

Questions & Answers About Down Syndrome

Question: *What is Down syndrome?*

Answer: There are trillions of cells in the human body. They are so tiny you can only see them through a microscope. Inside these tiny cells are even tinier parts called chromosomes. Most people have 46 chromosomes in each of their cells. People with Down syndrome have 47, and because of that they may look and learn differently.



Question: *How do people get Down syndrome?*

Answer: You cannot “catch” Down syndrome; everyone who has Down syndrome was born with it and will always have it. Down syndrome affects people from all around the world, and both boys and girls can be born with it. One out of every 691 babies born in the United States has Down syndrome.



Question: *Do kids with Down syndrome like the same things as other kids?*

Answer: Yes! When you get to know someone with Down syndrome, you will find that they have unique personalities and interests, just like everyone else! If they want to, they can be on sports teams, make art, play instruments and join clubs at school. They want to have fun and make new friends, like all kids do.



Question: *Why is it called Down syndrome?*

Answer: Down syndrome was first studied and described by a doctor named John Langdon Down.

Question: *Can kids with Down syndrome go to school?*

Answer: Yes! Some may go to special schools, and others may take special classes, but many are also part of classrooms with other students who don't have Down syndrome. They may need extra time to do their work, but they can learn the same skills as their classmates.



Question: *Are people with Down syndrome always happy?*

Answer: No! People with Down syndrome have feelings. Just like everybody else, they can feel hurt and upset by someone who is mean to them. It is never OK to use the “r-word” to describe someone or something.

