

national down syndrome society

ADULT
SUMMIT
ON THE ROAD • 2022

Conference Sessions

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27 | 8:30 AM-4:30 PM

Hilton Richardson Dallas Conference Center • Richardson, TX



FALL CONFERENCE

Learning Together,
Focusing on Possibilities

DOWN SYNDROME GUILD
OF DALLAS

Plenary Sessions



Jan & Austin Underwood, Austin's Underdaws & The Each & Everyone Foundation

Opening Plenary: A Life of My Own (8:45 AM)

Austin Underwood has Down syndrome. He also had a dream of being a chef, but it wasn't an easy journey. After a tireless search for a vocational school that would accommodate Austin's needs, he was able to learn the skills to become a certified prep chef. Since then, he has successfully held a variety of positions in the restaurant industry. With help from his family (aka his Mom, Jan), Austin's Underdaws launched in April 2016 selling "Dawgs" – hot dogs – which became an overnight success! Now six years later and a pandemic, Austin has sold more than 50,000 Underdaws from his 32 foot Dawgmobile. Austin wants to show people that with a little support and training, anyone can grow to be a successful member of their community. Jan and Austin are committed to developing opportunities for individuals with intellectual differences. The story they share shows how at age 44, Austin is living proof of the power of living inclusively and having meaningful employment in the community.



Dr. Tara Goodwin

Closing Plenary: Multi-level Advocacy: No Action is Too Small (4:00 PM)

Dr. Tara Goodwin will share how being a parental advocate grew into becoming a medical advocate for individuals with Down syndrome, and how her experience led her to open a clinic exclusively for adults with Down syndrome in Dallas. The discussion will also explore how individuals with Down syndrome may help advocate for themselves clinically. Dr. Goodwin will be joined by Kandi Pickard, NDSS President & CEO, and Jennifer Ford, Executive Director of the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas for a Q&A with the audience focused on what the community needs to see from a joint advocacy effort on the national, state, and medical level.



Kandi Pickard



Jennifer Ford



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Early Childhood Sessions



DS Clinic at Children's Health: How We Can Help Your Children and Family (10:00 AM)

Sari Bar, DO, Claire Usala, MD, Joanna Spahis, APRN, CNS, ACGN & Sarah King, LMSW, DS Clinic at Children's Health

The goal of this session is to provide you with an update about the Down syndrome clinic including the different types of clinic visits, who you can expect to meet during your clinic visit, and what exactly to anticipate during a clinic visit. We hope to answer questions and give you a better understanding as to why it may benefit your child to be seen as a patient in the Down syndrome clinic.



The Benefits of Occupational and Speech Therapy for Children with Down syndrome (11:15 AM)

Julie Bayless, OTR and owner, & Heather Snook - M.S., CCC-SLP, Keystone Pediatric Therapy

This session will focus on fine and gross motor skills, feeding, speech, social skills, as well as activities of daily living for young children with Down syndrome.



5 Things that Feel Right to Do as a Parent of a Newly-Diagnosed Child that are Actually Terrible for Your Mental Health (and What to do Instead) (1:30 PM)

Rose Reif, MS, LCMHC, CRC, BC-TMH

Many parents of newly diagnosed children suffer from doing the mental health equivalent of running a marathon at a sprint. In this session, we'll talk about signs that you may be on the road to burnout, and how to change course to find a healthy approach WITHOUT feeling guilty.



ABC's of ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) (2:45 PM)

Regan Roth Fitzgerald, MEd, BCBA, LBA

Research shows that early intensive intervention for children with disabilities is one of the most impactful processes for changing behaviors. The earlier a child begins therapy, the more successful they will be. After this course, parents will be provided factual information about ABA and the basics of the science of all behavior. We will be learning why behaviors happen and how to change behaviors to be more socially significant. Parents will know how ABA can help their child by increasing skill acquisition and reducing problematic behaviors.



School Age Sessions



Down Syndrome: Guidelines for Inclusive Education (10:00 AM)

Jessica Kuss, M.Ed., National Down Syndrome Society

Down Syndrome: Guidelines for Inclusive Education outlines best practices in educating students with Down syndrome. Individuals with Down syndrome have a specific learning profile. This document details this profile and provides tools, supports and resources for families, educators, administrators and districts on how to best support students from birth through high school. This presentation will first address the history and purpose of the document. Next, we will go into an in-depth look at the unique learning profile of individuals with Down syndrome. We will then go through the age level specific best practices and discuss how teachers can work together to create lessons and activities that meet the varying needs of their whole class.



To Use AAC or Not to Use AAC: That is the Question (11:15 AM)

Sara Loving, M.S CCC-SLP, AAC Specialist & Owner at Chatterbox Therapy Center

"That iPad is going to discourage speech." Is one of the most common statements we hear from caregivers and providers. What if AAC did the opposite for your loved one? 94% of those who use AAC, increase their verbal language and speech development (Light, 2006). AAC isn't always to use or not to use-sometimes it's a little bit of everything. Join us as we discuss the impact of language and speech, devices, and how to tell if your loved one should be utilizing AAC in a variety of ways to increase their communication, literacy and more.



Supporting Healthy Sexuality and Boundaries for School Age Kids (1:30 PM)

Katie Thune, Mad Hatter Wellness

We know that many individuals with Down syndrome are social beings and want to have relationships and friendships. The skills to have healthy relationships and appropriate boundaries need to be taught - early and often. In this session, participants will learn about why it is important to teach sexuality education, what topics should be addressed, how to have these conversations, and what resources are out there.



The Three Kinds of Fatigue that Caregivers Face and How to Overcome Them (2:45 PM)

Rose Reif, MS, LCMHC, CRC, BC-TMH, Reif Counseling Services, PLLC, NC

From making too many choices to struggling to get a good night's sleep, there are many things that can exhaust parents of kids with Down syndrome. In this session, we'll learn about the three main causes of fatigue and how you can combat each of them.

Adult Caregiver Sessions



Helping your Adult Child Understand Death and Cope with Grief (10:00 AM)

Rose Reif, MS, LCMHC, CRC, BC-TMH, Reif Counseling Services, PLLC, NC

When someone your child loves is sick and may die, how can you be sure that your child understands what is happening? How can you help them express and cope with their grief when they lose someone they care about? Participants will leave this session with confidence that they can support their adult children through even difficult losses.



Supporting Healthy Relationships for 20-30 Year Olds with IDD (11:15 AM)

Katie Thune, Mad Hatter Wellness

People with IDD want friendships and romantic relationships just as much as anyone else. In this presentation, Katie will facilitate a conversation on sexual health education and young adults with disabilities. You'll learn about resources and gain confidence in having conversations on topics involving health relationships, boundaries, dating, and more.



Employment Panel: What are the Options? (1:30 PM)

Entering or re-entering the workforce can be an overwhelming and frightening experience for you loved one, but there are many employment options available-it's just a matter of choosing what's best for them. Employment options available for individuals with Down syndrome include competitive and integrative employment, supportive employment, along with the great option of volunteering.



Independence Panel: What does it Mean to Foster Independence? (2:45 PM)

What does independence mean for you and your adult child with Down syndrome? Achieving independence is an essential part of the journey into adulthood, and it may look different for everyone. As a caregiver is it important to focus on guiding your loved one through decision making and creating room for reflection and mistakes. Learn how to assist and support your loved one through their journey of independence.

Self-Advocate Sessions



Romantic Relationships: What Does a Healthy Romantic Relationship Look Like? (10:00 AM)

Katie Thune, Mad Hatter Wellness

Do you have an interest in romantic relationships and dating? In this session, we will talk about who is a safe and appropriate person to date as well as how to meet someone to date. We will discuss the 5 pieces of a healthy relationship and how to maintain that healthy relationship.



Staying Safe at Home, at Work, and on the Internet (11:15 AM)

Rose Reif, MS, LCMHC, CRC, BC-TMH, Reif Counseling Services, PLLC, NC

Learn how to make safe choices in the community and at home. We'll play a game to figure out who is a real friend. Then we'll talk about staying safe on the internet and social media.



Envisioning Your Future: Using Vision Boards to Self-Direct Planning for the Future (1:30 PM)

Jessica Kuss, M.Ed. & Dana Sciallo, National Down Syndrome Society

Transition planning is a process that will help prepare you for life as you get older. The most important person in the process is you! Join NDSS's Jessica Kuss and Dana Sciallo in creating vision boards that will creatively express your goals and dreams.



Employment and Self-advocacy (2:45 PM)

Summer Gill, My Possibilities

Hands on session for self-advocates that will discuss employment and self-advocacy skills.

