

## Building Momentum: Advocacy Strengthens Our Community

By now you have seen DSACO's delta logo, symbolizing progress and representing the energy and dedication propelling us into the future. The logo represents three chromosomes and groups (people with Down syndrome, families, and our community) coming together. They form a delta, the strongest shape, which means "to manage or guide the course of." The insignia is forward tilting, building momentum as we move through our lives.

Advocacy is an actionable way to build that momentum.

From legislative policies to medical issues, to educational concerns, and beyond, DSACO proudly advocates on behalf people with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities. Our most powerful tool in our desire to achieve a lifetime of opportunities is knowledge, and we can share this with our peers and community leaders to create the progress we desire. To help propel our efforts even further, we are dedicated to educating and empowering families, self-advocates, and community members to advocate alongside us.

Announced in 2020, the Marge Barnheiser Advocacy Scholarship has been awarded by DSACO to people with Down syndrome and a companion to travel to Washington



*Developmental Disability Awareness and Advocacy Day*

D.C. for legislative advocacy on Capitol Hill. This resource allows folks to meet with their elected officials and their staff to share their stories and make connections with those tasked with creating policies that impact our community.

Our team continues to work closely with the medical community, ensuring that the most current information about Down syndrome is available to providers but also advocating for efficient, resourceful clinics to care for people with Down syndrome as they grow and mature.

To assist caregivers in navigating IEP meetings and other educational concerns, DSACO offers resources which aid them in effectively advocating so that their student

receives the services and support they need to be successful in school.

A recent DSACO family study revealed that 91% of respondents feel more educated and equipped to advocate for their loved ones with Down syndrome. Our combined efforts in advocacy will contribute to the momentum we're building to encourage a lifetime of opportunities for people with Down syndrome.

Our delta logo serves as a reminder of the powerful force behind our advocacy efforts. Working together, we are setting the course for a brighter, more inclusive tomorrow.





Spring is finally upon us, bringing brighter days and a renewed sense of optimism. We are so excited to continue to bring impactful opportunities for our members and the Down syndrome community! As we continue to move through the year, we want to pause to highlight the importance of our delta logo. A delta is the strongest shape, and ours is forward tilting to illustrate the momentum we are building as a community. Our delta logo has dual meaning: the sides represent three chromosomes but also the three groups that we support – people with Down syndrome, families, and our community.

As we focus more on the symbolism of our logo, its significance in our work becomes clearer. Here are a

few ways the meaning of our logo shines through:

**3 Empowering people with Down syndrome** by providing programming from birth (Little Buddies playgroups) through adulthood (Adult Conference), and the stages in between, we are able to support and encourage people with Down syndrome so they can reach their fullest potential.

**2 Guiding families** through caregiver support and connection groups, as we hope to strengthen their abilities and confidence as advocates while making them feel like they aren't alone in this journey.

**1 Inspiring our community** with displays of joy and determination, demonstrated by our community

every year at the Columbus Buddy Walk as people with Down syndrome come together with their families to raise vital funds for DSACO but also to lift each other up in celebration.

As we move forward into this season of growth and possibility, our delta logo serves as a constant reminder of the strength, unity, and momentum we're building. Together, we will continue to support people with Down syndrome and their families, making the future of our community brighter for all.

President & CEO

## Community Access Funds

*Get out there and experience everything!*

There is an abundance of incredible events and activities within our communities. That's why DSACO offers 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 2025:

**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.

Contact Kirsti Osborne at **kosborne@dsaco.net** with any questions.

*\*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

*¡Sal y experimenta todo lo que hay!*

Hay una abundancia de eventos y actividades increíbles en nuestras comunidades. Por eso, DSACO ofrece los Fondos de Acceso Comunitario, 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:

**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 31 de diciembre.

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

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

## Welcome Jennifer Franklin Kearns!



*Jennifer Franklin Kearns, Communications Manager*

We are delighted to share that Jen Franklin Kearns has joined the ElevateDD staff, bringing her creative communications skills and passion for advocacy to help amplify the ElevateDD mission in Ohio's developmental disability community.

Jen and her family are certainly not strangers to DSACO, as they have participated in programming and

events since her son, Alex, was born with Down syndrome. Alex is now 20 years old, and they continue to be grateful for the opportunities and support offered by DSACO. A seasoned Buddy Walk team captain, Jen has helped lead Team Alex to raise well over \$100,000 for DSACO since 2004 and they look forward to continuing their tradition of fundraising. She and her family have shared their talents in many different DSACO volunteer opportunities throughout the years.

Jen and her husband Mark live in Delaware, and in addition to Alex, they are the parents of Addie and Andrew. Immensely proud of all three, they spend much of their free time cheering the kids on in their various endeavors. They also enjoy spoiling their three dogs, Harper, Remy, and Roxy.

## Welcome Jen Bryant!

Jen Bryant is DSACO's Grants Manager. Her professional experience includes project management, process improvement, grant writing, and learning and development. She is a graduate of Franklin University and has a bachelor's degree in Communications.

In her current role, Jen is responsible for securing DSACO program funding through compelling grant proposals, maintaining positive relationships with funders, and managing all aspects of the grant cycle. She joined DSACO in January 2025 and is excited to be a part of the team!

Outside of work, Jen enjoys running, hiking, reading, traveling, and

spending time with family and friends. She lives in Central Ohio.



*Jen Bryant, Grants Manager*

## Welcome Sara Rainey!



*Sara Rainey, Program Manager of Education and School Aged Services*

Sara Rainey joined the DSACO team in 2025 as the Manager of Education and School Aged Services. She graduated from Miami University with a degree in Public Administration. She has a background in education services and community programming and is excited to use her experiences to serve the DSACO community.

Sara credits her passion for the developmental disability community to her parents – they've been vocal advocates for inclusion since her sister was diagnosed with epilepsy in 2002.

In her free time, Sara can be found either reading, coaching the local special hockey team, or spending time with her family and friends.





EARLY CHILDHOOD

SCHOOL AGE



# Jump Start Swim Clinic

*Make a splash with DSACO at Goldfish Swim School*

**Fee:** \$125 per swimmer

Come swim with us! Goldfish Swim School offers unique Jump Start Clinics specially designed to introduce kids (0-12) to the water and teach the fundamentals of water safety. Once again this summer, Goldfish Swim School is hosting exclusive clinics just for DSACO at four different locations!

The clinics offer 1:1 30-minute sessions for each swimmer for four consecutive days. The 1:1 ratio provides a personal, private lesson, offering the right amount of support and safety for your swimmer.

Swimmers attend all four sessions at the same location and time each day.

Locations:

**Dublin - June 10 - 13 | 9 AM - 12 PM**  
6175 Shamrock Ct Suite G, Dublin, OH 43016

**Westerville - June 17 - 20 | 9 AM - 12 PM**  
765 Brooksedge Blvd, Westerville, OH 43081

**Lewis Center - June 24 - 27 | 9 AM - 12 PM**  
7838 Green Meadows Dr N, Lewis Center, OH 43035

**Upper Arlington - July 15 - 18 | 9 AM - 12 PM**  
2199 Riverside Dr, Columbus, OH 43221

Spots are LIMITED at each location. **Registration opens Monday, April 21.**

For details regarding locations and dates, visit [dsaco.net/swimclinic](https://dsaco.net/swimclinic).

**Questions?** Contact Kirsti Osborne at [kosborne@dsaco.net](mailto:kosborne@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO

# DSACO's Summer Learning Academy Returns

*Maintain your student's academic skills to avoid summer slide!*

**Monday, June 9 – Thursday, July 10**  
**9 AM – 12 PM**  
(no class on Thursday, June 19)

**Fee:** \$200 per student

DSACO is excited to welcome students back for another year of Summer Learning Academy (SLA)! This five-week program is designed to help students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) combat summer learning regression by providing targeted academic instruction in math and literacy, focusing on two IEP goals.

Each classroom is led by two certified educators and a classroom support specialist, ensuring a well-rounded approach to academic growth, social-emotional development, and behavioral or personal care support. Transportation home from the program may be available at select locations for those who need it.

**Registration Details:**  
**Opens:** Friday, March 28 at 5 PM  
**Closes:** Friday, April 18 at 5 PM

**Enrollment Notifications:** Sent by Friday, April 25.

Please note that applying **does not** guarantee placement in an SLA classroom.

**Location Updates**  
Classroom locations and grade levels will be announced soon! Stay updated by visiting [dsaco.net/sla](https://dsaco.net/sla).

**Questions?** Contact Sara Rainey at [srainey@dsaco.net](mailto:srainey@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO

COMMUNITY

## All-Ages Outdoor Inclusive Pool Party

*Dive into summer fun with DSACO!*

**Saturday, June 14 | 7 – 8:30 PM**

**Highlands Park Aquatic Center**

245 S Spring Road, Westerville, OH 43081

All ages welcome!

DSACO has partnered with the City of Westerville Parks and Recreation Department to offer a sensory-friendly, inclusive swimming evening. Bring your family along to enjoy the beautiful and spacious pools at the Highlands Park Aquatic Center. Don't miss this chance for fun and connection in a welcoming setting!

Admission is free, but registration is required. Stay tuned for more details!

**Questions?** Contact Boo Krucky at [ekrucky@dsaco.net](mailto:ekrucky@dsaco.net).

SCHOOL AGE

## Empower Your Child's Education with DSACO's IEP Kit

Navigating the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process can feel overwhelming, but DSACO is here to help! Our IEP Kit is designed to equip families with the tools and resources they need to confidently advocate for their child's education.

Each kit includes essential information about the IEP process, organization tools to keep track of important documents, and practical tips to help families prepare for meetings with their child's school team. Whether you're new to IEPs or looking for ways to strengthen your advocacy, this resource is a great place to start!

Sign up for your 25-26 IEP Kit at [dsaco.net/iepkit](https://dsaco.net/iepkit) from June 13 through July 11.

**Questions?** Contact Sara Rainey at [srainey@dsaco.net](mailto:srainey@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO



## Join Our Expanded 321go! Healthy Lifestyle Series!

*For you & your 321go! partner*

**June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and July 7, 14, 21 | 6 - 7:30 PM**

**Location TBD**

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) created the 321go! program to encourage healthy lifestyle choices in physical activity, balanced nutrition, and emotional wellness among people with Down syndrome and their families. DSACO is excited to bring this program to life again through this eight-week healthy lifestyle class series, supported by eight dedicated OSU Medical School students.

Based on valuable feedback from past DSACO 321go! participants and facilitators, we're expanding the program to enhance the experience! Each adult with Down syndrome will now be able to bring a 321go! partner—a family member or friend who will fully participate alongside them (both participants must be at least 18 years old). By having a consistent partner engaged in the same learning, activities, and tracking, we hope to build habits that extend well beyond the eight weeks.



This class series is open to up to 10 adults with Down syndrome, each accompanied by their 321go! partner—someone who commits to attending every session and actively taking part in the program. Whether you're new to DSACO's 321go! series or have participated before, we welcome you to join us on this journey to better health, together!

Registration opens Monday, April 21, and closes Friday, May 23, or when the 10 spots are filled. More information coming soon!

**Questions?** Contact Boo Krucky at [ekrucky@dsaco.net](mailto:ekrucky@dsaco.net).



## Join Us for the 2025 DSACO Adult Conference

*Let's connect, grow, and celebrate!*

**August 8 - 10**

(Friday evening through Sunday morning)

**Deer Creek Lodge & Conference Center**

22300 State Pk Rd 20, Mt. Sterling, OH 43143

**Conference Fee: \$50\***

\*Additional information on hotel costs can be found on the website.

If you're 18 or older and have Down syndrome, you and your parents are invited to an unforgettable weekend at the DSACO Adult Conference! Thanks to the generous support of Philipps & Graham, LLC, we are planning an exciting experience from Friday to Sunday, August 8-10, at the beautiful, newly renovated Deer Creek Lodge & Conference Center in Mt. Sterling, Ohio. Get ready for a weekend filled with learning, laughter, and lasting connections — including a bonfire and s'mores Friday night plus a dance party on Saturday night!

More details and registration information can be found at [dsaco.net/adultconference](https://dsaco.net/adultconference). Registration will be open Monday, June 16 until Thursday, July 17.

Don't miss this chance to connect, grow, and celebrate at the 2025 DSACO Adult Conference!

**Questions?** Contact Boo Krucky at [ekrucky@dsaco.net](mailto:ekrucky@dsaco.net) or 614-263-6020 ext. 1070.



**MORE INFO**



**TEENS**

## High School Social Group

*Building friendships and independence*

**Thursday, April 10 | 5:30 - 7:30 PM**

**Big Air Trampoline Park**

1400 Polaris Pkwy, Columbus, OH 43240

Trampoline jumping and pizza

**Monday, May 12 | 6:30 - 8:30 PM**

**Star Lanes Polaris**

8655 Lyra Dr, Columbus, OH 43240  
Bowling and pizza

**Saturday, June 14 | 7 - 8:30 PM**

**Highlands Park Aquatic Center**

245 S Spring Rd, Westerville, OH 43081

Inclusive outdoor pool party for all ages – no food included with this event.

**MORE INFO**



Does your high schooler with Down syndrome want to connect with peers and make new friends? They should check out DSACO's free monthly High School Social Group! Each gathering is designed for teens who are mostly independent and eager to enjoy a fun, safe, and social environment. Each gathering features a different location filled with games, activities, and fun!

Parents are encouraged to step back and let our amazing volunteers lead the outing, giving teens a chance to enjoy their time together independently. Families are welcome to stay nearby, but our hope is that this group can help build both friendships and independence. We're excited to see your teen there!

Participation is free. Please register one week in advance of each event at [dsaco.net/hssocialgroup](https://dsaco.net/hssocialgroup).

**Questions?** Contact Boo Krucky at [ekrucky@dsaco.net](mailto:ekrucky@dsaco.net).

High School Social Group Contacts:

**Mandy Peterson | [mpeterson@mvcasd.us](mailto:mpeterson@mvcasd.us)**

**Mary Elliott | [columbuselliotts@gmail.com](mailto:columbuselliotts@gmail.com)**



COMMUNITY

ADULTHOOD

## Cooking with YOU...and Who?

*Virtual cooking class for adults + in-person potluck*

**Zoom classes: April 9 & 23, May 14 & 28, June 25 | 5:30 – 6:30 PM**

Virtual – Zoom Session

**In-person potluck: June 11 | 6-9 PM**

Park of Roses Shelter House  
3901 N High St. Columbus, Ohio 43214

Join DSACO for free virtual cooking classes designed for adults (18+) with Down syndrome, held via Zoom on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. Each session includes step-by-step cooking instructions, discussions on kitchen safety, and simple recipes with common ingredients, including gluten-free options. Participants will receive recipes in advance to purchase ingredients and cook along from home. A computer or device with a camera is required, and having a support person is recommended.

MORE INFO



Mark your calendars for our in-person potluck on Wednesday, June 25! Stay tuned - more details will be shared soon.

To receive our recipes and Zoom link, please register at least one week in advance of the class you wish to join.

Visit [dsaco.net/virtualcookingclass](https://dsaco.net/virtualcookingclass) to register.

**Questions?** Contact Boo Krucky at [ekrucky@dsaco.net](mailto:ekrucky@dsaco.net).



## Summer Social

*Columbus Clippers Game*

**Sunday, July 13 | 1:05 PM**

### Huntington Park

330 Huntington Park Ln  
Columbus, OH 43215

**Fee:** \$15 per Family

\*Parking is not included\*

Join us for an exciting day with other DSACO families and enjoy a game against the Louisville Bats. For \$15 per family, you'll receive admission tickets to the game, Clipper's cash for food for the whole family, and access to the Pepsi Party Deck.

Registration is required for all attendees, including both adults and children. Although parking isn't included, you can explore available options at [arenadistrict.com/map](https://arenadistrict.com/map).

**Register** for Summer Social at [dsaco.net/summersocial](https://dsaco.net/summersocial) from Sunday, June 1 until Monday, June 31.

**Questions?** Contact Mari Cox at [mcox@dsaco.net](mailto:mcox@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO



COMMUNITY



## Knox County Connection

*Let the good times roll!*

**April 12 | 1 - 3 PM**

**Colonial City Lanes**

110 Mount Vernon Ave. Mount Vernon, OH 43050

**Fee:** Free

Calling all DSACO families in Knox County and the surrounding areas! Join us for a fun-filled afternoon at Colonial City Lanes Bowling Alley in Mount Vernon. DSACO is covering the cost of bowling and shoe rental, making this a perfect opportunity to connect with other local families and strike up some friendships!

This event is free, but registration is required.  
No time to spare – register before April 4 to reserve your spot!

To register, visit [dsaco.net/countyconnection](https://dsaco.net/countyconnection).

**Questions?** Contact Kirsti Osborne at [kosborne@dsaco.net](mailto:kosborne@dsaco.net).



MORE INFO



SCHOOL AGE

## iCan Bike Camp – Volunteers Needed!

**June 2 – 6 | Different Time Slots Available**

**West Jefferson High School**

1 Roughrider Drive, West Jefferson, OH 43162

DSACO relies on the support of amazing volunteers to make iCan Bike Camp a success!

Volunteers must be at least 15 years old by the start of camp and be physically able to run alongside their assigned rider as they learn to ride. Volunteers will attend the same sessions Monday through Friday, working with the same rider to ensure their safety. You'll provide essential physical, emotional, and motivational support to your rider all week long. This is a fantastic opportunity to gain service hours while contributing to an amazing cause. Don't wait – sign up today and be part of this life-changing experience for the participants!

To register, visit [dsaco.net/icanbike](https://dsaco.net/icanbike) and click the volunteer registration link at the bottom.

**Questions?** Contact Lucy Maddrill at [bikecamp@dsaco.net](mailto:bikecamp@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO



COMMUNITY

## Swing Into The Season - 2 Hour Golf Experience

**Golf Galaxy**

5740 Britton Pkwy, Dublin, OH

Free event for DSACO D.A.D.S.  
Golf Simulator (one bay reserved)  
1st hour with golf pro instruction  
2nd hour for play

Last two Wednesdays of the month:

**March 19 & 26 | 6 – 8 PM**

**April 23 & 30 | 6 – 8 PM**

**May 21 & 28 | 6 – 8 PM**

Space is limited – First come, first served!  
Contact Kevin Cox to register: (757) 701-8356.



COMMUNITY

## DSACO Mom Prom

*Celebrate your MOM ERA!*

**Saturday, April 26 | 7 – 10 PM**

**Combustion Brewery & Taproom**

80 W Church St. Suite 200, Pickerington, OH 43147

**Fee:** \$10\*

We are so excited to bring our DSACO Mom Prom back for 2025! This year we want to help you celebrate your Mom Era! Whether you're a new mom or a seasoned mom, this will be a night to celebrate and embrace the Mom Era you're in!



Mom Prom is more than just a party – it's a chance to celebrate the unique bond shared by moms of people with Down syndrome and take time to celebrate YOU! Join us for a night filled with dancing, laughter, and celebration!

Hit the dance floor with your fellow DSACO moms (DJ Dayna is back!), enjoy delicious charcuterie board appetizers, and a make-your-own ice cream sundae bar! There will also be an extra special gift for each DSACO mom in attendance.

More details and registration information can be found at [dsaco.net/momsoutreach](https://dsaco.net/momsoutreach).

**Questions?** Contact Courtney Frost at [cfrost@dsaco.net](mailto:cfrost@dsaco.net).

*\*If the registration fee will prohibit you from attending this event, please reach out to Courtney Frost.*



MORE INFO



## 2025 DSACO Golf Academy

*In partnership with First Tee – Central Ohio*

**June 4 – August 13 | 6:30 - 8 PM**

Meets once a week on Wednesdays, no session on July 2.

**Blacklick Woods Metro Golf Course**

7309 E Livingston Avenue | Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

**Fee:** \$20

We are pleased to partner again this summer with First Tee – Central Ohio to offer our DSACO Golf Academy. This program is open to golfers of all skill levels (including beginners) ages 12 and up. It focuses on learning all aspects of the game of golf while encouraging character-building and developing the inner strength, self-confidence, and resilience that are important in golf—and every other aspect of life. Each week, golfers will enhance their skills in a safe, supportive, and empowering environment.



*DSACO is no longer able to provide golf clubs, so participants will need to bring their own or have access to a set.*

We encourage you to register early as this is a very popular offering that is sure to fill up! Registration opens May 1. Golf Academy is limited to the first 15 golfers who sign up here: [dsaco.net/golfacademy](https://dsaco.net/golfacademy).

Registration closes on May 23 or when the 15 spots fill up.

**Questions?** Contact Boo Krucky at [ekrucky@dsaco.net](mailto:ekrucky@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO



ADULTHOOD

## Aging & Down Syndrome Caregiver Support Group

*Connect and share online*

April 22, May 27, June 24 | 6 - 7 PM

Virtual

Join us for the DSACO Aging & Down Syndrome Caregiver Support Group, held monthly via Zoom. This support group, offered in partnership with the Central Ohio chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, is specifically designed for caregivers of aging individuals (40 years old or older) 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 receive special focus.

We offer this support group via Zoom to ensure caregivers from our entire service area can participate.

To register for the support group, please visit: **dsaco.net/agingsupport**. The registration deadline is one week before each scheduled group. Once registered, you will receive an email confirmation, followed by an introductory phone call from one of the co-facilitators. Finally, a Zoom link will be emailed to you prior to each session.

MORE INFO



DSACO is also thrilled to connect quarterly with professionals nationwide who lead similar groups, fostering valuable discussions on the intersection of Down syndrome and Alzheimer's. This unique networking opportunity will impact the programming and resources DSACO will be able to provide to families.

**Questions?** Contact Boo Krucky at **ekrucky@dsaco.net** or 614-263-6020 ext. 1070.



## Connecting Parents of Adults Group

*Enjoy fellowship, networking, and support!*

Thursday, April 17 | 6 - 8 PM

June date TBD

Location TBD

Calling all DSACO dads, moms, and caregivers of adults with Down syndrome (18+)! Take a break and join us every other month for a fun, casual evening where you can swap stories, share insights, tackle challenges, and enjoy plenty of laughs. DSACO picks up the tab for appetizers and non-alcoholic drinks, so come relax, connect, and recharge—you deserve it!

MORE INFO



Please visit **dsaco.net/connectingparents** to register. Registration is requested at least two days prior to the gathering so appropriate plans may be made.

If lack of care for your loved one with Down syndrome prevents you from attending, please contact Boo Krucky at **ekrucky@dsaco.net** to discuss alternatives.

Connecting Parents of Adults contacts:

**Cathy Gibson** | **catgibson@msn.com**

**Missy Jones** | **Missy.Jones@safelite.com**

**Paula Dymek** | **jpdymek@outlook.com**

## COMMUNITY

## Fayoqabka Maskaxda ee Daryeelayaasha

May 24 | 3 - 5 PM

**Columbus Metropolitan Library**  
96 S Grant Ave, Columbus, OH 43215

Daryeelayaashu waxay door muhiim ah ka ciyaaraan taageeridda dadka kale, balse caafimaadkooda maskaxeed waa mid aad muhiim u ah sidoo kale.

Cadaadiska shucuureed iyo midka jireed ee la xiriiira daryeelidda dadka kale wuxuu keeni karaa walaac, daal xad-dhaaf ah, iyo tabar-darri naxariiseed. Mudnaanta siinta daryeelka nafta, raadinta taageero, iyo dejinta xuduudo caafimaad qaba waa lagama maarmaan si fayoqabka loo ilaaliyo. Nasasho joogto ah, maskax furnaan, iyo la xiriirka bulsho taageerta waxay caawiyaan daryeelayaasha si ay u maareeyaan walaaca ugana sii wadaan daryeelidda si waxtar leh.

Nagu soo biir munaasabaddan khaaska ah oo loogu talagalay taageeridda caafimaadka maskaxeed ee daryeelayaasha adiga oo kale.

Waxaa soo bandhigaya:

Maryan Duelle  
GHEAD Agaasimaha  
Fulinta

Global Health Education and Development (GHEAD) waa urur aan faa'iido doon ahayn oo fadhigiisu yahay Columbus, OH, kuna shaqeynaya mustaqbal ay dhamaan bulshooyinku si siman ugu helaan caafimaad iyo waxbarasho tayo sare leh. Barnaamijyadoodu waxay diiradda saaraan xoojinta adkeysiga iyo awoodsiinta bulshada soo galootiga ah iyo qaxootiga iyada oo loo marayo kheyraadka caafimaadka iyo waxbarashada.

Wixii faahfaahin dheeraad ah, fadlan booqo websaytkooda: [ghead.org/home](http://ghead.org/home)

Munaasabaddan waa bilaash, balse isdiiwaangelintu waa lagama maarmaan kahor May 16, 2025.

Su'aalo? Fadlan kala xiriir Amina Said email ahaan: [asaid@dsaco.net](mailto:asaid@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO



## Explorando Recursos y Servicios: La Junta del Condado de Franklin para Discapacidades del Desarrollo

Sabado Mayo 3 | 12 – 2 PM

La Junta del Condado de Franklin para Discapacidades del Desarrollo (FCBDD) es una agencia del condado que brinda apoyo a niños y adultos con discapacidades del desarrollo.

Los invitamos a una sesión informativa para conocer más sobre la Junta del Condado de Franklin para Discapacidades del Desarrollo (FCBDD) y los servicios disponibles para apoyar a las personas con discapacidades y sus familias. Esta es una excelente oportunidad para hacer preguntas, conectarse con recursos y obtener información valiosa sobre cómo FCBDD puede ayudar a sus seres queridos.

Presentado por:

Anne Russell  
Supervisor de Coordinación de Servicios y Participación Comunitaria  
&  
Jenni Gonzalez  
Coordinador de Servicios

Este evento es gratuito, pero su registro es necesario antes del 25 de abril, 2025.

Si tiene preguntas o desea registrarse, por favor envíe un correo a Vanessa Armenta a [varmenta@dsaco.net](mailto:varmenta@dsaco.net).

## Descubre un Jardín Mágico

Domingo 13 de Abril | 12 – 2 PM

¡Únete a nosotros para una experiencia relajante y llena de diversión rodeada de hermosos jardines! Prepárate para un día lleno de diversión rodeado de la belleza de la naturaleza. Los invitamos en un espacio verde, tranquilo y refrescante.

Evento gratuito, su registro es necesario antes del 3 de abril, 2025.

Si tiene preguntas o desea registrarse, por favor envíe un correo a Vanessa Armenta a [varmenta@dsaco.net](mailto:varmenta@dsaco.net).

ENGLISH:

Join us for a relaxing and fun-filled experience surrounded by beautiful gardens! Get ready for a fun-filled day surrounded by nature's beauty! You are invited to a peaceful and refreshing space.

This event is free, but registration is required before April 3, 2025.

For any questions and registration please contact Vanessa Armenta at [varmenta@dsaco.net](mailto:varmenta@dsaco.net).



# medically speaking



with Dr. Jeffrey Keyes, MD

Newborn Intensive Care, Nationwide Children's Hospital  
Member, DSACO Medical Advisory Committee

Central Ohio is home to a large, diverse, and growing population of immigrant and refugee families. Ohio ranks as the 11th most popular state for resettlement in the United States, and in 2024, approximately 5% of the state's residents were foreign-born. Columbus hosts the second-largest Somali population in the country—the largest being in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota. In recent years, the region has seen additional growth from immigrants and refugees originating in Western Africa, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria, Myanmar, and Haiti. Unfortunately, many families face significant challenges that complicate integration and daily life. These challenges are often amplified for families when their children have Down syndrome.

Many of these families come from regions with limited medical services, where expectant mothers may not have received comprehensive prenatal testing, and children with Down syndrome may not have access to early intervention or specialized medical care. Language barriers further complicate navigation of the U.S. healthcare system, leading to misunderstandings between families and healthcare providers. Moreover, cultural stigma surrounding Down syndrome can exacerbate feelings of isolation, which is an ongoing

struggle in American society despite years of effort and education. These factors, combined with the challenges of communicating effectively with medical professionals, can hinder regular follow-up care.

As we know, consistent follow-up with pediatricians, specialists, and therapists is crucial for children with Down syndrome. Irregular care may lead to complications such as delayed interventions, developmental setbacks, nutritional deficiencies, vision and hearing issues, dental problems, and behavioral or mental health challenges.

DSACO currently employs Family Navigators for Somali- and Spanish-speaking families. Whenever possible, they also match new parents with a mentor with a similar background to help bridge cultural and language barriers. To further improve accessibility, their website is designed to translate into multiple languages, allowing healthcare providers to print resources in the family's preferred language.

One of DSACO's goals is the ongoing expansion of multilingual resources. Currently, they offer prenatal and postnatal information in Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Korean, Chinese, Somali, Vietnamese, Japanese, and Swahili.



With continued efforts to expand resources and bridge cultural gaps, we can help to ensure that every family in Central Ohio has the support they need while raising a child with Down syndrome.

## DSACO Medical Advisory Committee

Dr. Rick Baltisberger,  
Licking Memorial Hospital

Dr. Praveena Dhawale,  
Central Ohio Primary Care

Dr. Carl Gelfius,  
Nationwide Children's Hospital

Dr. Thomas Harmon,  
Ohio Health – Riverside Methodist Hospital

Megan Knapke Bergman, MS, CGC,  
Mount Carmel Health System

Dr. Murugu Manickam,  
Nationwide Children's Hospital

Dr. Jeffrey Keyes,  
Central Ohio Newborn Medicine

Dr. Steven Ciciora,  
Nationwide Children's Hospital

Betsy McCandlish, LISW-S,  
The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

Dr. Mark Wells,  
Nationwide Children's Hospital

Dr. Michael Neiger,  
The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

*Save the Date*

## DSACO Golf Classic

Monday, July 21 | 12:30 PM

**The Country Club at Muirfield Village**  
8715 Muirfield Dr, Dublin, OH 43017

Prepare to swing into action for a worthy cause at the DSACO Annual Golf Classic! Join us on the stunning fairways of the Country Club at Muirfield Village for a day of golf and networking. Enjoy the game while raising awareness and funds for people with Down syndrome and their families. Additional details coming soon.

Don't miss the registration launch at [dsaco.net/golfclassic](https://dsaco.net/golfclassic) on May 1!

We can't wait to see you out on the beautiful course for a fun day full of exciting challenges and opportunities to make a difference in the community.

**Questions?** Contact Mari Cox at [mcox@dsaco.net](mailto:mcox@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO



## Calling All Photographers!

DSACO is seeking generous photographers across our 23-county service area to donate their time and expertise by offering FREE photography sessions to DSACO families! The photos will be featured in DSACO's 2026 Faces in the Community calendar, and other promotional materials. This is a wonderful opportunity to make a meaningful impact in our community.

Photographers interested in participating should reach out to Katie Garcia at [kgarcia@dsaco.net](mailto:kgarcia@dsaco.net) and fill out the photographer interest form as soon as possible!

MORE INFO



**DSACO FAMILIES** Don't miss out on this great opportunity to capture beautiful photos of your loved ones and have them featured in our upcoming calendar. The list of photographers in your area will be available soon!



## 2025 Columbus Buddy Walk

Sunday, October 5 | 9 AM - 2 PM

**Fortress Obetz**

2015 Recreation Trail, Columbus, OH 43207

We invite you to join us for a day filled with joy, celebration, and advocacy.

The Columbus Buddy Walk® is an annual event that raises awareness for Down syndrome, promotes inclusivity, and celebrates the abilities and accomplishments of people with Down syndrome. The event includes a short, leisurely walk, music, and fun activities for all ages. This year's event promises to be bigger and better than ever, with an expected turnout of thousands of participants.

The Columbus Buddy Walk is a great way for families to come together and show their support for the Down syndrome community while raising awareness and funds for DSACO's programs and services. Don't miss out on this amazing day of fun, friendship, and advocacy for people with Down syndrome.

By joining us at the Columbus Buddy Walk, you're not just enjoying a day of fun with family and friends; you're also making a meaningful difference. Your participation helps raise vital funds for DSACO's programs and services, supporting the Down syndrome community in numerous impactful ways.

For details, and to register your team, visit [columbusbuddywalk.org](https://columbusbuddywalk.org).

**Questions?** Contact Mari Cox at [mcox@dsaco.net](mailto:mcox@dsaco.net).

MORE INFO



## Connection Groups

### D.A.D.S.

**Meets once a month | 6 PM**  
(Food will be ordered at 7 PM)

**April 14** – Gatto's Pizza, 3420 Indianola Ave. Columbus, Ohio 43214

**May 12** – Gallo's Tap Room, 5019 Olentangy River Rd

**June 9** – DAD's Outreach Event OR Potluck, location TBD

#### 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://facebook.com/groups/273810587540605)



### M.O.M.S. – Chillicothe

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month | 6 PM**

#### Rooster's

10 North Plaza Blvd, Chillicothe, Ohio

**April 15**

**May 20**

**June 17**

#### Keely Wescott

redmnm0607@hotmail.com

#### Michelle Wallace

michelle\_rn@outlook.com

### M.O.M.S. – Delaware

**2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the Month | 6:30 PM**

#### Yabo's Tacos

5875 Evans Farm Dr. Ste H  
Lewis Center, Ohio 43035

**April 9**

**May 14**

**June 11**

#### Crystal Vitullo

crystalmowry@gmail.com

#### Allison Schwab

allieb1220@gmail.com

### M.O.M.S. – Español

**Meets quarterly**

**June 13** - Roosters Whitehall

#### Yirha Torres

dtefamily4@gmail.com

### M.O.M.S. – Marion

The Marion M.O.M.S. group is currently on "pause." Stay tuned for updates and in the meantime, check out one of our other locations.

### M.O.M.S. – Marysville

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

#### Tres Potrillos Mexican Restaurant

435 Colemans Crossing Blvd,  
Marysville, Ohio 43040

**April 19**

**May 17**

**June 21**

#### 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**

#### The Goat

4265 Brooklands Dr., Hilliard, Ohio 43026

**April 15**

**May 20**

**June 17**

#### Hannah Reid

hannahreid329@gmail.com

### M.O.M.S. – Southeast

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

#### Zapatas Mexican Kitchen OR Rooster's

**April 9** - Zapatas Mexican Kitchen

**May 14** - Rooster's Pickerington

**June 11** - Zapatas Mexican Kitchen

#### Yirha Torres

dtefamily4@gmail.com

#### Whitney Garrett

wpwalker86@gmail.com

### M.O.M.S. – Westerville

**1st Thursday of the Month | 6:30 PM**

**April 3** - Roosters, 1041 Gemini Pl,  
Columbus, Ohio 43240

**May 1** - Las Margaritas, 706 N State St,  
Westerville, Ohio 43082

**June 5** - Agape Mediterranean, 405  
Polaris Pkwy, Suite 101, Westerville, Ohio  
43082

#### Lucy Pagán

lucillepagan@gmail.com

### Jackie Johnston

jackierosejohnston@gmail.com

Visit DSACO M.O.M.S.  
Facebook group for  
any area's meeting details:  
[facebook.com/groups/297727160607506](https://facebook.com/groups/297727160607506)



### Little Buddies Parent 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 provided.

### NORTH - Little Buddies

**Monday, April 14 | 6:30 PM**

All Saints Lutheran Church  
6770 N. High St. Worthington, Ohio 43085

Join us for part 2 of behavior strategies! We will once again be joined by a Clinical Psychologist and Behavior Support Specialist from Nisonger to discuss the most common behavioral problems, and dive even deeper to explore even more challenging behaviors and strategies to help. We will have plenty of time, so come prepared with specific areas of need for your child!

**Monday, May 12 | 5 PM**

We Rock The Spectrum  
Oak Creek Center, 1250 E Powell Rd, Lewis Center, OH 43035

Join us for some rockin' fun at We Rock The Spectrum Kid's Gym! This will be a private event for DSACO, and dinner/snacks will be provided as well. This unique play space is perfect for kids of all abilities and provides "play with a purpose."

**Monday, June 9 | 6 PM**

Liberty Park  
2845 Home Rd. Powell, Ohio 43065

Join us for a summer picnic with your fellow Little Buddies families! Enjoy this unique playground that has structures for kids of all abilities. We'll enjoy the summer weather, along with dinner and snacks!

#### Jessica Huber

jesshuber86@gmail.com



## Cory Guindon

righterc@gmail.com

### SOUTHEAST - Little Buddies

**Thursday, April 17 | 6:30 PM**

Grace Fellowship

575 Diley Rd, Pickerington, Ohio 43147

Join us for part 2 of behavior strategies! We will once again be joined by a Clinical Psychologist and Behavior Support Specialist from Nisonger to discuss the most common behavioral problems, and dive even deeper to explore even more challenging behaviors and strategies to help. We will have plenty of time, so come prepared with specific areas of need for your child!

**Saturday, May 3 | 10:30 AM**

AHA! A Hands-On-Adventure

Children's Museum

1708 River Valley Cir S

Lancaster, Ohio 43130

You're invited to join us for hands-on learning and fun! This unique space gives kids a chance to use imagination, creativity, and their sense of discovery in the 8,000 square foot facility. Children from six months to eight years of age can become explorers, scientists, engineers, and artists! DSACO will cover the cost of admission for you and your child with Down syndrome plus siblings ages eight and under. Lunch will also be provided! Registration is required.

**Thursday, June 19 | 6 PM**

Sycamore Creek Park Hilltop Shelter

Hilltop Dr, Pickerington, Ohio 43147

Join us for a summer picnic with your Little Buddies friends! Enjoy a private shelter house and playground area, with snacks and dinner provided.

## Whitney Garrett

wpwalker86@gmail.com

## Jen McGhee

jenny.a.mcghee@gmail.com

Visit Little Buddies Parent Facebook group for meeting details: [facebook.com/groups/339782022866623](https://facebook.com/groups/339782022866623)



## TEEN CONNECTIONS:

### High School Social Group

Does your high schooler with Down syndrome want to connect with peers and make new friends? DSACO's free monthly High School Social Group is the perfect place! Each gathering is designed for teens who are mostly independent and eager to enjoy a fun, safe, and social environment. Every month features a different location filled with games, food, and activities!

### Trampoline Jumping and Pizza

**Thursday, April 10 | 5:30 – 7:30 PM**

Big Air Trampoline Park

1400 Polaris Pkwy, Columbus, Ohio 43240

### Bowling and Pizza

**Monday, May 12 | 6:30 – 8 PM**

Star Lanes Polaris

8655 Lyra Dr, Columbus, Ohio 43240

### Inclusive Outdoor Pool Party

**Saturday, June 14 | 7 – 8:30 PM**

Highlands Park Aquatic Center

245 S Spring Rd, Westerville, OH 43081

**To Register:** Events are free but registration is required. Please register one week before event at [dsaco.net/hssocialgroup](https://dsaco.net/hssocialgroup)

## Mandy Peterson

mpeterson@mvcasd.us

740-501-8206

## Mary Elliott

columbuselliotts@gmail.com

614-301-8461

## BOTH TEEN & ADULT CONNECTIONS:

### Stamping Club-East (Ages 16+)

**April 8, May 13, June 10 | 6 – 7 PM**

Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD)

## ADULT 18+ CONNECTIONS:

### Adult Stamping Club-Central

**April 2, May 7, June 4 | 6:30 - 8 PM**

Westerville Public Library

### Cooking with YOU...and Who?

**April 9 & 23, May 14 & 28, June 25**

**5:30 – 6:30 PM**

via Zoom

## In-person potluck: June 11 | 6 - 9 PM

Park of Roses Shelter House

3901 N High St, Columbus, Ohio 43214

Visit Parents of Adults with Down syndrome Facebook group: [facebook.com/groups/1114469685683633](https://facebook.com/groups/1114469685683633)



## Stay Connected!

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

 [dsaco.cb.us](https://dsaco.cb.us)

 [dsaco.cb.us](https://dsaco.cb.us)

## Facebook Groups:

DSACO's Black and African American Outreach Group

DSACO D.A.D.S.

DSACO "Lending" Library

DSACO Little Buddies Parent

Resource Group

DSACO M.O.M.S.

DSACO Parents of Adults with

Down syndrome

DSACO School Aged Group

Familias Latinas De DSACO

DSACO Families with Medically

Complex Needs

DS-ASD Parent Resource Group,

courtesy of DSACO

**Our Mission:** To support families, promote community involvement, and encourage a lifetime of opportunities for people with Down syndrome.

**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 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and a community of ElevateDD. Contributions are fully tax-deductible.

## CALENDAR of EVENTS

### April

- 2 Adult Stamping Club Central
- 3 Westerville M.O.M.S.
- 8 Adult Stamping Club East
- 9 Cooking with You... and Who?
- 9 Southeast M.O.M.S.
- 9 Delaware M.O.M.S.
- 10 High School Social Group
- 12 Knox County Connection
- 13 Latino Outreach
- 14 Little Buddies – North
- 14 D.A.D.S.
- 15 Chillicothe M.O.M.S.
- 15 Northwest M.O.M.S.
- 17 Connecting Parents of Adults
- 17 Little Buddies – Southeast
- 18 Summer Learning Academy Registration Closes
- 19 Marysville M.O.M.S.
- 22 Aging & Ds Caregiver Support
- 23 Cooking with You... and Who?
- 21 Jump Start Swim Clinic Registration Opens
- 26 Mom Prom

### May

- 1 Westerville M.O.M.S.
- 1 Golf Classic Registration Opens
- 3 Latino Resource Group
- 3 Little Buddies – Southeast
- 7 Adult Stamping Club Central
- 12 D.A.D.S.
- 12 High School Social Group
- 12 Little Buddies – North
- 13 Adult Stamping Club East
- 14 Cooking with You... and Who?
- 14 Southeast M.O.M.S.
- 14 Delaware M.O.M.S.
- 17 Marysville M.O.M.S.
- 20 Chillicothe M.O.M.S.
- 20 Northwest M.O.M.S.
- 24 Somali Outreach
- 26 Memorial Day – Office Closed
- 27 Aging & Ds Caregiver Support
- 28 Cooking with You... and Who?

### June

- 2 321go! Starts
- 2 iCan Bike starts
- 4 Adult Stamping Club Central
- 4 Golf Academy Starts
- 5 Westerville M.O.M.S.
- 9 D.A.D.S.
- 9 Little Buddies – North
- 9 Summer Learning Academy
- 10 Adult Stamping Club East
- 11 Delaware M.O.M.S.
- 11 Potluck Cooking with You... and Who?
- 11 Southeast M.O.M.S.
- 13 M.O.M.S. Español
- 14 Outdoor Inclusive All Ages Pool Party
- 15 Community Access Funds Application Deadline
- 16 Adult Conference Registration Opens
- 17 Chillicothe M.O.M.S.
- 17 Northwest M.O.M.S.
- 19 Little Buddies – Southeast
- 19 Juneteenth – Office Closed
- 21 Marysville M.O.M.S.
- 24 Aging & Ds Caregiver Support
- 25 Cooking with You... and Who?