

World Down Syndrome Day

World Down Syndrome Day is annually observed on March 21 to raise public awareness of Down syndrome, a congenital disorder caused by having an extra 21st chromosome.



What Do People Do?

World Down Syndrome Day is observed in more than 60 countries worldwide. Many organizations and communities, including the United Nations (UN) and Down Syndrome International, promote World Down Syndrome Day to raise people's awareness and understanding of Down syndrome.

Activities and events that take place on March 21 showcase the abilities and accomplishments of people with Down syndrome. These events also focus on encouraging independence, self-advocacy and freedom of choices for people with Down syndrome.

Background

Down syndrome is a naturally occurring chromosomal arrangement that has always been a part of the human condition, being universally present across racial, gender and socio-economic lines. According to the UN, it affects about 1 in 800 births worldwide, causing intellectual disability and associated medical issues.

Organizations such as Down Syndrome International have been organizing various activities for World Down Syndrome Day since 2006. In November 2011, the UN decided to officially observe the event from 2012 onwards, inviting governments and businesses to take part in World Down Syndrome Day.