



TREASURE VALLEY
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

TVDSA Newsletter

Newsletter Editor: [Celena Auger](#)

Aug 2015

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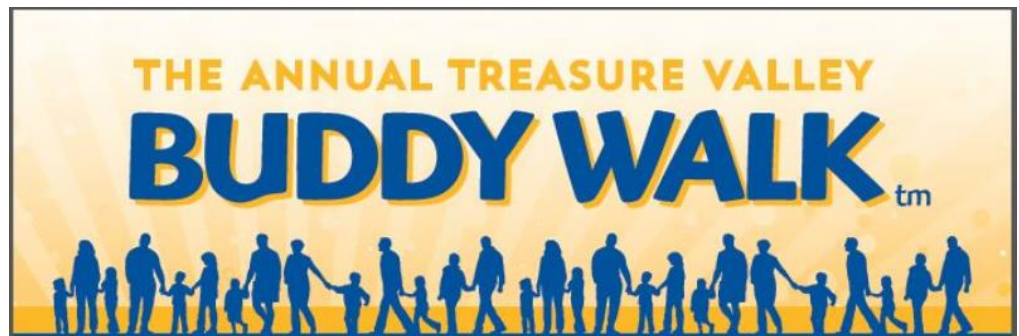
Summer is almost over and it's back to school time. In this month's newsletter you will find two articles to help prepare for meeting new teachers: Starting a new IEP Advocacy Year and Creating Personal Portfolios. TVDSA wishes all of the students a great start to a new school year!

If you haven't started your Buddy Walk team – now is the time! Priority registration ends August 14th and prices do rise a bit. Take advantage of the lowest prices and register today! Don't forget to share this opportunity to register early with family, friends, and co-workers!

Monthly and archived TVDSA newsletters are available on our website at: www.idahodownsndrome.org for viewing and sharing.

If you haven't already – it's time to start building your team for the 2015 TVDSA Buddy Walk!

Priority Registration ends August 14th!



Saturday, October 10th

On-site Registration starts at 9:00am

Walk will start from Capitol Park at 11:00am

Festivities at Julia Davis Park will continue through 2:00pm

All TVDSA members with Down syndrome are FREE!

Priority Online Registration ends August 14th:

Adult registration (13 & up) \$10.00

Child registration (12 & under): \$7.00

Extended Online Registration runs August 15th through September 28th:

Adult registration (13 & up) \$15.00

Child registration (12 & under): \$10.00

Register Today!



Questions? Email Jason Robles at: buddywalk@idahodownsndrome.org



2015 Buddy Walk Dancers Needed!

If you are interested – please see more details on page 4!

TVDSA Calendar of Events

August 4th:

TVDSA Board Meeting

CANCELLED

Contact: [Kristie Yerger](#)

August 8th:

Lil' Buddies 10:00am (meet at 9:45am) at Zoo Boise

Contact: [Elisha Jimenez](#)



It's back to school time.
You can help TVDSA earn donations just by shopping with your Fred Meyer Rewards Card!

Here is how the program works:

- Sign up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards card to TVDSA at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards searching by name or by Non-profit (NPO) number **93128**.
- Every time you shop and use your Rewards Card you are helping TVDSA earn a donation!
- You still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points and Rebates just as you do today.



Starting a New IEP Advocacy Year: Back to School Tips by Lisa Krizman, Esq.

It's that time again! For parents of children with special needs, "back to school" means the start of a new IEP advocacy year. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

"Back to School" Supplies for Parents

(1) *New spiral book.* Get a new spiral notebook to document incidents concerning your child at home and at school, and conversations with the school and professionals. Start by documenting how your child did over the summer, which is important if you plan to ask for an Extended School Year. Keep this book handy (in the kitchen, for example).

(2) *New very large folder.* Get a folder in which you can toss ALL school work and notes your child brings home for that year. This can be very important for you to evaluate and monitor and document the child's progress during that year, and from year to year.

(3) *New loose-leaf book:* Use this to file IEPs, the latest Parental Rights book from your state Department of Education, notices, emails, official reports to and from school and doctors/therapists. Remember that your requests to the Child Study Team **MUST** be in writing in order to initiate certain procedural protections.

Update the School Nurse. You may want to disclose medication status and changes.

Educate the New Staff. Initiate friendly contact with your child's new teacher, aide and therapists to describe how to best handle your child.

Monitor. Watch the progress of your child on a regular, periodic basis and report your concerns early to the teacher and your Child Study Team Case Manager. Don't assume your child IS progressing during the year. And, *don't wait until the annual IEP meeting to find out.*

Check up by Private Specialists. To whatever extent you can afford it, have your child periodically examined/treated by your own team of therapists and specialists. If you are concerned about the upcoming school year, it may be helpful to get a "baseline" picture of your child at the start of the year. Judges generally give much greater weight to an expert who has treated your child over time than a specialist who is brought in to give a report for the purpose of litigation.

Catch up on new legal developments in special education. Click [here](#) for some recent noteworthy developments and some older useful cases.

Source: © [Wrightslaw](#) 2009, 2013 Lisa Krizman Esq. LLC

Creating Personal Portfolios, Tools for Transition, Communication and Inclusion by Paula Kluth

This article is from the website of Dr. Paula Kluth. It, along with many others on inclusive schooling, differentiated instruction, and literacy can be found at www.PaulaKluth.com. Visit now to read her Tip of the Day, read dozens of free articles, and learn more about supporting diverse learners in K-12 classrooms.

When a student with disabilities, especially one with significant disabilities, comes into a new classroom or school, he or she may have limited ways of sharing her needs, preferences, and abilities. Each school year, therefore, the families of students with disabilities may spend hours communicating important details to help educators better support and teach their children.

While an IEP or cumulative file does provide some information about a learner, these records often do not provide information about how to approach day-to-day life in the classroom. A psychological report may, for instance, provide the teacher with a student's test scores and may help the teacher understand how the learner performed on these assessments as compared to his or her peers, but how does this information help an educator plan a lesson for Monday morning? A teacher will probably learn more from reviewing a list of adaptations that the learner uses in math class. Or tips on how to help the student interact with peers. Or a description of all of the ways that a student can effectively communicate.

What is a Personal Portfolio?

The portfolio can be thought of as a "positive portrait" of the learner with disabilities; it can serve as a communication method, a socialization strategy and as a staff-development tool. Students who create a portfolio also have a meaningful and tangible document that can be used during their parent/teacher conferences and IEP or transition planning meetings.

Portfolios may include photographs, art, written assignments or other samples of academic work, lists of favorite things, or even video or audiotapes. Many students find that using the portfolio is easiest if it is contained in a scrapbook, photo album, or three-ring binder but some students may choose to share information electronically, on a website, or in a CD or video format. Portfolios can be formal or informal, can consist of a few pages or dozens of pages, can include only current information and artifacts or serve as a cumulative record of the student's life. One student I know keeps his formal portfolio at home and carries a condensed copy with him at all times. Another student developed a creative video portfolio complete with interviews of her sisters reading her favorite poetry.

In most cases, it is best to write the text from the learner's point of view. For example, "My name is Scott Austin. This is a book all about me." The learner should, of course, have as much control over the book as possible. If he or she can communicate reliably, the student can dictate the text and explain how the portfolio should be assembled. Students with more significant communication struggles can be involved by choosing (through finger pointing) what products will be included in the portfolio or by being responsible for handing the finished product to new people in his or her life.

What Should Be Included in a Portfolio?

I recommend dividing the portfolio into two sections, one that is focused only on learning about the person (the "about me" section) and one that is focused on learning about teaching that person (the "help for teachers" section). Some students may actually choose to create two different books so they can introduce themselves to friends without needing to share personal information about their medical, personal, and academic needs.

Each portfolio will undoubtedly be as unique as its creator but the following elements are suggestions for students across grade levels:

Section I: About Me

- "portrait" of the student including name, personal photos, age, information about family and friends, list of interests and strengths
- lists or photos of favorite things including interests (e.g. hobbies) and preferences (e.g., foods, stores, movies); and important life events (e.g., meeting a celebrity, taking a family trip).
- snapshots or video of the student enjoying activities both inside and outside of school
- samples of the students talents/work: drawings, paintings, poems, audio clips of the student singing or playing an instrument, photos of personal collections

Section II: Help for My Teachers

- IEP goals with a short explanation of how the goals can be implemented in daily instruction

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Social Groups Page

Activities for Teens & Young Adults

TVDSA's Adults in Motion and Cool Club will be temporarily on hold. Check this page for other fun activities throughout the Treasure Valley.

Elevated Dance Project's Super Stars Class

Students will leave class feeling like a Superstar, each and every time! Dance is the mode, and Love is the method. Come for great company, great dancing, and great fun! Class is open for teenagers and adults with any disability and dance level.
\$25 per month.
Thursdays from 3:30-4:00pm.

Please note that although this activity is not TVDSA sponsored, it is a wonderful opportunity in the Treasure Valley.



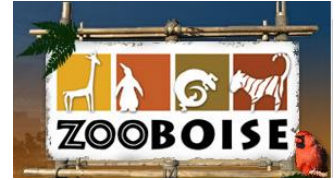
Pictured: 2014 Buddy Walk Dancers



Lil' Buddies (ages 0-5 years)

Little Buddies will be going to **Zoo Boise** on **Saturday, August 8th at 10:00am**. We will meet in the front at 9:45am. The Boise Zoo is located at 355 Julia Davis Dr. in Boise.

TVDSA will cover admission for children with Down syndrome and one adult. All other children and adults are welcome to accompany at the Zoo's



admission prices of: Adults: \$10, Seniors (62 & over): \$8, Children 3-11 = \$7, and Children 2 and under are free.

Need more information on **Lil' Buddies**? Please contact [Elisha Jimenez](mailto:ElishaJimenez@tvdsa.org) at 208-871-4780

Mom's Night Out!

TVDSA Amazing moms, take a moment to email me (Reme) at moms@idahodownsyndrome.org as to where you would like to have Mom's Night Out!, what days of the week work best for you, and what area of town might make it easier for you to participate. You can also call or text me at 208-866-4095.

I am wanting to make Moms Night Out! a time to just laugh and talk with other moms and to get as many moms out as possible. Just a reminder that you all work so hard to take care of your families and you deserve a night out.



Buddy Walk Dancers Needed!

Elevated Dance Project's Verge Dancers is again asking for assistance from TVDSA families during the **Buddy Walk Performance on October 10th at Julia Davis Park**. This opportunity is open to anyone with Down syndrome **ages 8 and up!** They will be learning the routine in a short six weeks. It is important that you attend every week! The Elevated Dance Project studio is located at 1396 Iron Eagle Drive in Eagle.

Practice Date and Times:

Thursday, Sept 3rd 4:30-5:30
Friday, Sept 11th 4:30-5:30
Friday, Sept 18th 4:30-5:30
Friday, Sept 25th 4:30-5:30
Friday, October 2nd 4:30-5:30
Friday, October 9th 4:30-5:30 at the band shell



Due to expanded interest and limited stage space, we will only be able to take the **first 12 individuals** with disabilities (no siblings) who register. Please be sure that the dancer is able to attend all 6 practices in order to learn the routine.

If you or an individual with Down syndrome you know would enjoy dancing on stage or if you have additional questions, please contact Celena Auger at cauger@cableone.net.

Conferences, Workshops, Webinars & TVDSA Scholarship Information

IPUL Workshop

August 12th 6:00pm-9:00pm
4619 Emerald Suite E, Boise

Topic: Success with IEP –This training will provide information and resources on special education and related services. This interactive workshop will give parents the tools needed to understand the IEP process and write meaningful goals.

RSVP not required.

Can't make it in person?
How about hearing the same information via the
Success with IEP Webinar:

August 25th either at **11:00am** or **3:00pm**

Click on the time to register or contact IPUL at
208-342-5884 or parents@ipulidaho.org

2015 TASH Conference

Portland, OR

December 2-4, 2015

www.tash.org/conference2015

This year's conference theme, "Celebrating 40 Years of Progressive Leadership," acknowledges TASH's 40 years of generating change within the disability community and anticipates a brighter, more inclusive future for people with disabilities in all aspects of life. The conference has impacted the disability field by connecting attendees to innovative information and resources, facilitating connections between stakeholders in the disability movement, and helping attendees to reignite their passion for the full inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of life.

Registration is Open!

TVDSA Scholarships

Did you know that TVDSA supports members in gathering information at local and national conferences and/or workshops?

The TVDSA Scholarship program is NOT income based, so all TVDSA members are eligible.

Please see our [Scholarship application](#) for the guidelines and how to apply today.



The Annual Catch a Special Thrill (C.A.S.T) for Kids Saturday, August 15th from 9:00am-2:00pm at Black Canyon Reservoir in Emmett

Children with disabilities are invited to come learn how to fish with B.A.S.S. professionals in their boats or pontoon boats if available. Fishing gear will be provided along with a take-home pole. **Event is FREE!** Bring your family and plan on coming aboard and catch that special thrill.

Immediately following the fishing activities, an awards presentation will be held. A marvelous picnic style lunch will be served to hungry anglers and their families.

Reserve your spot online as soon as possible. There is **only space for the first 40 kids**. Register at: <http://www.castforkids.org/events-calendar/cast-events/black-canyon-reservoir> or call Erika Lopez at 208-383-2254.

To Whom It May Concern:

The Cut-A-Thon in May 2015 was our first annual charity event at Opulence Salon Spa & Tanning. We all knew immediately what stand we wanted to take and Amiah was the first little lady on all of our minds. The genuine happiness and enjoyment on Gabby's (Amiah's mom) face when she shares fun and exciting stories about Amiah and her younger sister have become something we look forward to. To be a part of something so big yet something so close to home has been a very uplifting and rewarding experience for all of the girls involved.

Thank you to all that were involved in any way. We were able to reach and exceed our goal through endless efforts from the stylist's and their families. The community of Star and Sully's Bar & Grill were also huge factors in going above and beyond our goal at our first charity event. THANK YOU to the Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association for all the support you offer in and around our community !!

Thanks, Amanda Gates, Owner/Stylist
Opulence Salon Spa & Tanning

TVDSA would like to thank Opulence Salon Spa and Tanning for their generous donation of \$1,200 raised during their Cut-A-Thon!



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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.idahodownsyndrome.org

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

Portfolio (continued from Page 3)

- curricular adaptations that have been effective for the learner including several samples of adapted work with descriptions/captions of how the adaptations were created
- ideas for differentiating instruction for the learner
- lesson plans highlighting how the student has participated in academic lessons in the past
- a range of work samples across curricular areas (e.g., writing samples, video clip of reading lesson, quizzes/tests, sketches, reports)
- CDs, video clips, or photos of the learner successfully engaged in activities in the inclusive classroom
- a "tips for teachers" sheet composed, when possible, by the learner with disabilities
- ideas for creating a successful learning environment for the student (e.g., seating needs)
- information on personal care, health needs, and physical assistance
- tips on communicating with the student (e.g., whispering, giving "wait time" after asking a question) and on helping the student communicate (e.g., how to position a communication device); information on using the student's augmentative and alternative communication when necessary
- positive behavior support plan (if one exists) and effective supports that help teachers avoid challenging situations
- detailed description of how to use the student's assistive technology
- helpful articles/handouts/websites on inclusive schooling, differentiating instruction or other related topics

Conclusions

Of course one of the primary goals of using a portfolio is to help a learner with disabilities connect with, teach, and learn from peers. This tool can help teachers move away from a model where the learner with the disability is viewed as the only unique learner in the classroom. In the past, many teachers have taken time to share "special" information about a learner with a disability and his or her label. While this strategy is well intended, it can lead learners to believe that only some of the students in the classroom have special qualities or unique learning characteristics while others do not. Having all students reflect on their individuality and share their lives through a portfolio can, in contrast, send the message that all students are important and different; that all have struggles and strengths; and that all have something to share.

Source: Paula Kluth's website: www.paulakluth.com, Readings not included in this article is JD's High School example. Click [here](#) for original version of the article to read JD's example.

The mission of the Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association is to enhance the quality of life for persons with Down syndrome by promoting inclusive environments, providing accurate information to parents, families, and the community, and by advocating respect, dignity, and appropriate supports for people with Down syndrome.

Board of Directors:

President: [Kristie Yerger](#)
Vice President: [George Taylor](#)
Advisor: [Lynda Wells](#)

Treasurer & Spanish Contact: [Lucy Olmos](#)
Secretary: [Paul Auger](#)
Marketing Chair: [Jason Robles](#)

For more information, articles, past newsletters and more, please visit our website: <http://idahodownsyndrome.org>
Mailing: PO Box 1404 Meridian, ID 83680; Check us out on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)