



Broward
Gold Coast
Down Syndrome
Organization

UPDATES & NEWS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Down Syndrome Committee General Meeting
Thursday, March 14th from 6:00-8:00pm
Broward Gold Coast Office
- Broward ESE Advisory Monthly General Meeting
Wednesday, March 20th - 6:15pm-8:45pm
- World Down Syndrome Day Bowling-Member's Only Event
Thursday, March 21st
- Spring Egg Hunt Picnic-Member's Only Event
Saturday, March 30th
- New Families Breakfast
Tuesday, April 2nd from 10:00am-12:00pm
Broward Gold Coast Office
- Coffee and Conversations-Parents & Caregivers
Saturday, April 13th from 10:00am-12:00pm
Broward Gold Coast Office
- Broward ESE Advisory Monthly General Meeting
Wednesday, April 17th from 6:15pm-8:45pm
Plantation High School Media Center
- Junie B. Jones-Member's Only Event-Both Social Groups
Saturday, April 20th
- Read Along
Thursday, April 25th from 6:30pm-8:30pm
Broward Gold Coast Office
- Mother's Day Floral Arrangements-Children's Social Group
Sunday, April 28th
- Mother's Day Floral Arrangements-Teen & Adult Social Group
Sunday, May 5th
- Read Along-Both Social Groups
Date and Time TBD Broward Gold Coast Office
- Coffee and Conversations-Parents & Caregivers
Saturday, May 11th from 10:00am-12:00pm
Broward Gold Coast Office
- Broward ESE Advisory Monthly General Meeting
Wednesday, May 15th from 6:15pm-8:45pm
Indian Ridge Middle School Media Center
- Read Along-Both Social Groups
Date and Time TBD Broward Gold Coast Office
- Coffee and Conversations-Parents & Caregivers
Saturday, June 8th from 10:00am-12:00pm
Broward Gold Coast Office
- 26th Annual Family Café-Orlando
Thurs- Sat, June 14-16th Hyatt Regency, Orlando
- Read Along-Both Social Groups
Date and Time TBD Broward Gold Coast Office
- Coffee and Conversations-Parents & Caregivers
Saturday, July 13th from 10:00am-12:00pm
Broward Gold Coast Office
- DADS Fishing Trip-Both Social Groups
Saturday, July 27th

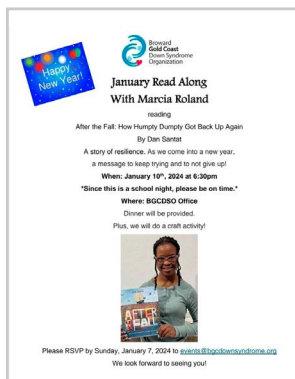
Another Great Read Along in January by Marcia Roland!



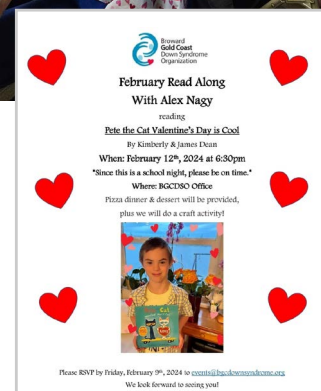
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Thank you to the Roland family for organizing a great night. We had fun making a picture frame before the reading. We love getting to spend time together!



We started our **February Read Along** with some arts and craft activities. We loved making Valentine's cards for our moms, teachers, and/or someone special. Then, we had a read along with Alex who read Pete the Cat. We also decorated cookies and ate them afterward. It was a fun event filled with lots of Love!



Coffee and Conversations



Coffee and Conversations is a new service we started offering last year. It is an opportunity for parents to get together the second Saturday of every month to talk about current issues they may be experiencing. It is a time to share advice or offer support, to get some validation or just experience the comradery that comes with

parenting. You are welcome to join when you can, but please RSVP by the Thursday before the meeting to events@bgcdowns syndrome.org. We hope to see you there! Please note there is no October date since it falls on the same day as our SU4DS Walk!

Coffee & Conversations

When: 2nd Saturday of each Month
Time: 10-12pm
Where: BGCDSDO Office
7301 NW 4th Street Suite #103
Plantation, FL 33317

Please RSVP the prior Thursday to events@bgcdowns syndrome.org

UPCOMING DATES

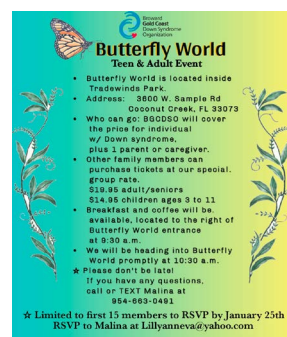
November 11th	March 9th	July 13th
December 9th	April 13th	August 10th
January 13th	May 11th	September 14th
February 10th	June 8th	November 9th

****This is a group for parents only, we will be discussing adult topics.**

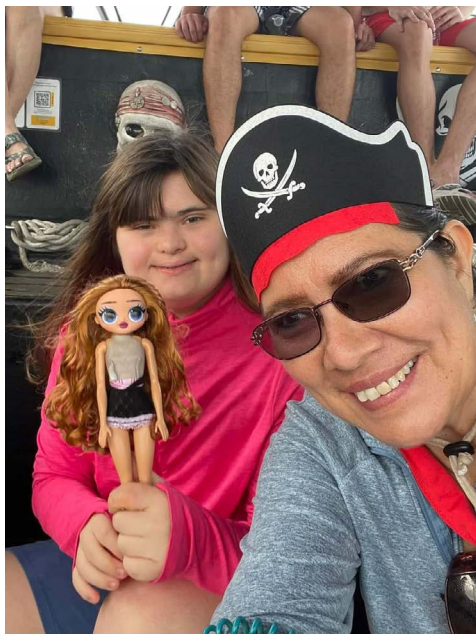
However, if you bring your child, we will make accommodations **

*If less than five people RSVP, the meeting will be cancelled.





We had a fun day with the **Teen and Adult Social Group** at **Tradewinds Butterfly World**. Special thanks to our parent volunteers, Malina Carraher and Kristina Armstrong, for organizing this fun activity for our members. It was a beautiful day!



Thank you, Freedom Waters Foundation for holding this amazing trip for our **Children's Social Group**. We had such a fun day on the **Bluefoot Pirate Adventure Ship** and the amenities at the Bahia Mar Hotel and Resort Ft. Lauderdale Beach. Our members had a blast! Thank you to Patricia Gordon for organizing it for your Children's Group.

We were lucky to have **Attorney Bobbi Meloro** come and educate us on some important needs when it comes to caring for and setting up the proper trusts for our children. She had a lot of great information to share. You can see her presentation via our Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization Facebook page.



GET YOUR DUCKS IN A ROW THIS NEW YEAR
with Attorney Bobbi Meloro

Learn how to protect your loved one by setting up a Special Needs Trust, Guardianship and ABLE account.

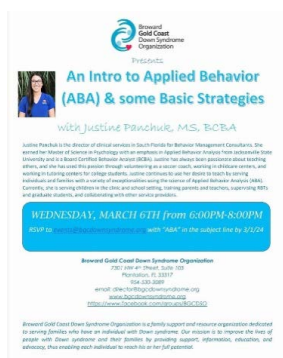
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd from 6:30PM-8:00PM
At the Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Office
7301 NW 4th Street Suite 1012, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311
RSVP to [phone number] with "Ducks" in the subject line by 2/15/24.

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization
7301 NW 4th Street, Suite 1012, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311
954-338-2089
email: [email address]
www.browardgoldcoastds.org
https://www.facebook.com/browardgoldcoastds

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.



Many thanks to Justine Panchuk and Miguel Salas from **Behavior Management Consultants, Inc.** for their very informative presentation regarding **ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) therapy**. They gave us some great pointers on what to look for when looking for an ABA company, what questions to ask, and what our rights are regarding transparency of data and sessions. You can watch the Facebook live we streamed on our Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization Facebook page.



An Intro to Applied Behavior (ABA) & some Basic Strategies
with Justine Panchuk, MS, BCBA

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6th from 6:00PM-8:00PM
RSVP to [phone number] with "ABA" in the subject line by 3/1/24.

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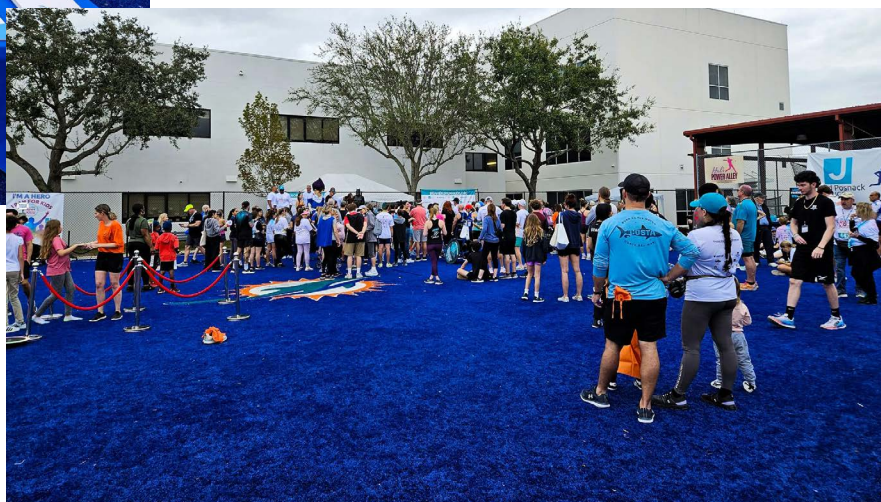


FAMILY SPOTLIGHT: The Knapp Family

Hello, my name is Isabel and I am the proud mom of Alyssa. Alyssa is 18 years young. I became a widow 13 years ago when she was 5 years old. She was the apple of her daddy's eye. Although Alyssa would rather stay home and relax, she will immediately say yes to a Disney trip, especially for the hotels and food. At first, Alyssa is very shy, it takes her a while to warm up and become the chatterbox that she is. We are working on getting her to be more independent, which can be a struggle, because it's hard finding rewards that will motivate her. Alyssa does talk but she mainly communicates in single words rather than sentences. I am a work from home mom which has been a blessing, so I can dedicate more time to my special roommate. I am very grateful for Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization because their resources, support and community has helped Alyssa's development in many aspects.

BGCDSO Community Resource Events

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization had a resourceful morning at the David Posnack JCC's annual **Run4Kids** on Sunday, February 6th, 2024. We dodged the rain and met Paul Castronovo from BIG 105.9, Betty Davis, our Local 10 weather woman and a few retired Dolphin players!





We attended the **Greater Plantation Chamber of Commerce-Membership Luncheon** on Valentine's Day. We sat with Attorney Bobbi Meloro, our presenter for our February 22nd workshop. We met with the new CEO of HCA Florida Healthcare, and learned some interesting heart health facts from our presenters. We will have a table next Month to share our Down syndrome resources with the Chamber members.



Discover the Power of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) with the BMC Team

ABA therapy helps to address learning and behavior challenges across a wide variety of ages, ability levels and disabilities.

Experience the BMC difference with:
Highly skilled and experienced therapists led by Masters and PhD level behavior analysts

Home, school, community and clinic based therapy, assessment, and a commitment to parent training

Experience and expertise across a wide variety of ages, exceptionalities, and behavior challenges



A leader in ABA services since 1980

What To Expect From Your ABA Provider



An experienced BCBA to provide assessment and written treatment plans to be reviewed by parent

Use of ongoing objective measurements of progress

Frequent and onsite supervision of direct therapy staff

Developmentally appropriate goals and target skill areas including: social, communication, play, and self-help.



Visit our website for more information



My partner in crime ❤️

Luke picked the winning duck



It was a fun day at our annual **Spring Shopping Social** event! Huge gratitude to our parent volunteers, Lucy Whitson and Laura Laurenzo, who organized this amazing fundraiser for the Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization. Special thanks to Lucy for inviting us to your beautiful home. Thank you to everyone who came out to support us!



Thank you to the Enterprise Mobility Foundation for donating \$1,000 to the Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization. This grant support will help us support our Mission!

The mission of the Enterprise Mobility Foundation is to strengthen the communities where Enterprise Mobility team members live and work by actively supporting a range of charitable causes such as the environment, health and human services, education, military and disaster relief. The Foundation has contributed more than half a billion dollars to thousands of local non-profits in the United States and made wide-reaching commitments – from global philanthropic initiatives to community focused projects.



Our gratitude to **The Fish Joint, in Coral Springs and Coconut Creek**, for their generous donation of \$1,000. We appreciate your continued support of Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization.

www.thefishjoint.com

Education/Community Services



Does your kiddo want to give up riding a bike? Is it too "hard" for them?

This book was inspired by some of the challenges my daughter, Liz, has gone through riding a bike. She had to work hard to build resilience and courage to get over the hurdles of riding a bike. Yes, she may be physically different than most kiddos, but that didn't stop her. With determination and help, she managed to not only create endurance but also the self-esteem to conquer another milestone.

In this book, you will learn:

- Ways your kiddo can build endurance to ride a bike.
- Analogies on how your kiddo can build self-esteem.
- Building imagination as a coping mechanism.
- Build a bond with a loved one who can help them achieve a milestone.

Liz

trains for
Bike-Ready Muscles

Shirley Lopez
Illustrated by Tamar Blaauw

Hi, my name is Shirley and I was inspired to write this book for all my princesses. Shirley has so much to share about her beautiful journey growing up to be a young school age girl. You will laugh, relate, and realize she is just like you.

She loves to eat ice cream, dance, play and most of all, spend time with her family. Watching her enjoy life is one of the greatest gifts I can ever ask for.

I am a mother of four. Most of my day consist of my children's activities, which I love to do, and help run our family business.

Something I am passionate about is sharing with families my life experiences as a mother of special needs. Sometimes, it can be challenging to explain everything I've learned in a matter of minutes, which is why these books about Liz are so dear to my heart.

Stay tuned for more children's books based on Liz's journey.

www.cloudstars.com

THE 26TH ANNUAL #FAMILY CAFE 2024

FEATURING THE GOVERNOR'S SUMMIT ON DISABILITIES

HYATT REGENCY ORLANDO
JUNE 14-16, 2024

MELORO LAW

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

March 2024

SPEAKING EVENT IN THE COMMUNITY

On February 22, Bobbi spoke to the Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization about setting up a Special Needs Trust, Guardianship and ABLE accounts.

MELORO LAW IN THE COMMUNITY

Bobbi, Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization Executive Director (Barb Todaro) and executive assistant (MaryBeth Gebbia) at the Chamber luncheon.

KEY TIPS FOR ESTATE PLANNING WHEN A LOVED ONE HAS DOWN SYNDROME

Estate planning for individuals with Down Syndrome in Florida requires early, comprehensive strategies. As attorneys, we emphasize protecting financial futures and ensuring health care and personal well-being. Planning involves legal considerations, financial planning, and addressing personal desires and needs. Starting this process early empowers families to create a support system.

Early estate planning is critical for providing long-term support for a loved one with Down Syndrome, ensuring resources are in place to support their quality of life and healthcare needs. A Special Needs Trust (SNT) allows families to set aside assets without affecting government assistance. Selecting guardians and trustees and regularly updating plans are crucial.

Moreover, discussing the establishment of a durable power of attorney (DPOA) and health care planning documents with your attorney can help your loved one appoint someone they trust to make decisions on their behalf. These legal tools help manage decisions seamlessly, potentially avoiding the need for guardian advocacy. Estate planning is a multifaceted process requiring early action to ensure individuals with Down Syndrome are protected and supported.

For assistance with estate planning or elder law matters in Florida, contact us today. We're here to help secure your interests both now and in the future.

To read more on this topic, please visit our website.

SPOTLIGHT

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization

The **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.

Learn more on our website:
www.bgcdownsyndrome.org

get your ducks in a row 🦆🦆🦆 protect your family 🦆🦆🦆 save your dough



Be sure to go ahead and [LIKE us on Facebook](#). We would love to engage with you on our social media accounts. Don't miss a minute of our weekly news feed.

Help us spread the word about our dedicated elder law services in Florida! If you've benefited from our assistance, please consider [leaving a review on Google](#). Your review can guide others in finding the support they need during challenging times.



Have questions? Need help right now?
Just give us a call or fill out our contact us form.

[Learn more on our website!](#)

get your ducks in a row 🦆🦆🦆 protect your family 🦆🦆🦆 save your dough



2024 World Down Syndrome Day T-Shirts are Ready for you!

For those who ordered 2024 WSDS t-shirts & other products, your orders are ready for pickup at our office during the following hours:

3/14 - 9am-1pm

3/19 - 9am-1pm

Pickup at BGCDSDO: 7301 NW 4th St, Suite 103, Plantation, FL 33317

Please Note: If you would like your order shipped, there is an additional delivery cost. Please contact us at info@bgcdownsyntax.org for more information and pricing.

Check out all our merchandise for all your WSDS gear!

SPRING DONATIONS DRIVE Egg Hunt

Our Spring Egg Hunt will be here before you know it! We will be filling over 100 plastic eggs with goodies for our DS members. **Can anyone donate little toys, candy and/or notes of encouragement to put in our eggs?**

Contact us at email address
events@bgcdownsyntax.org
for drop-off/pickup arrangements.

Thank you in advance for your help!



CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS

- Reunión General del Comité de Síndrome de Down
Jueves, Marzo 14 de 6:00 a 8:00 pm – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Reunión General Mensual del Comité de Asesor ESE
Miércoles, **Marzo 20 de 6:15 a 8:45 pm**
- Evento de Bolos por del Día Mundial del Síndrome de Down – Solo para Miembros Jueves, **Marzo 21**
- Evento de Primavera de Huevos de Pascua – Solo para Miembros Sábado, **Marzo 30**
- Desayuno para Familias Nuevas
Jueves, **Abril 2 de 10:00 am a 12:00** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Café y Conversaciones – Padres y Cuidadores
Sábado, **Abril 13 de 10:00 am a 12:00** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Reunión General Mensual del Comité de Asesor ESE
Miércoles, **Abril 17 de 6:15 pm a 8:45 pm** – Plantation High School Media Center
- Evento de Grupos Sociales Junie B. Jones – Solo para Miembros Sábado, **Abril 20**
- Lee con Nosotros Jueves, **Abril 25 de 6:30 a 8:30 pm** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Arreglos Florales Día de las Madres – Grupo Social de Niños Domingo, **Abril 28**
- Arreglos Florales Día de las Madres – Grupo Social de Jóvenes y Adultos Domingo, **Mayo 5**
- Lee con Nosotros – Dos Grupos Sociales
Día y Hora por confirmar – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Café y Conversaciones – Padres y Cuidadores
Sábado, **Mayo 11 de 10:00 a 12:00 pm** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Reunión General Mensual del Comité de Asesor ESE
Miércoles, **Mayo 15 de 6:15 a 8:45 pm** – Indian Ridge Middle School Media Center
- Reunión General del Comité de Síndrome de Down Jueves, **Mayo 23 de 6:00 a 8:00 pm** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Lee con Nosotros – Dos Grupos Sociales
Fecha y Hora por confirmar – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Café y Conversaciones – Padres y Cuidadores Sábado, **Junio 8 de 10:00 a 12:00 pm** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Reunión Anual Family Café # 26 – Orlando
Jueves a Sábado, **Junio 14 al 16** – Hyatt Regency, Orlando
- Lee con Nosotros – Dos Grupos Sociales
Fecha y Hora por confirmar – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast
- Café y Conversaciones – Padres y Cuidadores Sábado, **Julio 13 de 10:00 a 12:00 pm** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast



All tumblers are \$25 plus shipping cost

20% OF THE PROFITS WILL
BE DONATED TO THE
BROWARD GOLD COAST
DOWN SYNDROME
ORGANIZATION

Write us to our insta page @maniluscreations
or email maniluscreations@gmail.com and let
us know which tumbler you want

ONLINE FUNDRAISER



SAVE THE DATE

Step Up 4 Down Syndrome

2024 Walk

October 12, 2024

Markham Park-Sunrise, FL

Shelters 2 & 3 from 8:15am-12pm

Sponsors Needed!

Contact director@bgcdownsyrndrome.org

Volunteers Needed!

Contact su4ds@bgcdownsyrndrome.org



Coffee & Conversations

When: 2nd Saturday of each Month

Time: 10-12pm

Where: BGCD SO Office

7301 NW 4th Street Suite #103

Plantation, FL 33317

*Please RSVP the prior Thursday to events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org

UPCOMING DATES

November 11th	March 9th	July 13th
December 9th	April 13th	August 10th
January 13th	May 11th	September 14th
February 10th	June 8th	November 9th

**This is a group for parents only, we will be discussing adult topics.

However, if you bring your child, we will make accommodations.**

*If less than five people RSVP, the meeting will be cancelled.



Help Support the

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization

AND

Get a Great Deal on Pizza+!

PAPA JOHN'S



*Unique online-only promo code on each card gives the purchaser 18 online orders of 50% off all regular priced menu items! Great for school parties, birthday parties or any day!

*Can be redeemed at participating locations in:

Miami-Dade County
Broward County
Palm Beach County
Tampa
Ft. Meyers
Orlando

*Valid until December 31, 2024.

* Each card sold raises \$10 for the BGCD SO!

* All cards are pre-sold. Cards will be delivered about 2 weeks after the fundraiser ends on March 25th.



**Broward
Gold Coast
Down Syndrome
Organization**

7301 NW 4th Street • Suite 103
Plantation, FL 33317

954.530.3089 • bgcdownsyrndrome.org

Any Questions?

Victoria Whitson Robinson, President

Daniela Roeder, Vice President

Nancy Smith, Treasurer

Paola Herrera, Secretary

Bach Todaro, Executive Director

Lisa Hoddinott, Creative Director

MaryBeth Gebbia, Editor

Carolina Echeverry, Spanish Translator

president@bgcdownsyrndrome.org

vice-president@bgcdownsyrndrome.org

pahego9@hotmail.com

info@bgcdownsyrndrome.org

l.hoddinott@att.net

admin@bgcdownsyrndrome.org

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.