



“DADS meetings provide great fellowship – Belonging to DADS is a practical way for me to show my support for my wife and our son.

It increases my awareness of issues in raising Joseph and also gives me the opportunity to share some of our experiences for the benefit of others.

Paul, father of Joseph, 8



foundation21
Supporting kids with Down syndrome

Foundation21 Incorporated
PO Box 151
Greenacres SA 5086
P. (08) 8367 8022 • F. (08) 8367 8033
E. info@f21.org.au
www.f21.org.au

Ten feet tall
and bullet proof.

That's how children see their fathers . . .



Dads Appreciating Down Syndrome

Ten feet tall and bullet proof! That's how children view their fathers. Having a child with a disability, however, can challenge that perception in ourselves. We think we are supposed to have all the answers – we are 'fixers'. But what happens when we can't 'fix' it? Most of us find ourselves asking, "What now? What can I do to help my child?" D.A.D.S. offers a forum which to ask these questions. Whether choosing a therapist, preparing for school, or planning the financial future of your son or daughter; somewhere there is a father that has gone through it and is willing to share his experience and his understanding.

"DADS to me is about learning and sharing: Learning new life skills from other DADS and sharing my experiences with others."

-Paul, father of Giles, 6

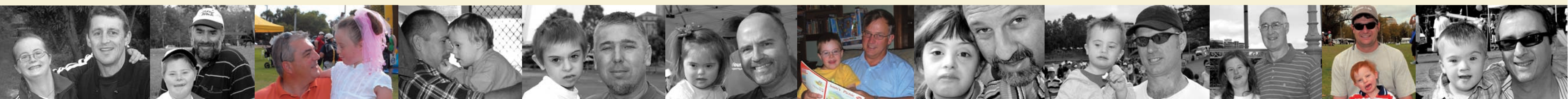
D.A.D.S. was formed in 2002 when eight men met for the first time in a restaurant in Indianapolis USA, to discuss the possibility of starting a support/action/fellowship group for fathers of individuals with Down syndrome. In the first 24 months the group grew at an astonishing pace – with new faces showing up at every meeting and hundreds more joining in our e-mail network to discuss and share topics like health, education, legislation and the individual successes and challenges of our kids. Today, D.A.D.S. is operating in many countries all over the world. D.A.D.S. in Australia commenced in 2007 in Adelaide by foundation21, a volunteer group that supports kids with Down syndrome – with a main focus on speech therapy.

"It is comforting to know that support groups like "DADS" are available. It helps to know we are not alone..."

David, father of Dana, 18

"DADS is a place I can come to and be understood by other blokes that are walking the same journey as me."

Phillip, father of Jet, 5



Our mission is simple:

To assist and support, through fellowship and action, the fathers and families of individuals with Down syndrome.

The way we accomplish our mission is as varied as our members. From fundraising, to writing letters to legislators regarding important issues, to moving tables at

the Buddy Walk®, each of us contributes in our own way. And each of us gets back far more than we give.

"Being able to relate my own experiences of our 16yo with Down syndrome, seems to be helpful and inspiring to dads with a younger child..."

George, father of Jianna, 16

What does D.A.D.S. do?

- Each year we raise money to support educational and recreation opportunities for kids with Down syndrome.
- We host holiday parties, picnics, and sporting event outings where fathers and families can get together to spend time with their children.
- We attend and facilitate workshops and seminars on issues that are relevant to raising children with special needs.
- We provide an online support network for fathers, grandfathers and siblings, (and even occasionally mothers) to post and review questions concerning their children.
- We monitor and distribute information concerning state and federal legislation related to children with special needs.
- Our annual D.A.D.S ten pin bowling tournament brings fathers and their kids together for a bit of 'competitive' spirit.

How do I become a D.A.D.S. dad?

If you are a father of a child with Down syndrome, you are already a member! If you want to become an active member, simply attend a meeting or join our online forum by visiting our website.

"Being a part of DADS has shown me that we are all on the same road as each other...and confirmed that we are heading in the right direction."

John, father of Adele, 9