



UPDATES & NEWS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Broward Gold Coast's Teens & Young Adults Socials
Date, time and location - TBA
- Broward Gold Coast's Moms Night Out
Date, time and location - TBA
- Broward Gold Coast's Children Group Socials
Date, time and location - TBA
- Deliver the Dream's In-Person Retreat Weekend
(for Families who have a child with Down syndrome)
January 7-9th
FFA Leadership Training Center, Haines City
Apply ASAP
- Broward ESE Advisory Monthly General Meeting
Wednesday, January 19th at 6:30PM
Location - TBA
- Broward ESE Advisory Family Resource Fair
Wednesday, January 26th at 6:00PM
Location - TBA
- Down Syndrome Committee General Meeting
Thursday, January 27th at 6:00PM
Location - TBA
- ICAN Living and Learning Center Valentine's Party
Saturday, February 12th
Time and location - TBA
- Broward ESE Advisory Monthly General Meeting
Wednesday, February 16th at 6:30PM
Location - TBA
- Broward ESE Advisory Monthly General Meeting
Wednesday, March 16th at 6:30PM
Location - TBA
- World Down Syndrome Day Celebration
Monday, March 21st
Time and location - TBA
- Spring Break for Broward County Public Schools
March 21 - March 28



Greetings from Executive Director Bach Todaro

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and myself, we wish you Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!

Here are a few important reminders and updates:

Expectant/New Parent: If you are expecting or a new parent of a baby with Down syndrome, congratulations! Contact us at www.bgcdownsyntax.org for your New Parent package. We have "Babies with Down syndrome" books in English and Spanish, along with medical resources waiting for your family. You don't have to sail this journey alone; we are here to help.

Med Waiver: If your child with Down syndrome is 3 years old or older and is not on the Medicaid Waiver, make sure to apply for his/her Medicaid Waiver soon as possible, as there is a long wait list at the Agency of Persons with Disabilities (APD). The Florida Medicaid waiver provides services to those with intellectual disabilities. Many people who qualify are not even aware of eligibility. The waiver is applicable to all ages. Go to www.apd.myflorida.com for more details and to apply.

Guardianship: By law, parents of an adult child with special needs can no longer make medical or financial decisions for them once they turned 18 years old. Therefore, preparing for their transition is crucial. You can contact Stephanie Schneider at www.fl-elderlaw.com for more details.

Social Security: If your son/daughter is 18 years old, they are eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). These are federal programs that provide assistance to eligible children and adults with disabilities. www.socialsecurityoffices.info/co/fl-broward

Broward Gold Coast Membership: Our membership for 2022 will be available soon for your renewal at www.bgcdownsyntax.org. Stay tuned for our email of any changes in the membership. As always, your membership has to be current before you RSVP to any social events, or request to be eligible for our scholarship help.

Regards,
Bach Todaro, Executive Director

Step Up 4 Down Syndrome Walk & 5K Run on October 10, 2021



We had an Amazing day at the Step Up 4 Down Syndrome Walk & 5K Run on Sunday, October 10th! We had 700 people participate in our Walk & 5K Run. Thirty-three teams were present to participate and we loved seeing the specialized team masks, shirts and all the "I AM" signs that filled the park! The weather was fantastic, just a perfect day! There was music and laughter heard throughout our event!

Thank you again for supporting our Step Up 4 Down Syndrome Walk & 5K Run, and the Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization. We pledge to continue walking for as long as it takes to ensure that people with Down syndrome are fully accepted and included. We are grateful that you support our steps along the way!

We are grateful for the support of our walkers and runners in attendance, but no less grateful to our friends and family who donated and the local businesses who sponsored this wonderful event! This year with your support the Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization (BGCSO), raised \$51,111 of our \$120,000 goal. Donations will be accepted until December 31, 2021 at www.stepup4downsyndrome.com. You can check out our Sponsors and Team pages at the above website as well.

Our Top 10 Fundraising Teams this year:

- Bianca's Friends: \$7,317.00
- Amazing Grace 2021: \$3,350.00
- Chad's Buddies: \$3,145.00
- Team Etienne & Amelie 2021: \$2,900.00
- Team Coby Chesal: \$1,862.18
- Darren's Dawgs: \$1,340.00
- Cameron's Crew 2021: \$1,260.00
- Zara & Friends: \$870.00
- Team Preston: \$851.00
- Zara Montage: \$790.00

Our Top 5 Teams with the Most Participants:

- Team Preston: 61
- T-UNIT: 40
- Chad's Buddies: 39
- Team Jesus: 25
- Amazing Grace 2021: 24

THANK YOU 2021 SPONSORS

We don't take your donations for granted. We know there are a lot of great organizations out there, but you chose to donate to BGCSO. That means a lot to us.



"I AM" SIGNS



I am Mary

I AM Golden.



I am Julia

I AM AMAZING...
PACA!



I am Kendrix

They told me I couldn't.
That's why I did it.



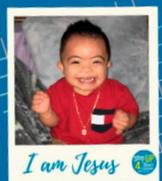
I am Gustavo

I LOVE sports!



I am Jacob

I AM a Big Brother.



I am Jesus

I AM Down
Right Perfect.



I am Cassandra

I AM INDEPENDENT.



I am Chad

I AM a HAPPY boy.



I am Coby

I CAN Do Anything!



I am Zara

I AM LIMITLESS
because with God ALL things are possible.



I am Devon

I AM a BLESSING.



I am Aiden

I AM a LOVED
unconditionally.



I am Alyssa

I AM FEARLESS.



I am Biyarea

I AM the BEST cousin!



I am Cameron

I AM LOVED.



We are Etienne & Amelie

WE ARE Fearfully &
Wonderfully Made.



Team Preston

WE Believe in
Meaningful Inclusion!



We are ETC

WE believe in inclusion
through the arts!



I am Darren

I AM loved.



I am Elizabeth

I AM confident
& extraordinary.



I am Grace Ann

I LOVE inclusion
and respect.

Family Spotlight



This is David and his stepmom, Kim. They were blessed to become family almost 3 years ago. David has taught Kim a lot about Down syndrome and they enjoy exploring and learning together. David is almost always happy and loves to make EVERYONE smile and laugh. It's not uncommon to see David giving a stranger a hand shake or hug. Often he serenades people with songs from his favorite musicals (especially pretty girls).

Together they ride bicycles, dance, sing, swim, take walks and hikes, read, travel, go to beaches and parks, shop, paint, watch movies, bake, attend church, theatre performances, concerts, try new foods, and adore making new friends. David especially likes riding with Kim on motorcycles. David demonstrates independence too by picking out his clothes, dressing himself, taking walks, surfing YouTube, and making sandwiches all by himself. He just finished his first Special Olympics golf season and is looking forward to trying other sports.

They are so thankful God brought them together and they have each other. Kim says the best part is the many hugs and kisses David lavishes on her every day.

Broward Gold Coast's Socials Mom's night out - Pottery Wheel Class



(Socials continued on p6)

Volunteer Spotlight



I am Angela Viveros. I am married to an amazing man, Alejandro, and am the mother of two sons: Daniel (15 years old) and Nicolas (12 years old). Nicolas also known as "Nico", was the reason we joined Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization (BGCD SO).

I work in the Financial Department of a Production Company. In addition to working, taking care of my home and running from one place to another, I have been volunteering for the BGCD SO for the last year. It feels so good giving back to this amazing organization who is giving our children and families different opportunities and valuable information to succeed in these times.

I love reading, watching movies and series, and traveling, but what I really love is enjoying quality time with my family!

Congratulations Darren!

Congratulations to Darren De Braga, one of the Exceptional Theater Company's 2021 Actor Heroes at the 5th Annual Heroes Gala in November 2021.

Exceptional Theater Company is an all-inclusive theater program for teens and adults with special needs. Through the power of theater our actors learn and improve important life skills that teach them to be the best versions of themselves! ETC takes pride in bringing happiness, fulfillment, independence and a love for the arts into the lives of all our actors, their families and audiences. From 12 original actors, ETC now serves over 150 which include many of our original 12. Exceptional Theater Company turned 30 this year and has remained a pillar of the South Florida special needs community. Through our theater classes that refine acting, singing and dancing we improve physical and developmental disabilities. Their programs also teach additional skills via theater games, improvisation and music that often enhances verbal skills, movement, self-confidence, and socialization. ETC classes provide a setting for inclusion, creativity, learning, building lifelong friendships and so much more.

For more information or questions about enrollment please contact our Executive Director, Daniela Roeder daniela@exceptionaltheatercompany.org



Teen & Young Adult Event Chocolate Candy Making Class



Welcome Back to School Waterpark Fun



Saludos de su Directora Ejecutiva Bach Todaro

De parte de toda la Junta Directiva, todo el personal y yo, les deseamos una Feliz Navidad y un Prospero Año Nuevo.

A continuación, algunos recordatorios importantes:

Nuevos Padres / Esperando Bebe: Si usted está esperando un bebe con síndrome de Down o si se acaba de convertir en padre de un bebe con síndrome de Down, felicitaciones! Comuníquese con nosotros en bgcdowndownsyndrome.org para un paquete de Nuevos Padres. Tenemos el Libro "Bebes con Síndrome de Down" en Ingles y en Español junto con recursos médicos para su familia. No tiene que navegar este viaje solo, estamos aquí para ayudar.

Med Waiver: Si su hijo/hija con síndrome de Down tiene 3 años o mas y aun no esta inscrito en el Medicaid Waiver, asegúrese de aplicar lo antes posible ya que la Agencia de Personas con Discapacidades tiene una lista de espera. El Medicaid Waiver de la Florida provee servicios a personas con discapacidades mentales. Muchas personas califican y no se dan cuenta. El waiver aplica a todas las edades. Para aplicar visite apd.myflorida.com.

Tutela Legal: Por ley, los padres de adultos con síndrome de Down no pueden tomar decisiones medicas o financieras por su hijo/hija después de que cumple la mayoría de edad (18 años). Por lo tanto, prepararse para esta transición es crucial. Para más información puede contactar a Stephanie Schneider fl-elderlaw.com.

Seguro Social: Si su hijo o hija tienen 18 años de edad, ya pueden recibir el pago suplementario del seguro social (SSI) y el seguro de deshabilitados del Seguro Social (SSDI). Estos son programas federales que proveen asistencia para jóvenes y adultos con discapacidades. socialsecurityoffices.info/co/fl-broward

Membrecía de la Organización de Broward Gold Coast: Información para la renovación de nuestra membrecía para el 2022 estará disponible pronto en www.bgcdowndownsyndrome.org este atento a nuestro email en caso de algún cambio en la membrecía. Como siempre, su membrecía debe estar al día antes de que pueda participar o reservar asistencia a alguno de nuestros eventos sociales, o pedir becas.

Saludos,
Bach Todaro, Directora Ejecutiva

New Children and COVID-19 Updates

In December 2020, the CDC officially categorized people with Down syndrome as "high risk" for COVID-19, meaning that they have a higher likelihood of having more severe symptoms and sadly death. A few studies on COVID-19 underscore the risk to be especially acute in people with Down syndrome who are 40 years old or older, so we must remain vigilant and update our resources as available information and recommendations evolve.

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization is proud to share the valuable, free COVID-19 & Down Syndrome Resource published by GLOBAL and the national consortium - DSMIG-USA, GLOBAL, LuMindIDSC, NDSC, NDSS, and NTG. The Resource focuses on new and updated information specific to the Delta variant, vaccines for kids aged 5-11, COVID-19 boosters, breakthroughs, mental health, ways to stay safe in schools, precautions for people with Down syndrome, and advocacy.

We strongly recommend you read through this important resource.

We applaud the national consortium of Down syndrome organizations for updating this important resource for community. Please remember we are here for you during this difficult time and do not hesitate to call or email. In the meantime, please stay healthy and be safe!



CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS

- **Evento Social para Adolescentes y Jóvenes Adultos de Broward Gold Coast**
Fecha, Hora y Lugar – Por Definir
- **Noche de Mamas de Broward Gold Coast**
Fecha, Hora y Lugar – Por Definir
- **Evento Social para Grupo de Niños de Broward Gold Coast**
Fecha, Hora y Lugar – Por Definir
- **Retiro de Fin de Semana - En persona - Deliver The Dream's**
(Para familias que tengan un hijo con síndrome de Down)
Enero 7- 9 en FFA Leadership Training Center, Haines City
Aplicar lo antes posible
- **Reunión General del Comité Consultivo de Broward ESE**
Miércoles, Enero 19 - 6:30 pm – Lugar por definir
- **Feria de Recursos para Familias del Comité Consultivo de Broward ESE**
Miércoles, Enero 26 - 6:00 pm – Lugar por definir
- **Reunión General del Comité de Síndrome de Down**
Jueves, Enero 27 – 6:00 pm – Lugar por definir
- **Fiesta de San Valentin del ICAN Living and Learning Center**
Sábado, Febrero 12 – Lugar y Hora por definir
- **Reunión General del Comité Consultivo de Broward ESE**
Miércoles, Febrero 16 – 6:30 pm – Lugar por definir
- **Reunión General del Comité Consultivo de Broward ESE**
Miércoles, Marzo 16 – 6:30 pm – Lugar por definir
- **Celebración del Dia Mundial del Síndrome de Down**
Lunes, Marzo 21 – Lugar y hora por definir
- **Spring Break para las Escuelas del Condado de Broward**
Marzo 21 – Marzo 28

Holiday Party

Thank you so much to Angels for Humanity for their surprise appearance and donation of 60+ presents for our kids at our annual Holiday Party. The kids were so excited and with the amazing variety of gifts brought, many had received exactly what they were wishing for! Thank you to our Angels who assisted in the gift-giving, we appreciate the kindness and generosity more than you know! And a big thanks to Gordon Garland for connecting us with this amazing organization, it truly was a wonderful surprise!





Presents

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

With Melixsa Acosta

Melixsa Acosta, M.S., CCC-SLP is a Florida state licensed bilingual Speech-Language Pathologist with 14 years of experience in the field and holds a Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA). Melixsa obtained a Bachelor's degree from Carlos Albizu University, San Juan Campus, and a Master's of Science in Speech-Language Pathology from Nova Southeastern University.

Melixsa has practiced in a variety of clinical settings, including outpatient facilities, private clinics, homes, and schools. She is the founder and owner of a pediatric private practice in Oakland Park that offers bilingual (English/Spanish) speech and occupational therapy services to children from 0-20 years of age.

Melixsa is also a parent of a child with special needs. This life experience has allowed her to learn additional tools to implement in her career while supporting families on their journeys. She believes in a compassionate, collaborative, and family-centered approach to therapy.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH AT 6:00PM-6:40PM

RSVP to director@bgcdownsyrndrome.org with "speech pathologist" in heading, and Zoom link will be emailed to you prior to presentation.

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization
9900 West Sample Road, Suite 339
Coral Springs, FL 33065

954-825-0400
email: director@bgcdownsyrndrome.org
www.bgcdownsyrndrome.org
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BGCDSO>

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization is a family support and resource organization dedicated to serving families who have an individual with Down syndrome. Our mission is to improve the lives of people with Down syndrome and their families by providing support, information, education, and advocacy, thus enabling each individual to reach his or her full potential.

Jordana Faine-Siadman

PHYSICAL THERAPIST

Jordana Faine-Siadman MSPT is Florida Licensed Physical Therapist, and founded Fitness Made Fun Inc. to help others find the "fun" in Fitness.

Jordana's unique approach to treatment has gained her many fans. She is not only a licensed physical therapist with a master's degree from Boston University, but also is a licensed swim instructor with certification in special needs, has training in hippo-therapy (horse therapy), is trained as a C.H.E.K holistic lifestyle coach, a wellness educator and juice plus wellness coach. In her work with patients and families she combines all of these skill-sets to offer a unique, holistic, approach to treatment that goes beyond traditional therapy.

In addition to her dedication to her profession, Jordana is proud wife and mom of two girls. She can also be found giving her time to community awareness and charitable causes. The best compliment a client can give her, is a referral of a friend or family member.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2ND from 6:00PM-6:40PM

RSVP to admin@bgcdownsyrndrome.org with "Physical Therapist" in heading, and Zoom link will be emailed to you prior to presentation.

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization
9900 West Sample Road, Suite 339
Coral Springs, FL 33065

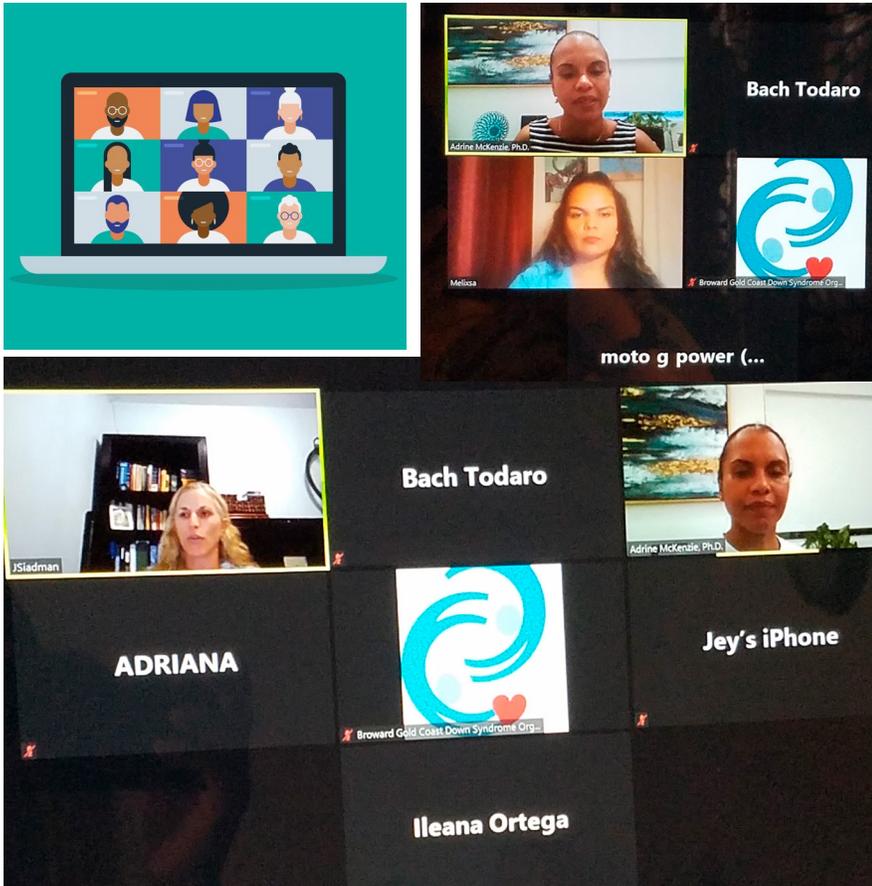
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Q&A Sessions - Zoom Edition

We are thrilled to have hosted the Q&A Sessions - Zoom edition for our members:

1. **Speech-Language Pathology with Melixsa Acosta, M.S., CCC-SLP**
2. **Physical Therapy with Jordana Faine-Siadman MSP**



9900 West Sample Road • Suite 339 • Coral Springs, FL 33065

954.825.0400 • bgcdownsyrndrome.org

Any Questions?

- | | |
|--|--|
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Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization • Statement of Policy and Disclaimer

This newsletter reports items of interest relating to Down syndrome and provides a forum for others. The Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization (BGCD SO) does not promote or recommend any therapy, treatment, etc. BGCD SO will not espouse any particular political or religious view. Individuals or organizations referred to are not necessarily endorsed by this publication or its editor. We wish to bring together those interested in Down syndrome and attempt to create an optimistic outlook and attitude. The editor reserves the right to make corrections as are appropriate and in accord with established editorial practice in material submitted for publication. Please submit articles to info@bgcdownsyrndrome.org.