

# TVDSA Newsletter

Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association

January 2011

Newsletter Editor: Celena Auger

## In This Issue

[New Year's Resolutions for Parents](#)

[A Wonderful Life](#)

[Legal Planning for Life After 18!](#)

[Permission to Fail and Succeed](#)

### The January newsletter focus is "New Year's Resolutions"

Whether your children/family members are babies, toddlers, teenagers or adults, we hope the information in this newsletter will give you some hints on how to start the New Year with a new outlook and strategies for a successful 2011!

It is the goal of this newsletter to provide information to all age groups and extended family members. We hope to give you the support and information necessary to improve awareness and acceptance of all individuals with Down syndrome in both academic and social environments.

Please make sure to check out the upcoming events and activities throughout the newsletter and in the calendar of events.



TREASURE VALLEY  
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION



## New Year Disability Awareness

### Make Disability / Ability Awareness Your Resolution

Almost everyone makes resolutions for the New Year. Why not make "awareness" your resolution? Teach others about your child's disability and **ABILITIES!**

## New Year's Resolutions for Parents of Learning Disabled Students

By Ann Logsdon, About.com Guide

Losing weight, saving money, and getting a better job are usually among the top New Year's resolutions for many of us. As the parent of a child with learning disabilities, here are a few more you may want to add to that list.

## TVDSA Meeting

January 11th, 2011  
7pm-9pm

The New Leaf  
2456 N. Stokesberry Place  
off Eagle between Ustick  
and Fairview

**Speaker:** Jason Ellison, MD from  
Idaho Pediatric  
Gastroenterology

**Discussion Topic:**  
Gastrointestinal issues common  
in Down syndrome

For more information, please  
contact [Kelly Zimmerman](#).

**TVDSA Volunteer Meeting** to  
follow speaker, approximately  
8pm-9pm.

### We NEED YOU!

Whether you have been with  
TVDSA for awhile, would like to  
get more involved or are new to  
the group, we have volunteer  
openings on our board, in  
committees, and for smaller  
one-time jobs.

- \* Buddy Walk Committee
- \* Programs Committee
- \* School Age Group  
Coordinator
- \* Library Committee
- \* Fundraising Committee
- \* Community Outreach
- \* Spanish Speaking Group
- \* Outlying Satellite Groups

TVDSA would also like to hear  
from you, what you would like in  
the upcoming year. What  
events and/or programs would  
you like to see?

For more information, please  
contact [Joyce Page](#).

See you then!

## Calendar of Events

### January 8th:

Lil' Buddies Playgroup  
3pm-5pm at Kit's  
house in Nampa.  
Contact [Kristie Yerger](#)

### January 8th:

Transición a Adulto/Tutoría y  
Alternativas a Tutoría,  
10am-Noon UnBefuddled,  
505 N. Midland Ave,  
Nampa.  
Contact: [Rosario Beagarie](#)

### 1. [Resolve to Reduce Your Stress Levels During the School Year](#)

Many parents experience periods of stress as they adjust to the demands of parenting a [learning disabled child](#). Learn about common reactions parents show toward their children's disabilities and [find helpful ways to cope](#).

### 2. [Resolve to Communicate More Effectively with Your LD Child](#)

Communication with a learning disabled child can be challenging, especially for children who have language processing problems. These students often have difficulty focusing on conversations and gleaning the important facts necessary for understanding. Learn some strategies to improve communication with your child, with the [Top 3 Tips To Talking With Your Child](#).

### 3. [Resolve to Create a More Positive Relationship with Your Child's School](#)

Parent involvement is important to help your learning disabled child be as successful as possible. Educators recommend that parents take active roles in helping their children learn. This is particularly important for students with learning disorders and others in special education programs. There are many ways parents can become more involved in their children's programs beyond IEP team meetings. Check out: [Strategies for Involvement That Work](#).

**4. [Learn to be a Better Advocate](#)** As the parent or guardian of a child with a learning disability or other type of disability, you are your child's first and most important advocate. Whether you are a veteran parent advocate or new to special education, you need to know how to advocate effectively for your child in public schools.

**5. [Build Your Child's Self-Esteem - Resolve to Help](#)** As parents of children with learning disabilities, we sometimes focus so much on academic achievement, there is little time to spend on self-esteem building activities. Holidays are a great time to work on social skills, making friends, developing a positive self-concept, and creating a family identity, all important foundations for self-esteem. Check out [Improving Self Esteem](#) and help your child develop a healthy sense of self-esteem.

### 6. [Resolve to Strengthen Family Self-Esteem, Relationships, and Identity](#)

Building Self-Esteem - Self-esteem is important for all children, especially those with learning disabilities. Students with SLDs typically struggle with school and can benefit from a healthy sense of identity with their families. Setting personal goals and developing an awareness of family values are good ways to begin helping your child develop self-confidence. [These strategies](#) can get you started!

**7. [Resolve to Learn More about Parent Rights](#)** Parents of children with disabilities have specific rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. [Learning more about your parent rights](#) will help you advocate more effectively for your child.

**8. [Resolve to Prepare Your LD Teen for College with a Learning Disability](#)** Discover strategies to help learning disabled students

January 11th:

General TVDSA Meeting  
7pm-9pm  
Contact: [Kelly Zimmerman](#)

January 12th:

IPUL Support Group  
6pm-8pm  
Topic: Family to Family  
Health Information Center  
and Idaho Family Voices  
500 South 8th Street, Boise  
Contact: [Angela Lindig](#)

January 15th:

Cool Club  
3:45pm-? Bowling and Pizza  
Party Contact: [Jeanie Baker](#) or [Molly Benton](#)

January 15th:

Adults in Motion (AIM)  
1pm Baked Potato Party  
Contact: [Freddie Gallas](#)

January 24th:

Lil' Buddies Playgroup  
10am-noon at Caleb's  
house in Eagle.  
Contact [Kristie Yerger](#)

February 10-12th:

[Peak Conference](#) on  
Inclusion: Expand Your  
Toolbox and Construct New  
Possibilities. Denver CO  
Early Registration - January  
14th

February 23-26th:

[Inclusion Works 2011](#)  
Austin TX  
Registration due February  
11th

February 26th:

TVDSA Mini-Workshop  
9:00am-12:00pm  
Legal Planning for Life  
After 18!  
Contact: [Paul Auger](#)

March 21st:

World Down Syndrome Day

April 29-30th:

[r.i.s.e. Conference](#) (Respect,  
Inspire, Support & Educate)  
Spirit Mountain Casino  
Grand Ronde, OR

August 5-7th:

Annual [NDSC Conference](#)  
San Antonio, Texas

become successful in higher education. Learn about college level programs for students with learning disabilities. Find [ways to prepare for educational programs after high school](#).

**9. [Resolve to Learn about Learning Disabilities in Your Senior Loved Ones](#)** If you or a loved one are facing learning disabilities after retirement, learn more about common concerns older adults with LDs may experience later in life. Learning disabled adults face challenges after retirement and throughout their senior years, but they also have unique strengths that can be an advantage. Learn about how learning disabilities may affect [aging adults](#).

**10. [Resolve to Deal with your LDs More Effectively in the Workplace](#)** Learning disabled adults face challenges [in the workplace](#), but they also have unique strengths that can be an advantage. Learn about how learning disabilities affect them.

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## A Wonderful Life

Disability is Natural by Kathie Snow  
E-Newsletter, December 13, 2010

In the holiday film classic, "It's a Wonderful Life," George Bailey (James Stewart) faces many trials and tribulations that lead to his decision to jump off a bridge and end it all. He believes he's more valuable to his family dead than alive (via life insurance).

You know the rest of the story: Clarence, Angel Second Class, arrives to show George how different the world would be if he had never been born. The lesson takes hold, and by the end of the movie, George realizes what's really important: family and friends, and the precious experiences with those he loves. There are valuable lessons in this movie for all of us in our everyday lives, as well as some specific to the disability arena.

If you're employed in the field -- as a special ed teacher, therapist (OT, PT, speech, etc.), direct support professional, or something else -- if the children and/or adults with disabilities in your life had never been born, you wouldn't have the job you have today! You might be a newbie, or maybe you've been in the field for decades. Either way, your career has enabled you to succeed; allowed you to keep a roof over your head, food on the table, clothes on your back, and more; and helped you to learn from a wide variety of experiences. As a result, you have a wonderful life -- thanks in part to people with disabilities. Have you shown your appreciation lately?

On a larger scale, government agencies, service providers, non-profits, and other entities would not exist without people with disabilities. Do these organizations truly value the people who make their existence possible?

If you're a parent or family member of a child or adult with disability, you have also enjoyed the privilege of learning from invaluable experiences...Do we appreciate their contributions



## Meet Megan McKenery

This is Megan McKenery. She is twenty-five years old and a happy, busy young woman. She lives at home with her two younger sisters and her Mom and Dad. Megan's latest passion is for fitness. She lost thirty pounds two years ago using a diet that she designed herself, and has maintained her weight continually since then. She watches her portion size at each meal (and ours too!) and loves to run on the treadmill. She works out to DVD's as well, and Jillian Michaels from the Biggest Loser is her favorite person in the world. I fully expect that some day she will get the chance to meet her and I'm sure Jillian will have found a friend for life! Perhaps someday Megan will lead her own exercise classes, but for now she is content in what she is doing. Megan plays the piano and enjoys going to church and visiting friends and extended family members. Oh and one more thing...Facebook. She loves it! But like all her other disciplines, she tries to limit how often she gets on. We could all learn from her self control. I am so glad God allowed me the privilege of being Megan's mother. I am a better person than I would have been without her.

- Submitted by Linda Slaughter

to our wonderful lives?

Finally, what about their lives? Let's go back to the movie for a moment. Early on, George announced his hopes and dreams: I'm shakin' the dust of this crummy little town off my feet and I'm gonna see the world. Italy, Greece, the Parthenon, the Coliseum. Then, I'm comin' back here to go to college and see what they know. And then I'm gonna build things. I'm gonna build airfields, I'm gonna build skyscrapers a hundred stories high, I'm gonna build bridges a mile long. . ." Later, his dream was to salvage the wreckage of his "building and loan" company. Ultimately, George realized these things didn't contribute to his living a wonderful life. It was, instead, his family and friends, and sharing meaningful experiences with them. And George's family and friends didn't care about what he did not achieve. They cared about living life with him.

What about us? Are we doing what it takes to ensure children and adults with disabilities have those meaningful experiences with family and friends, or are our efforts focused in the wrong direction?

Many people own a wonderful life, thanks in part to people with disabilities, whose lives touch so many and make such a difference. If they weren't around, as Clarence said, it would leave an "awful hole."

We know what's really important, don't we? A wonderful life can be had by all. Let's do it!

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## SAVE THE DATE:

### TVDSA February Mini-Workshop

**February 26, 2010**

9:00am - 12:00pm

**Topic:** Legal Planning for Life After 18!

**Speaker:** Charlene K. Quade, Attorney,  
C K Quade Law, PLLC



## Adults In Motion Reminder & Updates

The next Adults In Motion (AIM) meeting is **January 15th** at Kit Gallas' house: 11368 Greenhurst in Nampa.

### **Baked Potato Bar**

Bring your favorite toppings for your baked potato. Potatoes will be provided. We'll have a feast!

Please **RSVP** to [Freddie](#), 409.718.0417

## January Cool Club Gathering

The next Cool Club Gathering will be **January 15th** at Nampa Bowl at 485 Caldwell Blvd.

### **Bowling and Pizza Party**

We will meet at 3:45pm and start bowling at 4pm. After bowling two games (approximately 2 hours) we will head to Chicago Connection for dinner at 732 Caldwell Blvd.

Cost: Each game is \$3.25, shoes are free. Cost of pizza will be divided by the number of attendees. Drinks and sides will need to be ordered separately.

Questions or to RSVP contact [Jeanie Baker](#) or [Molly Benton](#)

*This presentation is appropriate for families of children and adults of all ages. The child is never too young to start planning for their future.*

Location: TBA

Who should attend? Parents, professionals, and service providers. Open to everyone. Share the information with those you know, or bring a friend.

**CEU's** and Certificates of Attendance for those needing education or training for licensure is available.

For more information or to pre-register, please contact: [Paul Auger](#), TVDSA Program Chair

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## Permission to FAIL . . . and SUCCEED

**Disability is Natural by Kathie Snow  
E-Newsletter, November 16, 2010**

When my son, Benjamin, was in a general education kindergarten class, the teacher, Mrs. S, was uncomfortable having a child with a disability in her class. Despite lots of support from me, and the special education staff, she seemed content to let Benjamin "be" in her class, so long as she didn't have to exert any effort to help him learn. Which, of course, is exactly what happened: he wasn't learning, even though I knew he could.

During an informal meeting with Mrs. S and the supportive principal, I told her, "I know my son can learn, and I know you can teach him, but you have to be willing to try new things. I trust you enough to put my son in your care every day. You have to trust me enough to know that you can call me and say, 'Today was a disaster-nothing worked!' Then you and I can figure it out together. My husband and I need to do this all the time. But if you don't give my son the opportunity to learn-by trying new things to see what works-he won't learn!"

Things got better after that. She was willing to try: she took risks and learned from mistakes, and that enabled her to teach my son. The principal later said to me, "You gave Mrs. S 'permission to fail,' and everyone needs that..."[Click here for the whole article](#)(PDF).

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## January IPUL Events

Saturday, January 8  
10:00 am - Noon

### Transición a Adulto/Tutoría y Alternativas a Tutoría

UnBefuddled: 505 N. Midland Avenue, Nampa

Contact: [Angela Lindig](#) for any questions or information in English or [Rosario Becgarie](#) for any questions or information in Spanish

Wednesday, January 12  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
IPUL Monthly Support Group

### Topic: Family to Family Health Information Center and Idaho Family Voices

This workshop explains the Family 2 Family Health Care Education and information centers and how they help families of children and youth with special health needs. It also discusses Medicaid services (Katie Beckett program).

**New Location!** 500 South 8th Street, Boise

For additional information or to register, contact: [Angela Lindig](#)

## TVDSA Board of Directors

[Sara Mitton Cox](#), President

[Joyce Page](#), Vice President

[Kate Lukkari](#), Secretary

[Lynda Wells](#), Treasurer

[Leslie Bryant](#), VP of Marketing

[Dianna Brown](#), VP of Membership

[Rebecca Page](#), Self Advocate

[Melody Witte](#), Buddy Walk Chair

[Mary Anne Murphy](#), Librarian

[Paul Auger](#), Programs Chair

## From the TVDSA Library

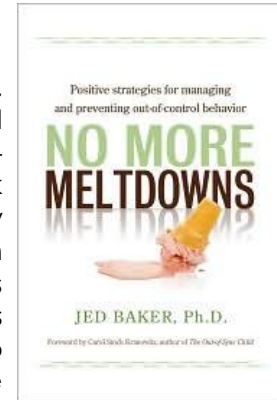
With Mary Anne Murphy

The beginning of each new year is a time we naturally think of with hope about making some change for the better in ourselves. This New Year, if the need is present, you might consider helping your child with Down syndrome make one behavioral change for the better that he or she would not be able to achieve without your loving support.

### **No More Meltdowns** by Jed Baker, Ph.D.

provides clear explanations of behavioral theory and practical solutions for out-of-control behavior. Throughout the book the author demonstrates respect for every child and encourages the same quality in parents. While this book does not address Down syndrome specifically, the principals apply equally to all. This book will help anyone trying to help a loved one overcome out-of-control behavior. The first 19 pages can be read at [Google Books](#).

This book is a new addition to our TVDSA library. Contact the [librarian](#) to reserve it.



A complete list of the TVDSA Library is now available [online](#).

## About Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association

For more information, articles, past newsletters and pictures, please visit our website at <http://idahodownsyndrome.org/>

### Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association

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Check us out on [Facebook](#), [Google Group](#) and [Twitter](#)!



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