



Hannah

My name is Hannah and I am 7 years old. I enjoy doing a lot of the same things as other kids my age.

I jump on my trampoline. I can jump 70 jumps. I play kick ball and run. I play board games like Candy Land and my favorite card game is Uno. I love to play "Hide and Seek". I read books and sing songs like "Jesus Loves Me."

I have two brothers and two sisters. I love to spend time with my family. I ride the 3 wheeler with my brother, Aaron and run races with my brother, Michael. I go swimming with my sister, Marie and talk with my sister, Andrea, on the phone. I cook with my mom and play on the trampoline with my dad.

I am a lot like everyone else my age. One difference is that I have Down Syndrome. I can do everything everyone else can except sometimes it takes me a little longer to do it which is why I may sometimes need extra help or more time to do it.

My friends are very important to me. My friends help me learn. Thank you for being my friend.

Questions About Down Syndrome (DS) That Kids May Ask

Why does Hannah have Down syndrome?

Hannah was born with DS. Our bodies are made up of cells and every cell has 46 chromosomes. People with DS have an extra chromosome.

Can I catch Down syndrome?

No. If you weren't born with DS you will never get it. You can't catch DS from Hannah.

Is there a cure for Down syndrome?

No. There's no medicine to make DS go away. Hannah will have it for the rest of her life.

Why does Hannah seem so tired in class?

All the muscles in Hannah's body are very soft and flexible. She has to work extra hard to do the things you can do easily. This extra work makes her tired.

What should I do if I can't understand what Hannah is saying?

Ask Hannah to say repeat what she said, have her show you what she is talking about or ask your teacher to help you understand each other.

Why does Hannah leave the classroom with adults?

Hannah works with some adults to get extra practice with her speech, math and handwriting. Some days she may have a helper here with her in class to explain what is being taught and help her understand everything.

Why does Hannah sometimes scratch or hit others?

Hannah has feelings just like you. Sometimes when she is upset she can't find the exact words to tell someone how she is feeling. She might be feeling sad, afraid, or hurting, etc. This seems to be when this happens. Giving her personal space seems to help Hannah.



October 2009

Dear Parent,

Some of you already know our daughter, Hannah. For those of you who do not, Hannah has Down Syndrome. She is excited to be in 2nd grade with your child. She is a cheerful student who loves school and to learn with her classmates.

Our expectations for Hannah are high, much like those you have for your child. We hope she will learn to the best of her ability, make lasting friendships, follow school rules, and be a contributing member of the classroom.

Your child's role modeling and positive interactions with Hannah will help her to be successful in these areas. Today, your child was part of a brief presentation which highlighted and explained some challenges Hannah and others with Down Syndrome face along with some truths about Down Syndrome.

In addition, it hopefully gave some insight into her similarities to other children. We hope this helped answer some of the questions your child may have.

We hope you will contact us if your family has any questions. Children with Down Syndrome have unlimited potential when given opportunity and support.

Sincerely,
Jay and Jane Luthi

For more information on Down syndrome you can visit the Down Syndrome Guild of Greater Kansas City website at www.kcdsg.org. You can also contact the Executive Director, Amy Allison at 913-384-4848.

Myths & Truths About Down Syndrome

Myth: Down syndrome is a rare genetic disorder.

Truth: Down syndrome is the most commonly occurring genetic condition. One in every 800 births is a child with Down syndrome. There are currently 350,000 people in the U.S. with Down syndrome, with 5,000 to 6,000 births per year.

Myth: Most children with Down syndrome are born to older parents.

Truth: Eighty percent of children born with Down syndrome are born to women younger than age 35 due to higher fertility rates. However, research has shown a link between the incidence of Down syndrome and maternal age.

Myth: Down syndrome is hereditary and runs in families.

Truth: Most cases of Down syndrome are sporadic, chance events. In general, Down syndrome does not run in families and a sibling or aunt has no greater chance of conceiving a child with Down syndrome.

Myth: People with Down syndrome have severe cognitive delays.

Truth: Most people with Down syndrome have cognitive delays that are mild to moderate. IQ is not an adequate measure of the functional status of people with Down syndrome. People with Down syndrome have great potential if given opportunities.

Myth: The life expectancy of people with Down syndrome is 30.

Truth: Thanks to advances in medical and clinical treatment and opportunities to thrive, as many as 80 percent of adults with Down syndrome reach age 55, and many live longer.

Myth: Behavior problems and depression are just part of having Down syndrome

Truth: Often, medical or mental health problems go untreated due to the assumption that it is typical of having this genetic condition. Complete examinations by appropriate health care professionals should always be pursued.

Myth: Children with Down syndrome are placed in segregated special education programs.

Truth: Children with Down syndrome are included in regular academic classrooms across the country. Students may be integrated into specific courses or fully included in the regular classroom for all subjects.

Myth: Adults with Down syndrome may be unable to work.

Truth: Businesses seek young adults with Down syndrome for a variety of positions. They are employed by banks, corporations, nursing homes, hotels and restaurants. They work in the music and entertainment industry. People with Down syndrome bring to their jobs enthusiasm, reliability and dedication.