

A booklet about Down's syndrome for people with Down's syndrome.



Let's talk about Down's syndrome



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

**This booklet is for people
with a learning disability.
It will tell you about
Down's syndrome.**



What is Down's syndrome?

Our bodies are made up of billions of cells. Inside each cell are chromosomes.

Chromosomes contain all the information about us, things like the colour of our hair and eyes, how tall we will be and whether we are male or female.

People who have Down's syndrome have an extra chromosome 21 in the cells in their body.

If you have an extra chromosome 21 when you are born you will have Down's syndrome. It is not an illness. You cannot catch Down's syndrome and you cannot take medicine to stop having Down's syndrome.



This is a picture of the inside of a cell. Chromosome 21 is circled.

What does the extra chromosome do?

Physical characteristics

People who have Down's syndrome:

- Are usually smaller than the rest of their family.
- Have eyes that slant slightly upwards.
- Have a small mouth. This is why some people with Down's syndrome stick out their tongues.
- Have shorter arms and legs.
- Have smaller and broader hands and feet.



Health Problems

People who have Down's syndrome may get some health problems more than other people.

- Coughs, colds and chest infections - People who have Down's syndrome have smaller tubes in their ears and nose and these can become blocked easily.
- Eyesight - People who have Down's syndrome often need to wear glasses.
- Heart problems - Some babies with Down's syndrome are born with heart problems.
- Hypothyroidism - The thyroid is a part of your body that controls your metabolism. If it does not work properly it can make you ill. The doctor can check if it is working properly by testing your blood.
- Weight - People who have Down's syndrome can put weight on easily. This is because their bodies don't use up the energy from food as quickly.

Learning Disability

People who have Down's syndrome will have a learning disability. This means that it might take longer to learn new things and you may need extra help at times.

What does having Down's syndrome mean?

Most people who have Down's syndrome can do the same things as everyone else but might need a bit more support sometimes. People who have Down's syndrome can...



Have a boyfriend or girlfriend

Go out and do things they enjoy such as the cinema, bowling, playing football.

Get a job





Go to college ✓



Live in their own house ✓

Travel around the world ✓

Go on holiday ✓

Get married ✓



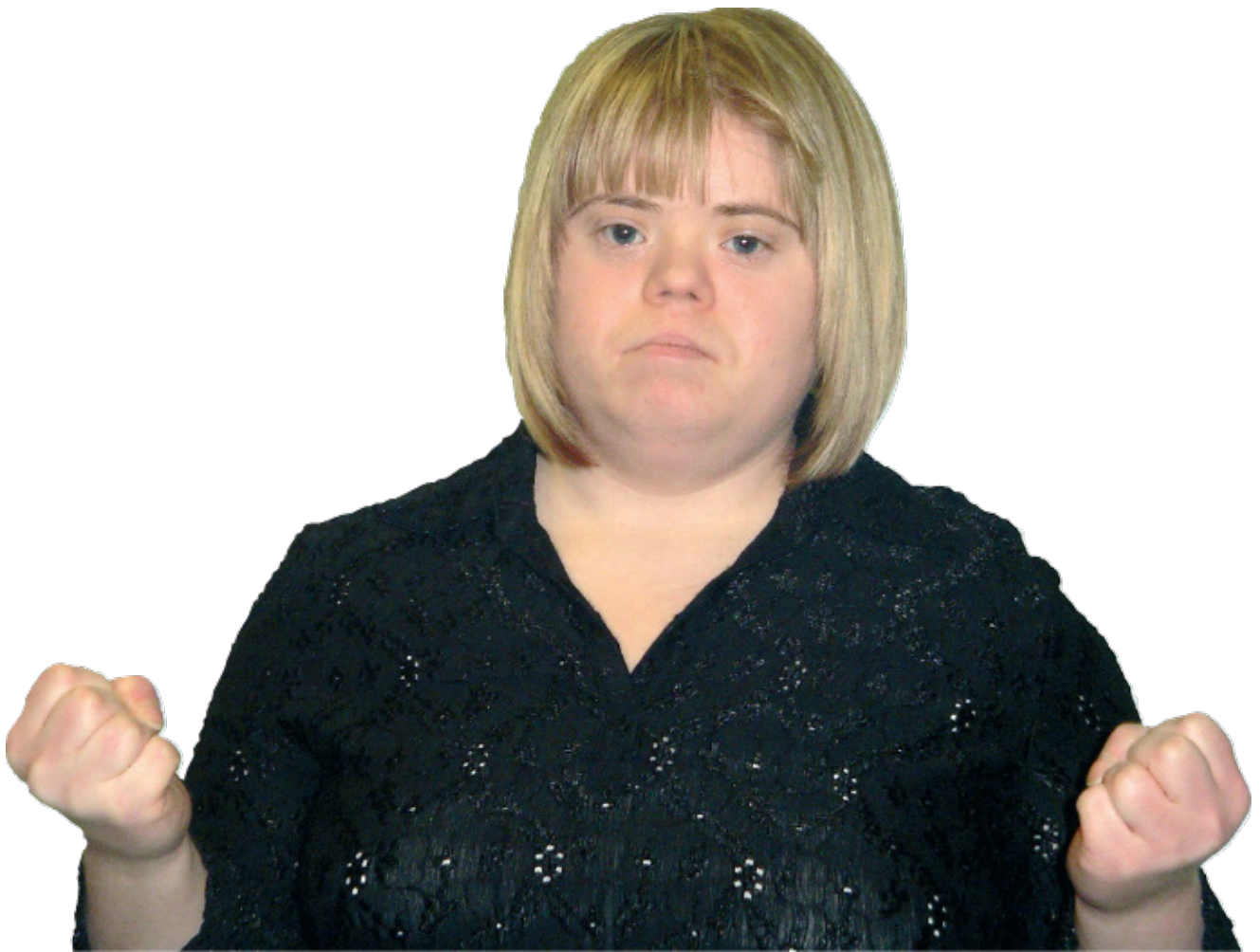
Have friends ✓

Things can be hard

What can be hard about having Down's syndrome?

- Sometimes you might not be treated like an adult.
- People might not listen to what you say.
- People might tell you what to do rather than asking you.
- You might not get the chance to do things that you would like to do.

- You might not be given a choice about what you can do.



Things can be hard

What can you do about this?

- Take responsibility for yourself and the things you do.
- Get involved in decisions about your life.
- Believe in yourself.
- Look after yourself.
- Think about what you want in life.
- Don't expect everything to go your way.
- Treat other people in the way that you would like to be treated.
- Talk to people about how you feel.



Get involved

Get involved with Down's Syndrome Scotland either nationally or locally. You can meet other people with Down's syndrome and get the chance to explain to people what it is like to have Down's syndrome.



Be proud of yourself!

Everyone is different. No two people are the same. We all have things that we can do and things that we find more difficult.


Be proud of who you are as a person. Having Down's syndrome is just a small part of who you are.




Find out more

From Down's Syndrome Scotland

A booklet about getting older for adults with Down's syndrome.



Let's talk about getting older



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

A booklet about death and funerals for people with Down's syndrome.



Let's talk about death



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

A booklet about growing up for young people with Down's syndrome.




Let's talk about puberty



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

A booklet about growing up for girls with Down's syndrome.



Let's talk about periods



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

A workbook about health, weight and diet for people with Down's syndrome.



Let's talk about keeping healthy



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

A booklet about dementia for adults with Down's syndrome.



Let's talk about dementia



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

A booklet about the menopause for adults with Down's syndrome.



Let's talk about the menopause



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

Information about growing up with your brother or sister with Down's syndrome.



A little book about siblings



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit www.dsscotland.org.uk

This booklet is in an easy read format. It is advisable that family/carers/friends read the book and discuss the content with the person.

Down's Syndrome Scotland provides support to families, carers and professionals who care for people with Down's syndrome.

If you would like to access further support please call us on 0300 030 2121.

For further information visit: www.dsscotland.org.uk




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