

TVDSA NEWSLETTER



TREASURE VALLEY
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

In this Issue

TVDSA Giving Drive Kicks Off.	1
TVDSA Wants Your Videos!.	1
Mission/Vision Statements.	1
Adjusting IEP/IDLPs for the 2020 School Year	2
Legal FAQs about IEPs	2
Join TVDSA Today.	3
Volunteer Spotlight	3
Board Information	3
Contact Information	3

Upcoming Events

September 1

Board Meeting

Google Meet, 8:00 pm

October 10

Giving Drive Facebook Live

Facebook, 11:00 am

Our Mission

To enhance the quality of life for persons with Down syndrome by promoting inclusive environments as well as advocating respect, dignity, and appropriate supports for people with Down syndrome to ensure that the world sees them as we do — Equal.

Our Vision

A world where full inclusion is a reality rather than a goal.

TVDSA Giving Drive Kicks Off

TVDSA's biggest annual fundraiser is the Buddy Walk, and since we are unable to hold the Buddy Walk this year, we are asking our friends and supporters to donate on behalf of their favorite Buddy Walk team for our 2020 Giving Drive! Donations support TVDSA!

To get started, go to the **TVDSA Giving Drive website** and register your team, then invite friends and family to donate. It's as easy as that!

The more money your team raises, the bigger chance you have to win fabulous prizes.



Our Giving Drive will end on Sunday, October 4 at 11:59 pm, and our winners will be announced Saturday, October 10 during our Facebook Live event at 11 am, so start giving TODAY!

PRIZES

Top Fundraising Team Leader:

\$400 VISA gift card

2nd Place Fundraising Team Leader:

\$100 VISA gift card

Team Leaders who raise \$100 or more

Entered into a drawing for a \$50 Amazon gift card.

We will also award three \$20 Amazon gift cards to three randomly drawn donors who give a donation of \$21 or more. (One entry per donor.)

TVDSA Wants Your Videos!

To celebrate October, Down Syndrome Awareness Month, TVDSA wants to put together a video montage of our members.

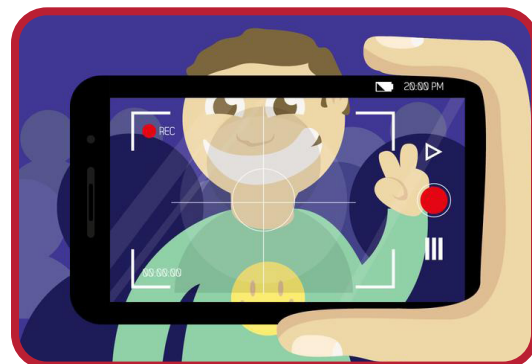
It's been a while since we've been able to meet in person, so we're excited to see everyone's faces, even if it is through video!

You can say hi, dance, spin, smile, wave, hold up a sign — whatever you like! Get creative and keep it family-friendly.

Send a short (10–15 second) video clip to **j.rice@idahodownsyndrome.org** by September 30, and we'll debut

the video at our October Facebook Live event on October 10.

If you have any questions, email **Jennifer Rice**.



Adjusting IEP/IDLPs for the 2020 School Year

Back-to-school looks a bit different this year. That may be the understatement of 2020! For many families, it is not the traditional welcome back to school with children wearing their first day of school clothes with backpacks brimming with new school supplies and teachers leading their new students down to their classroom.

While some students will start the school year in a brick-and-mortar school, many students adjusting to 100% virtual/distance learning or a hybrid approach, some days are learning at the school and some days are virtual/distance learning at home.

TVDSA knows this can be challenging for families who are juggling work, schooling at home, new schedules, and keeping your family healthy. We'll use our newsletters and TVDSA Facebook page to get you updated on important education issues.

Idaho's State Department of Special Education holds regular webinars for all Idaho's district special education directors. View the webinar recordings at the [Department of Special Education's webinar web page](#).

Here are important items discussed at the August 3 state special education directors' webinar, *Schools Reopening 2020*.

1. Some students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) may be eligible for compensatory/recovery services because of the lack of services in the spring that resulted in the student regressing. Discussion and decisions about compensatory/recovery services happens at an IEP meeting.

2. Districts need to have IEP meetings this fall to write an Individualized Distance Learning Plan (IDL). Parents are required members of the IEP team. Meaningful parent participation is important at every IEP meeting
3. During the webinar, it was emphasized to district special education directors that IEPs, IDLPs, and Prior Written Notes must be individualized.
4. Making sure students have access to the general education curriculum and serving students in the Least Restrictive Environment was also emphasized.

TVDSA Suggested Action Steps You Can Take

1. Email your child's special education teacher and request an IEP meeting to write an IDLP. Ask for a copy of the draft IDLP so you can receive it at least 3 days before the IEP meeting.
2. Write a list of what worked and didn't work last spring with distance learning. Email your input to the school members of the IEP team before the meeting, or bring it with you to the meeting. You want your input discussed at the IEP meeting and have it written in the IDLP.
3. Write any needed staff or parent training. For instance, you might want to request parent training to learn how to use the technology the school is using during distance learning, or how to help your child learn a certain skill at home. Staff and parent training can be written in the IDLP.

You can listen and watch the last two webinars (August 3 and 18):

- [August 3 webinar recording](#)
- [August 3 webinar slides](#)
- [August 18 webinar recording](#)
- [August 18 webinar slides](#)

Continued on page 3.

Legal FAQs About IEPs understood.org

Español

La mayoría de las escuelas están cerradas debido a la crisis sanitaria causada por el coronavirus. En colaboración con Lindsay Jones, directora ejecutiva de National Center for Learning Disabilities (socio de Understood), creamos estas preguntas para aclarar inquietudes legales comunes que usted pudiera tener sobre la educación especial, las evaluaciones y el IEP.

A medida que lea estas preguntas tenga en cuenta que las leyes de su estado pueden ser diferentes. El primer lugar donde obtener información es el departamento de educación de su estado y su distrito escolar, así como la página con información actualizada sobre el coronavirus del Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos (incluye algunos recursos en español). Sin embargo, estas preguntas son un buen punto de partida.

[Lea el artículo completo en \[understood.org\]\(http://understood.org\).](#)

English

Nearly all schools are closed due to the coronavirus. Working with Lindsay Jones of our partner, the National Center for Learning Disabilities, we created this FAQ to answer common legal questions you may have about special education, evaluations, and IEPs.

As you read these FAQs, keep in mind that your state laws may differ. Your first place for information is your state department of education and your local school district, as well as the U.S. Department of Education's up-to-date coronavirus information page. But these FAQs will give you a good starting point.

[Read the full article at \[understood.org\]\(http://understood.org\).](#)



Additional Resources

Here are some resources from the state department of special education:

- **Reopening Student Learning**
(Click the blue **Special Education** tab.)
- **Special Education Guidance for Back to School 2020**
- **Idaho Parents Unlimited**

This is a lot of information, but the most important thing to remember is to email a request for an IEP meeting to review the current IEP and write the IDLP.



Join TVDSA Today!

If you are not currently a member or you would like to renew your membership, you can do so **online with the TVDSA Membership Form**. You can contact us at membership@idahodownsyndrome.org to verify your membership status.

Volunteer Spotlight: Julie McConnel

My name is Julie McConnel and my youngest boys, Charlie and Milo, are fraternal twins both with a diagnosis of Down syndrome. We received the news of our double lottery win when I was about 18 weeks pregnant. At the time we had no idea just how lucky we were and we struggled with the uncertainty of a future raising not just one, but two children with an extra chromosome. We were afraid we might not be the best equipped to care for them and even considered finding an adoptive family for them.

I'm so thankful that we chose to act in faith rather than fear and decided to parent our two boys, welcoming them into our already good-sized family of six in August of 2015. We have never regretted our decision and love the new perspectives and joys Charlie and Milo have added to our lives. We have developed a greater sense of compassion and understanding for others and learned to slow down a bit and just enjoy the ride. We will get to our destination soon enough so no need to rush.

Finding a community of support and friendship through TVDSA has been one great and unexpected blessing our boys have given us. As the coordinator



Julie with her husband, Dan, and her sons Charlie, Andy, and Milo.

for Lil' Buddies, I have had the privilege of meeting new families and then seeing those families grow into a community who cares for one another greatly. And of course, I get to watch the cutest, brightest and most precious bunch of children grow and learn. Together we celebrate milestones – first steps, first words, first day of school – share resources and advice, and lift each other up during hard times.

I wish pregnant me could have had a glimpse into the life we have now that Charlie and Milo have been in our lives for 5 years. It is not a life to be feared. It is different than I had expected and planned, but another thing our boys have taught us is that differences are beautiful and worth celebrating!

Board of Directors

President
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Contact Information

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