

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2024

Message from the CEO

Welcome to the April edition of Down Syndrome Queensland newsletter!

Last month, DSQ was busy with involvement in many successful events. The sell-out Townsville Gala Dinner raised vital funds and awareness within the local community. World Down Syndrome Day events included an early start at Parliament House where we engaged with MP's and staffers over a DSQ Brew and later that afternoon our Patron, the Governor of Queensland, hosted a Reception at Government House where we celebrated with our community and supporters.

The Hon Charis Mullen, Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs recently visited our Stafford office where I introduced her to the breadth of DSQ's work within the intellectual disability sector. Discussion areas included a range of NDIS Review findings such as accommodation issues, Foundational Supports and emerging needs of our aging population with an intellectual disability. As part of the Queensland Disability Peak Network, DSQ along with other members has provided input to Queensland Government on a position paper.

I am pleased to announce that DSQ now has one office location in Brisbane. The DSQ team was previously split between the Stafford and Ascot offices, with some of us working between the two. The Ascot office will be our base – 77 Kitchener Road Ascot, if you are in the area, please drop in to see us!

While October is a while away, we are in preparation mode, gearing up for a gala dinner on Friday 25th October 2024 to celebrate Down syndrome awareness month! Come along and support us – together, we can make a difference!

BE A PART OF OUR GALA

Written by Chris McMillan, Chief Executive Officer

As we move into April, it is important to take a few moments to reflect on March and some of the amazing events that made World Down Syndrome Day 2024 so special.

On March 21st, we had the pleasure of spending the morning at Parliament House, raising awareness with our MPs over DSQ Brew coffee and cupcakes. This was followed by an afternoon event at Government House and some immense pride in seeing Government House lit up in blue and yellow, the international colours for Down syndrome.

However, the highlight of 2024's World Down Syndrome Day event came the week prior when our Townsville community came together for the first DSQ Townsville Gala Dinner. It was a very special night, pulled together by the wonderful volunteers in the Townsville community, and was a great demonstration of the amazing North Queensland spirit.



[SEE MORE](#)

Inspired by the Townsville gala success, we are excited to announce that we will be replicating this community spirit in Brisbane on 25 October at Victoria Park, as we host our first DSQ Gala Dinner in over 10 years. With the theme of 'Living Your Best Life', this event promises to be something special and is not to be missed!

To be part of this event and know that you are helping people with Down syndrome and intellectual disabilities live their best life, book your tickets here:

[GET YOUR TICKETS NOW](#)

Written by Michael Harrison, Community Engagement & Fundraising Manager

Join our Relationships & Speed Dating event on the Sunshine Coast

Come along to this wonderful opportunity in May to learn new things, meet new people, make new friends, and perhaps find that special someone!

This FREE and inclusive event is for people over 18. It will be run by DSQ staff and co-hosted by the wonderful Olivia Hargroder, who has lived experience of intellectual disability.

The first session will be a workshop on relationships. It will help you learn about different types of relationships, healthy and unhealthy behaviours, and staying safe. We will have refreshments together and then move into the main event – Speed Dating! There will be fun activities throughout the day and plenty of time to chat and mingle in a supportive environment.

[Register here](#)

Introduction to Art Therapy for Carers event, run by Carers Queensland

When: Thursday 18th April, from 10:30am - 12pm

This event is open to any adult carers in the Ipswich region. Registration is required to attend. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow carers, build a supportive network and learn new skills.

Written by Laura Mugaba, Support Services Manager

DSQ Professional Teaching Cluster 2024

EDUCATION

The DSQ Education Team are excited to announce our FREE Professional Teaching Cluster is back again this year. The team support educators of students with Down syndrome and/or intellectual disability. We will host 4 online meetings throughout the year, where we will present free professional development sessions on a variety of topics, followed by a collaborative discussion and Q&A.

We hope to create a network of educators who are interested in connecting with other like-minded educators and learning about authentic and sustainable inclusive teaching and learning strategies.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Key Word Sign (KWS) Workshop

EDUCATION

If you are interested in hosting a Key Word Sign (KWS) workshop at your school, our accredited KWS trainer can provide a 2hr tailored workshop for all staff at your school. This includes an introduction to KWS, practical activities to practice signing, school-based printable KWS sentence strips for staff and students and follow up support via email or phone.

Please email education@downsyndromeqld.org.au for further information/

Written by Carly Lassig, Lead Education Consultant

Join the Possibility Pathways Programs

PROGRAMS

We're still **accepting registrations into our Possibility Pathways Program**, aimed at empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities towards independence and meaningful employment.

Partnering with the Queensland Government, this program offers tailored curriculum focusing on essential skills like communication, using technology and finding and applying for job opportunities. **Running over 8 weeks on Mondays and Tuesdays**, it provides a comprehensive learning experience with multiple cohorts for flexibility. Upon completion, participants receive ongoing support in evaluating employment opportunities, ensuring a seamless transition to the workforce.

Eligible individuals aged 15 and above, no longer enrolled in school, with foundation skills, are encouraged to join this life-changing opportunity. With **no cost to participants**, the Possibility Pathways Program is the gateway to a brighter future of independence and employment.

Unlock your possibilities today!

Written by Georgie Greaves, Office Manager

SEE OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

BECOME A MEMBER

www.downsyndrome.org.au/qld



Down Syndrome
Queensland