



Down Syndrome Association of Simcoe County

Newsletter | September 2016



HEADING BACK TO SCHOOL always brings excitement, but for families with children with special needs, this can also be a stressful time of year. Turn to pages 6-7 for tips, inspiration, and resources.

Summer Highlights

Our members kept busy this summer with lots of milestones and adventures! See pages 6-7 for photos.

DSAO Conference

This year's provincial conference is being held at Great Wolf Lodge!

Turn to page 2 for more details, including bursary opportunities!



Connor and Owen O. taking it all in at one of our summer splash pad playdates.

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MEMBER MEETING

September 17

Help us kick off the fall with an all-members meeting on September 17th from **12-3pm** at **Willow Creek Baptist Church** in Midhurst.



Join us for a **pizza lunch** and a **magic show** with Magician James Harrison, and then we will break into more age-specific **discussion groups** about IEPs, young adults independence needs, etc. while the kids play supervised in the play room.

This event is **free** for all our members, but we do ask that you **RSVP by September 12** so we know how much pizza to order and childcare to set up.

RSVP!



NIAGARA FALLS, CANADA

DSAO "Dreams" Conference

October 15-16, 2016

This year's Down Syndrome Association of Ontario Conference will be held at Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls. There is a full one-day agenda of speakers. Register at www.dsao.ca, rooms are filling up quickly.

It would be great to see lots of DSASC families at this event, so we are offering up to \$50 registration bursaries, and full bursaries for any Young Advocates who wish to attend. See you there!

**July 21,
2016**

DSASC CHARITY
GOLF
Tournament

Tangle Creek Golf & Country Club

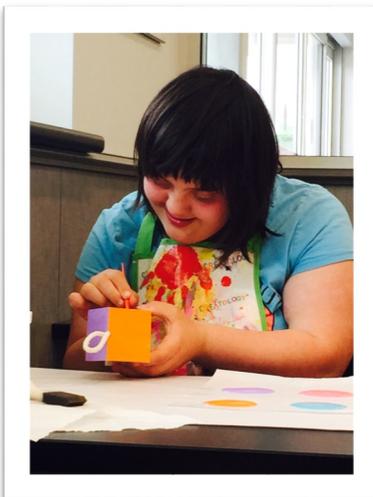
A huge thank you to all who were involved in making our 6th Annual Golf Tournament fundraiser a great success! Members who receive this newsletter in the mail will also find in the envelope the dinner program from our tournament, so you can see all the businesses that supported this event.

Introducing...



This fall, instead of scheduling 6-week programs for each season, we will be hosting a social club that enjoys different weekly-ish, all-ages activities to give our members a chance to try different things while hanging out with their friends. See the fall schedule on our website under the EVENTS tab at www.dsasc.ca.

Registration will be required through the website, and each activity costs \$5 per child (including siblings). Check the website for updates to the schedule, and let us know if you have an idea for an activity for us to try!



ARE YOU ON THE LIST?

Make sure you are on the e-mail list to get regular updates and reminders right to your inbox. Email admin@dsasc.ca.

Pumkinfest

October 23, 2016 | 10am

Brown's Farm, Dalston

(At County Rd 93 and Simcoe Rd 11)

One of our most popular events!

Brown's Farm is opening early exclusively for DSASC!

Come enjoy a wagon ride and some warm cider.

Free for members, includes 1 pumpkin per child.



November 6, 2016 | 12-2pm

Innisfil YMCA

(At Innisfil Beach Road and Yonge St.)

All members are encouraged to support the DSASC through at least one of our three annual fundraisers (Bowlathon, Walkathon, or Golf Tournament). We hope to see many of you come out to the Fun Walk and fundraiser! Save the Date, and stay tuned for more details.

Christmas Party

November 20 | 12-3pm

Save the Date and plan to join us at Bear Creek High School in Barrie for lunch, singing, crafts, and a visit from Santa himself!



Bursaries

Children's Therapy and Recreation Bursary

From Roan C.'s family:

We were very grateful to receive bursary funding this year. We used it to enroll our son Roan into dance classes for the first time. He had watched his sisters go to dance for several years and he wanted his turn. We were apprehensive at first but he attended each lesson eagerly and enthusiastically; weekly making the parents in the waiting room smile as he walked into the studio. At the year-end dance recital, Roan and his class lit the stage up with their routine "Men in Black." Roan not only knew every move but he led his group as they had a little stage fright. This kid surely has all the right moves and definite stage presence! Special thanks to CIBC and DSASC for their generous support and community leadership; to Tracey King, studio owner of Tapps Performing Arts, for encouraging his participation and her welcoming environment and to Sheridan Moonilall for her enthusiasm and choreography.



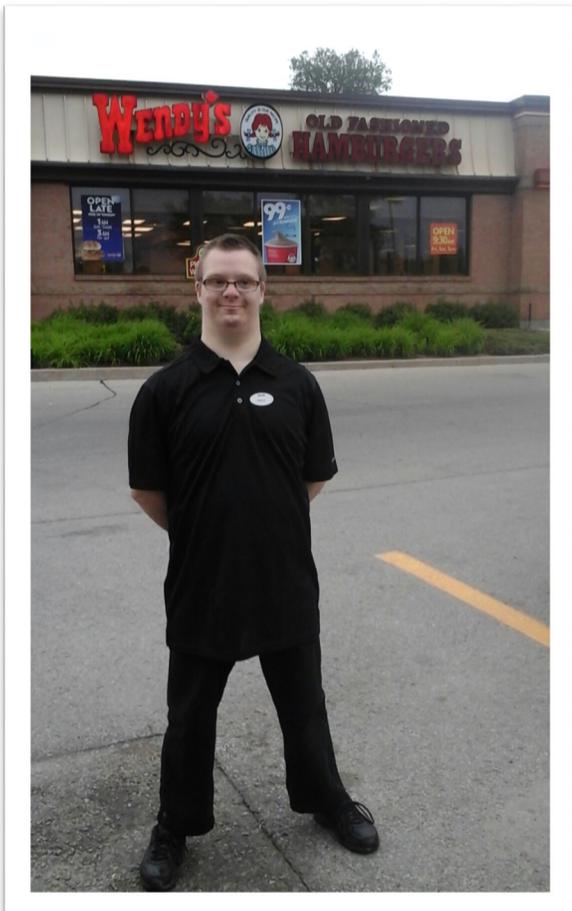
Young Adult Independence Bursary

Last year the DSASC introduced the Young Adult Independence Bursary to assist young adults who are no longer in school. Four families applied for the bursary and received \$400 each. Here is Ben Helmond at his new job at Wendy's. Ben uses part of his bursary to buy a bus pass that gets him to and from work on his own. We also gave out 10 Children's Therapy and Recreation Bursaries totalling just over \$3300.

2016-2017 Bursary Applications Now Open

All members are encouraged to consider applying for a **Children's Therapy and Recreation Bursary** or **Young Adult Independence Bursary**.

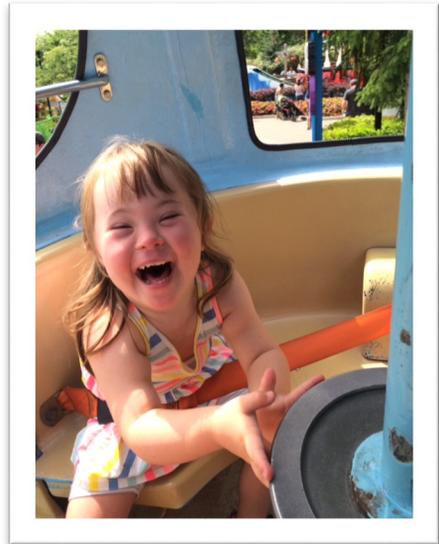
The deadline for application is **October 1**, and all relevant information and applications can be found online under the PROGRAMS tab at www.dsasc.ca.



Summer 2016: We've Been BUSY!



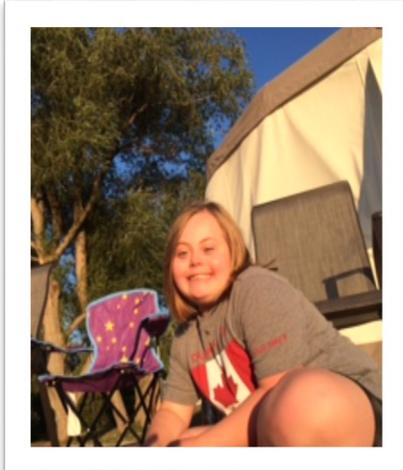
Meaghan S. turned 21 and got a trip to Disney!



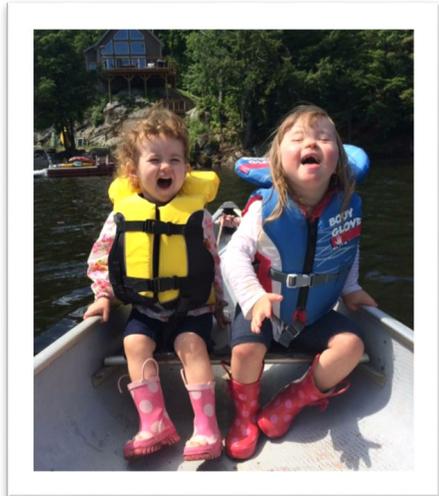
Emma B. loved Wonderland!



Aiden M. taming the waves in Muskoka.



Claire S. enjoyed camping in a yurt with her family.



Lucy and Emma B. out for a ride at the lake.



Nichola K. at her bowling birthday party, with members Siobhan K., Mackenzie C., Alex E., Chris I., Fiona F., and other friends.



Cierra C. living the dream on her birthday at a Justin Bieber concert!



Ben H. enjoying some lobster on his family trip out east.





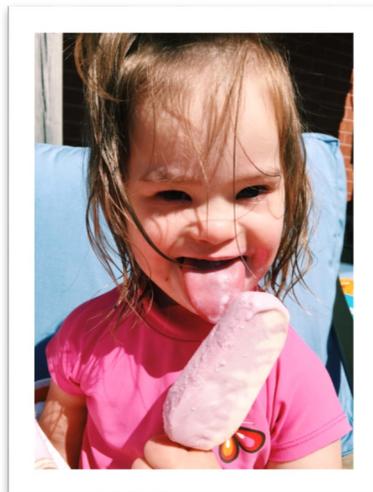
Claire S., Carissa C., Hayden R., and Reuben F. and their friends had a fun week at Friends Camp in August.



Cierra C. was a Counsellor in Training at Pioneer Camp this year!



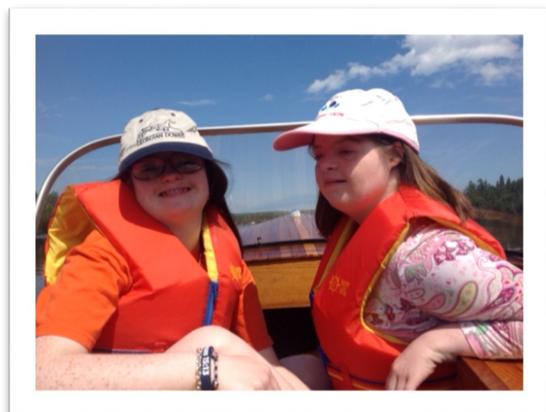
Connor O. loves to play at the park.



Ella B., enjoying a popsicle on a hot day.



Carissa C. wrapped up the summer in Disney World with her family.



Nichola and Siobhan K. enjoying a day out on the water.

Summer Fun Milestones Accomplishments

Rocking the IEP Meeting: 5 Important Tips for Parents



Being a member of the IEP team requires confidence, collaboration and commitment. These tips, adapted from the article “5 Important Things to Do During an IEP Meeting” by Kristin Stanberry on www.understood.org can help during your next IEP meeting:

- 1. Personalize for your child.** No one on the IEP team knows your child the way you do. The other team members may be experts about education, but you're an expert about your child. Share your perspective on your child's personality, interests, struggles and success. Cast a wide net. Describe how he behaves when doing homework, playing on sports teams and doing other activities outside of school. This will give the school insights into your child's abilities and interests. It also will remind the team to tailor his IEP to him as an individual.
- 2. Keep an open mind.** Kids sense when parents are nervous and this can exacerbate a child's anxiety -- or create one -- about school. Often parents are way more anxious to prep for September but you can't make it your child's problem.
- 3. Ask questions and seek clarification.** Special education laws and programs are complex. Even if you're well prepared, you may hear new terms and references during an IEP meeting. When this happens, ask for explanations. You have a right to understand every detail and decision. You may want to ask in advance for notes to be taken during the meeting. Then ask for a copy of the notes at the end of the meeting.
- 4. Focus on the outcome, not the process.** Be aware of the goals you have for your child, and make sure the team understands your expectations. You can work together to create a plan to help your child achieve those goals. Together the team can figure out the best resources and effective instructional approaches. Be sure to ask questions about what the team proposes and even suggest changes.
- 5. Advocate for your rights and those of your child.** Don't allow others to gloss over IEP details that involve your rights. For instance, if you're told that the school board won't cover certain services, ask to see the documentation that supports that. If you're unsure about the IEP drafted in the meeting, don't feel pressured into signing it. (Signing the attendance page doesn't mean you agree with the IEP; it simply means you attended.) Exercise your right to take the IEP draft home and think it over. Be polite but firm. Ideally the other team members will respect you for standing your ground.

From parents who know:

Successful Morning Routines for Children with Special Needs (or really any kids)

- “I find a visual always works better than words! We have a visual schedule that gets us through the morning smoothly.”
- “We love routines at our house, but sometimes schedules change day-to-day. So we have made the routine to just check the schedule, which allows her the comfort of a routine and still gives me some flexibility.”
- “The game changer for me was when I realized how much I set the tone in our house each morning. I don’t like feeling rushed and annoyed, so the mornings that I can remember to change my perspective and work to feel gracious and relaxed, we ALL have a better morning.”
- “We are trying a new rule—no screen time before school. And it is working. I’m getting a lot less complaining compared to when I would try to pull the kids away from their tablets to get ready, and we are consistently making it out the door on time with no tears. Of course now I’ve probably jinxed it...”
- “Two words: First –Then. Non preferred activity followed by a preferred activity. That’s all I’ve got, but it works for us!”



The Canadian Down Syndrome Society, in partnership with Civitan International Foundation of Canada, provides an **Educator Package.**

This resource is designed to assist educators and parents in their journey towards a fully inclusive classroom. It features information on inclusive education, tips on how to best support students with Down syndrome, and real life stories of inclusion from a student with Down syndrome and from a teacher.

The Educator Package is available in print or PDF form at cdss.ca/educator-package.html

Educator Package

A guide to inclusive education for students with Down syndrome



Canadian Down Syndrome Society
Société canadienne du syndrome de Down

More and more therapy, respite, and inclusive recreation options are popping up in Simcoe County. Here are a few of the groups who have asked us to let you know about their services:

HIKEWOOD THERAPY SERVICES

Therapeutic Riding for those in need of physical, cognitive, psychosocial and emotional restoration.

705-817-0559

E-Mail lhikele@hikewood.com



RECREATIONAL RESPITE

Fun Changes Behaviour!

Offering Community Group
Recreational Programs in
Simcoe County.

www.recrespite.com



FALL/WINTER 2016-17 ADAPTIVE SKATING REGISTRATION

Two Programs Available

SkateABLE™ will be offered at East Bayfield Community Centre - Barrie from January 14-March 25, 2017. This year, we will offer two back-to-back classes. Skaters can register for the 10am class or the 11am class on Saturday mornings.

Registration is available on our website at www.skateable.ca

(Spaces are limited)

High quality & developmental appropriate programming

HIGH FIVE® certified program leaders

Low coach-to-skater ratios

Personal progress report

Register today:
www.skateable.ca



SKATEABLE™
Head Office

108 Ahrens St. W.,
Kitchener N2H 4C3

Toll free: (844) 317-7810
info@skateable.ca

www.skateable.ca

From CDSS



NATIONAL DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS WEEK NOVEMBER 1 TO 7

See the ability

Raise awareness this Canadian Down Syndrome Week with the hashtag

#WeSeeTheAbility!

www.cdss.ca



They're here!

Our NEW new parent packages have arrived, put out by the Canadian Down Syndrome Society.

We will distribute these new packages to the 5 hospitals in Simcoe County, to be given to families upon the birth of a new baby with Down syndrome.

If you would like to have a copy for your own family or to share, just email admin@dsasc.ca.



Canadian Down Syndrome Society Société canadienne de syndrome de Down

2016 DSASC BOARD

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Down Syndrome

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Save the Date

Bowling Buddies League begins	Sept 10
Dance begins	Sept 16
DSASC Member Meeting	Sept 17
DSAO Conference @ GWL	Oct 15-16
Pumpkinfest	Oct 23
Down Syndrome Awareness Week	Nov 1-7
Step Up 4 DS Fun Walk & Open Swim	Nov 6
Christmas Party	Nov 20

MISSION STATEMENT:

*To work together to increase awareness and acceptance,
while supporting and enhancing the lives of our children.*

We wish to bring together those interested in Down syndrome and foster an optimistic outlook and attitude.

The Down syndrome Association of Simcoe County does not promote or recommend any particular therapy, treatment etc. We will not espouse any particular political or religious view.