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A Word from DSRF’s Executive Director

This summer issue contains three articles covering the topic of behaviour. Every parent realizes the importance of consistency and balance in raising a child. We all want our children to grow up to have happy lives, to be self-confident, successful, have quality relationships and healthy lifestyles. We do our best to instill values and manners while also encouraging creativity and risk taking (within reason) so that our children are welcomed and active participants in their community.

This is not always easy and we often get unwelcome or ‘bad’ behaviour when our children don’t get what they want, when they want it. Children with Down syndrome often lack the skills needed to communicate effectively. Behaviour is one way children communicate when they are having difficulty making their needs known, and once a behaviour is established it is difficult to “undo.” The enclosed articles provide some tools and suggestions to address problem behaviours and to help prevent them before they become a habit.

We are excited to be welcoming two additions to our staff this summer – Hina Mahmood is returning to DSRF after completing her Masters in Occupational Therapy, and Alissa Segal, who recently completed her Masters in Speech Language Pathology, will be joining our multi-disciplinary team.

A new resource page has been added to our website, packed with resources on Down syndrome and Alzheimer’s disease. Located in the Information section of the site, information is organized under the following headings:

1. Medical screening to rule out other treatable conditions that might lead to decline
2. The National Task Group Early Detection Screen for Dementia
3. Living with dementia: information for families and caregivers
4. Models of community care: information for service systems
5. Resources

Our 20th Anniversary Run Up for Down Syndrome was a huge success, and plans are well underway for the August 20th Benefits of Bocce tournament. If you’re looking for a great day of fun in the sun, come join us – you don’t need any special skills to participate!

Finally, we recently emailed the families who participate in our programs, asking you to complete a short survey. We welcome your feedback on our programs and services and look forward to hearing from you. Your input helps ensure we are aware of the gaps that exist in your community so we can make plans to address them to the best of our ability.

Dawn McKenna
DSRF Executive Director
In May 2016, I presented a workshop to families on the use of Positive Behaviour Support, focusing on specific issues and strategies relevant to children with Down syndrome. During the course of the workshop, I covered the following list of “Top 10” strategies. These strategies were chosen because they are (a) powerful when used consistently (all are evidence-based practices); (b) representative of strategies that address problem behaviours by prevention, teaching new adaptive behaviour and providing effective consequences; (c) geared towards the functions of problem behaviours we see most often in children with Down syndrome (escaping non-preferred activities and getting attention); and (d) relatively straightforward to incorporate into busy family lives.

1. Incorporate preferences

This is my favourite strategy of them all! You are really only limited by your own creativity. We know that intrinsic motivation is a big issue for kids with DS, so you have to make things more fun! You have to know the child’s preferences well to be able to do this. Remember that you can incorporate preferences into ANY activity, even non-preferred or hard ones! Some examples:

- Using a musical toothbrush
- Making books about a child’s favourite characters or activities
- Favourite superhero doll only at the grocery store
- Star Wars plates to eat off of at dinner time
- Dancing, listening to a favourite song, or doing something silly (e.g., pretending to sneeze over and over) on the way to the car to ease a transition

This works for adults, too. You can use favourite song lyrics or Canucks players’ names to practice speech sounds, for example. I know a few adults at DSRF who would be more likely to make it to work or school on time if their alarm was a Justin Bieber song!

2. Stock up the attention bank

A study by McComas, Thompson & Johnson (2003) in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis showed that for children with DS whose behaviour was attention-motivated, this technique reduced problem behaviour to near-zero levels. The strategy is simply this: if you know you are going to be busy (making dinner, helping a sibling with homework), give your child with Down syndrome 5-10 minutes of good quality
attention. This will “satiate” your child with the thing he or she craves, and will make it less likely that he or she will engage in the problem behaviour during the time you are busy. In other words, it buys you some time!

Good quality attention:

• Sit with your child
• Follow her or his lead with respect to play
• Comment on what your child is doing
• Give your child praise and physical affection

You may want to use a timer to show your child that the play session will only last 5 minutes, and give them a warning when there is only a minute left. At the end say, “That was fun! Mummy has to do ___ now, but you can keep playing with ___.”

3. Request effectively

There is a way to give instructions to your child that will increase the likelihood that she or he will comply. The three elements to an effective request are:

• Firm, confident, calm voice
• Simple language phrased as a statement, not a question
• Eye contact, close to child on her or his level; ensure you have the child’s attention prior to delivering the request

Examples:

• “Shoes on.” NOT “Can you put your shoes on, please?”
• “Let’s get in the car now” NOT “It’s time for school now so mummy needs you to hop up onto the seat so we can get going or we’re going to be late!”

4. Precorrect use of language

Precorrect use of language and/or behavioural expectations by letting your child know what she needs to do in a particular situation IMMEDIATELY BEFORE it begins. This needs to phrased positively, so that your child knows exactly what it is that she should be doing.

Examples:

• “Remember when it’s hard, you say ‘help please’” NOT “Remember, don’t hit mommy!”
• “You can say, ‘I need break’” NOT “You need to tell me when you want a break and don’t just run off out of the room. Or if you need a snack. Remember to tell me if you are hungry!”

5. Provide choices

This is a familiar, tried and true strategy for many parents – I hear our parents at DSRF using these all the time! Did you know that you can use choices between two NON-preferred things and it is still often effective?

Tips for providing choices effectively:

• Example: “Do you want milk or juice?”
• Use simple language
• Augment with signs or pictures for people at a lower language level, or one choice for each outstretched hand so that a child can point

• Try to do frequently (as much as possible throughout the day – during both preferred and non-preferred activities)
• Keep in mind the guidelines for how to give effective requests here

How NOT to provide choice:

• “You have a choice. You can put the toy away right now or you can go to your room!”
• “You need to either get in the car, or you will lose your iPad for the next week! Your choice!!!”
• “Do you want to go to the movies or the waterslides this weekend?” (while struggling to get ready for school)
• “Do you want cookies? Crackers? An apple? How about some yogurt?? What do you want??”
6. Give positive contingency statements

Positive contingency statements let children know what will happen after they finish their current task: “If you do X, you get Y!” This enhances predictability, which is helpful for many children with Down syndrome. Typically, X = something less preferred and Y = something more preferred. Because “if, then” statements on their own can be hard for people with DS to process:

- Use the language “first, then” instead
- Augment with visuals

7. Teach functional communicative phrases

All problem behaviour serves a function, or sends a communicative message (otherwise there would be no reason for your child to do it). Teach language that will replace the problem behaviour, but serve the same function. Here are some examples by the most common functions:

- Escape: “I need a break,” “I don’t want ____,” “Help, please.”
- Tangible (object or activity): “I want ____,” “May I have ____,” please?”

The language must be more efficient and effective than the problem behaviour, or it will be easier for your child to just keep doing the problem behaviour. It is crucial that you honour a child’s request immediately after they state it. Otherwise, they won’t learn that using the language gets them what they want or need!

8. Give safety signals

This is a good strategy for teaching children endurance. It is especially relevant for people with DS, who have low levels of task persistence and compromised attending skills. Safety signals gradually teach tolerance for delay, as in the following:

- “Do two more and then you can take a break”
- “Wait one more minute and then I will help you.”
- “One more, then all done!”

9. Honour language used and give praise for positive behaviour

This is potentially the most powerful PBS strategy in your toolkit, and yet the one I see parents using the least. You want to both:

- Honour every request using appropriate language
- Reward your child for behaving appropriately

A few guidelines on content and delivery of praise:

- Use specific language (“Wonderful colour you chose!” vs. “Good job!”)
- Use an enthusiastic/upbeat tone of voice (or whatever tone your child prefers)
- Smile!
- Use varied wording to avoid satiation/boredom

Challenge: You may not be doing this as much as you think! For a few days, try to just observe the ratio of positive to corrective statements you give your child. The ideal ratio is 5 to 1.

10. Interrupt and redirect minor problem behaviour

PBS focuses mainly on the prevention of problem behaviour, with the ideal situation being that if you can put enough strategies in place to prevent problem behaviour, you won’t have to deal with consequences for it very often. However, here are a few tips for what to do when minor problem behaviour occurs. Often, major problem behaviour starts out as fairly minor. In other words, there are precursors or warning signs. Some examples: crying before a temper tantrum or whining about homework before throwing pencils and ripping up paper. Try to respond to low-intensity problem behaviours before they escalate. Use strategies that redirect your child to the desired behaviour:

- Actively ignore and redirect
- Prompt use of language and then honor request
- Do this from behind the child (i.e., give as little attention as possible)

Good luck! Please email me if you have questions: susan@dsrf.org.
Behaviour challenges are all too common in individuals with Down syndrome (DS). About 1/3 of children with DS have behavioural issues that are problematic enough to be diagnosed by a professional. Many more have behaviours that get in the way of their daily lives. Unfortunately, many children with DS who have behaviour problems go on to have the same issues as adults. Most concerning, however, is that those behaviour problems can really limit success for adults with DS. After all, people in the community do not usually want to live or work with someone who may be aggressive or act out.

Thankfully, we now know a great deal about the brain in DS. This understanding allows us to be selective about behaviour management strategies that are most likely to be effective for individuals with Down syndrome. By understanding brain differences related to socialization, language, personality, and executive functions, we are far ahead of the game in planning our behaviour strategies. Using positive, proactive strategies on a consistent basis can help people with DS do their best behaviourally. And of course, this allows those same individuals to be most successful in the short- and long-term.

In this book, I provide a basic overview of brain differences in DS and guidelines for behaviour management. I provide the rationale for each behaviour strategy so that you, the reader, can apply it flexibly to fit your child or unique situation. I offer many simple but highly effective strategies. I intentionally keep the strategies manageable so that they can fit into people’s lives and be used consistently, for the long-term. Through consistent use of these methods, and a broader understanding of the rationale behind them, I have seen countless individuals with DS make impressive gains in their behaviour. Over the long-term, this leads to less stress for individuals, families, providers, and teachers, and improved adult outcomes for individuals with Down syndrome.

Dr. Stein’s 2015 presentation on the ‘Respond but Don’t React’ Method can be found on our website at DSRF.org/GTGvideo
“Stubborn” Behaviour
Beyond the Box Basics Consulting

Barbara Laird, BEd.

It makes me extremely angry when anyone suggests that an individual with Down Syndrome is stubborn, non-compliant or “bad.” They are not. They lack the skills and the tools to communicate effectively with us. The only way we will listen is for them to behave in a way that gets our attention. And it works, every time.

Individuals with Down syndrome, especially in their younger years, have few efficient communication skills. Try to imagine what it must be like for someone with limited communication ability. They have no proper way to express their feelings; whether they are hurt, upset, tired, sick, angry, lonely or scared. They may not be able to tell us what they want, or do not want. They don’t have the skills to let us know that something in their environment is driving their sensory system crazy. They may have a health issue that they cannot tell us about. It could be that their throat hurts, their ears are plugged, they have PMS, their tummy is sore, their skin is cracked, they are tired or they are feeling anxious. The list of health related possibilities can be endless.

Always consider health issues first if there is any change in the individual’s behaviour, or if inappropriate behaviours are ongoing. They may be trying to tell you through their behaviour that something is wrong within their body or in the environment.

Even teens and adults may not have the words or understanding to express what is wrong. Communication breakdowns and/or the inability to communicate effectively can lead to huge misunderstandings of their actions and behaviours.

We must continue to include individuals with Down syndrome in inclusive school and community settings. But in doing so, we must realize that they will learn to model not only good but also bad behaviour; behaviour that in certain situations may be inappropriate.

Often people assume that individuals with Down syndrome will immediately and always behave, understand, remember, cope and cooperate as if they were a typically developing person. It is also assumed that they will learn after one mistake and remember the lesson forever. Individuals further confuse us because most of them make eye contact. They smile, agree and we think they understand and remember.

To make matters worse, most of the time we give our instructions and explanations in verbal form, not realizing that in many cases, this is the least effective way for an individual with Down syndrome to learn. Our assumptions, our method of “teaching” and their inability to communicate more than just nouns and basic wants can lead to much frustration for them and for us.

So, what can we do to help?
1. We need to understand the medical and genetic strengths and weaknesses of the person in our life with Down syndrome, and the cognitive challenges they may have. Never forget about their physical disability, the weaker gross and fine motor skills and the effect of hypotonia. Their ability to participate, to have successful experiences and to be included in activities greatly influences how they will behave.

Individuals with Down syndrome can become very tired, very quickly. Their gross and fine motor skill weaknesses and their hypotonia can cause basic activities like sitting, writing, running, walking and jumping to be very difficult, especially over long periods of time.

We need to give them lots of breaks. Always do a gross motor activity or resistive fine motor task before doing fine motor skills. Give them alternate ways to sit, to write, to tell us what they know. Scribe for them; try not to expend their limited energy on tasks that can be done in alternate ways such as stamping, circling, answering orally or pointing. Often we don’t even realize what they actually have learned or how “smart” they really are, simply because the traditional testing methods of talking and writing provide more challenges for the individual with Down syndrome than for the average person.

Mental and physical health issues that present as behaviour can include anxiety, sensory challenges, celiac disease and sleep apnea. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children with Down syndrome should be screened for sleep apnea by overnight polysomnogram by age 4. Repeat screening throughout the lifespan is also important as untreated sleep apnea can lead to daytime behaviours and have negative consequences for health and development. It is estimated that 50 to 80% of individuals with Down syndrome are impacted by sleep apnea.

2. We must believe that all behaviour is a way of communicating with us. When we miss the message the first time, a person very quickly learns to escalate the behaviour to try and get us to understand what is bothering them. They are smart and very quickly learn to up the ante; they can go from touching, to hitting, to punching, to throwing.

We must become detectives. Behaviour is a puzzle to figure out what they really are trying to tell us, especially when we don’t get it the first time. They are not being bad, stubborn or non-compliant; they are attempting to communicate. The behaviour may be wrong, but we may have aided and abetted the situation to the point that the behaviour has escalated and become a problem. The infamous “sit down strike” also works well, especially when we want them to think, move, process information and respond in our time speed and not theirs.

So, remember, behaviour is a form of communication, and it is our task to discern what is being communicated.
“The CAUSE of behaviour is related to communication difficulties. The REMEDY to improve behaviour is to improve communication. The METHOD to improve communication is to use VISUAL COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS to aid and support the communication.” Linda Hodgson, www.usevisualstrategies.com

3. Keep a journal or complete an ABC form of what is happening before, during and after the behaviour. Track the behaviour, time, place, people, dates and events in the family life. Patterns will probably emerge, and then you can work towards preventing and anticipating behaviour. An ABC (Antecedents/Behaviour/Consequences) chart is part of Positive Behaviour Support.

“The best emergency management procedure is to avoid the emergency in the first place.” Tom Willis

“Sometimes we want things to be different, but we don’t want to do anything different.” Linda Hodgson

4. We have to teach more effective ways of communicating and to spend more time talking and teaching them about feelings. We need to help them understand and teach them to self-regulate their anxiety, stress and anger. Start talking about feelings by using photographs of themselves and you, and by looking into mirrors. Because they may have some memory difficulties, and because memory is further compromised when a person is anxious, stressed or angry, always support the teaching and coping with visual tools.

Sign language can work well as a primary method of communication in the early years, but it can have its limits as they age. Individuals with Down syndrome often have difficulty making some of the signs, and so make up their own which results in only their family being able to understand them. As they enter school, it can all break down. Most individuals within the school system and the wider world do not sign, so they are left without any way to communicate effectively. As they get closer to school entry, begin to pair sign language with other communication supports.

As speech develops, there are often problems with effective enunciation, and they often don’t know many words beyond names, nouns and a few verbs. Strategies to improve communication must involve visuals, visuals and more visuals. Use photographs, symbols, and any other kind of alternate and augmentative communication systems you can access, along with signing. Incorporate movement, touch, involvement and choice in the preparation and use of the visual tools. Remember that the body and gestures are also great visual tools.

Learn how to write Social Stories. These tales, coupled with photographs or symbols, can become your most valuable tool in helping an individual with Down syndrome to understand why they need to behave and how do to so. (Tip: Google “Carol Gray” to learn more about Social Stories.)

Start teaching your children how to read. Label or name items they want to learn to read; put the words on pictures and photos; make up stories using words and pictures they have chosen; and be guided by their interests. Start writing books and making up sentences, using carrier phrases such as “I want…, I see…, I can… I love…” to teach verbs.

5. Have visual schedules for all routines and activities. Never assume that an individual with Down syndrome will remember or innately know something; instead, have a visual to remind the child of what is happening, about to happen or not happening. Carry a whiteboard, a pad of paper, an iPad or a phone with you at all times. Draw stick drawings, write words or show photos. This gives them the information they may be missing or may have forgotten, which causes them such angst.

6. When teaching a new routine to sidestep an unwanted behaviour, be creative, flexible and support the new routine with visual supports. You can’t change all behaviour overnight; you have to decide which “battle” you really want to fight. Choose first to deal with any concerns around safety for all. Then work on the behaviours that prevent them from being included, involved and accepted by their peers. Work on one new routine at a time, the one closest to success and the one most needed for participation and inclusion. Remember it takes at least 6 weeks and 60 times (and that is for a typical person) to learn a new routine or behaviour. Imagine how many more times it can take for a person with Down syndrome.

“It’s easier to teach a new routine than to change an old behaviour.” Linda Hodgson

7. Try to access an Occupational Therapist assessment and/or consultation at least once a year. Many of the individual’s behaviour problems are a reaction to sensory issues and anxiety. If you can understand this area and alleviate the stresses and provide
the supports necessary, many problematic behaviours will disappear. Occupational Therapists can also help with teaching self regulation, a skill that every individual with Down syndrome needs to learn, but one that takes much time, patience and visual support.

8. **Remember to give individuals with Down syndrome lots of time.** They require a much longer time to process information, to think, to answer, to respond. We need to step back, keep quiet and give them the time to think, to process, to understand. Individuals with Down syndrome are 45-second people in a 3-second world. Give them the time by cueing them, then counting to 15 silently, cueing again, counting to 15 a second time, cueing a third time and counting to 15 a third time. **Do not speak to them while they are processing information.** Ensure that on the third cue and after the third counting to 15 that there is success. Always include a visual cue with the verbal one.

9. **Attending and listening can be so much harder for the individual with Down syndrome, so keeping their attention and keeping them focused means that we have to be flexible.** Be flexible in allowing breaks, giving them alternative seating arrangements, tools and methods of working. Focusing on their interests and incorporating them into activities will motivate them and keep their interest longer. We need to understand that once a person with Down syndrome is overloaded, they are going to want to escape.

10. **Choice is crucial: make everything a choice.** The choices can be limited; at first, limit them to a very few at a time. (Give them two options to start with, and increase it slowly over time.) Giving choice increases their critical thinking skills and ensures that there will be more cooperation and eagerness in participating.

11. **Patience, flexibility and humor are important words as you watch an individual with Down Syndrome grow and develop into an independent person.** Be flexible and include humour in everything that you do. Both of these strategies will go a long way in helping individuals with Down syndrome become more flexible themselves, and willing to learn and cooperate. Along with the humour, regularly incorporate music, rhythm, movement, tactile, visual and sensory experiences into activities.

These are but some of the techniques that can be used to overcome “stubborn” behaviours. It is important to remember the physical and cognitive limitations for a person with Down syndrome. Everything is such hard work for them. And then when you add in all the expectations, rules, environmental issues, transitions and lack of communication skills, it becomes easier to understand how they become totally exhausted and overwhelmed.

Becoming a behaviour detective is a good way to see antecedent stimuli that will evoke undesirable behaviours. But first and foremost, remember, an undesirable behaviour is a form of communication – what is the temper tantrum or sit down strike telling us?

*Barbara Laird is the parent of a 31-year-old daughter, Mel, who lives with Down syndrome. She does professional development, educational consulting and advocacy for all persons with disabilities. She can be reached at [www.beyondtheboxbasics.com](http://www.beyondtheboxbasics.com), by e-mail at barbi@telus.net, or by phone at 604-325-9990.*
A History Making, Record Breaking Day

The 20th Annual Run Up for Down Syndrome was one for the record books.

What may have been the hottest day in Run Up history drew the largest crowd the event has ever welcomed, and obliterated all previous fundraising records.

860 runners and walkers, representing 40 teams, made their way around the campus of Simon Fraser University in support of individuals with Down syndrome. They were assisted in their efforts by an incredible team of over 125 dedicated volunteers who kept everybody encouraged and well-hydrated.

The Down Syndrome Research Foundation’s goal of making 2016 the first ever $100,000 Run was not only met, but surpassed. Final totals are still being determined, but it appears we will break $110,000 in net funds raised - more than $27,000 above the previous record, set last year.

The 20th Anniversary Run Up for Down Syndrome was visually spectacular, with the landscape dominated by a brand new Run Up archway, unveiled for the special occasion. The arch was revealed by DSRF Executive Director Dawn McKenna, Bill Longman (founder of lead sponsor Euro-Rite Cabinets), and former DSRF student Jodi Klukas.

Euro-Rite continued their exceptional longstanding support of the event, entering a team of 127 runners, raising over $37,000 and winning the Spirit Award for highest staff participation. Euro-Rite was joined by almost 40 other local businesses in sponsoring the Run.

Each and every person involved - runners, sponsors, donors, volunteers - has made an incredible difference in the lives of many individuals with Down syndrome. Thank you for celebrating the 20th Anniversary with us, and for investing in the future of DSRF’s students and families.

A Great Surprise

A special event was made unforgettable when the 20th Anniversary Up the Down Market Toronto was crashed by none other than Wayne Gretzky.

The 275 guests who had gathered to celebrate two decades of investment in individuals with Down syndrome were not expecting a special guest. But when Gretzky, who was hosting another event down the hallway of the Fairmont Royal York Hotel, noticed the dinner benefiting people with Down syndrome, he popped in for a few minutes of photos with delighted volunteers and guests.

Gretzky has a special personal connection to Down syndrome. He helped his good friend Joey Moss land a job as assistant equipment manager with the 1980's Edmonton Oilers, a job Moss held for over two decades. Moss was recently inducted into the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame.
Visually Impaired Vancouver Man to Challenge Kilimanjaro for Individuals with Down Syndrome

Bill Der, who is legally blind due to glaucoma, is out to prove that disabilities are no obstacle to doing good, as he prepares to summit Mount Kilimanjaro this fall in support of two local charities.

Over the past five years, Bill has climbed the Grouse Grind Trail every weekend. On one such occasion, he came across a fellow Grinder who was carrying a thirty-pound backpack. She was in training to climb seven mountains in Asia, and she suggested that Bill try climbing Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa.

The idea stuck. Bill decided to undertake a significant event to mark a change in his life's direction, as well as pay tribute to his wife of 35 years, Lana, who recently passed away.

Bill and his son Spencer, who will serve as Bill's guide, will be symbolically accompanied on their journey by Lana, as her name will be carved into a special staff that they will carry with them. When they descend from the mountain, they will enter into a different future in which they intend to drive life, as opposed to being driven by life. It is merely the first step in their new mission to spend their energy and resources on helping others to reach their own summit of life, just as others have helped Bill to overcome his own challenges with deteriorating vision.

Bill has worked for The Answer Company for more than 15 years, and the company has been tremendously supportive through his battle with glaucoma and the loss of his wife. One of the major charities The Answer Company supports is the Down Syndrome Research Foundation. In gratitude, Bill will be supporting DSRF as he completes his inspiring journey. He will also be simultaneously raising funds for the Alzheimer Society of BC, and has set a goal of raising $15,000 for each charity.

Bill and Spencer Der will be blogging their Summit Challenge at http://mysummitchallenge.blogspot.ca/. Donations can be made to the Down Syndrome Research Foundation at https://fundraise.dsrf.org/BillDer. On Twitter, Bill and Spencer will be using the hashtag #BlindvsKilimanjaro.

DSRF Staff Announcements

The Down Syndrome Research Foundation is pleased to introduce two new staff members who will be joining our team this summer - one of whom will be a very familiar face to many of our families!

Hina Mahmood, Occupational Therapist

Hina is a recent graduate of the Master of Occupational Therapy program from the University of British Columbia. Prior to obtaining her degree she worked at DSRF for 6 years as the Administrative Assistant and Volunteer Coordinator, as well as a Teacher's Assistant for the Reading & Communication program. Hina is passionate about working with individuals of all ages who have special needs. She values a holistic approach that is client centered and focuses on enabling and empowering her clients to live their everyday lives in meaningful ways.

Alissa Segal, Speech Language Pathologist

Alissa completed her Master of Science degree in Speech-Language Pathology at UBC and her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology at the University of Calgary. Before joining DSRF, she worked with a girl with Down syndrome for one year, helping her student to develop and improve her social skills. Alissa strongly believes that everyone deserves the chance to participate in the world around them, to build connections with other people and to find what makes them truly happy. Communication is key and needed for most, if not all of these things. Alissa is excited to work together with the families at DSRF to help her clients grow their confidence in themselves as communicators.
Parents and educators play a crucial role in setting the stage for the healthy development of children with Down syndrome into adults who are able to make positive contributions to their community. By guiding appropriate behaviour for successful social interactions, incorporating knowledge about communication strengths and challenges into everyday routines, and using successful strategies for teaching children with Down syndrome to read, we are teaching skills that will optimize the potential for full social inclusion.

Please join us on Friday, October 21 as we come together to learn, share, and inspire.

**Check In:**
Registration desk opens at 8:15 am

**Cost:**
$50 (includes coffee, snacks and lunch)

Please register by October 14. Limited seating – register early to ensure your spot!

Register at DSRF.org/EmbracingSuccess

For more information and session outlines, visit GVDSS.org

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**Upcoming Events**

**Presented by RAYMOND JAMES**

**16th Annual BENEFITS OF BOCCE**

**Saturday, August 20, 2016**
North Vancouver Bocce Pits

Cost: $240/team
(includes a tasty Italian lunch, entry for fabulous door prizes, and a full day of bocce fun)

Register at DSRF.org/Bocce

**Register at DSRF.org/EmbracingSuccess**

**Vancouver:** Sept. 28, 2016
**Calgary:** Oct. 26, 2016
**Montreal:** Nov. 17, 2016

**The Greater Victoria Down Syndrome Society is pleased to present:**

**Embracing Success: Educating Students with Down Syndrome**

Friday, October 21, 2016
(9:00 am – 4:00 pm)

Cedar Hill Golf Course
1400 Derby Rd, Saanich, BC
Ames Family Foundation

The Ames Family Foundation has generously granted $20,000 towards the production of a series of videos to support speech and language for children with Down syndrome.

CKNW Orphans Fund

The CKNW Orphans Fund has generously provided two grants totaling $5,500 in support of the Down Syndrome Research Foundation’s Summer School program.

Kiwanis Vancouver

Kiwanis has donated $3,000 towards DSRF Summer School for students with Down syndrome.

Vancouver Talmud Torah Students

Special thanks to grade 7 students Ilana, Mattea and Indy, who raised over $800 for individuals with Down syndrome through the school’s Mitzvah of Valuing Philanthropy (MVP) program.

Variety - The Children’s Charity

Variety - The Children’s Charity has granted $4,800 in scholarships to DSRF Summer School students.

Triple-21 Partners

A big thank you to our newest Triple-21 partners: Kent Brittain, Patrick Dalzell, Rick and Kate Hoos, Enza Mancinelli, Victoria Mancinelli, Christine Van Staden, Lorand Szasz, Sharon Wilson and the Raymond James Foundation. To learn how you can empower individuals with Down syndrome to reach their full potential through a donation of $21 or $210 per month, please visit DSRF.org/Triple21.
Like most children with Down syndrome, David struggled with reading. However, when David was in grade 4, he began to exhibit a strong desire to learn to read. He would often pull out chapter books and sit on the couch, pretending to read them like his sisters did. So when his mom, Rose Marie, heard that the Down Syndrome Research Foundation was starting a new one-to-one reading program, she jumped on it.

The progress that David has made since starting the program is remarkable. He’s learned to read many words, and his dad Steve notes, “His vocabulary has expanded enormously. The chatter that goes on around the house now is just great.”

Rose Marie credits DSRF with helping David progress in his confidence and skills. “I appreciate everything about DSRF’s programs,” she says. “They’ve been a lifesaver for our family. We’ve noticed David grow so much since he started there; he’s very confident in himself now. We’re so grateful that we have somewhere like DSRF that we can turn to. We plan to continue taking David there for many years to come.”

Your donation to DSRF helps write success stories just like David’s. We are grateful for your generosity, and we value your trust that we will use your money wisely.

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Thank you for standing together, hand in hand, with David and with all those who are walking the lifetime journey of Down syndrome.