

LEARN ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME

BY DOWN SYNDROME ADVOCATES IN ACTION NE

WHAT IS DOWN SYNDROME?

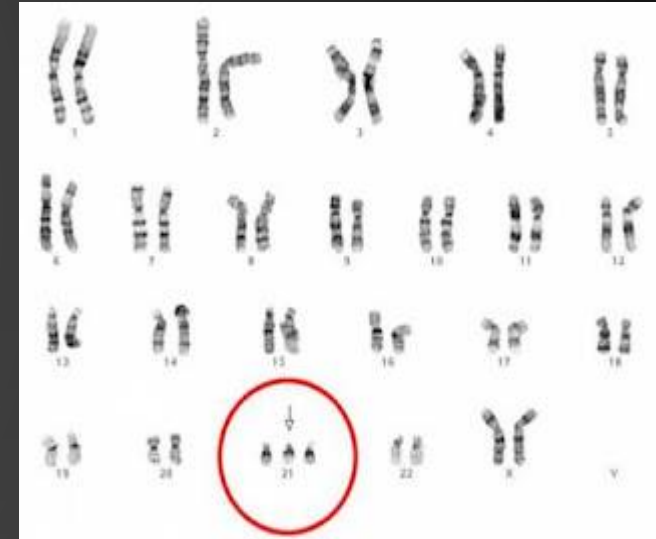
- Down Syndrome the second most common naturally occurring chromosomal arrangement.
- Everyone is made up of chromosomes, and people with Down syndrome have an extra 21st Chromosome.
- There is nothing parents could do to prevent a person being born with Down syndrome.
- You can not catch Down syndrome it is something a person is born with



WHAT ARE CHROMOSOMES

Chromosomes are tiny instructions in each of our cells. They determine if you look like your Dad or your Mom and if you are a boy or a girl.

Having an extra chromosome is like adding extra sugar or another egg to a recipe. You still get a delicious cake, but it might taste or look a little bit different.



ANYONE CAN HAVE A BABY WITH DOWN SYNDROME

- Young Parents,
- Older Parents
- Rich Parents
- Poor Parents
- Parents of all races
- First time Parents
- Parents with many children



WHAT IS IT LIKE TO HAVE DOWN SYNDROME?

People with Down syndrome:

- Experience a full range of emotions
- They like many of the same things as their peers
- May have to work extra hard to do the same things as you
- Are visual learners and do well with visual supports
- Are more like you than they are different



HOW DO YOU TALK ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME?

Use people first language and recognize the person before talking about any differences

Use language that is respectful to help people feel accepted and valued

Remember that differences are what make the world a more interesting place.



PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME UNDERSTAND AND LIKE TO DO THINGS JUST LIKE YOU



They like to hang out with friends, go to birthday parties, play video games and sports.

They grow up, may go to college, work and can live on their own, just like you might do! Some even run businesses and drive.

A sense of belonging is important to them and they can thrive when they are included in the classroom and in the community.

PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME MAY LEARN DIFFERENTLY

Generally they learn from seeing new information, not just hearing it

Some people with Down syndrome communicate through sign language, a speech device, or other visual communication method

Just like others, they might run slower or not be able to do the monkey bars

They might write their letters differently or read slowly



STUDENTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME BENEFIT FROM LEARNING ALONG SIDE THEIR PEERS

In some schools in Nebraska, students with Down syndrome are meaningfully participating in:

- Core Classes– English, Science, Social Studies and Math
- Specials– Music, Band, PE, and other electives
- Organized team sports
- Other extra curricular clubs and activities like dances and 4-H

Is this happening in your school? If you would like help thinking of ways to include students with Down syndrome, please email us at info@dsaane.org



PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME ARE DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER



- Just like you are different from your friends, people with Down syndrome have different likes, hopes, dreams and struggles
- They can experience lots of emotions; feel happy, angry, frustrated, excited, or sad.
- If you know one person with Down syndrome, you know one person with Down syndrome.

SOME DIFFERENCE YOU MIGHT NOTICE IN PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME



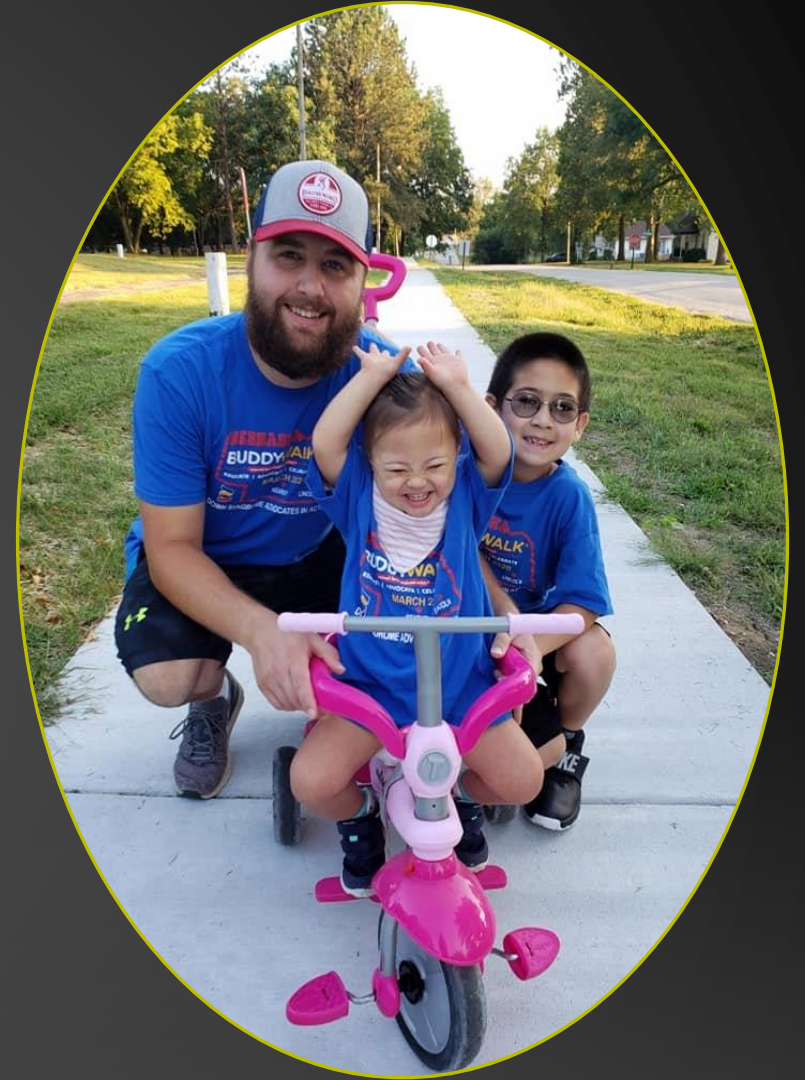
- **Some may have difficulty sharing their thoughts, but that does not mean they don't understand what you are saying**
- **Might not be able to eat all the things you can eat, if they are on a special diet**
- **Might wear braces on their legs to help them walk**
- **May wear glasses or hearing aids.**
- **Might get sick more often**

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- Ask if they need help. Don't assume a person needs help just because they are different from you.
- Give them time to process after you talk
- Set a good example
- Offer encouragement
- Ask them to play with you

REMEMBER:

People with Down syndrome can do the same things as others, but it might take a little more time and practice especially when they are learning something new.



ANY DAY IS A GOOD DAY TO MAKE A NEW FRIEND WITH DOWN SYNDROME

- When we go to school together, we can each learn a lot about people who are different than us.
- It is not a bad thing to be disabled—but it is a bad thing to not see the ability of people with Down syndrome and what they can do
- People with Down syndrome are important to their families and communities and can do many great things!



THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO LEARN ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME!

- **Down Syndrome Advocates in Action Nebraska** helps educate families so they can become more confident advocates for their loved ones with Down syndrome.
- If you have any additional questions please look at our website at dsaane.org, email us at info@dsaane.org or call us at 402-413-0199

