

# TVDSA Newsletter

Treasure Valley Down  
Syndrome Association

April 2011

Newsletter Editor: Celena Auger



TREASURE VALLEY  
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

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## Correction to March Newsletter:

I deeply apologize for the misspelling of one of our wonderful kids in the first picture collage of the World DS Day Celebration article. **Corgan**, please accept our apology!



## Note from the Editor:

In effort to limit the length of the TVDSA newsletter and yet share the maximum information, you will find numerous Internet links for additional websites and contact information located throughout this newsletter. Simply click on any highlighted & underlined text for a direct link to the information.

## Heaven's Very Special Child by Edna Massimilla

A meeting was held, quite far from earth  
"It's time again for another birth"  
Said the Angels to the Lord above,  
"This special child will need much love"

Her progress may seem very slow,  
Accomplishments she may not show  
And she'll require extra care  
From all the folks she meets down there.

She may not run or laugh or play  
Her thoughts may seem quite far away  
In many ways she won't adapt,  
And she'll be known as handicapped.

So let's be careful where she's sent  
We want her life to be content  
Please, Lord, find the right parents who  
Will do this special job for You.

They will not realize right away  
The leading role they're asked to play  
But with this child sent from above  
Comes stronger faith and richer love.

And soon they'll know the privilege given  
In caring for this gift from Heaven.  
Their precious charge, so meek and mild  
Is heaven's very special child.

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Published in The Optimist - newsletter for PROUD  
Parents Regional Outreach for Understanding Down's Inc.

## April issue: Infant/Toddler

The April newsletter is jammed pack full of information for the little ones. From Transition tips into the school setting, links for child development resources, beginning reading skills, materials to facilitate communication through sign language from our library to toilet training tips - you can find it all in this newsletter.

Don't miss the FIRST TVDSA Easter Egg Hunt, held in Eagle. Open to birth through elementary age. Fun will be had by all!

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



## Is Awareness the Right Word?

Please follow this [link](#) to the Colorado Springs Down Syndrome Association's Blog. A mother has beautifully summed up her feelings of her 15 month old son and World DS Day.



## TVDSA Easter Egg Hunt

The Lil' Buddies and Elementary groups will be joining forces for the first **TVDSA Easter Egg Hunt** on **April 23rd at 3:00pm** at **Guerber Park** in Eagle.

We invite all elementary and younger kids and their families to join us. We will set up three separate areas for: *Crawlers*, *Toddlers* (approx 2-4 years) and *Runners* (ages 5 & up).

In addition - we will have **CHICKENS** (who laid the eggs) and **BUNNIES** (who delivered them) for the kids to pet!



Refreshments will be served under the canopy after the Egg Hunt has concluded.

There is a large, padded, play area for before and after the Egg Hunt - for those who can't get enough fun.

### Directions:

From State Street - head north on Hwy 55. Take first left hand turn, on Hill Road (heading East). The park is 0.2 miles up on the right side of the road.

**Don't forget the cameras -  
and come out for some Easter Fun with the kids!**

TVDSA would like to Thank the 14 members of S.O.S. for volunteering to help at the Easter Egg Hunt. These boys from Eagle Middle School believe it is their responsibility to "Serve Now, Play Later." We Thank you!



## Are You Getting Involved?

by **Deanna Tharpe, DSAIA Executive Director & Mother of a 9 year old boy with Down syndrome**

Have you ever had a feeling you were missing something? Especially when it came to your child with Down syndrome? So often we rock along in life thinking everything is fine. And then, years later we realize that we missed out on something or worse yet, our child missed out on something. For years, this phenomenon has happened

## TVDSA Meeting Recap

**TOPIC: "Lifetime Transitions; Infant to Adult"**

At the March meeting, TVDSA presented information via an open forum. A panel of 5 of our TVDSA mothers, representing different ages, discussed different transition issues both in school and out.

A special thank you to our panel:

- \* Kristie Yerger
- \* Celena Auger
- \* Kelly Zimmerman
- \* Karen Boyd
- \* Lynda Wells

Thank you for opening up your lives and sharing with other families.

Do you have a suggestion for a topic or speaker for a TVDSA meeting? Please contact [Kelly Zimmerman](#), [Karleen Lemon](#) or [Erin Rosenkoetter](#).

## Calendar of Events

### April 4th:

Buddy Walk Kick Off Meeting  
7:00pm-8:00pm  
at the Moxie Java at Eagle Rd. and Overland  
Contact: [Sara Mitton Cox](#)

### April 7th:

Nutrition & Your Child  
Workshop, Meridian

### April 9th:

Lil' Buddies Playgroup  
3:00pm-5:00pm  
at Aaden's House, Nampa  
Contact: [Kristie Yerger](#)

### April 9th:

Cool Club  
4:00pm-7:00pm  
Isaac's Birthday  
Celebration, Nampa  
Contact: [Molly Benton](#)

### April 11-12th:

PEAL Center 2011  
[Conference](#) on Discovering  
Genuine Relationships  
Pittsburgh, PA  
Pre-registration due April 4th  
Scholarships Available!

over and over. But there is a solution for it. It's called "being involved." No, you don't have to start your own Down syndrome support organization. No, you don't have to organize a march on Washington or a walk in your hometown. You just have to be involved.

Go to the group meetings. Go to the workshops. Go to trainings. The resources are out there, but so often, we wait until a problem arises to take advantage of the gifts that are given to us by other involved parents and community professionals. Why is that? The sad part is that when the problem arises, a parent who has been involved will usually have the answers (or know who to call to get them quickly) and the problem becomes less of a problem in the end.

What does involvement breed? Knowledge. And we know that knowledge is power. It also breeds empowerment. Not just the empowerment of you as a parent, but also the empowerment of your child with Down syndrome. Knowing adults with Down syndrome who have gotten married, who are successful business owners, who work full-time in a job they love, who have purchased their own home. . . .that is another type of powerful knowledge. It gives parents perspective that they don't always have when they look into their young child's eyes. It gives you a glimpse into the future and opens your eyes to the possibilities available to your child as they grow and develop into an adult.

Most of "awareness" does not come from a walk or a program, but rather attending conferences and conventions around the state, region, and country. Listening to self-advocates speak about their life or listening to others talk about successes in their community is an awesome experience. And then there are the connections you make through your involvement. Those connections last a lifetime. And they are integral to your growth as a parent. It's not always about your child with Down syndrome, or your other children without. . . sometimes, it really is about you.

So get involved! Start local and start now! Your group needs you and you need your group. It's a win-win situation where everyone benefits and it's happening right now. Why aren't you there?

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***TVDSA's annual meeting will be held May 10, 2011. At this time, several board chairs are up for re-election, empty seats need filled and many volunteer positions are available. If you want to get involved as a volunteer - please contact Joyce Page, so she can direct you in your journey. Thank you for time and involvement, in advance!***

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April 13th:

IPUL Workshop: Positive Behavioral Supports  
6:00pm-8:00pm  
Contact: [Angela Lindig](#)

April 16th:

Adults in Motion (AIM)  
1:00pm-3:00pm  
Summer Planning Meeting  
Contact: [Freddie Gallas](#)

April 19th:

TVDSA Board Meeting  
7:00pm-9:00pm  
at A New Leaf (open to all interested parties)

April 23rd:

TVDSA Easter Egg Hunt  
3:00pm at Gueber Park in Eagle  
Contact: [Kristie Yerger](#) or [Celena Auger](#)

April 29-30th:

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

May 12th:

Children Redesign Meeting in **Caldwell**  
Contact: [Rebecca Fadness](#)

May 19th:

Children Redesign Meeting in **Boise**  
Contact: [Rebecca Fadness](#)

May 24th:

Children Redesign Meeting in **Pocatello**  
Contact: [Rebecca Fadness](#)

May 25th:

Children Redesign Meeting in **Idaho Falls**  
Contact: [Rebecca Fadness](#)

June 1st:

Children Redesign Meeting in **Coeur d'Alene**  
Contact: [Rebecca Fadness](#)

June 2nd:

Children Redesign Meeting in **Lewiston**  
Contact: [Rebecca Fadness](#)

June 7th:

Children Redesign Meeting in **Twin Falls**  
Contact: [Rebecca Fadness](#)

August 5-7th:

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

## Promoting Your Child's Development: Information Resources for Families of Children with Disabilities.

from: American Physical Therapy Association,  
Section on Pediatrics

### **Born Learning Campaign**

The United Way of America, partnering with the Ad Council and Civitas, created a Web site that helps parents, caregivers and communities create high-quality early learning opportunities using every day events for young children. The [Website](#) provides comprehensive developmental information on children from birth to 5 years of age. (This website is available in both English and en espanol.)

### **Zero to Three**

Zero to Three is a national nonprofit organization whose purpose is to promote the healthy development of our nation's infants and toddlers by supporting and strengthening families, communities, and those who work on their behalf. Examples of resources on the [Website](#) include an extensive list of parenting topics and downloadable booklets that show families how to make meaningful opportunities out of everyday moments.

### **Able Play**

Developed by the National Lekoteck Center, AblePlay™ is a toy rating system and [Website](#) that provides comprehensive information on toys for children with special needs, so parents, special educators, therapists, and others can make the best choices. Toys are categorized according to disability and age group.

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## Be Prepared: Tips for Transitioning into Early Childhood Education

*The Exceptional Parent, Sept, 2008 by Laura Ann Oliver*

The first days of school can be scary for parents, too. As your child reaches an age where she is ready to begin school, the very thought can overwhelm any parent. As a parent of a child with a disability there are added considerations. Nonetheless, transitions through the early years of school can become relatively easier for both the parents and the child. Knowing how to navigate the early transition periods allows families to face new challenges with greater assurance.

Once a child begins school, parents face letting go of the sole responsibility for their child's learning. For even the most actively involved parent, this can prove easier said than done. Parents of children with disabilities can experience significant anxiety when it comes to allowing another person to assume such an important role in their child's life.

October 24-25th:

Youth with Disabilities  
Secondary Transition  
[Conference](#)  
Portland, OR

November 4-5th:

Infant and Early Childhood  
[Conference](#)  
Portland, OR

### Meet Moses Briley



Moses Liam Briley was found abandoned in the town of Lubumbashi in the war torn Democratic Republic of Congo in October of 2009. He was thought to be just a few weeks old at the time of being found. This weak little baby boy was taken into a local clinic to be cared for, as he clung to life. The Doctors had little expectation that he would live because he was extremely malnourished, weak and frail. An orphanage, the Jamaa Letu Orphanage, in Lubumbashi was called to take the baby boy into their care. Though his health seemed grim, the orphanage committed to bringing the baby into their care as Bill and Julie Briley, who lived in the US, eagerly awaited who their child would be. As Bill and Julie came to know about this baby boy in his weak and frail condition, they were also made aware that he had Down Syndrome.

Concerned for this baby's life and health, the Briley's were also filled with joy, celebration and expectation over this baby boy who they knew was their own. Bill and Julie were able to quickly bring Moses home in just 6 months so they could care for his medical needs, any potential life threatening health issues and to be with their son at last!

Moses Liam has now been home for almost 2 years. He has grown into a healthy and sweet toddler boy who is filled with such a love

In spite of that, establishing open lines of communication with your child's school, especially the classroom teacher and paraprofessionals, will help to ensure that you are kept aware of what occurs when you cannot be with your child. Maintaining this open flow of communication permits a parent to have a voice in all that is going on while your child becomes part of a new educational setting.

It is important to remember that transitioning through the early years of education is a process. Therefore, it can take some time for everyone involved (including the child, parents, and teachers) to adjust to an unfamiliar situation. In order to successfully navigate these processes, some knowledge and a great deal of patience are essential. As a result, the goal of this article is to provide parents of children with disabilities some useful tips about surviving the early childhood transition periods, focusing primarily on the time between pre-kindergarten and first grade.

While the early years of transitioning can be challenging for any parent and child, parents of children with disabilities must consider additional factors that can make the early transition period increasingly stressful. Understandably, many parents have numerous questions and concerns such as:

- \* How will my child feel about this new environment?
- \* How will the school address his/her disability?
- \* Will my child interact with the other children?
- \* Will my child feel secure and happy with his/her new teacher and classmates?

Initially, such considerations can prove overwhelming. As you become accustomed to the school's system, the many processes involved will seem far less daunting. Since early experiences in education can have such a profound effect on how children perceive learning itself throughout their lives, it is important to make this time as positive as possible for both you and your child. Prior to the transition, gain as much knowledge as you can about what goes on at your child's school. For a smoother transition into a new situation, such actions like observing the classroom, getting to know future teacher(s), and understanding one's educational options, all help to ease anxious feelings of anticipation.

In order to provide a child with an opportunity to successfully manage the transitions throughout the earliest years of education, effective collaboration and communication among those individuals most involved in the child's life is essential. The continuous flow of communication between parents and school personnel, as well as parent and child, significantly reduces stress. Essentially, being prepared can make transitioning through the early years of education a more constructive experience for the child, as well as for parents and teachers.

of life and people. He impacts all who come in contact with him as his personality is larger than life, he causes laughter and joy wherever he goes; he is an entertainer who loves music and dancing; he is full of love, kindness and gentleness as he is gifted with a heightened sense of when others are hurting, meeting them with an incredible gift of mercy and compassion. He is a precious teacher of love, and the Briley's are thankful for the gift of life and second chances in the life and story of Moses Liam.

Submitted by: Julie Briley, proud mother

## **Lil' Buddies**

### **April Playgroups:**

Saturday, April 4th from 10:00am-12:00pm at Aaden's house in Nampa (address: 6616 Rodeo Ranch Drive)

Saturday, April 23rd at 3:00pm. The **Easter Egg Hunt** will be held at Guerber Park in Eagle (0.2 miles west of Hwy 55 on Hill Road).

#### **A Very HAPPY BIRTHDAY to:**

- \* **Davis** - Turning **ONE** on April 9th
- \* **Caleb** - Turning **THREE** on April 18th

For more information, contact [Kristie Yergler](#) or call 938.5812

## **PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**

For the families of individuals with disabilities, preparation for early childhood education needs to occur sometime long before the beginning of a school year. The tips in this section focus on areas that parents may want to consider before their child transitions to school for the first time, as well as for those transitions occurring through first grade. Careful preparation will allow both the parents and the future classroom teacher to feel a greater sense of confidence about what lies ahead. In addition, this approach provides parents and teachers with the opportunity to anticipate and sort out potential concerns before any issues actually arise. Essentially, taking a proactive attitude sets the tone for developing a strong partnership between home and school.

For most children, their early educational experiences have a profound effect on the rest of their education. This means that positive early experience establishes a solid foundation for learning, as well as for success in the future. In fact, it has been found that both parents and teachers believe that the way a child feels about their school has a major influence on how the child transitions into a new school environment. As a result, parents play an essential role in encouraging their children to maintain positive beliefs regarding school.

## **TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

**Tip 1:** Be enthusiastic about going to school. Remind your child of all the "new and exciting things" that they will do. To aid in preparation, ask your child's future teacher to tell you about some of the lessons they will be doing in the classroom, especially during the first few weeks of school. While children may function at different cognitive levels, in general, they recognize enthusiasm and positivity coming from their parents. When a child transitions from home to school for the first time, even greater emphasis and enthusiasm should be placed on explaining what he/she may expect. The surroundings and procedures of a school are a completely new experience, thus greater preparation and maintaining a positive attitude is vital for parents.

**Tip 2:** Visit the school. Take the opportunity to meet with teachers, administrators, and other school staff, such as the nurse. This orientation helps you get to know more about the philosophy and practices that are encouraged in the new educational setting.

**Tip 3:** Observe your child's future classroom and teacher(s). This gives you the chance to witness how the teacher runs the class. Also, this can be a good time to consider if the given classroom environment creates any accessibility issues for your child's specific disability.

**Tip 4:** Write a brief statement of things you would like the teacher or school to know about your child.

## Cool Club

April 9th  
4:00pm-7:00pm

Activity:  
Isaac's 14th Birthday Celebration

Where: The Gallas' House  
11368 Greenhurst Road  
Nampa

What to Bring:  
1) A pasta dish to share  
2) Your musical talent

The Bakers will provide salad, cake, ice cream and drinks. Mr. Baker will be singing for all to enjoy!

Questions or RSVP to [Molly Benton](#). We hope to see you all there. You can contact Molly at 468.0335 if you have any questions.

## Adults In Motion Reminder & Updates

April 16th  
1:00pm-3:00pm

Activity: Planning meeting for the BIG summer event and future activities.

Snacks: Please bring a healthy snack to share with the rest of the group. Drinks will be furnished.

For further information or to **RSVP** contact [Freddie Gallas](#), 409.718.0417

**Tip 5:** When possible, arrange for your child to meet his new teacher before school begins. Prior introductions help relieve some anticipation about starting the school year with an unfamiliar person. In addition, the teacher may also want to observe your child in his or her current learning environment to help better prepare future lessons to accommodate your child's needs.

### SCHOOLS IN SESSION

The first day has arrived. You are confident that you have done your best to prepare yourself and your child. But what can you do now to make the transition easier for your child? The following are some additional tips for the first few days or weeks of school:

**Tip 6:** New routines and environments can be exhausting for many children. That's why it is so important to try to make sure that your child gets enough sleep, especially that first week of school. Setting a consistent bedtime can help ease the strain.

**Tip 7:** Prepare a healthy breakfast to help get the first days off to a good start. Feeling hungry can be distracting, especially for very young children. They will be able to better focus on what is going on in the classroom if their stomachs are full.

**Tip 8:** Time to say goodbye. This can be a difficult moment for both parents and child. Try to keep it brief. Remember that your child can sense how you're feeling, so keep a positive and enthusiastic attitude. Also, establishing some sort of special goodbye routine, for instance a hug and a high-five, can make the separation far less stressful.

**Tip 9:** As the year progresses, attempt to maintain morning routines. Develop an order to getting ready and leaving for school. Consistency helps a child to adjust by increasing a child's sense of security.

**Tip 10:** Stay proactive by attending parent-teacher conferences and other important meetings. Also, make an effort to attend school activities that are open to parents. Your involvement can make your child happy and lets the teacher know by your actions that your child's education is extremely important to you.

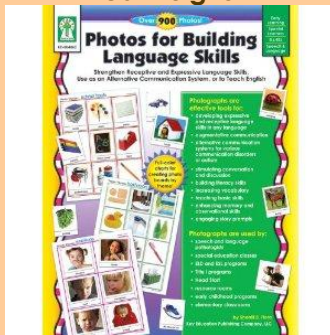
**Tip 11:** Stay in contact with the teacher throughout the year to help your child prepare for major changes or transitions that may occur at school. If possible, try to avoid presenting any major changes at home while the child simultaneously experiences transitions in school.

### THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Finally, you and your child have developed a positive relationship with the classroom teacher. However, it will eventually be time to move on to new educational

**From the  
TVDSA Library**  
with: Mary Anne Murphy

### Helping Children Learn Signs



Here is a fact: nearly any child, regardless of development, will be able to learn to communicate an idea with a sign earlier than with speech. For children with Down syndrome, the gap between ability to sign and ability to speak may be a much longer span of time than for typically developing children. With this in mind, many parents seek to teach signing to their son or daughter who has Down syndrome. Children naturally learn language, spoken or signed, in context. A small child who is not yet able to speak may reason, "Whenever Mom serves me milk, she makes that same movement with her hands. I really want some milk now. I bet I can make her think about milk by doing the same thing with my hands." He tries. It works. The child is empowered. Parents find that teaching first signs in the context of daily life is easy. Daily living presents the vocabulary to teach: bath, milk, eat, bed, diaper, dog, hug, ball, Dad, Mom, car, hurt, water, etc. After the first twenty or thirty signs, some parents begin to wonder how to add vocabulary to further empower their child. What about keeping in active memory the sign for the grandparents or older sibling who only come to town occasionally or the sign for swimming pool, which you only visit in the summer. What about the vocabulary we learned for the horses and cows we saw on vacation but do not usually see at home? Photographs are a great way to practice learned vocabulary and teach new vocabulary that does not regularly present itself in daily living. For family members or the family cabin, your own snapshots

challenges. Throughout the early years of education, the end of a school year often means that you and your child will need to be prepared to transition once again. The current classroom teacher can be a valuable resource in determining what steps will need to be taken. Saying goodbye to the current teacher may be difficult for your child, so allowing the teacher to be an active part of the transition process may help provide some ease in the inevitable separation. In order to get ready for the next school year, you may need to follow many of the same practices you did at the beginning of the current year. Remember, being well prepared and establishing an open line of communication with your child's school and teachers gives your child the opportunity to navigate transitions with confidence.

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## Teaching reading skills to children with Down Syndrome

*The following excerpt is from  
Up About Reading*



All children with Down syndrome benefit from being read to and from taking part in reading instruction from an early age. Research evidence

shows that these activities will improve their spoken language and memory skills. Children with Down syndrome learn to read in the same way as typically developing children. They build on their good visual memory skills but find it more difficult to use phonics. In other words, they benefit from learning to read through a 'whole-word' learning strategy to start with, bringing in phonics knowledge at a later date. While children who are introduced to reading in their preschool years show the highest levels of achievement, studies indicate that teenagers and young adults with Down syndrome can continue to develop their reading abilities if given appropriate instruction.

### The benefits of reading instruction:

Reading is a fundamental life skill. Print is all around us in our daily lives and we acquire reading and writing skills for practical use (street names, sign posts, advertisements, instructions) and for pleasure (writing a card, making a shopping list, looking up a television program).

Reading will help children with Down syndrome to develop vocabulary and grammar knowledge and will give added practice, and therefore improve spoken language skills. Reading practice will also help to develop working memory



will do the job. For the rest, The TVDSA library has four boxes of photos and one photo book that can be used to teach and reinforce signing and speech. Below find links to each. Click on each link to find out what is in each set. We also have several signing books so that parents can learn the signs they wish to teach.

[Photographic Learning Cards - Nouns, Verbs and Adjectives](#)

[Photographic Learning Cards - Early Learning Skills](#)

[Photographic Learning Cards - People and Emotions](#)

[Basic Vocabulary Photo Card Set](#)

[Photos for Building Language Skills: Strengthen Receptive and Expressive Language Skills](#)

These photo boxes and/or many other books are available from the TVDSA library and can be reserved by contacting the [library](#).

## **2011 Buddy Walk Kick-Off Meeting**

**April 4th  
7:00pm-8:00pm**

**Where:** at the Moxie Java at the corner of Eagle Road and Overland.

Last year, more than 1,300 people attended the Buddy Walk and we raised more than \$30,000 for the Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association! We are spreading the word to the community that people with Down syndrome are more like the rest of us than they are different, and that they should be valued and included in all activities.

We need volunteers to help grow the event even more this year! Please attend the meeting to learn more, or email [Sara Mitton Cox](#).

skills. The ability to read and write facilitates easier access to general knowledge and the school curriculum and it supports the skills necessary for problem solving and thinking strategies.

There is also evidence for the beneficial effect of reading on speech and language skills. Case study records suggest that early reading activities encourage progress to longer utterances and improved grammar in speech. They also suggest that reading improves articulation and speech intelligibility (the ability to be understood by the listener). For most children with Down syndrome, language comprehension (understanding) is better than language production (talking/signing). This means that children with Down syndrome understand more than they can say, probably due to a variety of issues, which may include problems with word retrieval, sentence structuring and speech-motor control. Working memory difficulties may also contribute to the speech and language delays that children with Down syndrome often face, limiting the amount that a child can organize and say clearly in a sentence. Reading provides opportunities to practice saying sentences that a child is unable to generate spontaneously even though he or she understands them. When children are reading aloud, the sentence is organized for them and the print is available without having to remember it, so the demands on the working memory system are reduced and its capacity can be used to plan and articulate each word more clearly.

The value of teaching reading and using reading activities to develop the spoken language skills for children with Down syndrome cannot be underestimated. Children should be introduced to reading in a fun way, first learning to read whole words by playing matching, selecting and naming games and then moving on to reading short sentences and longer sentences in topic books. Always relate activities and reading to your child's interests and experiences, and their language comprehension levels (understanding) and language learning needs. Children who have not made rapid progress with reading will still benefit from these reading games and activities, as they are powerful and enjoyable ways of improving their understanding and use of spoken language.

We found many good articles from Down Syndrome Education International on this subject, activities to get your child engaged and interested, and how to avoid the discouraging trail. Instead of picking only one article - here are the links to them all - read some, read all, but we suggest you "READ!"

- [Up for Reading](#) - Teaching reading skills to children with Down Syndrome
- [See and Learn Language and Reading](#): visual learning step by step
- [Reading and writing for infants with Down syndrome](#) (0-5

## Apps for Children with Special Needs

[A4CWSN](#) is a unique website that allows parents, educators and therapists to watch a short video of LOTS of apps for the iPhone, iPad, or iPod Touch so you can preview apps in more depth before you purchase them.

## Parents, Seeking More Knowledge?

### Upcoming Area Conferences:

**r.i.s.e. Conference:** [website](#)

22nd Annual Parent Conference  
April 29th - 30th, 2011  
Grand Ronde, OR  
(Scholarship applications close April 15th)

### PEAK Free Evening Webinars

from 6:30pm-7:30pm:

April 7th: Transition: Grade to Grade

May 12th: Creating Circles of support

Sign up [online!](#)

## IPUL Events

### Parent Workshop: Positive Behavioral Supports

**April 13th 6:00pm-8:00pm**  
500 S. 8th Street, Boise

Understand more about children's behaviors, functional behavior assessments and behavior interventions

For additional information or to register call: 342.5884 or email:

[Angela Lindig](#)

years) by Sue Buckley and Gillian Bird

- [Reading and writing for individuals with Down syndrome](#)

by Sue Buckley

*Down Syndrome Education International, Copyright 2007-2010*

## Toilet Training?

We have had members express interest in learning from other members about how they successfully taught their children with Down syndrome to use the bathroom. Below is a submission by one member. Names are not used so as to respect the privacy of the child.

I would not have said I had an "easy" time with my daughter, but we did get it done. The biggest things were 1) training me and 2) patience. We chose to start just after age 2, knowing that it might take longer than "normal" but we had her potty trained in 12 months with only occasional accidents when we were out and about (when the routine was different).



Our approach: We came up with a temporary schedule of taking our daughter to the bathroom every 20 min - - if anything to see if there was a pattern to when she went during the day. Since she had breakfast/lunch/dinner and drinks about the same time each day, did she go to the bathroom about the same time each day? It took a couple of days of data to figure out that she went about every 40-45 min (urine). Then I remember having to set the oven timer to remind me to stop what I was doing and take her - no matter what. Sometimes I would get it, sometimes I would miss it, etc. But my daughter is a pleaser, so she too tried. We also would do the sign for toilet (thumb through index and middle in fist and shake) while we went to the bathroom. She didn't speak very well yet, and signing was her primary communication venue. I would say it took 4-6 weeks to get where she started telling me - although I usually had 10 seconds to have her to the toilet. At that time, we then added "smarties" to the equation. If she told me and we got to the bathroom in time (no error on her side) she got 1 for #1, 2 for #2. Once she started showing success, we changed from the pull-ups to "big girl panties" during the day. She still slept in the pull-ups despite not "going" through the night, just in case we weren't fast enough in the morning.

Through the night, was never a problem for us - - even before we started this adventure, she would wake up dry. So we just learned the moment we heard her wake, we ran and took her to the potty. I don't have any tricks on the night issues.

## **Workshop: Nutrition and Your Child**

When: Thursday, April 7th

Time: 7-8:30pm

Location: lower level conference rooms St. Luke's Meridian

Presenter: Jennifer Taylor, registered dietician

Jennifer Taylor will be presenting on creating desirable kid-friendly meals, foods and ideas for elimination (aka avoiding constipation), teaching kids to love to eat, and the importance of eating together. All these topics will also be related back to oral feeders, troubled feeders and tube feeders. The presentation will be appropriate for parents, care providers, nurses, therapists...anyone who feeds kids.

To register please call 706.5549

## **TVDSA Board of Directors**

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I did buy a toilet seat adjuster that flipped down on-top of the seat to make it a smaller hole, so she didn't have to balance. That made her feel more comfortable. But then I had to buy a fold-able portable one for the public bathrooms, because all she knew was the smaller seat cover. That wasn't a problem, although once, I didn't get it open all the way, and it pinched her - took a few times, to get her to try that again.

Honestly, our biggest issue was proper wiping technique. It was (and sometimes still is, depending on what she is wearing) difficult for her to reach around back and clean herself up. Unfortunately, that means unclean underwear through the day, and a couple urinary tract infections to go with it.

**Just be patient and good luck!**

Additional information about teaching bathroom use to children with Down syndrome can be found at these websites.

- [Toilet Training Made Semi-Easy](#) by Kent Moreno
- [The ABC's of toilet training](#) - by Baby Center

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## **Children's Redesign Services Parent/Family Educational Meeting and Training**

**Presented by the Department of Health and Welfare -  
Family and Community Services**

This meeting is designed to provide you education and training about the new Children's DD system that begins the phase in process starting July 1, 2011.

All meetings will be from **6:00pm-8:00pm**, dates and locations are listed below. If you can't join us at those times, and have questions about the new system and/or Medicaid benefit package, you are welcome to contact [Rebecca Fadness](#) at 208.334.5701

**Caldwell:** May 12th  
3402 Franklin Rd

**Boise:** May 19th  
1720 Westgate Dr.  
Suite A, Room 131

**Pocatello:** May 24th  
421 Memorial Drive Human  
Development Center Rm 210

**Idaho Falls:** May 25th  
150 Shoup Ave

**Coeur d'Alene:** June 1st  
1120 Ironwood Dr. in the  
Large Conference Room

**Lewiston:** June 2nd  
2604 16th Ave

**Twin Falls:** June 7th  
601 Poleline Rd.

Based on request, we ask that this meeting be for parents only. Provider training will be scheduled separately.

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## 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**

**Mailing:**  
**PO Box 1404**  
**Meridian, Idaho 83680**

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

