CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Read Along-Both Social Groups
  Date and Time TBD
  Broward Gold Coast Office

- 2024 SU4DS Walk Planning Meeting
  Monday, July 8th at 6:30pm
  Broward Gold Coast Office

- Coffee and Conversations-Parents & Caregivers
  Saturday, July 13th, 10am-12pm
  Broward Gold Coast Office

- DADS Fishing Trip-Both Social Groups
  Saturday, July 27th

- Teen and Adult Social Group Water Park Social Event
  Sunday, August 4th

- Coffee and Conversations-Parents & Caregivers
  Saturday, August 10th, 10am-12pm
  Broward Gold Coast Office

- Read Along-Both Social Groups
  Date and Time TBD
  Broward Gold Coast Office

- First Day of School for Broward County Schools
  Monday, August 12th

- Read Along-Both Social Groups
  Date and Time TBD
  Broward Gold Coast Office

- Joe DiMaggio Resource Fair
  September 14th, 10am-1pm
  Charles F. Dodge City Center

- Coffee and Conversations-Parents & Caregivers
  Saturday, September 21st, 10am-12pm
  Broward Gold Coast Office

Happy 1st Anniversary to Us!

Can you believe it has already been a year since our Grand Opening/Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the Plantation office! We love our new space and boy, have we used it! We have held monthly events such as Coffee & Conversations every 2nd Saturday of the month, Read-Along, and DS Committee of ESE Advisory Meetings. We have held quite a few educational workshops such as How to Navigate the IEP Process, Advocacy Services, Special Needs Trust, Guardianship, ABLE Account, Applied Behavior Analysis, Matriculation, Transition into Adulthood, I Can Living and Learning, Neurofeedback Brain Training, APD, Sexuality Education, and any other topics that our families request.

We are so grateful for your continued support in helping us accomplish our mission!
Greetings, we are the Ferreira family! Dave and myself (Christina) are the proud parents of two beautiful girls; Chessie (9) and Emelia (3). Chessie was diagnosed with Down syndrome prenatally which allowed me to be very prepared for her arrival. She has been mommy’s best friend ever since she was born; that is until Dave stepped in to be the best dad ever & they now have a bond like no other. Chessie, who we call Cha-cha, loves to play mommy with her dolls and dance to music. Emelia is a sweetheart and very supportive of her special big sister. We feel both our daughters touch the lives of everyone they meet and we’re so blessed to have both of them. Recently we found the Broward Gold Down Syndrome Organization and it has been so enriching for all of us. The activities, support, and friendship have been a breath of fresh air. Thank you so much to everyone who makes this possible!

FAMILY SPOTLIGHT:
The Ferreira Family

Walk Registration - $25 (Walk Registration from 7/1-7/31. Includes t-shirt. Price increases to $30 on 8/1.)
Walk Registration - $30 (Walk Registration from 8/1-8/31. Includes t-shirt. Price increases to $35 on 9/1.)
Walk Registration - $35 (Walk Registration from 9/1-10/11. Includes t-shirt until 9/15.)
Walk Day Registration - $40 (Day of Walk Registration. T-shirt not included.)
Kids Walk Registration (Ages 5 & Under) - $10 (Includes t-shirt until 9/15)
Individual with Down syndrome - FREE (Includes t-shirt until 9/15)

T-shirt sizes are not guaranteed after 9-15-24.
To register yourself or a Team, click here: www.ds-stride.org/su4ds
To volunteer, register here: www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E48ABAC2CA3FACE9-step
FAMILY SPOTLIGHT:
The Ferreira Family

Our 3*21 Day Bowling event to celebrate our friends with Down syndrome and their families.

Our annual Spring Egg Hunt was made possible by Special Populations of Broward County and our volunteers!

We were very fortunate to have Dr. Volker came out to talk to our teens and young adults about being safe - physically, emotionally, and sexually. It's very important to have an open mind and share information with our kids!

Dr. Volker's passion in life is to invite all people to learn information about their one and only body – honoring public and private parts – by always being SAFE – physically, emotionally, and sexually! She will be answering pre-collected questions during a Q&A session focusing on people with Down syndrome.

Dr. Volker has been a sexuality educator for the past 40 years. She is adjunct faculty of three South Florida universities – University of Miami, Florida International University, and St. Thomas University. Dr. Volker teaches in the sexuality programs for three medical schools – University of Miami, Ross University and Florida International University. In addition, Dr. Volker trains counselors, sits on doctoral committees, she has served as a sexuality consultant for a variety of state and nationwide facilities, and has published articles addressing sexuality issues in recovery.

BROWARD GOLD COAST MEMBER EVENTS

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization
7301 NW 4th Street
Suite #103
Plantation, FL 33317
954-530-3089
www.bgcdownsyndrome.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.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24th AT 6:30PM
RSVP to events@bgcdownsyndrome.org with "Dr. Volker" in the subject line.

We ran into one of our long-time members, Gordon Garland, at the Plantation Chamber of Commerce Member Luncheon. We have been attending monthly where we enjoy conversations and make connections with our local community partners.

Special thanks to Above the Clouds for sponsoring our May Read Along event, we had so much fun hearing Liz's story and doing arts and crafts. We appreciate your continued support and partnership. Thank you to Liz, you did an amazing job with the reading!

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

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

UPCOMING DATES
November 11th      March 9th       July 13th
December 9th       April 13th              August 10th
January 13th                May 11th   *September 21st
February 10th    June 8th    November 9th

**This is a group for parents only, we will discuss adult topics. However, if you bring your child, we will make accommodations. **

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

In May, we surprised our moms at our monthly Coffee and Conversations, they were able to make their own flower arrangements. They had fun and did a great job!
What a beautiful morning at our New Families Breakfast! Special thanks to our parent volunteer, Patricia Garland, who helped us to connect with the families. Our gratitude to A Special Miracle for sponsoring the event. Please share our Mission, we are here to support all DS families!

Our Social Groups enjoyed the sensory show, Junie B Jones, at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts. Thank you, Patricia Garland and Malina Slaney Carraher, our volunteer coordinators for organizing it!

Our special thanks to Special Populations of Broward and the Tamarac Community Center for hosting our Hello Summer Dance Party. Families had a great time connecting with each other and dancing the night away!
Our Social Groups loved making floral arrangements for Mother’s Day! Thank you to our volunteer coordinators, Patricia Garland, Malina Slaney Carraher and Kristina Armstrong, who organized the event for our members. It was such a lovely day with the special ladies in our life at The Flowerbar at Field of Flowers!

The DS Committee of Broward ESE Advisory Council hosted the General Meeting, regarding Matriculation-Transition Elementary to Middle/Middle to High School at our BGCDSO office to help educate parents/guardians of the Matriculation process and their rights. We thank the District Curriculum Supervisors for coming out to direct us.

• DS Committee Chair Report - Bach Todaro
• District Update - Andrica Thornton Thomas
• Transition from Elementary to Middle, presents by Andrica Thornton Thomas-InD Curriculum Supervisor
• Transition from Middle to High School, presents by Antionece Robinson-High School Curriculum Supervisor

We had a productive night at our SU4DS Walk Kick-Off meeting! Thank you to everyone who has joined us, we appreciate your time and input. Please join us for our next 2024 Walk meeting on Monday, July 8th at 6:30pm.

Our Read Along event with Coby Chesal event was a full house.
What an amazing day at the Miss Arc Broward Pageant!

Congratulations to our very own Grace Ann and Elizabeth, along with all the contestants for a job well done. It took a lot of hard work and courage to be on that stage! We are very proud of you!

What an exciting day, seeing our gorgeous girls being themselves, so proud and happy! My Grace Ann was supporting all her peers, dancing with them on the side of the stage, warming up for her turn to dance, “Hips Don’t Lie” by Shakira. It was a memorable pageant filled with beautiful activities like making strawberry cake, an amazing spa night, and cooking with Arc Culinary! It was an unforgettable experience for our girls! Thank you to all the sponsors, teen ambassadors, family, and friends!

Elizabeth’s experience in the Miss ARC Broward Beauty Pageant was beyond any words can describe. From the moment she was announced a contestant, ARC Broward really knew how to make her feel special. From a Spa Day to a Makeup day, she definitely sparkled more than any star. Elizabeth chose to read her latest book to the audience. She read loud and proud and represented her community well by showing the world that she can do it all. Her diagnosis is not enough to stop her and this beauty pageant represented exactly that. Elizabeth, we are all so very proud of your accomplishments and cannot wait to see what else you have in store for us in the near future.

Sunday Funday for our members at the Museum of Discovery and Science.
This is the journey of Kaylee Marie Gallegos. Kaylee was born in Boca Raton on August 14th, 1998, to her mom, Risa Teate, at age forty-six. She was born at twenty-seven weeks gestation, at two pounds, nine ounces, and fourteen inches long, with Down syndrome and Autism. Ms. Teate is a licensed Elmo character from Sesame Street who does children’s parties and donates her time to schools, camps, and hospitals. She also participates in several local drives and walks to support different communities.

Kaylee will soon celebrate her twenty-sixth birthday. She graduated from Monarch High School and was a part of their cheerleading team. Kaylee has always loved dancing, karaoke, reading, shopping, and fashion. Kaylee is a collector of reborn baby dolls, which are unique and very special to her. Kaylee has always had a happy childhood. From an early age, Kaylee’s mom has always told her that she isn’t special; she has special needs and is always treated as such. Like every child, she had chores around the house and was expected to complete her schoolwork before playtime. Kaylee has always been a people person; she loves everyone. Her mom has always said that the perfect job for her would be a greeter because she is so full of love.

Kaylee’s journey began when after a visit to her gynecologist, who also delivered Kaylee, she noted how much weight Kaylee had gained. The doctor told Risa that it was her responsibility to help Kaylee, and said Risa “took the easy way out” by having gastric bypass surgery, but that it was “not an option for Kaylee”. Miss Teate knew that it was not an easy way out, and started to think, “Why couldn’t Kaylee get the surgery?” She then proceeded to find a doctor who would be able to help Kaylee, who was very overweight, borderline diabetic, and suffering from Hidradenitis Suppurativa, an inflammatory disease that is usually related to obesity. Kaylee also suffered from depression and total loss of energy, unable to walk up the stairs of where she lived. NO doctor was willing to give Kaylee a consultation. After being turned down by fifteen doctors, Mom did not give up. She was determined to find someone willing to help her daughter. After confiding in a friend, it was suggested that she try looking into Imperial Point Hospital Broward Health. In doing so, Ms. Teate found a general bariatric surgeon named Dr. Chi Zhang, MD. After researching, she realized he was a wonderful doctor and the perfect surgeon to talk to regarding Kaylee and her health. After examining Kaylee, he inquired why so many doctors turned her down. Although the previous doctors never gave her an answer why, she felt maybe they thought it would have been cruel to subject Kaylee to such surgery that she may not understand, or the changes to her body, diet and lifestyle. Dr. Zhang explained that it would be cruel to leave Kaylee in the state that she was. After seeing two psychiatrists, three dieticians, a cardiologist, and her primary doctor, Kaylee was cleared for surgery. On March 7th, 2023, Kaylee’s life took a turn for the better. She had gastric sleeve surgery at Imperial Point. Within two weeks, Kaylee was in the LA Fitness gym working out two to three times per week, followed by her clinical dietician Emilio Pena, who is part of Imperial Point Hospital and Dr. Zhang’s Physician group. Kaylee started losing weight and immediately began getting her energy back. Recovering wasn’t difficult because Kaylee had the will, the drive, and a great support team behind her. A few weeks later, Risa was contacted by the Broward Health Production Team, who asked if Kaylee would be interested in being part of their national TV commercials and billboards, along with having her documentary on YouTube and other publications. Kaylee is now the face of Broward Health and has a full page in the Sun Sentinel for Broward Health. Things have been wonderful. Kaylee has her health back and more energy than ever. She told Dr. Zhang that she had beat all odds, and he agreed! Kaylee is loving life as she now travels all over for modeling while sharing her story! The lesson is to never to underestimate someone with a disability who has the heart and the determination to do what they want.
Thank you to Rock & Brews for holding our Family Night for us. We look forward to doing it again in the near future!

Thank you to Walmart/ Sunrise Sam’s Club - Facility #6341 for choosing BGCDSO to receive their Community Grant!

Our new families had a photoshoot with Baby K’tan

Thank you to Juan Acosta and his team, in conjunction with Citizens Charitable Foundation for their matching monetary gifts in support of our Step Up 4 Down Syndrome 2023 Walk

Thank you to the following businesses below who signed up early to Sponsor our Step Up 4 Down Syndrome 2024 Walk! And thank you to Elmo, MODS, 501st Legion: Everglades Squad, Personal Ponies and Papa Johns for your In-Kind Donations. If you would like to support our Organization and register your company to Sponsor us, you can do so by clicking the link and sharing with friends! Thank you for your continued support! www.ds-stride.org/su4ds

We would like to thank the City of Southwest Ranches for holding a Wacky Socks Day fundraiser on World Down Syndrome Day, March 21st. The city employees were encouraged to make a donation to wear their wacky socks to work in support of the Down syndrome community. We were presented with a check at the Council meeting, and then given another $300 donation on the spot! We thank you for supporting our DS community and look forward to our partnership with the City of Southwest Ranches in the future!
CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS

• Lee con Nosotros – Ambos grupos sociales
  **Fecha y hora por definir** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast

• Reunión de Planeación de la Caminata SU4DS 2024
  **Sábado, Julio 8 a las 6:30 pm** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast

• Café y Conversaciones – Padres y Cuidadores
  **Sábado, Julio 15 de 10:00 am a 12:00** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast

• Grupo Social Jóvenes y Adultos – Parque Acuático
  **Fecha y Hora por definir**

• Viaje de Pesca para PAPAS – Ambos grupos sociales
  **Sábado, Julio 27**

• Café y Conversaciones – Padres y Cuidadores
  **Sábado, Agosto 10 de 10:00 am a 12:00** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast

• Lee con Nosotros – Ambos Grupos Sociales
  **Fecha y Hora por definir** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast

• Primer Dia de Regreso a Clases – Escuelas Publicas de Broward
  **Lunes, Agosto 12**

• Evento de Regreso a Clases – Parque Acuático
  **Fecha y Hora por definir**

• Lee con Nosotros – Ambos grupos Sociales
  **Fecha y Hora por definir** – Oficina de Broward Gold Coast

• Feria de Recursos de Joe DiMaggio
  **Domingo, Septiembre 14 de 10 am a 1 pm** – Charles F. Dodge City Center

CAMINATA Step Up 4 Down Sydrome 2024

Registración para Caminata - $25 (Registración para caminata del 7/1 al 7/31. Incluye Camiseta. El precio incrementa a $30 el 8/1)

Registración Caminata - $30 (Registración para caminata del 8/1 al 8/31. Incluye Camiseta. El precio aumenta a $35 el 9/1)

Registración Caminata - $35 (Registración para caminata del 9/1 al 10/11. Incluye camiseta hasta el 9/15)

Registración Caminata - $40 (Registración el día de la caminata. No incluye camiseta)

Registración Caminata Niños (Menores de 5 años) - $10 (Incluye camiseta hasta 9/15)

Individuos con Síndrome de Down – Gratis (Incluye camiseta hasta 9/15)

No garantizamos las tallas de las camisetas después del 9/15

Para registrarte individual o un equipo, haz click aquí:
[www.ds-stride.org/su4ds](http://www.ds-stride.org/su4ds)

Para ser voluntario, registra aquí:
[signupgenius.com/go/10C0E48ABAC2CA3FACE9-step](http://signupgenius.com/go/10C0E48ABAC2CA3FACE9-step)

Any Questions?
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