



DEEP DIVES

Friday, July 24
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
\$75 each

Deep-dive sessions are offered in addition to our regular workshop cycles as an opportunity to spend 3 hours with an expert. Because not all General Conference attendees are interested in these intense sessions, an additional charge is applied to only the individuals interested in participating in Deep-Dive sessions. Only choose one Deep Dive per attendee.

The Deep Dives are scheduled for Friday July 24, from 8:00am to 11:00am. The convention schedule is available [here](#).

Abrazando el Camino: Taller Vivencial para el Bienestar Emocional de Familias de Personas con Síndrome de Down

Vida Saludable, Todas las edades

Orador: Gabriel Couto, Red Down México, Gestalt Psychotherapist & Group Facilitator

Taller intensivo de tres horas, basado en la Psicoterapia Gestalt y Desarrollo Humano, diseñado para padres, madres y abuelos latinoamericanos que acompañan el síndrome de Down. Esta experiencia aborda necesidades emocionales profundas del cuidador, incluyendo desgaste, estrés y la carga silenciosa del duelo con el fin de mejorar el bienestar y la presencia familiar. La metodología es altamente vivencial y somática. A través de técnicas de movimiento consciente y dinámicas de expresión, los participantes desarrollan presencia, regulación y resiliencia. El taller crea un espacio seguro y culturalmente sensible donde cada cuidador puede reconocer su experiencia, fortalecer su vínculo afectivo con su ser querido con síndrome de Down, llevándose herramientas prácticas para su vida diaria. Probado con familias de Red Down México, ofrece una experiencia vivencial de alto impacto centrada en bienestar emocional y conexión familiar.

Down Syndrome Regression Disorder: What it is, what it isn't and what you can do about it!

Theme: Medical

Speakers: Dr. Eileen Quinn, University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences, Dr. Jonathan Santoro, Children's Hospital Los Angeles and the Keck School of Medicine at USC , Dr. Cathy Franklin, The University of Queensland (invited), Dr. Lina Patel, Children's Hospital Colorado (invited)

People with Down syndrome may experience regression in previously acquired skills. In this session, members of the Down Syndrome Medical Interest Group regression committee will present a panel discussion on regression, with a key focus on Down Syndrome Regression Disorder (DSRD). This condition occurs most commonly between the ages of 10 and 30 years and is associated with loss of skills in language, cognition, behavior, motor and adaptive skills. Discussion will include what we currently know about DSRD and its management. Topics discussed will be: clinical symptoms of regression, identifying "red flags" and when to seek additional work up and care, mimics of DSRD, and updates on cutting-edge treatments.

Future Ready: How AI Can Support Learning and Independence for Individuals with Down Syndrome

Theme: Education

Speakers: Dr. Sean Smith

Artificial intelligence (AI) is quickly becoming part of everyday life and is creating new opportunities to support learning, communication, and independence for individuals with Down syndrome. But what does this look like in practice? In this session, attendees will explore practical and easy-to-use AI tools that can support reading, writing, communication, organization, and everyday learning. Through demonstrations and real examples, participants will see how AI can help students understand schoolwork, generate ideas for writing, practice communication skills, build greater independence, and more. No technical background is needed. The focus will be on simple tools and strategies that participants can begin using right away to support learning and independence across different ages and

stages. Attendees will leave with practical ideas and a clearer understanding of how AI can be used thoughtfully to support individuals with Down syndrome.

Healthy Body, Healthy Mind: Using Physical Activity and Interoception to Promote Mental Wellness

Theme: Healthy Living, All Ages

Speakers: Megan DeBoom, MS, BCBA, LBA, Down Syndrome Innovations, Scott Quaife, NSCA-CPT, PNL1, Down Syndrome Innovations

As the lifespan of people with Down syndrome continues to increase, it has become increasingly vital to build a strong foundation of healthy lifestyle behaviors. Using research-backed and proven, real-world strategies, presenters will show how a healthy body contributes to a healthy mind and vice versa. In this interactive deep-dive, caregivers and self-advocates are invited to participate in physical movement, explore co-regulation and self-regulation practices, and engage in interoception experiments. By engaging in these healthy lifestyle activities, presenters will highlight the connection between a healthy body and a healthy mind. Workshop participants will leave with a variety of visual supports and practical strategies that can be applied at home and in the community to promote healthy lifestyle behaviors.

Navigating Aging and Dementia in Adults with Down Syndrome: Empowering Caregivers with Knowledge and Action

Theme: Adult Life

Speakers: Ley Linder, MA, M. Ed., BCBA, Crescent Behavioral Health Services, LLC, Kathryn Pears, MPPM, The National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practice

This comprehensive workshop will equip caregivers with essential knowledge and practical tools to recognize, evaluate, and respond to cognitive changes in adults with Down syndrome. Rather than creating alarm, this session aims to empower caregivers to be informed advocates who can meaningfully participate in their loved one's healthcare journey while navigating the complexities of aging and dementia. This session blends clinical depth with practical guidance, helping participants understand not only what to look for, but what to do next—fostering confidence, collaboration, and clarity in supporting people aging with Down syndrome and all intellectual disabilities.

Off to a Good Start: A Behaviorally Based Model for Teaching Children with Down Syndrome

Theme: Behavior, Birth through preschool

Speakers: Kathleen Feeley, Ph.D., Center for Community Inclusion at Long Island University

The focus of this presentation is the sharing of evidence-based strategies to meet the unique behavioral, communication, and learning needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with Down syndrome. The session will begin with an overview of strengths and weaknesses associated with Down syndrome, followed by the sharing of pivotal skills to be addressed across developmental areas (e.g., cognition, communication, behavior). Participants will then work through where, when, and with whom these skills can be addressed with their own

child within home and/or preschool settings. Using videotaped examples and photo sequences, participants will learn how to implement several evidence-based strategies during routine activities. For example, participants will learn how to teach young children to imitate sounds and words, and then how to use them within ongoing interactions within their homes and communities. Protocols for teaching sight words, colors, shapes, and handwriting will also be shared. Importantly, embedded throughout this presentation, will be strategies to prevent challenging behavior in young children while enhancing their ability to follow directions, attend to tasks, and engage in daily routines. In summary, this presentation will empower participants (including family members) with the understanding of learning principals and provide them with practice applying them across skill areas, with the potential for improving outcomes and expanding opportunities for their young child with Down syndrome.

Supporting Speech and Language Development in Young Children with Down Syndrome

Theme: Communication, Birth through preschool

Speaker: Jennifer Bekins, DHSc, CCC-SLP, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

Helping your child communicate starts with understanding how speech and language develop. In this interactive workshop, families will learn what to expect in early communication for children with Down syndrome and how individual differences and co-occurring conditions may shape development. We'll explore supportive strategies, such as sign language and technology, that can enhance communication while encouraging speech. We'll also discuss ways to recognize signs that may suggest autism alongside Down syndrome and what that means for your child's unique communication journey. Families will leave with practical tools, tips, and evidence-based resources to help their child build vocabulary and connection. This session is designed for families of children from birth through preschool.

The Skin is In: Skin Conditions in Children and Adults with Down Syndrome

Theme: Medical, All Ages

Speakers: Dr. Jillian Rork, Dermatologist, Dartmouth Health

In this session, you will learn about skin conditions seen in people with Down syndrome. The skin is our biggest organ and certainly the most visible, so there will be a lot to discuss. We will review common conditions such as dry skin, rashes around the mouth, dandruff, folliculitis, hidradenitis suppurativa, psoriasis, alopecia areata, and infections such as athlete's foot and toenail fungus. We will also discuss more uncommon skin conditions, but good to be aware of. This session will be visual with lots of photographs. We will focus on practical tips on how to take care of these conditions and talk about them with your doctor. We will discuss how the immune system interacts with the skin and how this could explain why certain skin conditions are more common. Lastly, we will provide updates on recent skin research studies and discuss future research topics.

Their Tomorrow Starts with Our Choices Today: Building a Lifecare Plan for a Meaningful Adult Life

Theme: Financial, All Ages

Speakers: Brady Murray, CFP, ChSNC, CaringTide, Jennie Dopp, BGS, ChSNC, Caring Tide

This session will guide families and caregivers through the process of creating a comprehensive Lifecare Plan that promotes independence and high expectations for adulthood, while also building a safety net of support for individuals with Down syndrome. Using the "7 Foundations of Disability Planning," we'll explore how to weave together resources and Transition to Adulthood curriculum to create a sustainable and thorough plan for the future. Financial strategies, legal safeguards, employment supports, housing options, caregiving resources, social opportunities, and benefit eligibility will be explored to help families create a roadmap for a sustainable, purposeful future. Participants will leave empowered with tools and resources that will help them determine their next right step in the planning process.