



# 2018 Annual Report

# President's Message

Maine Down Syndrome Network is a network of families, professionals and community members living in the state of Maine, who share the common goal of promoting awareness and acceptance of people with Down syndrome. We are privileged and proud to offer support, education and advocacy to our members and to our communities.

In 2018, we've offered support by reaching out to parents receiving a new diagnosis of Down syndrome. We've provided them books and materials to learn more about what to expect, and we've sent them flowers to celebrate the birth of their new baby. But the support doesn't stop there! We've sponsored Mom's night out events, providing food and fellowship for our hardworking Mom's. And we've continued our Dads Appreciating Down Syndrome (D.A.D.S) chapter, which provides friendship and fellowship for our amazing Dads.

We're also very proud of our Social Events and Gatherings for families. We've played at the Children's Museum of Maine, and we've climbed Bradbury Mountain. We've crafted, and feasted, and sang, and danced. And all along the way, we've supported each other in person, and online. Our social media presence has grown considerably this year, and our private facebook group has proved an invaluable resource. We also established a separate, public facebook page for friends and community members to learn more about us. Our website has begun a long awaited overhaul as well, with the goal of providing crucial information to all who seek it.

I'm so very proud of how our group has grown from a few families in a living room in Portland, to a vital network of more than 500 friends, families, educators, professionals and self advocates. Our Buddy Walk has grown from 40 people huddling under a 10x10 tent in Payson Park to more than 600 people in two locations, walking and dancing and celebrating, and raising ALL of our operating capital for the year. Our Board of Directors continues to do the hard work of strategic planning, and putting into place policies and framework that will ensure that MDSN will be here serving Mainers for years to come!

*Jen Greslick*  
President

# Committees



## Outreach

- First Call Program  
(Corin Swift, Abby Pearson)
- Medical Outreach  
(In Development)



## Support

- Mom's Events (Jen Greslick, Lisa Rancourt)
- D.A.D.S. (Ben Greslick)
- Social Gatherings (Jen Greslick)
- Siblings Events (Open)
- Care Committee (Open)



## Advocacy

- Governmental Affairs Committee  
(Jen Greslick)

# Committees



## Education

- Annual Conference  
(Betsey Mahoney, Jen Greslick, Deb Dunlap)
- DS Specialist Program  
(planning for future re-release)
- Workshops/Guest Speakers  
(Betsey Mahoney, Jen Greslick)



## Fundraising

- Buddy Walk  
(Jen Greslick, Abby Pearson)
- Valentine's Dance/Auction  
(in development, open)
- 5k (In development, open)



## Board/Executive

- Website (Jen Greslick, Ben Greslick)
- CIVICRM Management  
(Jen Greslick, Ben Greslick)
- Marketing (Jen Greslick, open)
- Affiliations (Jen Greslick)

# What We Do

## **First Call Program**

Receiving a diagnosis of Down syndrome for your child can be overwhelming. Our First Call Parents call, visit, calm fears, share hopes and provide information. Parents receiving a prenatal diagnosis receive the gold standard, award winning, “Understanding a Down Syndrome Diagnosis”, and all parents receive “Common Threads” as well as a packet full of the latest information and our New Baby bags. More importantly, they are connected to another parent who can help them along their journey.



## **Mom's Events and D.A.D.S.**

We know that being a parent of a child with Down syndrome is amazing and intense, wonderful and exhausting. We give our Moms a chance to unwind, have dinner or shop with each other, and offer support. Our Dads Appreciating Down Syndrome (D.A.D.S.) chapter provides support, action and fellowship to our incredible Dads.

## **Social Gatherings and Events**

Fun, food, friendship. MDSN's holds family friendly gatherings in many locations around Maine. Favorites include our Bradbury Mountain Outing, our Wells Beach Day and our most popular, night at the Children's Museum of Maine. We hope to grow these gatherings to become monthly events throughout Maine.



# What We Do

## **Governmental Affairs Committee**

Our Governmental Affairs Committee (GAC) has been busy! In March we travelled to Washington, D.C. to meet with Senator Collins, Senator King's staff, Congressman Michaud's staff and Congresswoman Pingree's staff. We're proud to say that all four have become co-sponsors of the ABLE act, which will allow people with disabilities to save money without sacrificing benefits. We also advocated for increased funding of Down syndrome at the NIH.



## **Down Syndrome Specialist Program**

We are re-tooling our pilot program, and are excited for it's re-launch! This program asks each participating school district to name 1-3 "Down Syndrome Specialists". We will provide those Specialists with training and access to the latest, best practices in educating students with Down syndrome. In turn, the Specialists will serve their

districts, passing along vital information, and consulting for students with Down syndrome in their district.

## **Buddy Walk**

Our Buddy Walk is our premier event. It serves as our largest fundraiser, our biggest awareness and advocacy event and our ultimate social gathering. And it's an amazing amount of fun! Our Portland walk, held at Payson Park saw over 500 people and our Augusta walk, at Capitol Park over 100. We walked and danced and talked and played, and jumped in bounce houses and celebrated our loved ones. And we raised more than \$25,000, for Maine Down Syndrome Network and the National Down Syndrome Society.



# Treasurer's Report

Our Treasurer's Report will be issued after the close of our fiscal year,  
12/31/18.

You will find it on our website @ [www.dsmaine.org](http://www.dsmaine.org) at that time.

# Contact Us!



**We'd love your support!** Become members, join us for an event, form a Buddy Walk team, or join a committee! FMI on these and more, please contact one of our board members:

Jen Greslick, President - [jen@dsmaine.org](mailto:jen@dsmaine.org)  
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