



**T**here are currently 7 Down Syndrome associations located throughout Tennessee. They provide support, information, and education to families and professionals throughout the state by offering educational programs, hosting support groups, and assisting with community advocacy. They work closely with national and local disability organizations including the National Down Syndrome Society, the National Down Syndrome Congress, the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Tennessee Post-Secondary Education Task Force and the National Down Syndrome Policy Center to advocate for individuals with Down syndrome.

### **What services or resources does this agency provide?**

Each DSA operates independently and provides its own programs and services. Some examples include lending libraries, weekly book clubs, summer camps, Buddy Walk®, social & recreational activities for individuals with Down syndrome, D.A.D.S., SibShops, Moms Nights Out, educational workshops and conferences, First Call & parent mentor programs, advocacy, family activities, awareness events, medical partnership programs, school partnership & training programs and much more.

### **What areas of Tennessee do they serve?**

There are associations in Memphis, Jackson,



Middle TN, Clarksville, Chattanooga, Knoxville and Tri-Cities.

### **Is there a cost and, if so, who pays?**

All DSAs strive to keep costs as low as possible or free to families, but check with your local DSA for more information on fees.

### **For which students might this agency be appropriate?**

Anyone with or related to someone with Down syndrome or an intellectual or developmental disability is eligible to receive the supports that their Down syndrome association might provide.

### **What is the family's responsibility?**

We recommend that all families connect with their local DSA for support and information to ensure they have the most up-to-date, accurate information and supports available to help their



loved one reach their true potential. Each DSA operates separately, and one should contact their local DSA for how to get connected.

### **What is the student's responsibility?**

It is the student's responsibility to take the initiative to contact their local Down syndrome association. Additionally, students should follow through with any services or supports he or she might be receiving.

### **What is the responsibility of an educator?**

Educators can recommend a Down syndrome association for parents who want to seek a local support network of other parents. This is also an important association for parents who want to learn more about Down syndrome by staying up to date on the latest research through workshops. These associations would also be a good resource to assist individuals with Down syndrome in finding meaningful activities and clubs to participate in throughout the year. Educators can also use the DSA as a valuable resource for information and training.

### **How (and when) do you involve them in the transition planning process**

Though your local Down syndrome association is not a required participant for transition planning, their supports and resources are worth considering while transition planning. Consider the following suggestions:

- Invite a representative from your local Down syndrome association to the planning meeting to discuss different post-secondary options.
- Brainstorm how your local Down syndrome

### **Where can I learn more?**

Check out the list below to find information on a Down syndrome association in your area!

association can help the student achieve some of the IEP goals that are outlined.

- Share with families a packet of relevant resources about your local Down syndrome association.

### **What questions should I ask of my local Down Syndrome Association?**

- What types of trainings and workshops are offered for parents?
- Is childcare available during these trainings?
- Does your organization provide any direct services?
- Does your association offer any specific programs or services related to transitioning out of the school system?
- How can I start a new club or camp within my local chapter?

### **Additional contact information:**

- Visit the [Down Syndrome Association of Memphis & the Mid-South website](#)
- Visit the [Down Syndrome Awareness Group of East TN website](#)
- Visit the [Down Syndrome Association of Middle TN website](#)
- Visit the [Clarksville Association for Down Syndrome website](#)
- Visit the [FRIENDS of the Tri-Cities website](#)