



# FAMILY CONNECTION

WINTER 2021 NEWSLETTER

## GLOBAL DOWN SYNDROME FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE 1ST EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICAL CARE GUIDELINES FOR ADULTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME

The Global Down Syndrome Foundation Medical Care Guidelines for Adults with Down Syndrome© provides first of its kind, evidence-based medical recommendations to support clinicians in their care of adults with Down syndrome. After four years of coordination, compilation, and rigorous assessment and writing, the Global Down Syndrome Foundation Medical Care Guidelines for Adults with Down Syndrome© (GLOBAL Guideline) is complete and available at no cost.



The GLOBAL Guideline is for clinicians and addresses nine medical areas deemed critically important for the health and well-being of adults with Down syndrome: Behavioral Health, Dementia, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, Obesity, Atlantoaxial Instability, Osteoporosis, Thyroid, and Celiac Disease.

The authors include the clinical directors of eight of the largest adult Down syndrome medical centers in the country – Advocate Health Care in Chicago, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Kennedy Krieger Institute at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, University of Kansas Medical Center, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, and Denver Health in conjunction with the Anschutz Medical Campus School of Medicine at University of Colorado.

The GLOBAL Guideline was peer reviewed, edited, and published in the Special Communication section of the print and online October 2020 issue of JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association. “We are so pleased that the quality of our guideline rose to the occasion of being published in JAMA, and we are deeply grateful to our families and self-advocates for pushing us to work on this difficult

project,” says Michelle Sie Whitten, President & CEO of the Global Down Syndrome Foundation (GLOBAL). “Now we can focus on collaborating with other Down syndrome and disability organizations as well as medical institutions to ensure clinicians are following our GLOBAL Guideline and measuring outcomes.”

While the GLOBAL Guideline is free of charge to any stakeholder, the copyright of the JAMA publication and of GLOBAL’s long-form publication prohibits the reproduction of the GLOBAL Guideline on any website or digital platform. However, printing and downloading for personal and clinical use is highly encouraged. Adults with Down syndrome and their caregivers should review the GLOBAL Guidelines with their clinicians to ensure they are receiving care meeting best-practice standards for adults with Down syndrome. The one page checklist is included in the link. <https://www.globaldownsyndrome.org/global-adult-guidelines/>

GLOBAL has support from over 50 local, national, and international Down syndrome organizations and several generous sponsors. By the end of 2021, GLOBAL plans to translate and distribute this transformative new resource into several languages, and to update and expand the GLOBAL Guideline every 6 years.

*Excerpts from “Global Down Syndrome Foundation Announces the 1st Evidence-Based Medical Care Guidelines for Adults with Down Syndrome” Press Release published October 20, 2020. [globaldownsyndrome.org/medical-care-guidelines-press-release](https://www.globaldownsyndrome.org/medical-care-guidelines-press-release)*

[www.dsagsl.org](http://www.dsagsl.org)



# A MESSAGE FROM ERIN



Dear Friends and Family,

Happy New Year! I don't think I am alone when I say I could not be more excited for a new year, a fresh start, and all the reasons we have to feel positive about the future. Moments before writing this letter, we got word from Governor of Missouri, Mike Parson, that adults with Down syndrome have been added to priority group 1B – Tier 2 for the COVID-19 vaccine. The DSAGSL will continue to advocate for our members with Ds in Illinois and Missouri! This news alone is cause for celebration, and I have more to share! Here are a few other reasons I am thrilled it is 2021:

It is the DSAGSL's 45th Anniversary and we are going to have more fun in '21! Stay tuned for many fun activities we have planned to celebrate 45 years of our great Association.

DSAGSL is rolling out a new Strategic Plan! Board and staff worked so hard over the last year to develop three important goals which will launch our organization forward in excellence. Find out more about this plan and how to get involved in this newsletter.

We are proud new partners of the St. Louis Office for Developmental Disability Resources (DDR), St. Charles Developmental Disabilities Resource Board (DDRB), and The United Way of Greater St. Louis! These partnerships offer not only reliable sources of funding for programming but also many valuable resources and opportunities for continued organizational growth.

An in-person Step Up for Down Syndrome! We know 2021 SUDS won't look like it has in prior years, but we are dedicated to hosting a safe, fun, in-person SUDS event on June 13. Start your team and learn more at our website: [dsagsl.org/events/step-up](https://dsagsl.org/events/step-up).

Though we continue to miss seeing your faces in real life, we are so grateful for the faith you've put into our organization from afar. Your support has allowed us to keep our staff whole, to offer dozens of wildly successful virtual programs, to welcome new babies and families to our community, and to plan for another 45 years of the DSAGSL. We are so grateful! As always, if you have any thoughts, questions, concerns or ideas for our organization or if you'd like to get involved, never hesitate to reach out to me at [erin@dsagsl.org](mailto:erin@dsagsl.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Suelmann".

Erin Suelmann  
Executive Director

## WELCOME EMILY FISHER

Emily is excited to be joining the team at the DSAGSL as the Director of Special Events. She graduated from Illinois State University in 2015 with a Bachelor's degree in Public Relations. Since then, Emily has worked in the fundraising and event planning field and really enjoys getting to know people and seeing how an organization can really make a difference in the community. Before moving to Missouri three years ago, Emily was an event planner in Bloomington, Illinois and in New York City!



In her spare time, Emily and her fiancé Adam have been training their new puppy, Charlie! She's a Miniature Australian Shepherd and is nine months old. Little Charlie loves to snuggle and always sits at Emily's feet while she is baking, hoping some scraps of food will magically fall on the floor. Emily loves anything Disney and also loves to travel. DSAGSL is super excited to welcome Emily to the team!!

# STAY CONNECTED

## Join Our Email List

DSAGSL sends out weekly emails with information about programs, services, resources, and events! Go to [dsagsl.org/signup](https://dsagsl.org/signup) to enter your email address and join the list.

## Update your Contact Information

Has your information changed? We have an update form on our website! DSAGSL was recently approved for grant funding with DDR, DDRB, and United Way- so exciting! It does mean we'll need more information from all of our families. Help us get a jump start and update your information today! [dsagsl.org/signup](https://dsagsl.org/signup)

## Follow us on Social Media

DSAGSL stays active on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. You can find out what's happening at DSAGSL, learn more about resources in the community, and help raise awareness about the awesome lives of people with Down syndrome! [facebook.com/dsagsl](https://facebook.com/dsagsl) | [youtube.com/stlouisdsa](https://youtube.com/stlouisdsa) | follow @dsagsl on Twitter and Instagram

## Visit our Website

[DSAGSL.org](https://DSAGSL.org) is FULL of information! Find our calendar of events, tons of resources, and more about all of our great programs for individuals with Down syndrome of all ages!



**THE MISSION** of the Down Syndrome Association of Greater St. Louis is to serve, support, and celebrate the lives of all individuals with Down syndrome and their families

## CONTACT US

8531 Page Ave, Suite 120. St. Louis, MO 63114  
314-961-2504 - [info@dsagsl.org](mailto:info@dsagsl.org)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021

Greg Szczepan- President  
Matthew Kane- Vice President  
Joe Niemeyer- Treasurer  
Dwayne Worley- Secretary  
Michelle Abounader  
Chris Canfield  
Andy Conover  
Dain Giesie  
Brian Hadican  
Elizabeth Hall  
Renata Keys  
Megan Layton  
Jessica Leggett  
Paula Mass  
Rochelle Nichols  
Ali Siegel-Kerins  
Jonathan Waldron  
Allie Wargel  
Claire Watson

# RESOURCE CORNER

## COVID-19 VACCINATION INFORMATION

The DSAGSL is committed to sharing the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 and the vaccine to our community. Here is a summary of what we know right now:

- In Missouri, individuals with Down syndrome have been added to the vaccine priority list labeled Phase 1B - Tier 2 which focuses on protecting those who are at increased risk for severe illness. People in this group are eligible for a vaccine as of January 18th.
- Individuals in Phase 1B - Tier 2 should contact their local pharmacy or health care provider, or visit [MOStopsCovid.com](https://moplastops.com) to learn when vaccines may be available and how to receive them.
- There is no current evidence that vaccines are associated with increased side effects in individuals with Down syndrome, but it will be important to consult a healthcare professional before accessing the vaccine: [t21rs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/T21RS-vaccines.pdf](https://t21rs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/T21RS-vaccines.pdf)

As of mid-January, DSAGSL does not have information about what phase individuals with Down syndrome will be in for Illinois residents. We will continue advocating in Illinois. You can learn more about Illinois' plan here: [dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccine-faq](https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccine-faq) DSAGSL will continue to provide updates to our families on our website [dsagsl.org](https://dsagsl.org), as well as through our e-newsletter and social media. Sign up to receive our e-newsletter at [dsagsl.org/signup](https://dsagsl.org/signup) and follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/dsagsl](https://facebook.com/dsagsl)

## STIMULUS CHECKS

If you're part of the SSDI or SSI program, there's a lot to know about the second stimulus check, including how to make a claim for last year's payment. Find all the details at [cnet.com/personal-finance/ssi-ssdi-and-stimulus-checks-what-to-know-about-eligibility-missing-600-payments-and-more](https://cnet.com/personal-finance/ssi-ssdi-and-stimulus-checks-what-to-know-about-eligibility-missing-600-payments-and-more)

## COMPUTER AND INTERNET RESOURCES

DSAGSL received a grant from the United Way to help families connect to virtual programs by helping cover some of the cost of internet services and/or a connection device. If your loved one with Down syndrome could benefit from these services, please apply by contacting Makini Anwisy at 314-961-2504 or [makini@dsagsl.org](mailto:makini@dsagsl.org). Applications are due by February 29, 2021. All families with a loved one with Down syndrome are eligible to apply. Please note that funds are limited and we cannot guarantee we will be able to provide assistance to all applicants.

## TEACH ME TOO

This is an online library of 20 short educational videos and accompanying learning resources, all designed around the specific learning profile of children with Down syndrome. Located in the UK, this resource was created by 21together in response to the loss of in person learning due to COVID19. [21together.org.uk/teach-me-too](https://21together.org.uk/teach-me-too)

## IDD HELP

IDDHelp is a fast, free and confidential service that provides information, resources, referrals and advocacy to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families residing in St. Louis County, St. Louis City and St. Charles County. A Community Connector can be reached by phone at 1-877-256-2202, or you can visit the website where there is an email option, or a live chat option. [IDDHelp.org](https://IDDHelp.org)

## NATIONAL DOWN SYNDROME CONGRESS PARENT WEBINAR SERIES

This three-part series was designed to help parents and educators make the jump from the classroom to online learning. Presented by Sean J. Smith, a professor of Special Education at the University of Kansas and an NDSC Board member, these sessions focus on the various tips, tools, and techniques to maximize online learning for students with disabilities. Watch anytime at [ndscenter.org/outreach-education/parent-webinars/](https://ndscenter.org/outreach-education/parent-webinars/)

## DSAGSL COMMUNITY OUTREACH VIDEOS

We've put together a YouTube Playlist of all our webinars from 2020 including the three-part series Secure Futures- Planning for the Future for your Loved One with Down Syndrome, a Visual Schedules Workshop, and a seminar on Down syndrome & Alzheimer's disease. View them anytime at [youtube.com/StLouisDSA/playlists](https://youtube.com/StLouisDSA/playlists)

# COMMUNITY GROUPS

DSAGSL Community Groups provide information, resources and/or emotional support for parents and friends of individuals with Down syndrome. Each group has its own personality and may be based on location, culture, native language and/or the age group(s) they serve. Each community group is open to all interested DSAGSL members. Contact the groups below for more information about their respective events, or contact Abigail Beckord, Community Engagement Manager at the DSAGSL, if you have any questions or would like information about starting a group!

## MISSOURI

### **DADS APPRECIATING DOWN SYNDROME (DADS)**

Serving Greater St. Louis  
Contact: Tony Sorocko | (314)393-8548  
dadsstl@outlook.com | www.dadsstl.org  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/270173929671043

### **DOWN SYNDROME AND AUTISM (DS/ASD) COMMUNITY GROUP**

Serving Greater St. Louis  
Contact: Christy Klaus | (314)961-2504 ext 2  
christy@dsagsl.org | www.dsagsl.org

### **DOWN SYNDROME COMMUNITY GROUP OF UPSTATE MISSOURI**

Serving Kirksville, Brookfield and surrounding areas  
Contact: Becky Pike | (660)651-5139  
kirksville\_cg@dsagsl.org | www.facebook.com/dscnemo

### **HEARTLAND COMMUNITY GROUP**

Serving Southeast Missouri and Southern Illinois  
Meetings are 2nd Sat. of each month 10am-12pm at the Cape Girardeau Public Library, Penzel Conf. Rm  
Contact: Claire Watson | (573)334-5685  
heartland\_cg@dsagsl.org | www.facebook.com/HeartlandDSA

### **ST. CHARLES COUNTY COMMUNITY GROUP**

Serving St. Charles, West County, & surrounding areas  
*This community group is looking for new leadership*  
Contact Abigail at DSAGSL more information | abigail@dsagsl.org  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/stcdsgroup

### **SOUTH COUNTY MOMS GROUP**

Serving Kirkwood/Webster/South County and surrounding areas  
Contact: Stephanie Holmes | (314)495-8388  
Contact 2: Cheri Nienhaus | (618)570-8485  
kirkwood\_cg@dsagsl.com  
www.facebook.com/groups/kirkwoodwebsterdsmoms

### **NORTH COUNTY/NORTH CITY COMMUNITY GROUP**

Serving North St. Louis County and St. Louis City- This group is looking for new leadership! Contact Community Engagement Manager, Abigail at Abigail@dsagsl.org or (314)961-2504

## ILLINOIS

### **SOUTHERN ILLINOIS COMMUNITY GROUP**

Serving Carbondale, Creal Springs, and surrounding areas  
Contact: Samantha Dudley | Soil\_cg@dsagsl.org  
www.facebook.com/SIDownSyndromeSupportGroup

## OTHER DOWN SYNDROME GROUPS

### **DOWN SYNDROME GUILD OF CENTRAL MISSOURI**

Serving Columbia, Jefferson City, Central Missouri and surrounding areas  
Contact: Jessica Fahey | Program Coordinator | 913-384-4848  
www.kcdsg.org/dsg-central-missouri.php

### **RIVERBEND DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION**

Serving Southwest Illinois  
Contact: secretary@riverbendds.org  
www.riverbendds.org

### **DOWN COUNTRY**

Serving Hannibal, Quincy and surrounding areas  
Contact: info@upatdowncountry.com | 217-617-3568  
www.upatdowncountry.com | www.facebook.com/UpatDownCountry

### **DOWN SYNDROME GROUP OF THE OZARKS**

Serving Springfield, MO and surrounding areas  
Contact: (417)885-9905 or (888)655-5173  
info@ozarksdsg.org | www.ozarksdsg.org

### **LINCOLN LAND DOWN SYNDROME SOCIETY**

Serving Springfield, IL and surrounding areas  
Contact: (217)415-8716 | lldss@comcast.net  
www.lldss.org | www.facebook.com/LincolnLandDownSyndromeSociety

### **CENTRAL ILLINOIS DOWN SYNDROME ORGANIZATION**

Serving McLean County, Bloomington/Normal & surrounding areas  
Contact: (309)452-3264 | info@cidso.org | www.cidso.org

### **DOWN SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP | BLESSING HOSPITAL**

11th Street Auditorium at Blessing Hospital | Quincy, IL 62305  
Meetings: Every last Monday of the month at 6:30pm  
Contact: 217-223-8400 ext 4190

### **HEART OF ILLINOIS DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION**

325 E. Queenwood Rd. | Morton, IL 61550  
Contact: (309)712-4852 | info@hoidsa.org  
www.hoidsa.org | www.facebook.com/HOIDS

## NEW COMMUNITY GROUP

We have heard from members that there are families interested in creating an African American community group. Please contact Makini Anwisyse if you are interested in a leadership role, attending an event, or learning more. Makini@dsagsl.org or 314.961.2504 x7

# OUR CONNECTION IS STRONG



With the excitement of a New Year stretched in front of us, we also reflect on this last year and everything the world has been through. The year 2020 was filled with disappointments, loss, stress, and fear, but it was also filled with hope, strength, flexibility, and innovation. The Down Syndrome Association of Greater St. Louis has always been dedicated to serving and supporting families, but it took some quick decision-making and creative thinking for the DSAGSL team when faced with this new reality.

Our Virtual Programs have continued to evolve and the number of participants engaging in our various programs continues to grow. We have strategically developed programs that stimulate the brain to continue learning, engage the body in physical activity, as well as provide a fun and entertaining environment to encourage emotional and mental health.

On Facebook Live, you can find DSAGSL staff on programs such as

- Music and Movement-** a program geared toward younger children where they can play, sing, and learn
- Activities with Andi-** get ideas for learning activities for your babies and toddlers that you can do at home
- Living Your Best Life-** formerly Back 2 Basics and Healthy Living, this program combines both topics into one great series! Learn skills to improve independence like making the bed and doing dishes, as well as more about healthy eating and cooking, exercise, and more!

DSAGSL has also developed several programs where participants can log into a Zoom for a classroom style setting. These programs include

- Cheer and Dance-** participants stay physically active as they dance, while also engaging their brains in learning a routine over a 4-week session
- Ukulele Club-** Musicians learn songs on the ukulele with a music teacher over a period of 8 weeks
- BINGO-** A weekly game of BINGO keeps player's minds active while also having some much needed social time
- Talk Time-** This program engages individuals with thought-provoking questions and relevant topics such as "the importance of wearing a mask and washing your hands"
- Book Club-** participants read a book aloud over the course of a few weeks and then discuss the main characters and topics
- Parent & Caregiver Happy Hour-** This program gives parents an opportunity to share stories, strategies, and a few laughs together

These are some highlights from the Virtual Program schedule. We have added a few new programs, tweaked some here and there, as well as brought back a few of the favorites. For a full schedule of all the DSAGSL Virtual Programs, as well as log-in information, visit [dsagsl.org/programs/virtual](https://dsagsl.org/programs/virtual). You can also watch past videos at [youtube.com/stlouisdsa](https://youtube.com/stlouisdsa)

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>9:00 AM</b> Music & Movement w/ Andi  <b>1:00 PM</b> Living Your Best Life!  <b>3:00 PM</b> Workout with DSAGSL	<b>12:00 PM</b> Let's Talk Meetup  <b>1:00 PM</b> Stand Up, Sit Down w/ Corny the Clown  <b>7:00 PM</b> Parent Happy Hour <i>1st Tues. of the month only</i>	<b>11:00 AM</b> Book Club w/ Makini  <b>3:00 PM</b> BINGO! w/ Andi  <b>5:00 PM</b> Cheer & Dance w/ Amber	<b>10:00 AM</b> Improv Class  <b>2:00 PM</b> Ready 2 Work Employment Series  <b>6:00 &amp; 7:00 PM</b> Ukulele Club	<b>9:00 AM</b> Play w/ Andi- Activities for babies & toddlers  <b>12:00 PM</b> Ready 2 Work Review & Rehearse

**FULL SCHEDULE AND LOG-IN INFORMATION AT [DSAGSL.ORG/PROGRAMS/VIRTUAL](https://dsagsl.org/programs/virtual)**

# THERE'S MORE FUN IN 2021

## SAVE THE DATE FOR THESE 45TH ANNIVERSARY DSAGSL EVENTS IN 2021!

### VIRTUAL TRIVIA MADNESS TOURNAMENT

February 1 - February 5 | Online with KAHOOT

Play trivia online and you could win \$1,000! 5 nights of qualifying rounds, quick fun games you can play at home, and TONS of great prizes! Sign up today!

[dsagsl.org/events/trivia](https://dsagsl.org/events/trivia)

### WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

Sunday, March 21st | Details Coming Soon!

It might not be quite time to gather in person, but one thing is for sure- we will be celebrating 3/21! Stay tuned for more details!

[dsagsl.org/programs/advocacy-awareness](https://dsagsl.org/programs/advocacy-awareness)

### BIRDIES AND BASS GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, May 3rd | Persimmon Woods Golf Club & Lakes

Our annual golf tournament returns to the spring! We are excited to catch some fish and tee off at the beautiful Persimmon Woods Golf Club!

[dsagsl.org/events/golf](https://dsagsl.org/events/golf)

### STEP UP FOR DOWN SYNDROME

Sunday, June 13th | Forest Park

We are determined to have a great 2021 Step Up for Down Syndrome event and we really hope you can be there with us! Start your team today!

[dsagsl.org/events/step-up](https://dsagsl.org/events/step-up)

### YOUNG FRIENDS BOWLING EVENT

August 2021 | Details Coming Soon!

It will be a Bowling BALL! The fanciest bowling event you've ever seen. Check back soon for more details!

[dsagsl.org/programs/21-club-social-events](https://dsagsl.org/programs/21-club-social-events)

### WALK IN THE BALLPARK

Sunday, October 3rd | Busch Stadium

Start earning tickets to Walk in the Ballpark at Busch Stadium by raising money for your Step Up Team!!

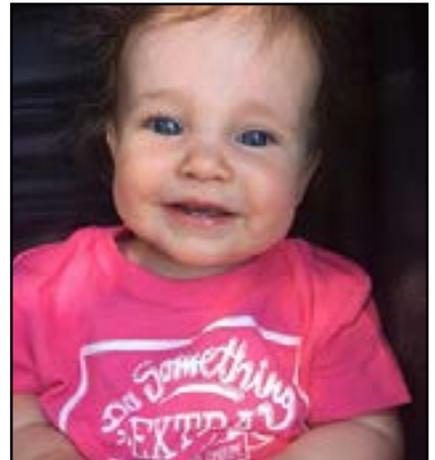
[dsagsl.org/events/walk-in-the-park](https://dsagsl.org/events/walk-in-the-park)

### 45TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

October 2021 | Details Coming Soon!

We are having more fun in 2021 for our 45th Anniversary! Stay tuned for information about a possible Fall Gala!!

[dsagsl.org/events](https://dsagsl.org/events)



# DSAGSL 3 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

In August of 2019, the Board of Directors and staff of the DSAGSL began the process of developing a three year strategic plan with the help of well-respected consultant, Allie Chang Ray. Over the course of the year and a half, with pauses taken in light of the pandemic, the Strategic Planning Committee and staff met regularly to review our current mission, vision and core values, and to identify organizational needs and goals. It is even more powerful that the launch of this exciting plan is taking place in the year of our 45th anniversary! We are proud of the work we have accomplished and thrilled to be working on three goals that will launch our Association forward in excellence, with racial equity in mind. Below are the DSAGSL's updated mission, vision, and core values as well as the three goals we will be working on over the next three years.

**MISSION** To serve, support, and celebrate the lives of all individuals with Down syndrome and their families

**VISION** An inclusive community where all people with Down syndrome can achieve their full potential

**CORE VALUES** Respect | Excellence | Inclusion | Equity | Integrity

## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

**Know Our Members & Partners** - Define DSA service area, ensure quality data of members, volunteers, and donors, and assess needs of families.

**Create a Roadmap for Excellence** - Develop strategic communications, fund development, and organizational management plans.

**Advance Racial Equity in the DSAGSL Community** - Conduct an internal assessment of policies and procedures, ensure collection of data related to race and ethnicity, and increase opportunities for engagement and involvement with and for families of color

## STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEES

### Talent and Organizational Management Committee

- Responsible for developing policies, procedures, and handbooks to recruit, retain, and develop staff, board of directors, and volunteers

### Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

- Responsible for the ongoing evaluation of data for the purposes of ensuring the organization is operating in excellence and fulfilling our mission

### Resource Development & Strategy

- Responsible for creating and implementing innovative resource development strategies to ensure the diversification and sustainability of DSAGSL resources

### Community Engagement

- Responsible for strategies related to engagement of external community members in order to raise awareness and enhance efforts of all other committees

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Responsible for working with all above committees and organization leaders to ensure the Association is prioritizing the advancement of racial equity in the DSAGSL community and viewing all activities through a racial equity lens

If you'd like to learn more about how this plan was developed, have any questions about the plan, or if you are interested in joining one of the Strategic Plan Committees, please contact Executive Director Erin Suelmann. 314.961.2504 or [erin@dsagsl.org](mailto:erin@dsagsl.org)

# DSAGSL | IN ACTION



## WELCOME NEW FAMILIES

We welcomed 42 new families to the DSAGSL community in 2020!! DSAGSL provided each with information, resources, and a few gifts to get started on their journey with their newest family member.

## VIRTUAL NEW MOTHERS LUNCHEON

In partnership with the Pujols Family Foundation, DSAGSL hosted 25 new moms at the first ever Virtual New Mother's Luncheon in August. Attendees enjoyed messages of encouragement from other moms in the community, and watched inspirational videos about the endless possibilities and opportunities their children will have throughout their lives.



## VIRTUAL TALENT SHOW

DSAGSL hosted a virtual talent show for Down Syndrome Awareness Month in October. The event was so much fun and individuals in the community had the opportunity to show off their skills and talents. There were 9 acts in the show including dancing, art, and singing!

## VIRTUAL 21 CLUB EVENTS

The Young Friends Board didn't let the pandemic stop them from planning some super fun virtual social events for their friends with Down syndrome. 32 people logged on for the super unique themed BINGO party in August, and 27 people dressed up in costume and attended the Virtual Halloween Party where they played games, sang karaoke, and had TONS of laughs together



## DRIVE THROUGH HOLIDAY PARTY

To ensure everyone stayed safe and healthy, DSAGSL organized a drive-through holiday party rather than having a typical in-person event like usual. In partnership with Harvester Christian Church, we decorated the parking lot, called up our super hero and princess friends, made some craft and snack goodie bags to hand out, and spread some holiday cheer!! More than 100 families came to the event and fun was had by all!

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## GRANTS

**Dana Brown Charitable Trust - *Childhood Programming***

**Carney's Kids - *Ukulele Club***

**Walmart - *Digital Programming***

**Blues for Kids - *New Family Support***

**United Way - *General Operating Support***

**Wayne C. Kaufmann Charitable Foundation- *Adult Programs and Services***

**St. Louis Office for Developmental Disabilities Resource (DDR) - *Family Support Services***

**St. Charles Developmental Disabilities Resource Board (DDRB) - *Family Support Services***

The DSAGSL recently received funding from the DDR and the DDRB. DDR serves residents of St. Louis City and DDRB serves residents of St. Charles. This funding is important as it helps us provide many services to families for free. As a requirement of these grants, we will need to collect more information for every family we serve and additional information about your loved one with Down syndrome. In turn, it helps us get reimbursed for the services we provide! If you'd like to update your information, visit our website at [dsagsl.org/signup](https://dsagsl.org/signup)

## THIRD PARTY FUNDRAISERS

**McAuliffe Chiropractic - *New Family Baby Gift Item Drive***

This is the third year McAuliffe Chiropractic has supported the DSAGSL with an item drive. This year, they brought hundreds of onesies, rattles, bibs, socks, and other baby items that are included in New Family Welcome Baskets. We are so grateful for their ongoing support of the Down syndrome community.

## THANK YOU TO THE YOUNG FRIENDS BOARD OF DSAGSL!

The DSAGSL is so grateful for the support of these wonderful young people who have shown so much commitment to the mission of the organization. Through all of the challenges 2020 presented to folks personally and professionally, the Young Friends of DSA continued to meet virtually and brainstorm ways to continue connecting with the community. They hosted two virtual events in 2020 including a unique Bingo Night with themed rounds and fun props, and a Halloween Party with music, games, and costumes!

THANK YOU YOUNG FRIENDS BOARD FOR ALL YOU DO!!!

## 45TH ANNIVERSARY 2021 FRIENDS FOR ALL SEASONS CALENDAR

Let the smiling faces of our beautiful community members keep you happy all year long with the DSAGSL annual 12-month calendar.

Order your calendar today at [dsagsl.org/friendscalendar](https://dsagsl.org/friendscalendar)

Just \$10 each plus shipping!



# GET INVOLVED WITH DSAGSL

## VOLUNTEER

DSAGSL is always looking for interns and volunteers to help with our day to day operations, as well as with events and programs. Visit our website [dsagsl.org/get-involved/volunteer](https://dsagsl.org/get-involved/volunteer) to see what opportunities we have available and to fill out the registration form, or contact Volunteer Manager Abigail Beckord at [abigail@dsagsl.org](mailto:abigail@dsagsl.org) or 314.961.2504.

## JOIN A STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

DSAGSL spent a lot of time in 2020 creating the framework for a three year strategic plan for the organization. Be a part of the growth and evolution of the DSAGSL and become a committee member! We have teams working on organizational management, quality improvement, resource development, community engagement, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. If you are interested in joining a committee, contact Executive Director Erin Suelmann at 314.961.2504 or [erin@dsagsl.org](mailto:erin@dsagsl.org).

## CALAMIA GIVING CIRCLE

Join the Calamia Giving Circle by making a gift of \$1,000 or more to the Down Syndrome Association of Greater St. Louis. In honor of your gift, a plaque will be hung on our Giving Circle Wall. It's donations like these that provide year-round services, supports, and programs for individuals with Down syndrome and their families in our community.

## ROSEMARIE BAUMGARTNER SOCIETY

When planning your estate and the legacy you'd like to leave, consider becoming a member of the DSAGSL Rosemarie Baumgartner Society. Gifts can be made from your IRA, will, or trust, and provide vital programs and supports for people with Down syndrome and their families now, and in the future.

Contact Executive Director, Erin Suelmann, for more information about the Calamia Giving Circle, the Rosemarie Baumgartner Society, or any other questions you may have about leaving a legacy gift to DSAGSL. 314.961.2504 or [Erin@dsagsl.org](mailto:Erin@dsagsl.org).

## DSAGSL VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM

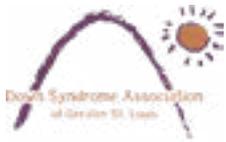
Want to get rid of an old vehicle but don't want to deal with selling it... fixing it... or junking it? Donate it to DSAGSL! The donation process is safe and simple, and will benefit the lives of 1,800+ individuals with Down syndrome! Find out more about donating your unwanted car, boat, motorcycle or RV... whether it runs or not! Visit [www.dsagsl.org/vehicle-donation](https://www.dsagsl.org/vehicle-donation)

## AMAZON SMILES

Do you shop on Amazon.com? Did you know you can select DSAGSL as your charity of choice and for every purchase you make, a donation is made to the organization? It's true! Just make sure to shop through [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) - it's the same as amazon.com, except they will make a donation each time you make a purchase!

## OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Make a donation, set up a third party fundraiser, or collect items for DSAGSL through a donation drive! Find more information on our website at [dsagsl.org/get-involved](https://dsagsl.org/get-involved), or contact Abigail Beckord at [abigail@dsagsl.org](mailto:abigail@dsagsl.org) or 314.961.2504.



8531 Page Ave, Suite 120  
St. Louis MO 63114

[www.dsagsl.org](http://www.dsagsl.org)



# STEP UP!

## FOR DOWN SYNDROME

**Sunday, June 13, 2021**

Start your team today and you could be entered to win great prizes!

[dsagsl.org/events/step-up](http://dsagsl.org/events/step-up)

