

October



Broward
Gold Coast
Down Syndrome
Organization



NEWSLETTER



BGCDSO Member Events & Community Resources



OCTOBER

2026



OCTOBER 3	DANCE WORKSHOP-Members Only Sunrise Athletic Complex-Community Room from 1pm-3pm 11501 NW 44 th Street, Sunrise, FL 33323 RSVP to events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org by 10/1
OCTOBER 6	SU4DS VOLUNTEER MEETING BGCDSO Office @ 6:30pm RSVP to admin@bgcdownsyrndrome.org by 10/1
OCTOBER 7	READ ALONG-Members Only Sunrise Athletic Complex-Community Room at 6pm 11501 NW 44 th Street, Sunrise, FL 33323 RSVP to events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org by 9/28
OCTOBER 7-8	SU4DS RAFFLE BASKET MAKING PARTY BGCDSO Office- 10/7 from 10am-2pm, 10/8 from 10am-12pm RSVP to events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org by 10/5 to help
OCTOBER 10	COFFEE & CONVERSATIONS BGCDSO Office @ 10:00am RSVP to events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org by 10/8
OCTOBER 10	DANCE WORKSHOP-Members Only Sunrise Athletic Complex-Community Room from 1pm-3pm 11501 NW 44 th Street, Sunrise, FL 33323 RSVP to events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org by 10/8
OCTOBER 17	STEP UP 4 DOWN SYNDROME WALK! Markham Park in Sunrise-Shelters #2 & #3 8am-12pm Register today!
OCTOBER 21	BINGO NIGHT-Members Only BGCDSO Office @ 6:00pm RSVP to events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org by 10/19
OCTOBER 21	ESE ADVISORY COUNCIL GENERAL MTG Indian Ridge Middle School-1355 S Nob Hill Rd, Davie, FL 33324 from 6:15pm-8:45pm

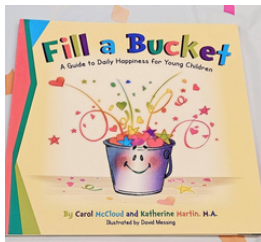


MEMBER EVENTS

FUNDRAISING, LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITY

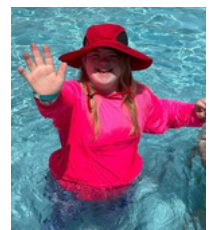
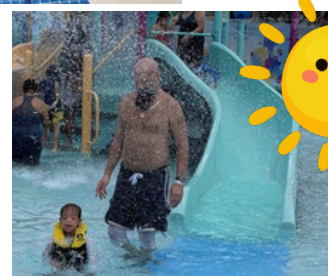


- **Read Along**-We had such a fun time at our monthly Read Along! We read the book "Fill a Bucket". It holds such deep meaning and really encourages us to think before we act. After reading, we decorated our own buckets and filled them with words that speak to us personally. Stay tuned for our upcoming Read Along for the Halloween theme on October 7th.



I ♥ READING

- **Fun in the Sun-Calypso Cove Waterpark Day**-We had a great Sunday Funday at our annual Back to School Waterpark event! We were lucky with the weather for most of the day until the thunderstorm siren went off, but we didn't let that spoil our awesome time! We love having this fun day together!



See more on



MEMBER EVENTS CONT.

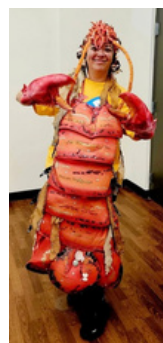
FUNDRAISING, LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITY



- > **BINGO Night-** Bingo helps our members build recognition and matching skills through structured, repetitive, and highly visual play while socializing with friends. Even a nonverbal member enjoys to call out "Bingo" in his/her own way. Thank you to the Baken Family for donating the pizza. We appreciate your continued generosity! We hope to see you for our next Bingo Night on October 21st!



- > **Dance Workshop-** Today's dance class was extra fun thanks to a special delivery of costumes for our members. Our dance teachers from Onelove brought in all the costumes they collected through their costume drive, allowing our members to browse and take home as many free costumes as they liked. Amazing!



See more on





Down Syndrome Committee of Broward ESE Advisory Council Meeting & Presentations:

1. Bach Todaro - DS Committee Chair, and BGCDSDO Director
2. Andrica Thomas - InD Curriculum Program Specialist: District Updates
3. Lauren Didriksen, BCaBA - ESE Behavior Program Specialist:
Understanding School Behavior Supports, How Behavior Plans Are Created
4. Dylan Chang, RDN - Dietetics and Nutrition
5. Melissa Bottge White - Children's Diagnostic & Treatment Center (CDTC)

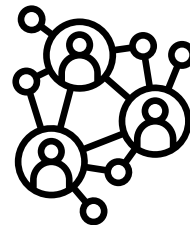


GROWTH

FUNDRAISING, LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITY

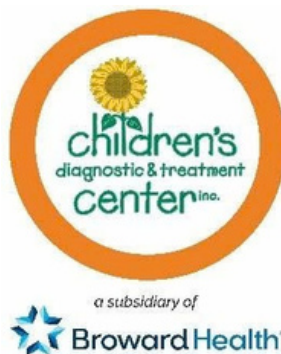


- > **Joe DiMaggio Special Needs Fair**-Thank you so much to Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital for hosting the Special Needs Resource Fair and for including us in the event! We truly appreciate the opportunity to participate. It was a wonderful, resource-filled day spent helping families and connecting with so many outstanding community agencies.



- > **Children's Diagnostic & Treatment Center**- Thank you for welcoming us for a wonderful tour and sharing the valuable resources and services you provide to children, teens, and young adults with special needs. We're excited about the opportunities ahead to partner and collaborate in support of our Down syndrome community!

NETWORK



See more on



GROWTH CONT.

FUNDRAISING, LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITY



- **The Greater Plantation Chamber of Commerce Events-** Coffee Talk at My Plantation Dentist and the Grand Opening of Neo Coffee and Kava! We are thrilled to have you in the community and wish you all the best with your businesses!



- **2026 Arlene Lakin Educational Seminar at the Ann Storck Center-** It was a great line-up of expert panelists who shared their knowledge with families, caregivers, and the community. #KnowledgelsPower #CommunityResources

Learn · Connect  Support · Empower

September 15, 2026

Arlene Lakin Educational Seminar

1790 SW 43RD WAY FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33317 | 6 PM - 8 PM

Join ASC for a conversation with community experts who understand the developmental disability landscape and are ready to share practical information, resources, and guidance for families.

Emergency Preparedness **APD & Medicaid Waiver**

JOSETTE HENINGWAY
Emergency Management Specialist
Broward County Emergency Management

PAMELA ROMACK
Regional Medicaid Waiver Supervisor
Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)

Caregiver Support **Therapy & Resources** **Guardianship & Trusts**

WENDY BALLACE
Executive Director
Family Network on Disabilities

KRISTEN ELY
Assistant Executive Director
Children's Diagnostic Treatment Center
for Broward Health

COLLETT F. SMALL, ESQ.
Partner, Small & Small PLLC
Florida Bar Board certified in Elder Law

EXTRA PERKS:
Refreshments
ASC Merch
Chance to win \$500+ in gift cards!

RSVP REQUIRED:

bit.ly/ArleneLakinRSVP

MODERATED BY:
 **FAY BURNETT**
CEO of ASC
 **KIM TRACY**
PARENT



Knowledge
is
Power

BIRTHDAYS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Alex



Sam



Christopher



UPCOMING EVENTS

MONTHLY MEMBER EVENTS

Join us for COFFEE & CONVERSATIONS

DATE: 2nd Saturday of each Month (or alternative date posted)
TIME: 10am-12pm
Where: BGCDSDO Office
7301 NW 4th Street, Suite #103
Plantation, FL 33317

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

UPCOMING DATES

January 17 th	February 28 th	March 14 th
April 11 th	May 9 th	June 6 th
July 18 th	August 8 th	September 26 th
October 10 th	November 14 th	December 12 th

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

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



READ ALONG

Join us for a night of...

Craft • Read Along • Socialization

2026 Dates

- August 6
- September 3
- October 7
- November 5
- December 3

**Sunrise Athletic Complex
Community Room
11501 NW 44th St.
Sunrise, FL 33323
6:00 PM**

MEMBERS ONLY

Please RSVP by the prior Tuesday to:
events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org



Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization Presents a **MEMBERS ONLY EVENT**

DANCE WORKSHOP

Get ready to boogie to great music with friends! **Love to Dance?**

All levels welcome! Fun workouts! Great vibes!

LOCATION: SUNRISE ATHLETIC COMPLEX-COMMUNITY ROOM
11501 NW 44TH STREET
SUNRISE, FL 33323

In Partnership With: 

Upcoming Dates:

Sun 8/23, 12pm-2pm	Sun, 8/30, 12pm-2pm
Sat, 9/26, 1pm-3pm	Sun, 9/27, 12pm-2pm
Sat, 10/3, 1pm-3pm	Sat, 10/10, 1pm-3pm

Please RSVP to events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org



Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization Presents a **MEMBERS ONLY Event**

Join us for a night of fun, socializing & prizes!

BINGO Night

Location: BGCDSDO Office
7301 NW 4th Street
STE. 103
Plantation, FL 33317

UPCOMING DATES

July 21st	August 26th	September 23rd
October 21st	November 18th	December 16

All events begin at 6pm

Please RSVP by the Thursday before to:
events@bgcdownsyrndrome.org

SPECIAL THANKS

Special Thanks to the **Broward Sheriff's Office** for awarding BGCD SO two LETF grants in support of our Read Along Program and Step Up 4 Down Syndrome 2026 Walk! We are truly grateful for their continued support of our organization and the Down syndrome community!

Another Special Thanks to **Children's Services Council** awarding us the Capacity Building Grant.

Thank you to **Bach Todaro** and **Giovanna Peters** for working so hard to secure these grants for our organization! They are very time consuming and we are so proud to have such a great team working to help us continue our Mission!



Children's Services Council
of Broward County
Our Focus is Our Children.



Thank You!

See more on



JOIN US!

<https://su4ds.redpodium.com/step-up-4-down-syndrome-2026-walk>



Step Up 4 Down Syndrome 2026 Walk

SATURDAY

OCTOBER 17TH
Walk Starts 8:30am

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT



Broward
Gold Coast
Down Syndrome
Organization

Markham Park:

16001 W. State Rd 84
Shelters #2 & #3
Sunrise, FL 33326

BREAKFAST | FAMILY FUN | ENTERTAINMENT |
INFLATABLES | RAFFLES & MUCH MORE

REGISTER/DONATE/SPONSOR

<https://su4ds.redpodium.com/step-up-4-down-syndrome-2026-walk>



BGCDSDO: 954-530-3089

EARLY REGISTRATION DISCOUNT:

7/1-7/15 - \$25 Early Bird Special

7/16-7/31 - \$30

8/1-8/31 - \$35

9/1-10/17 - \$40



SCAN ME



See more on



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JOIN US!

We are grateful that **Hooters - Weston, FL** is once again hosting the **Fundraiser** event on Saturday, October 17th, following our Step Up 4 Down Syndrome 2026 Walk (SU4DS Walk).

Please save the attached flyer and present it to your server during your visit on Oct 17th—20% of your bill will go directly toward the SU4DS Walk fundraiser. Thank you for your support!



HOOTERS®
**FRIEND
RAISER**

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 17**
• • • • •
AFTER THE WALK



Broward
Gold Coast
Down Syndrome
Organization

**Present this Flyer to Your Server
and 20% of Your Tab Will Benefit:**

**STEP UP 4 DOWN
SYNDROME WALK 2026**

**Weston Hooters | 2282 Weston Road
Weston, FL 33326**

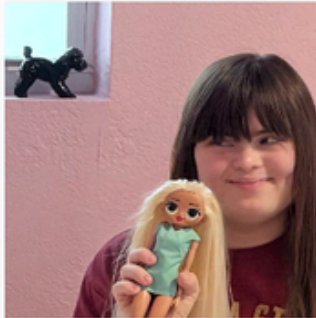
Valid only on 10/17/26 Weston Hooters. Flyers handed out in the parking lot is prohibited.
Are you interested in having a Fundraiser Event for another organization?
Fill out a form with us at: www.hootersflorida.com/fundraisers

GREAT JOB TEAMS!

Thank you to the Teams below for a great start in collecting Walk registrations and donations! Have you registered yet?

Join an existing team or create your own!

2026 SU4DS Team/Stats



Amazing Grace 2026

\$10,940

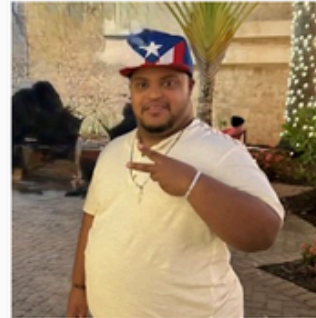
11 Members



Chad's Buddies

\$3,940

27 Members



Ky-Ky's Team

\$3,110

25 Members



Anthony's Ace Squad

\$1676.94

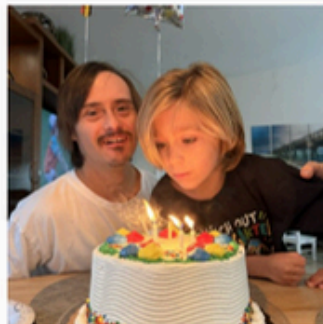
6 Members



JERO's Team

\$1380.20

12 Members



Darren's Dawgs

\$975

4 Members



Team Preston

\$945

31 Members



Cassie's Crew

\$825

9 Members



Noah's Ark

\$660

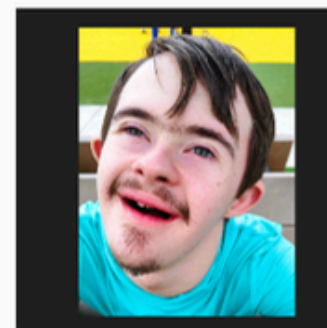
18 Members



Happy Feet

\$370

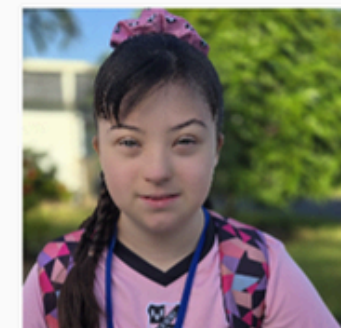
4 Members



Team Devon

\$350

4 Members



Köri's Crüe

\$310

11 Members

See more on



GREAT JOB TEAMS!

2026 SU4DS Team/Stats



Leo's GO Warriors

\$310

4 Members



Team Jenny & Charlie

\$250

6 Members



Equipo Amy

\$220

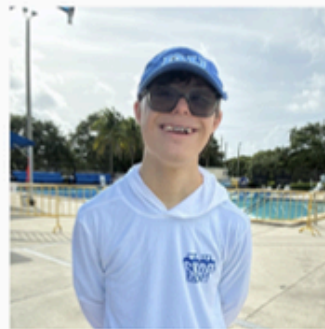
5 Members



Fabrizio

\$175

7 Members



Nico

\$155

3 Members



**Unbreakable
Diamonds**

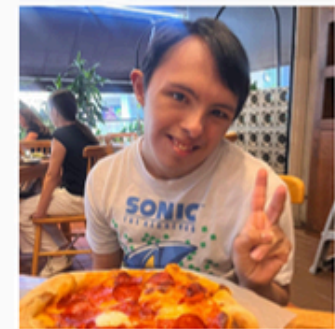
\$150



Mary's Marchers

\$105

5 Members



Team Manolo

\$105

4 Members



Titi's Advocate

\$95

4 Members



A Special Miracle

\$80

4 Members



Joey's Go Team

\$75

5 Members



Lucky Leilani

\$70

3 Members

GREAT JOB TEAMS!

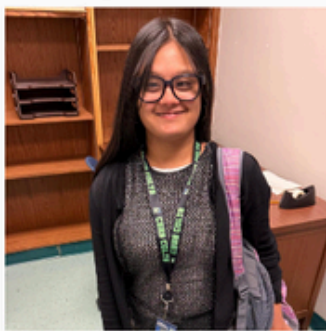
2026 SU4DS Team/Stats



Tanner's Team

\$50

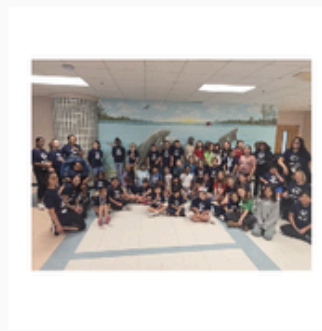
3 Members



Team Kyra

\$40

2 Members



**Manatee Bay
Elementary Friends**

\$40

1 Member



Lillyanns Love

\$25

2 Members



Thank you who already committed to donating a raffle basket for our SU4DS Walk-You're AMAZING!

CAN YOU HELP?

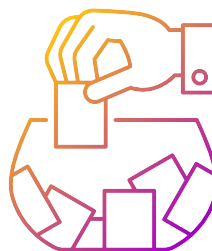


If you'd like to donate a raffle basket, please email admin@bgcdownsyntax.org

Themed Raffle Baskets:

- Movie night-**Talhia Rangel**
- Spa/Beauty- **Isabel Rojas-Knapp-2 Beauty Baskets**
- Man- Home Depot-
- Gym basket- **Hana Maharaj, Talhia Rangel**
- Liquor basket-
- Pet basket- **Hana Maharaj**
- Lego basket-**Yalpri Ortega**
- Beach basket-**Nancy Smith**
- Garden basket-**Nadine Turner**
- Sensory basket-
- Disney basket-**MaryBeth Gebbia**
- Game basket-**Paola Herrera**
- Italian basket-**Lucy Whitson**
- Girl's basket-**Yalpri Ortega**

*Enter
to Win*



- Boys' basket-**Hana Maharaj**
- Teen basket-
- Garden Basket-**MaryBeth Gebbia**

See more on



★ THANK YOU TO OUR 2026 SPONSORS ★

Diamond Sponsors



Sheriff Gregory Tony, Ph.D.

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



In-Kind Sponsors



TRADER JOE'S



Anthony's
CLAM HOUSE & GRILL

PAPA JOHN'S
Better Ingredients. Better Pizza.

Community Donations



Dr. Adrine McKenzie
Children, Adolescents and Families



PADRINO'S
Cuban Restaurant



Thank you to all the Sponsors listed for either renewing their Sponsorship or offering their services in support of our rapidly approaching
Step Up 4 Down Syndrome 2026 Walk!

Your continued support helps us provide vital programs, resources, and opportunities that empower individuals with Down syndrome and their families throughout our community.

Thank you for standing with us and helping create a more inclusive future where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Together, we are making a meaningful difference!

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
HELP!**



See more on



October National Down Syndrome Awareness Month!

It is a time to:

- Raise awareness about Down syndrome
- Celebrate the abilities and accomplishments of individuals with Down syndrome
- Promote inclusion, respect and acceptance



Additional References:

- <https://www.ndss.org/about-down-syndrome/down-syndrome-facts/>
- <https://www.globaldownsyndrome.org/about-down-syndrome/facts-about-down-syndrome/>
- <https://www.ndss.org/about-down-syndrome/down-syndrome/>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/down-syndrome#screening>

See more on



WE ARE A SPECIAL MIRACLE



*Finding the
JOY
in it all!*



I AM AIDEN



*I love my
dog!*



I AM ALYSSA



*I am Loved
Unconditionally.*



I AM AMY



*I am strong,
beautiful and
resilient!*



I AM ANTHONY



*I am spreading
kindness and
high-five
energy!*



I AM ANTHONY



*I am strong
and capable!*





I AM CASSIE

*"I am strong,
beautiful,
smart and
loved!"*



I AM CHAD

*"I am
always
HAPPY!"*



I AM CHARLIE

*"I am joyful,
happy and
brave! I am
good at playing
basketball!"*



I AM DARREN

*"I am
Loved!"*



I AM DEVON

*"I am a
Blessing!"*



I AM ETIENNE

*"I am
fearfully and
wonderfully
made."*



I AM GRACE ANN



*I love to be
curious, and
learn!*



I AM JENNY



*I so am loved.
I am creative
and friendly.*



I AM JERO



*A bright soul
and World
adventurer!*



I AM KORI



*I am a Black
Belt Warrior
and I Never
Give Up!*



I AM KYRA



*I am
motivational.*



I AM KYSEAN



*I am
courageous.
I am loved.
I love to dance.*





I AM LEILANI

*"I am
Blessed
and
Loved!"*





I AM LEO

*"I am loved,
resilient and
strong!"*





I AM LILLYANN

*"I am
beautiful!"*





I AM NICO

*"I am Cool
and Funny!"*





I AM NOAH

*"I'm learning
everyday to lead
with kindness &
have love for
all."*





I AM PRESTON

*"I Believe in
Meaningful
Inclusion!"*




COMMUNITY EVENTS

Save the date! Get involved, stay connected,
be present, and stay informed!

Down Syndrome Committee Meeting Schedule 2026–2027 School Year

General meetings will be held on
Thursdays 6:00pm–8:00pm

LOCATION: Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Office
7301 NW 4th St., Suite 103
Plantation, FL 33317

DATES

September 30th, 2026
December 17th, 2026
March 31st, 2027



Broward
Gold Coast
Down Syndrome
Organization

The Down Syndrome Committee (DS Committee) is a parent driven group of volunteers with a mandate of nurturing greater understanding, acceptance, inclusion and independence for students with Down Syndrome across Broward county. We represent all students through collaboration consultation and participation on school, District and community-derived committees.

SERVING: Children from age 3 entering Pre-K (transitioning from Early Steps) to their transitional exit from Broward County Schools at age 22.

GROUPS: National Down Syndrome Congress and its local chapters around the country, Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization.

Contact: dscommitteeboard@gmail.com for any questions or concerns.

Follow us on Facebook "LIKE" our page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/DSCommittee>



COMMUNITY EVENTS CONT.

Save the date! Get involved, stay connected,
be present, and stay informed!



BROWARD ESE ADVISORY COUNCIL



WHO WE ARE

Broward ESE Advisory Council is a parent-led volunteer group established under School Board policy to voice the interests of students with disabilities.



OUR PURPOSE

We provide recommendations and feedback to the Superintendent and School Board relating to exceptional student education. We foster communication between the school district and parents, and provide a forum for information and advocacy.



COME TO OUR MEETINGS

Our meetings are open to everybody, including parents and caregivers, educators, staff and leadership, service providers, advocates and community members. Join us for district updates, guest speakers and discussion of systemic concerns.

CONNECT WITH US!



Facebook
@browardeseadvisory



Instagram
@browardeseadvisorycouncil



Website
www.browardeseadvisorycouncil.com



X (Twitter)
@BrowardESEad



Email
ESE.chair@gmail.com



ESE ADVISORY CALENDAR 2026/27

ESE ADVISORY GENERAL MEETINGS:



At Indian Ridge Middle School, 6.15pm–8.45pm:

Aug 19th

Sept 16th

Oct 21st

Nov 18th

Dec 16th



At Seminole Middle School, 6.15pm–8.45pm:

Jan 20th

Feb 17th

March 17th

April 21st

May 19th

OUR SUBCOMMITTEES:



Autism (ACE) – all 10am:

Sept 24 (Coral Park Elementary)

Nov 12 (Forest Glen Middle)

Feb 11 (Seminole Middle)

April 15 (Sunset Lakes Elementary)



Deaf & Hard of Hearing:

All on Teams 7pm – Sept 14, Nov 9, Jan 11, March 8, May 10.

Links will be emailed to parents, posted at
browardschools.com/calendar and shared to our social media.



Down Syndrome:

6pm on Sept 30, Dec 17, March 31 at

Broward Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization
7301 NW 4th St. Suite 103, Plantation, FL 33317



See more on

