

2027 Session Topics

Adult Life	Select this category for proposals that highlight supports and skills for adults with Down syndrome. Topics may include independent or supported living, community involvement, lifelong learning, aging, and planning for a fulfilling adult life. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: internet and social media safety, skills for independent living, Alzheimer supports, navigating long-term care, marriage, siblings as caregivers, choosing a day program, panels with adults with Down syndrome and their families.
Advocacy	Select this category for proposals that focus on legislative and policy advocacy to influence system change. Topics may include policy updates to government benefits (Medicaid, Medicare, SSI and SSDI), strategies for influencing change, and ways to strengthen advocacy skills. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: case studies of successful local or state advocacy efforts and engaging self-advocates in advocacy.
Behavior	Select this category for proposals that address understanding and managing challenging behaviors in home, school and community. Topics may include emotional skill building, coping strategies, sensory strategies, and environmental safety. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: aggressive behaviors, prevention strategies, FBAs, losing skills and elopement strategies, behavior therapies, and adult behaviors.
Co-Occurring Down Syndrome – Autism Spectrum Disorder (DS-ASD)	Select this category for proposals that explore the intersection of Down syndrome and autism. Topics may include communication and learning strategies, family experiences, and practical tools to support individuals across ages and settings.
Communication	Select this category for proposals that highlight strategies to build clear, effective communication. Topics may include speech development, sign language, AAC, and approaches that strengthen verbal and nonverbal skills covering all ages. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: spelling to communicate, low and high tech AAC, writing and speaking skills for everyday technology use.
Education	Select this category for proposals that focus on effective learning and inclusive education. Topics may include reading instruction, AI, transition planning throughout preK to high school, paraprofessionals, classroom strategies, and tools for creating inclusive school environments. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: more on AI, reading and language development, making the most of high school, speakers who are public school educators, and math instruction.

Employment	Select this category for proposals that prepare individuals with Down syndrome for meaningful employment. Topics may include career readiness, workplace supports, skill-building, and strategies for long-term job success. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: entrepreneur experiences, competitive integrated employment experiences and supports (panels), preparing for employment, social skills for work.
Financial	Select this category for proposals that provide guidance on securing financial stability and long-term support for individuals with Down syndrome. Topics may include special needs trusts, government benefits, ABLE accounts, estate planning, and strategies to plan for future independence and security.
Healthy Living	Select this category for proposals that promote health and wellness across the lifespan. Topics may include fitness, nutrition, mental health, caregiver support, and building lifelong healthy habits. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: grief, caregiver support, and more on nutrition.
Housing	Select this category for proposals that focus on housing options and supports for individuals with Down syndrome. Topics may include independent and supported living models, accessibility, and planning for safe and meaningful community living. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: panels of community-based inclusive housing models and federal housing benefits.
Medical	Select this category for proposals that provide information on health and medical concerns relevant to people with Down syndrome. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: sleep apnea and Inspire, ENT, hearing, eye care, immune deficiency, arthritis, depression, weight management, and orthopedics.
Personal Perspective	Select this category for proposals that feature personal stories and lived experiences but also offer practical insights and meaningful takeaways. Strong proposals should go beyond sharing a personal story. They should create opportunities for discussion, sharing, and learning from each other. Speakers should have experience facilitating group discussions. Popular topics include sibling perspectives, parent panels, Dad perspective, autism, aging, dementia, and transitioning to adulthood.
Postsecondary	Select this category for proposals that discuss opportunities for continued learning after high school in Inclusive Postsecondary Education programs. Topics may include an overview of inclusive college programs, preparing for college, supports in college. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: vocational training and life-long learning opportunities.

Sexuality / Relationships	Select this category for proposals that address healthy relationships and sexuality education. Topics may include safety, self-advocacy, family support, and building skills for meaningful social connections. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: boundary confusion, socializing and making friends, tweens beyond puberty, healthy dating, stranger danger.
Therapies	Select this category for proposals that share effective therapy strategies for individuals with Down syndrome. Topics may include speech, occupational, and physical therapies for all age spans.
Transition to Adulthood	Select this category for proposals that support the move from high school to adult life. Topics may include planning for college, employment, independent living, and strategies to ensure a smooth medical transition into adult care. In addition to popular topics from previous years, consider these additional topics: self-determination skills, vocational services through pre-employment transition services and vocational rehabilitation services.