO Office

510 E. North Broadway, Suite 401
Columbus, OH 43214

Maintaining any relationship poses its difficulties, and the demands of parenting can amplify the strain on a marriage. To help DSACO parents navigate this journey, we've curated an enjoyable kit for a delightful date night at home, fostering a stronger connection with your partner. These kits will be available just in time for Valentine's Day!

To register, you must have a child with Down syndrome and live within our 23-county service area.

**Shipping is available ONLY for those who select that option at time of registration.*

***Only those who select to pick-up their kits at the DSACO office on Wednesday, February 7, will receive alcohol (due to shipping restrictions).*

To register: dsaco.net/coupleskits by Sunday, January 21.

Questions?

Contact Kirsti Osborne at kosborne@dsaco.net.

Adult Improv Classes

February 5 – April 22

Mondays 6:30 – 8:00 PM

Ruling Our eXperiences (ROX)

1335 Dublin Road #18A
Columbus, OH 43215

Cost: \$100/10-week session

The fun continues with our Adult Improv Classes! DSACO will again offer a winter session of improv classes for adults with Down syndrome, ages 18 and up. Our much-loved instructor, Jake Lees, is returning to use interactive and creativity-inspiring activities that will have a positive impact on eye contact, listening skills, quick thinking, voice projection, and teamwork.

Returning or new-to-improv participants are welcome! Class size is limited to 12 participants (first come, first served.)

To Register:

Email Boo Krucky at ekrucky@dsaco.net.



Making Waves This Winter

Two Indoor Pool Parties to Heat Up Your Season!

Westerville Community Center

350 Cleveland Avenue
Westerville, OH 43082

Teen & Adult Inclusive Swim

Sunday, February 25

5:30 - 7 PM

We're excited to partner with the Westerville Community Center again to offer our teens and adults with Down syndrome a much-loved opportunity to enjoy their wonderful and spacious indoor leisure pool and slides.

People with Down syndrome (ages 13 and up) and their friends and families are invited to the event! If you have friends who are not DSACO members, please encourage them to join you for an optional cash donation to DSACO.

To Register: dsaco.net/teenpool-party by Thursday, February 22.

School Age & Little Buddies Pool Party

Sunday, March 3

5:30 - 7 PM

Join us for a splashing good time as our Little Buddies and School Aged groups combine for an epic pool party! People with Down syndrome (ages 12 and under) and their immediate siblings are invited to join us at the Westerville Community Center for this fun family event.

To Register: dsaco.net/poolparty



Virtual Cooking Classes for Adults

Learning Never Tasted So Good
January 10 & 24, February 14 & 28, March 13 & 27
5:30 - 6:30 PM

Virtual on Zoom

Join us for an engaging virtual cooking experience tailored specifically for adults (18+) with Down syndrome. Our virtual cooking classes will take place on two Wednesday evenings every month: January 10 & 24, February 14 & 28, March 13 & 27. The sessions will be conducted via Zoom from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. It's completely free to participate!

During each 60-minute session, DSACO will provide step-by-step instructions through Zoom. We will not only guide you through the cooking process but also take the time to discuss cooking terms, offer how-to ideas, explore useful kitchen gadgets, and provide valuable information about food and kitchen safety. Rest assured, the recipes we share will consist of basic ingredients and will not require the use of complex tools. Additionally, we will include gluten-free recipes or provide gluten-free options to cater to different dietary preferences.

To ensure you have all the necessary ingredients, we will send the recipes to all participants in advance. Simply purchase the required ingredients and join us over Zoom from the comfort of your own kitchen to cook along with the group! To participate in the virtual cooking classes, you will need access to a computer, laptop, or a screen with a camera in your kitchen. We strongly recommend having a support person available to assist you.

To secure your spot, please register at least one week in advance of the class you wish to join.

To register: dsaco.net/virtualcookingclass

Questions?
Contact Boo Krucky at ekrucky@dsaco.net.



321go! Program to Promote a Healthy Lifestyle

January 29 - March 25
6 - 7:30 PM

BASH!
679 High Street B
Worthington, OH 43085

Have you heard about NDSS's 321go! program to promote healthy lifestyle choices among people with Down syndrome and their families?

In 2023, we offered a successful round of 321go! with a group of 10 DSACO adults joined by 8 OSU medical school students. It was so well-received that we would like to offer this series again to a new group of 10 adults with Down syndrome who have not yet taken part in 321go!.

Each class will provide both theoretical knowledge and practical experiences in the domains of physical activity, balanced nutrition, and emotional wellness. This 8-class program will be led by a team of OSU health sciences students and DSACO staff members.

To register: dsaco.net/321go
Class size is limited to 10 adults with Down syndrome.

Questions?
Contact Boo Krucky at ekrucky@dsaco.net.

Muskingum County Family Outreach Event

Saturday, February 17
12 - 2 PM

Sunrise Bowling Center
1940 East Pike
Zanesville, OH 43701

Join us for a fun afternoon at Sunrise Bowling Center in Zanesville, OH! DSACO is ecstatic to offer you two hours of bowling with a delicious pizza lunch included. This event is exclusively for DSACO families and provides the perfect opportunity to connect and create lasting memories with others!

The event is free, but registration is required by February 12.

To register: dsaco.net/coun-tyoutreach

Questions? Contact Lucy Maddrill at lmaddrill@dsaco.net.



Book Bundles to Celebrate World Down Syndrome Day

Celebrate your student on World Down Syndrome Day by sending a Book Bundle to their classroom! Each Book Bundle contains awareness items like bookmarks, a poster, and stickers to celebrate each student with Down syndrome. Additionally, two books and interactive resources are included to promote inclusion inside the classroom.

Book Bundles are not just for students with Down syndrome; they can also be sent to sibling's classrooms so that they can spread the mission of inclusion and share about their awesome sibling!

Registrations for Book Bundles will open on Thursday, February 1 and will close on Friday, March 1! To make sure that Book Bundles arrive on time to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day, late registrations cannot be guaranteed.

To register: dsaco.net/bookbundles

Questions? Contact Emily Callahan at ecallahan@dsaco.net.



Planning for the Future

Saturday, February 24
10 - 11:30 AM

Dublin Library, Meeting Room 1
75 North High Street
Dublin, OH 43017

Attorney and DSACO parent, Derek Graham, Esq., will provide an overview of guardianship and estate planning, with a focus on information important to people with disabilities and their families. Attendees will receive a copy of Planning for the Future and Supported Decision Making and Guardianship, both published by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council and co-authored by Derek Graham and his law partner, Logan Philipps.

Derek will cover the following topics:

- Special Needs Estate Planning
- Medicaid and Social Security
- When guardianship of an adult is necessary
- The various types of guardianship and alternatives to guardianship
- Supported Decision Making

To register: dsaco.net/events/guardianship by February 21.

Questions? Contact Kirsti Osborne at kosborne@dsaco.net.





3/21: A Global Day to Celebrate

Thursday, March 21

5:30-8 PM

Location TBD

World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) is a global awareness day on March 21, that has been officially observed by the United Nations since 2012. According to the Down Syndrome Institute, “World Down Syndrome Day creates a single global voice advocating for the rights, inclusion, and well-being of people with Down syndrome.”

The date for WDSD, being the twenty-first day of the third month (3/21), was selected to signify the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the twenty-first chromosome that results in Down syndrome.

Join DSACO and The Ohio State University’s Students Supporting People with Down Syndrome (SSPDS) at the 2024 World Down Syndrome Day Celebration on Thursday, March 21.

This year’s event will feature:

- Proud to Be Me Fashion Show
- Improv Performance by DSACO’s Improv Group
- Activities for all ages

Registration is free and will open in February 2024 at dsaco.net/wdsd.

Questions? Contact Evanthia Brillhart at ebrillhart@dsaco.net.

CALL for MODELS

If your child/adult with Down syndrome is interested in participating in the Proud to Be Me Fashion show, hosted by The Ohio State University’s SSPDS group, please visit dsaco.net/wdsd to complete the application.



Aging & Down Syndrome Caregiver Support Group

Connect and Share Online

January 23, February 27, March 26 | 6-7 PM

Virtual on Zoom

Join us for the DSACO Aging & Down Syndrome Caregiver Support Group, held monthly via Zoom. This support group, in partnership with the Central Ohio chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, is specifically designed for caregivers of aging people with Down syndrome.

During each session, caregivers will find emotional support, as well as opportunities to share their experiences and resources. Given the higher prevalence of Alzheimer’s and dementia in the Down syndrome community, these topics will receive special focus. All caregivers of aging people (40 years old or older) with Down syndrome are welcome to participate.

HOW TO JOIN US

We will meet via Zoom to include caregivers across our entire service area. If you have questions about participating virtually, please email ekrucky@dsaco.net for assistance.

To register: dsaco.net/agingsupport

You will receive an email confirmation of your registration and an introductory phone call from one of the co-facilitators. A Zoom link will be emailed to you before each meeting.

Questions? Contact Boo Krucky at ekrucky@dsaco.net.



High School Social Group

Our High School Social Group is a free monthly gathering for high school age teens with Down syndrome. The goal is to build friendships and foster independence in a safe and fun environment. These monthly events are most appropriate for older teens that are mostly independent and want to (or their parents want them to) connect with peers. The locations vary from month to month but always include games, food, and fun! The events are hosted by DSACO with the support of volunteers.

Families are welcome to gather in their own space at the location or drop off and pick up. While the teens socialize, parents are strongly encouraged to foster independence by hanging back and allowing our awesome volunteers to facilitate the outing! The goal is to allow our teens to enjoy time together without their parents hovering.

Pizza and BINGO

Tuesday, January 16 | 6:30–8:30 PM

Taranto’s Pizzeria
1282 E. Powell Road, Lewis Center, OH 43035

Teen and Adult Inclusive Swim

Sunday, February 25 | 5:30–7 PM

Westerville Community Center
350 Cleveland Avenue, Westerville, OH 43082

Bowling and Pizza

Tuesday, March 12 | 6:30–8:30 PM

Star Lanes Polaris
8655 Lyra Drive, Columbus, OH 43240

To register:

dsaco.net/hssocialgroup

High School Social Group Contacts:

Mandy Peterson

mpeterson@mvcsl.us

Mary Elliott

columbuselliotts@gmail.com



Rosca de Reyes

Entrega: 4 Enero, 2024

10 AM - 4 PM

DSACO Office

510 E. North Broadway, 4to piso
Columbus, OH 43214

El Día de los Reyes Magos se celebra cada 6 de enero en varias partes del mundo, algunos de los países que lo celebran son: España, México, Puerto Rico, Perú, Argentina, Republica Dominicana, Uruguay, Cuba, Venezuela, Alemania, Portugal, Austria, Polonia, etc.

Sucede 13 días después del nacimiento de Cristo, la historia cuenta que desde el Oriente viajaron tres Reyes para homenajear y llevar regalos al recién nacido niño Jesús. Los reyes fueron guiados por una estrella hasta la pequeña ciudad de Belén, lugar donde nació Jesús.

La tradición dice que los tres Reyes Magos llevan regalos a los niños. Además de los regalos a los niños, el elemento más común en esta fiesta es la rosca de reyes o roscón de reyes, un bollo dulce en forma circular, que parece una corona, decorada con fruta confitada y azúcar.

Aunque la celebración en cada país puede variar, es muy similar, por ejemplo:

En México: Quien encuentre la figura del niño Jesús es bendecido y debe llevarla a la iglesia más cercana el 2 de febrero (Día de la Candelaria). Esta persona tiene la responsabilidad de organizar una cena.

En Puerto Rico, en "La Víspera de Reyes" (la víspera del Día de Reyes), los niños puertorriqueños participan en el corte de pasto/hierba que luego se colocará en una caja que colocarán debajo de su cama. A los niños se les pide que escriban una lista de deseos, que luego se coloca encima de la caja. Con la magia de los reyes el contenido de la caja se convierte en regalos.

En Argentina, los niños se aseguran de colocar un par de zapatos, pasto/hierba y un tazón de agua para los camellos y el pan debajo de su árbol de Navidad. A la mañana



siguiente, los niños se despiertan con regalos debajo del árbol.

Para los cubanos, la celebración del Día de Reyes comienza cuando las familias decoran su árbol de Navidad y sacan sus belenes. Colocan las figuras de los reyes más lejos de la exhibición y las acercan al pesebre a medida que se acercan al día.

Esta tradición reúne y brinda alegría a muchas familias, para celebrar con su familia, DSACO les regala una Rosca de Reyes.

Su registro es necesario antes del 29 de Diciembre 2023, por favor visite dsaco.net/roscadereyes.

La rosca se entregará en la oficina de DSACO el jueves 4 de Enero, 2024.

¿Preguntas? por favor envíe un correo a **Vanessa Armenta** a varmenta@dsaco.net

¡FELIZ DIA DE REYES!

Reunión Virtual del Grupo de Apoyo de Familias Hispanas/Latinas

Jueves 15 Febrero

7:30-8:30 PM

Virtual en Zoom

¿Han escuchado hablar sobre Disability Rights Ohio?

Disability Rights Ohio es una organización sin fines de lucro cuya misión consiste en abogar por un Ohio equitativo para las personas con discapacidades.

Desde Octubre de 2012, Disability Righths Ohio ha servido como un sistema de protección y defensa y como programa de asistencia al cliente en Ohio.

Lo invitamos a esta reunión virtual para conocer sobre sus programas y esfuerzos de servicio de defensa.

Presentado por Disability Rights Ohio

Kerstin Sjoberg, *Director Ejecutivo*

Norma Prater Ramos, *Miembro del Consejo*

Lindsey Evans, *Especialista en Comunicaciones y Promoción*

Su registro es necesario a más tardar el 12 de Enero, 2024.

¿Preguntas? Por favor envíe un correo a **Vanessa Armenta** at varmenta@dsaco.net o visite dsaco.net/latinooutreach.



ENGLISH:

Thursday, February 15

7:30-8:30 PM

Virtual on Zoom

Have you heard of Disability Rights Ohio?

Disability Rights Ohio is a non-profit corporation with a mission to advocate for an equitable Ohio for people with disabilities.

Since October 2012, Disability Rights Ohio has served as Ohio's Protection and Advocacy system and Client Assistance Program.

Please join this virtual meeting to learn more about their advocacy efforts and services.

Presented by Disability Rights Ohio

Kerstin Sjoberg, *Executive Director*

Norma Prater Ramos, *Board member*

Lindsey Evans, *Communications & Outreach Specialist*

Registration is required by Monday Jan 12, 2024.

Questions? Please email **Vanessa Armenta** at varmenta@dsaco.net or visit dsaco.net/latinooutreach.

Celebrating the Rich Tapestry of Black History

Exploring Achievements, Acknowledging Contributions, and Embracing Diversity

Black History Month serves as an annual tribute to the remarkable achievements of African Americans and underscores their pivotal role in shaping U.S. history. Since 1976, each U.S. president has officially designated February as a dedicated time to honor this legacy. The significance of this celebration extends globally, with countries like Canada and the United Kingdom also devoting a month to the celebration of Black history.

As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we are excited to announce our upcoming event in recognition of Black History Month. Stay tuned for more details on this enriching occasion.

For more information: dsaco.net/events.



Sugnaanta Soomaaliyeed

Waad la dhameystirayaa casho kasta oo ah "MOMS" ee lagu martiqaadayo

Jimce, Janaayo 12 | 7 ilaa 9 fiidnimo

Café Istanbul Easton

3983 Worth Ave.
Columbus, OH 43219

Fadlan ku soo biir kulan ka kooban dhamaan hooyada Soomaaliyeed ee DSACO, waxaana loo baahan yahay casho aan loo baahneyno oo ka dhacda cunto, fiidnimo, iyo wada hadallada.

DSACO waxay maalgelin doontaa lacagta cunta.

Fadlan hagaaji ilaa Janaayo 2, 2024, dsaco.net/somalioutreach.

Su'aalo? Fadlan la xiriiir Amina Said at asaid@dsaco.net.

ENGLISH:

Friday, January 12 | 7-9 PM

Café Istanbul Easton

3983 Worth Ave.
Columbus, OH 43219

Please join other DSACO Somalian moms for a much needed night out of fun, food, sharing stories, needs and concerns with us!

DSACO will cover the cost of food.

Please register by January 2, 2024, at dsaco.net/somalioutreach.

Questions? Please contact Amina Said at asaid@dsaco.net.

SAVE the DATE



Photo credit: Brittany Cottman Photography

May 23

2FGR Run for Down Syndrome

Join runners from across Central Ohio for the 15th annual 2FGR Run for Down Syndrome. DSACO is thrilled to once again be the beneficiary of this incredible and empowering event. Participation fees and location information can be found at 2fgr.org/run.

June 30

Summer Picnic with the Columbus Clippers

1:05 PM

Huntington Park

330 Huntington Park Lane
Columbus, OH 43215

Save the date to join DSACO at Huntington Park as the Columbus Clippers take on the Omaha Storm Chasers, the Triple-A affiliate of the Kansas City Royals. Tickets & Clippers Cash will be provided to registered families. Kids will be able to run the bases after the game, too! You won't want to miss this new twist on DSACO's Annual Summer Picnic.



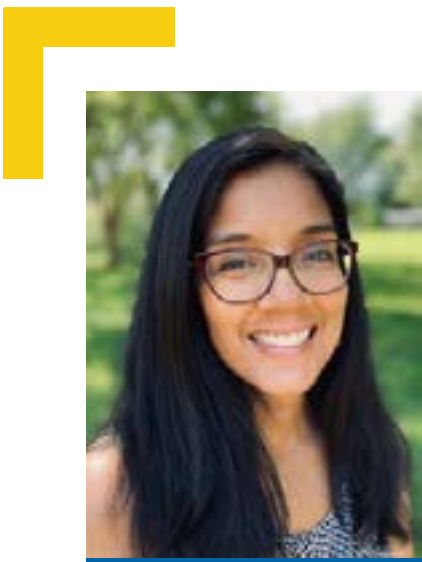
August 23-25

Adult Conference

Cherry Valley Hotel

2299 Cherry Valley Rd. SE
Newark, OH 43055

Mark your calendars for DSACO's Annual Adult Conference in 2024. Plan to stay the weekend with us at Cherry Valley Hotel in Newark. Keep an eye out for additional details about the conference in the coming months.



Medically Speaking

with Vanessa Rodriguez, PhD BCBA-D MPH
Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Doctorate Level Board
Certified Behavior Analyst
The Ohio State University Nisonger Center
Clinical Supports Services and Adult Down Syndrome Clinic

The Importance of Promoting Mental Health Wellness

Individuals with Down syndrome experience the same mental health needs as the general population but are at a higher risk of developing ill mental health, particularly depression and anxiety disorders. The good news is that the same strategies to promote mental well-being in the general population work for people with Down syndrome. One of the most important preventative strategies is daily activity engagement. Activities such as crafts and other hobbies, school, work, or volunteering help provide daily structure and purpose. Having something to look forward to each day goes a long way in promoting good mental health. This includes physical activity and social activity, too. Physical activity- whether through organized sports and classes, going to a gym, or daily walks- can improve more than just physical health. Being physically active can improve sleep and mood. Social connections through friends and family also help boost mood, reduce stress, and improve self-esteem. While activity is important it is also important to allow for downtime. Not every minute of one's day needs to be scheduled. Time to relax and unwind is just as important in promoting mental well-being. Establishing and maintaining these healthy habits can help to minimize the potential negative effects of daily stress or more stressful life changes.

And don't forget that caregivers need to practice self-care, too. Activity engagement, physical activity, social connectivity, and downtime are just as important for caregivers of individuals with Down syndrome.

Big Life Changes

Change is stressful for everyone. Individuals with Down syndrome thrive on routine and develop their own daily rituals. For some individuals with Down syndrome, these daily routines may involve self-talk and fantasy play. For these individuals, self-talk and fantasy play may help them process their day. It is not uncommon to see more time devoted to daily rituals in response to life changes. Self-talk and fantasy play may also increase. This is okay- but it may mean adjusting expectations to allow more time to complete these daily routines. Trying to rush through a routine often results in resistance and increased time devoted to the ritual. It is important to continue to provide opportunities for a variety of mental, physical, leisure, and social activities across the day. For known changes, it is best to prepare in advance. Planning for change can help reduce stress. For many, picture-based social stories can be helpful in explaining upcoming changes. Reviewing social stories allows one to

develop a picture memory of what to expect and can help reduce anxiety related to change.

One big life change that we know to be particularly stressful for Down syndrome teens is high school graduation. It is important to start planning early for life after high school with emphasis on how to establish and maintain daily activity engagement- whether through college, work, volunteering, or adult day program. Social connections often suffer the most during this transition. Preventatively, it helps to identify friendships that can be maintained post high school as well as introduce new social opportunities (e.g., social interests clubs) before graduation that can be maintained post-graduation so that the transition is less disruptive.

When to Worry

As a parent, it can be hard not to worry. Remember that daily routines and self-talk can be helpful and sometimes may take more time. However, when behavioral changes interfere with your child's ability to get through the day (e.g., missing school or work, missing meals, etc) or if you observe a drastic change in the amount of time being spent on their own (e.g., spending more time alone and/or declining previously preferred social activities) talk to your primary care provider to determine if a referral to a mental health specialist is needed.

Having something to look forward to each day goes a long way in promoting good mental health.



Caregiver Support Powered by Cariloop

Meet Cariloop: your dedicated Caregiver Support Platform. We know caregiving can be overwhelming, especially when balancing work and other obligations. With Cariloop, you are provided unlimited support from experienced Care Coaches who can guide you through all parts of your unique caregiving journey- at no cost to you!

As soon as you sign up, Cariloop pairs you with one of their full-time care professionals to help with any caregiving challenge that arises. Their Care Coaching team is made up of a diverse range of care professionals including nurses, social workers, facility administrators, educators, pediatric specialists and more.

The collaboration and responsiveness of this holistic team of care professionals ensures DSACO families are getting the support they need in any caregiving situation. Cariloop Care Coaches handle a range of caregiving tasks, so you can stress less and remain present at work and at home.

DSACO is providing you with access to caregiver support from Cariloop at no cost. To get paired with your own dedicated Care Coach today reach out to **Kirsti Osborne** at kosborne@dsaco.net.

For more information: dsaco.net/families/parents-caregivers

D.A.D.S.
Meets once per month | 6 PM
(Food will be ordered at 7 PM)

Monday, January 8
Monday, February 5
Monday, March 4

Brian Stumpo
bstumpo@columbus.rr.com

Justin Whitley
whitleyj@icloud.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/273810587540605

M.O.M.S. – Chillicothe
3rd Thursday of the Month | 6:30 PM

Fire And Stone Pizzeria
98 N. Paint Street | Chillicothe

January 18
February 15
March 21 - *See you at DSACO's World Down Syndrome Day Celebration!*

Keely Wescott
rednmn0607@hotmail.com

Michelle Wallace
michelle_rn@outlook.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/297727160607506

M.O.M.S. – Delaware
2nd Wednesday of the Month | 6:30 PM

Yabo's Tacos
5915 Evans Farm Blvd. Suite H | Lewis Center

January 10
February 21
March 13

Crystal Vitullo
crystalmowry@gmail.com

Allison Schwab
allieb1220@gmail.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/297727160607506

M.O.M.S. – Marion
2nd Saturday of the month | 7 PM

Amato's Wood Fired Pizza
143 W. Center Street | Marion

January 13
February 10
March 9

Amanda Long
along51516@gmail.com

Dawn Brookes
dawn.m.brookes@gmail.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/297727160607506

M.O.M.S. – Marysville
3rd Saturday of the Month | 6 PM

Tres Portillos Mexican Restaurant
435 Colemans Crossing Blvd. | Marysville

January 20
February 17
March 16

Katie Furr
katiel617@hotmail.com

Lauren Roush
lauren.roush1107@gmail.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/297727160607506

M.O.M.S. – Northwest
3rd Tuesday of the month | 6:30 PM

The Goat
4265 Brooklands Drive | Hilliard

January 16
February 20
March 19

Hannah Reid
hannahreid329@gmail.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/297727160607506

M.O.M.S. – Southeast
2nd Wednesday of the month | 6 PM

Zapatas Mexican Kitchen
1282 Hill Road North | Pickerington

January 10
February 7
March 13

Yirha Torres
dtcfamily4@gmail.com

Whitney Garrett
wpwalker86@gmail.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/297727160607506

M.O.M.S. – Westerville
1st Thursday of the month | 6:30 PM

Chuy's
1481 Polaris Parkway | Columbus

January 4
February 1
March 7

Lucy Pagan
lucillepagan@gmail.com

Jackie Johnston
jackierosejohnston@gmail.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/297727160607506

Facebook Groups:
DSACO D.A.D.S.
DSACO "Lending" Library
DSACO M.O.M.S.
DSACO Parents of Adults with Down syndrome
DSACO Little Buddies - Down Syndrome Parent Resource Group
Familias Latinas De DSACO
DSACO Families with Medically Complex Needs
DSACO's Black and African American Outreach Group

Little Buddies Parent Resource Group

Little Buddies Parent Resource Group is a monthly group for expecting and new 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.

Thursday, January 11
6:30-8 PM
Learn & Play with The Gab Lab!

Grace Fellowship
575 Diley Road, Pickerington, OH 43147

We're kicking off the new year with some fun! Join us for a private class with The Gab Lab! This class incorporates music, play, sensory experiences, and evidence-based language development techniques to promote the growth of your child's receptive and expressive language skills. It is professionally taught by a certified speech-language pathologist. This unique class is for our Little Buddies ages 6 months and up and any siblings ages 5 and under.

Thursday, February 15
6:30-8 PM
Learn about The Miracle League

Grace Fellowship
575 Diley Road, Pickerington, OH 43147

It's time to play ball! We'll be joined by The Miracle League to learn more about this fun and exciting program here in Central Ohio. The Miracle League removes barriers that keep children with mental and physical disabilities off the baseball field and lets them experience the joy of America's favorite pastime. Join us to learn more about how it works and how it can be a great opportunity for your child.

Thursday, March 21
We will see you at the DSACO World Down Syndrome Day Celebration!

Whitney Garrett
wpwalker86@gmail.com

Jen McGhee
jenny.a.mcghee@gmail.com

For information:
facebook.com/groups/339782022866623

TEEN HAPPENINGS:

High School Social Group

Tuesday, January 16 | 6:30–8:30 PM
Taranto's Pizzeria Bingo

Sunday, February 25 | 5:30–7 PM
Westerville Community Center

Tuesday, March 12 | 6:30-8:30 PM
Star Lanes Polaris

TEEN & ADULT HAPPENINGS:

Teen & Adult Inclusive Swim (Ages 13+)
Sunday, February 25 | 5:30-7 PM
Westerville Community Center

Stamping Club (Columbus) (Ages 18+)
6:30-8 PM

January 3
February 7
March TBD

Stamping Club East (Licking County) (Ages 16+)
6-7 PM

Licking County Board of DD (LCBDD)
116 N 22nd Street, Newark, OH 43055

January 9
February 13
March 12

Cooking with YOU...and Who?
5:30–6:30 PM

January 10 & 24
February 14 & 28
March 13 & 27

Aging and Down Syndrome Caregiver Support Group
6-7 PM

January 23
February 27
March 26

Dancing with Our Stars Gala Ballroom Dance Lessons
11 AM-12 PM and 12-1 PM

Arthur Murray Dance Studio
5371 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43214

January 6, 13, 20, 27

TEEN & ADULT HAPPENINGS:

Adult Improv Classes
6:30-8 PM
Ruling Our eXperiences (ROX)

February 4, 12, 19
March 4, 11, 18


321go!
6-7:30 PM
BASH!


January 29
February 5, 12, 19, 26
March 4, 18, 25

Stay Connected!

Stay up-to-date on all the events in your area by visiting **dsaco.net**.

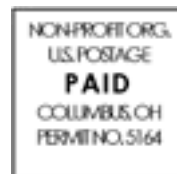
We are also active on social media! Find us by searching these platforms:

 **dsaco.cbush**

 **dsaco_cbush**

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 relating to Down syndrome. DSACO does not promote or recommend therapy, treatment, institution, or professional system. 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.



Return Service Requested

CALENDAR *of* EVENTS

January

- 3 Adult Stamping Club Central
- 4 Westerville M.O.M.S., Rosca de Reyes Pick Up
- 8 D.A.D.S. Meet Up
- 9 Adult Stamping Club East
- 10 Virtual Cooking Class, Southeast M.O.M.S., Delaware M.O.M.S.
- 11 Little Buddies Parent Resource Group
- 12 Somali M.O.M.S.
- 13 Marion M.O.M.S.
- 16 Northwest M.O.M.S., High School Social Group
- 18 Chillicothe M.O.M.S.
- 20 Marysville M.O.M.S.
- 23 Aging & Down Syndrome Caregiver Support Group
- 24 Virtual Cooking Class
- 29 321go!
- 31 Post-Secondary Scholarship Applications Due

February

- 1 Westerville M.O.M.S.
- 3 Dancing with Our Stars Gala
- 5 Adult Improv Class, 321go!, D.A.D.S. Meet Up
- 7 Southeast M.O.M.S., Stamping Club Central, Couple's Date Night Kit Pick Up
- 10 Marion M.O.M.S.
- 12 Adult Improv Class, 321go!
- 13 Adult Stamping Club East
- 14 Virtual Cooking Class
- 15 Chillicothe M.O.M.S., Little Buddies Parent Resource Group, Hispanic & Latino Outreach Group
- 17 Marysville M.O.M.S., Muskingum Family Outreach Event
- 19 321go!, Adult Improv Class
- 20 Northwest M.O.M.S.
- 21 Delaware M.O.M.S.
- 24 Planning for the Future
- 25 Teen & Adult Inclusive Swum
- 26 321go!
- 27 Aging & Down Syndrome Caregiver Support Group
- 28 Virtual Cooking Class

March

- 3 School Age & Little Buddies Pool Party
- 4 D.A.D.S. Meet Up, Adult Improv Class, 321go!
- 7 Westerville M.O.M.S.
- 9 Marion M.O.M.S.
- 11 Adult Improv Class
- 12 Adult Stamping Club East, High School Social Group
- 13 Virtual Cooking Class, Delaware M.O.M.S., Southeast M.O.M.S.
- 16 Marysville M.O.M.S.
- 18 Adult Improv Class, 321go!
- 19 Northwest M.O.M.S.
- 21 World Down Syndrome Day Celebration
- 25 321go!
- 26 Aging & Down Syndrome Caregiver Support Group
- 27 Virtual Cooking Class