

3-21 SAMVAAD



INTRODUCTION

Hello fellow Hamsafars:

Happy 2024! Cheers to another fantastic year.

Welcome on this exciting journey where we plan to provide information, showcase talents, share tips, tell you about all the interesting happenings in our part of the world keep ourselves connected with each other. Isn't that what families are supposed to do?

The idea behind our newsletter is to make you all become more participative and interactive. We need you all to come out and talk to us. After this edition, we are looking to have you all send in your contributions to our editors. So by March, when we come up with our next edition, we look forward to hearing from more of you.

Editorial Team



In 2024, I intend to bring India even closer.
Rekha Maa

Mere Pyare Hamsafarwalon...Aap sab ko meri taraf se a very happy new year!

I am happy that one very eventful year went by and I am looking forward to 2024 with eager anticipation. 2023 was a great year for us as a community. We had so many programs where our self-advocates showcased their talents, events - both national and international where persons with Down syndrome were recognized and honoured, activities -where our

MAA KE MANN KI BAAT

REKHA MAA

self-advocates proved themselves to be as good as anyone else - my heart swells with pride at the achievements of each one of my children.

We cannot rest on our laurels. We have a long way to go and it is us, as a family that has to take things forward and ensure that our self-advocates have a secure future where they are accepted. In 2024, I intend to bring India even closer. The North-East is yet to be fully integrated with us and we are going there this year for sure to make them feel at home.

This year, I am also looking at the next Down Syndrome National Games, IIDSC, World Down Syndrome Day activities, Purple Fest, more camps in newer locations, more awareness creation, reaching out to a wider audience and making sure that T21 is not an alien thing anymore.

It is time for us to hold hands and move towards newer horizons. Together we are unstoppable. And Sky is not the limit. Remember - Aasmaan Hamara Hai!

Spreading Joy and Hope
Meet Arav Mahajan, a 15-year-old with Down Syndrome breaking barriers and achieving big. He's not just a star student but also excels in speed skating, securing third place nationally. Arav is into swimming and cycling, bagging medals left and right. His inspiring story goes beyond; he's part of "Feet Me Up," painting custom shoes. His creations are a hit globally. Arav proves that with determination, there are no limits. Let's celebrate his resilience and boundless possibilities!



SELF-ADVOCATE CORNER



Medical updates:

In this edition, we showcase children DSFI has aided with surgeries in the past year, extending support to self-advocates facing economic challenges, and invite interested sponsors to reach out and contribute.

Healthwise Queries: Ask the Doc Pediatrician Dr. Priya Biswakumar

1. Tools for Waiting Parents:
 - Refer to a DSFI center for interventions.
 - Utilize the Passport tool for guidance.
2. Early Development Strategies:
 - Start early intervention at 4-6 months.
 - Consult with professionals for physiotherapy, speech therapy, and behavioral support.
3. General Health Care:
 - Focus on nutrition, vaccinations, play, and social interaction.
 - Monthly checkups in the first year, 2-3 monthly in the second year, then 6-month intervals until 5 years, followed by yearly checkups.
4. Managing Self-Talk:
 - Encourage regular exercise, yoga, music, and dance.
5. Supplements for Growth:
 - While Down syndrome isn't a disease, supplements aid overall growth and immune support due to enzyme deficiencies.
 - They are beneficial but not compulsory.

EVENTS CORNER

There are many events planned in the first quarter of 2024 since the WDSO Celebrations fall in this quarter.

January 10-12 – DSFI will be a part of Purple Fest at Goa

January 20 – Down Syndrome Awareness Campaign at Amrita Hospital, Kochi

February 10-12 – Health and Awareness Camp, Rourkela

March 21 – World Down Syndrome Day, INDIA

March 16-17 – Down Syndrome National Games 2024, Gurugram

Parenting Tips and Resources

1. Stay Informed and Organized:
Connect with doctors, therapists, and other parents. Keep a log to track your child's health and education.
2. Motivate Your Child:
Set high, achievable expectations for independence. Break tasks into small steps and use visual learning.
3. Take Advantage of Therapies:
While there's no cure, therapies improve quality of life. Incorporate therapies into regular activities.
4. Explore Special Education:
Special education helps with social and academic learning. Individualized Education Plans (IEP) cater to each child.
5. Connect with Support Groups:
Create a support group for mutual comfort. Bond with other caregivers facing similar situations.
6. Remember, advancements in understanding Down syndrome means longer, happier lives. Keep them active and fit for a fulfilling life.

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For additional details, article submissions, sponsorships, and more, reach out to us through:
Email: info@downsyndrome.in | WhatsApp: 98400 60817
YouTube – Down Syndrome Federation of India
Social @DSFI