



Enclosed are some resources to help your school celebrate **World Down Syndrome Day** which occurs on **March 21st** each year!

*(Since WSDS falls on a Saturday this year, many schools are choosing to celebrate the day before!)*

Together we will create a global voice for advocating for the rights, inclusion, and wellbeing of people with Down syndrome



# FACTS ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME

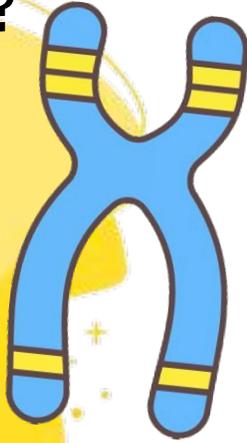
## When can we celebrate DS?



In October, we celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month AND on March 21st we celebrate World Down Syndrome Day!

## What is Down syndrome?

Chromosomes are tiny thread-like structures inside your body. They hold the instructions that make you who you are! Most people have 23 pairs of chromosomes, for a total of 46. But a person with Down syndrome has an extra copy of their 21st chromosome (47 instead of 46)!



## Who can get DS?



You're either born with DS, or you're not. Around 1 in every 691 babies born in the USA have Down syndrome. It can occur regardless of gender, race, or economic status.

## Why is it called Down syndrome?



Down syndrome is named after John Langdon Down, the doctor who first described it, in 1866.

How can we support someone with DS?

Advocate, include, & educate!

## Are all people with DS the same?



People with DS are unique individuals, each with their own strengths, likes, and personalities. While they do share similar physical characteristics, they more closely resemble their family members!

## What is life like for someone with DS?



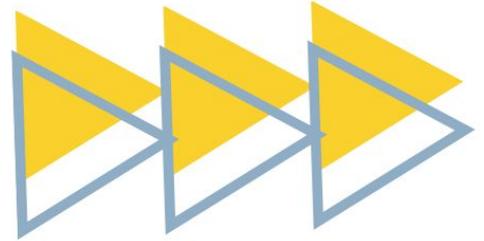
The sky's the limit! People with DS can do anything, it might just take some extra practice, patience, and time. Individuals with Down syndrome want to be treated the same way all people want to be treated – with respect, fairness, and friendship.

# 5 WAYS TO CELEBRATE WDSO

## ROCK YOUR SOCKS

# 1

- Wear bright, mismatched socks to celebrate differences and spark conversation (also socks look like chromosomes!)
- Encourage students and staff to talk about why socks are worn on WDSO
- Take photos and share them on social media using #WorldDownSyndromeDay #RockYourSocks #DelcoDSIG
- Design paper socks and display them in halls



## EDUCATE

# 2

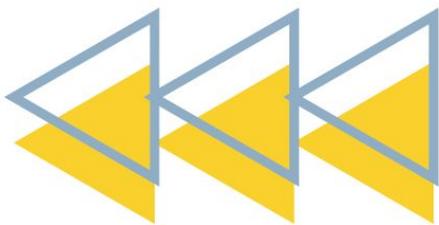
- Read a book or watch a video about Down syndrome
- Post a fact about DS each day in March
- Teach that DS is caused by having an extra copy of the 21<sup>st</sup> chromosome
- Highlight famous self-advocates, athletes, actors, and leaders with Down syndrome
- Encourage students to reflect on how inclusion makes communities stronger

## FUN ACTIVITIES

# 3

- Host a WDSO Crazy Sock Dance Party!
- Organize a Crazy Sock Parade!
- Color WDSO socks or posters and hang them around the school
- Create a "Design a Sock" contest
- Play inclusion-themed games focused on teamwork and cooperation
- Invite music, art, or PE teachers to incorporate WDSO into their lessons

## SPREAD KINDNESS



# 4

- Complete random acts of kindness throughout the day
- Write kind notes to classmates, teachers, or staff
- Create a "Kindness Wall" where students post positive messages
- Pair students for buddy activities or cooperative games
- Discuss how everyone learns, communicates, and shines in different ways

## SUPPORT

# 5

- Follow Delaware County Down Syndrome Interest Group (Delco DSIG) on social media to learn about local resources and community events
- Share posts to help amplify messages of inclusion and awareness
- Explore ways families can engage with local organizations that support individuals with Down syndrome
- Host WDSO contests/fundraisers and donate proceeds to local DS organizations (delcodsig.org)

**World Down Syndrome Day** is celebrated every year on **March 21 (3/21)** to represent the three copies of chromosome 21. It's a day to celebrate differences, promote inclusion, and recognize the abilities and contributions of people with Down syndrome in our schools and communities.

# 21 FACTS ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME

1

When you refer to someone with Down syndrome use “people first” language. Say “a kid with Ds” instead of “a Ds kid”. Put the person first!

2

Individuals with Ds have hypotonia or low muscle tone. This means they might require therapy to increase their strength. It may cause a delay in activities such as walking, talking and fine-motor skills. BUT, it also allows for increased flexibility, which is pretty cool!

3

Down syndrome is not a disease. You cannot “catch it”. The only way to have Ds is to be born with it.

4

There are three types of Down syndrome! It just depends on how the cells divide: Trisomy 21 (nondisjunction) accounts for 95% of cases. Translocation is 4% and Mosaicism only occurs in 1% of individuals with Ds.

5

Individuals with Ds have bright and successful futures! They can do/be anything they want, just like you! They can learn to drive a car, go to college, live on their own, get married and hold successful jobs. Don't limit what they can do!

6

People with Ds are not all the same. They each have their own strengths/weaknesses, likes/dislikes, and personalities. While they do share some similar characteristics and features, they're unique individuals first and foremost!

7

It is a common misconception that individuals with Ds are always happy. This is not true. They experience the same range of emotions that you do! They most certainly are not always just happy!

8

Down syndrome is the most common chromosomal condition world-wide! Approximately 1 in 691 babies born are diagnosed with Down syndrome.

# 21 FACTS ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME

9

Down syndrome is also known as Trisomy 21. This is because it is defined as having three (tri) copies of the 21<sup>st</sup> chromosome.

10

In 1866, a British Doctor was the first to identify this syndrome. His name was Doctor John Langdon Down, which is why it was called Down syndrome.

11

October is a month dedicated to spreading Ds awareness. Also, World Down Syndrome Day is celebrated on March 21<sup>st</sup>. This is significant because March is the third month making it 3/21 for 3 copies of the 21<sup>st</sup> chromosome.

12

Some common characteristics/features of Ds include almond shaped eyes, a single crease across the palm of the hand, shorter stature, smaller nose bridge, heart complications (approx. 50%), speech and cognitive delays. But not all individuals with DS exhibit all of these characteristics.

13

When given opportunity, patience, love, encouragement and respect people with Down syndrome will thrive and reach amazing potential!

14

People without Down syndrome have 46 chromosomes. People with Down syndrome have 47!

15

There are more than 400,000 individuals living with Down syndrome in the United States today!

16

It is unknown what exactly causes the DNA to split with an extra copy of the 21<sup>st</sup> chromosome (resulting in Down syndrome).

# 21 FACTS ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME

17

Some individuals with DS have a delay in speech. If so, they can get extra support and help from a Speech Therapist, learn sign language and/or use assistive technology!

18

Both kids and adults with DS are aware of how you treat them. They get their feelings hurt just like you would. Treat everyone you meet with kindness and acceptance no matter what their unique and wonderful differences may be.

19

Most people with DS have physical and intellectual disabilities. But, there is SUCH a range of abilities within this population that it is impossible to predict their potential ahead of time!

20

When in school, students with DS may have assistance of an aide, special education teacher, physical therapist, speech therapist and/or occupational therapist. All of these resources are ways for students to work on, or find-tune skills that may need extra practice.

21

The colors that represent Down syndrome awareness are blue and yellow!

[delcodsig.org](http://delcodsig.org)





**WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY**

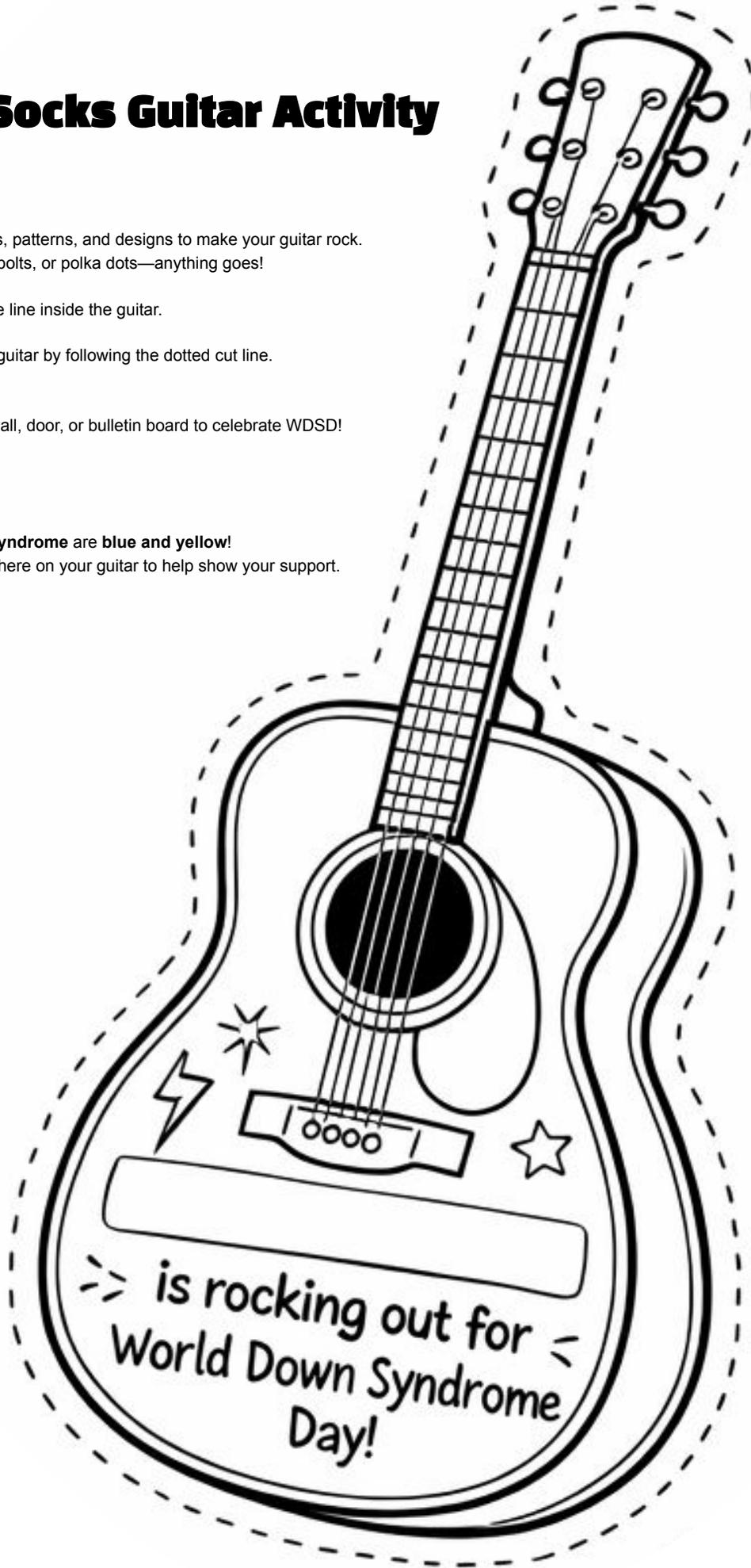
# Rock Your Socks Guitar Activity

## Directions:

1. **Color your guitar!**  
Use your favorite colors, patterns, and designs to make your guitar rock. Stripes, stars, lightning bolts, or polka dots—anything goes!
2. **Write your name** on the line inside the guitar.
3. **Carefully cut out** your guitar by following the dotted cut line.
4. **Show it off!**  
Hang your guitar on a wall, door, or bulletin board to celebrate WDS Day!

## 💙💛 FUN FACT 💛💙

The colors that represent **Down syndrome** are **blue and yellow!**  
Try using blue and yellow somewhere on your guitar to help show your support.



# Rock Your Socks Activity

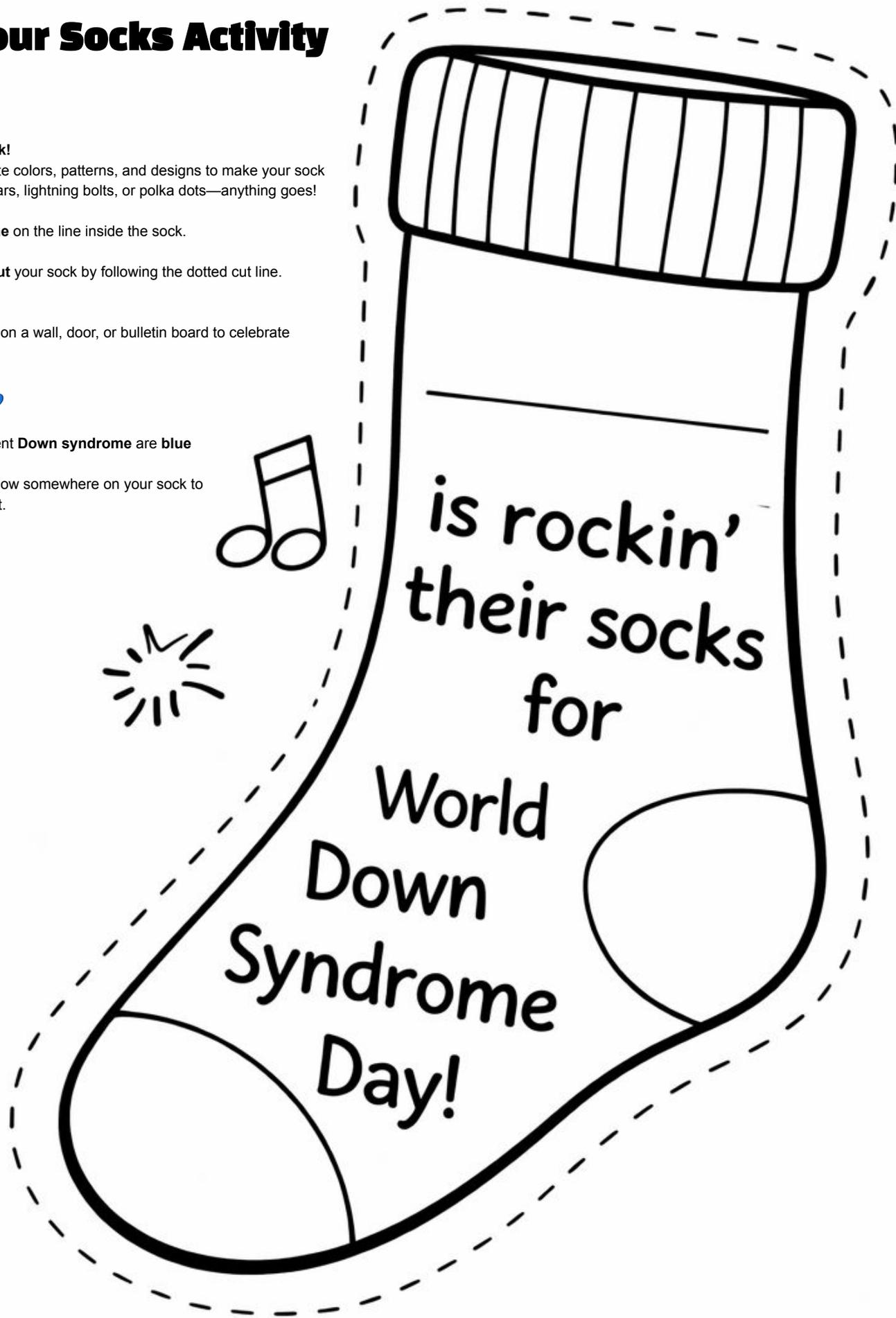
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Hang your sock on a wall, door, or bulletin board to celebrate WDSO!

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# Rock Your Socks Activity

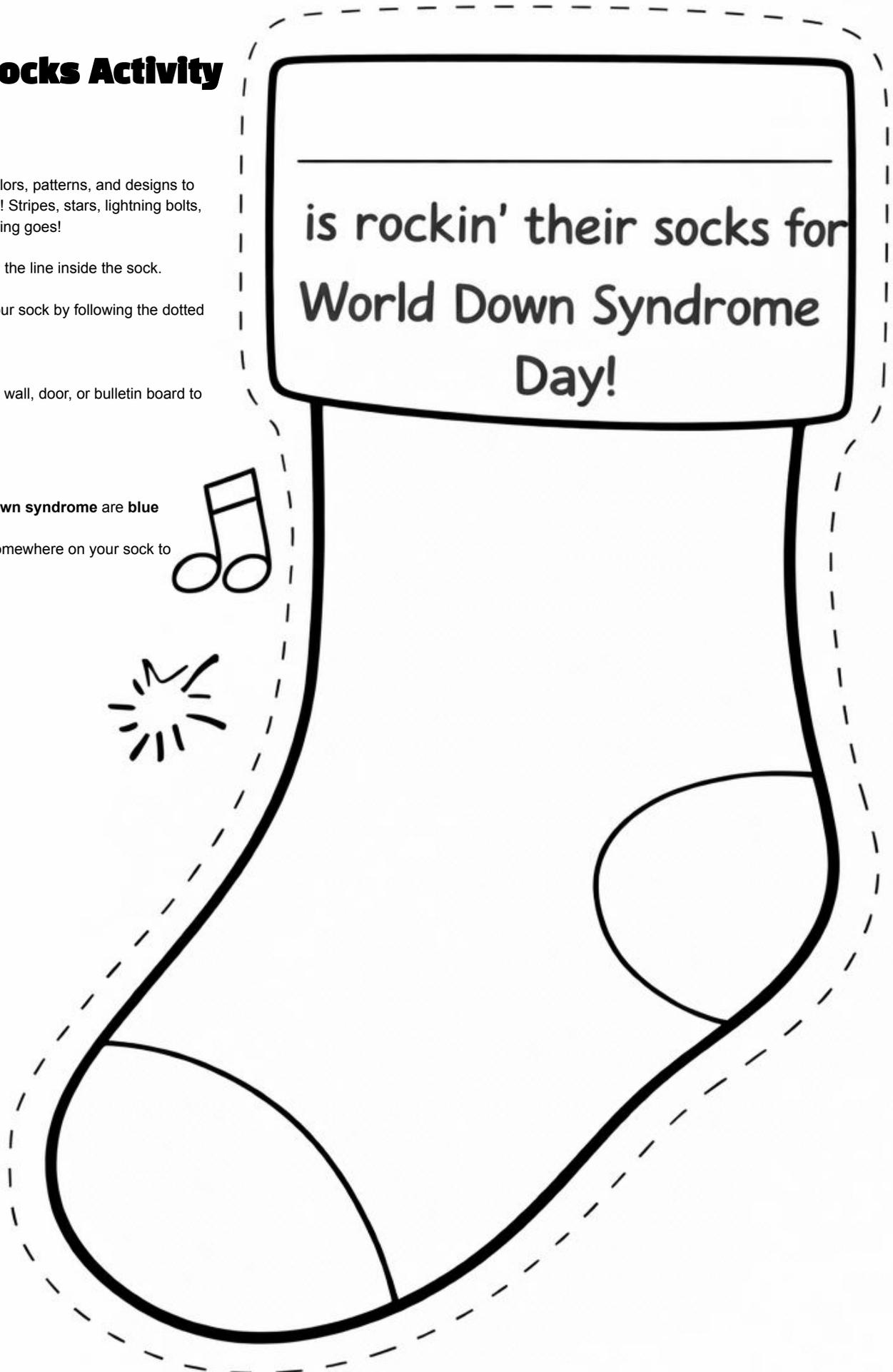
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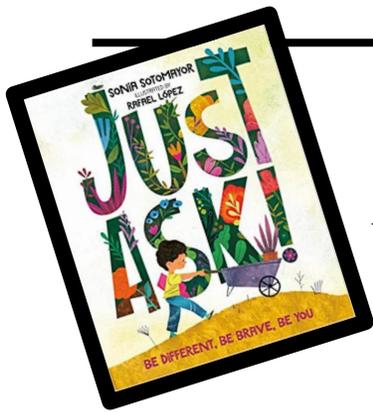
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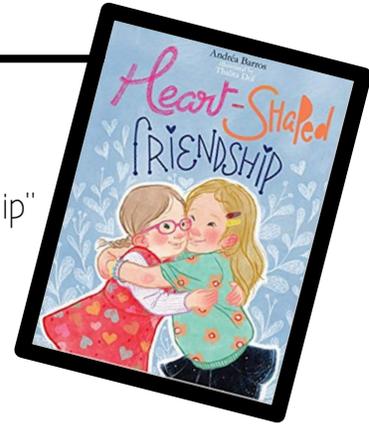
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# Down Syndrome books



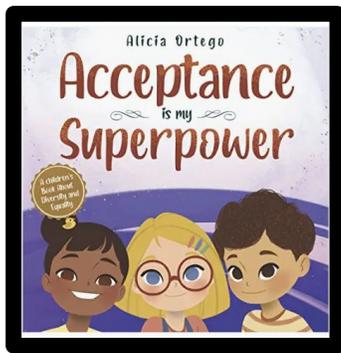
"Just Ask"  
-SONIA SOTOMAYOR



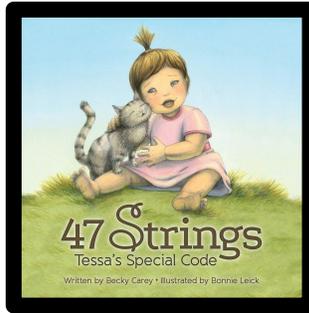
"Heart-Shaped Friendship"  
-ANDREA BARROS



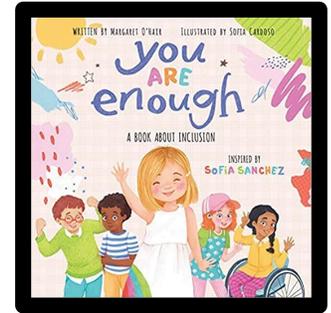
"Acceptance is my Superpower"  
-ALICIA ORTEGO



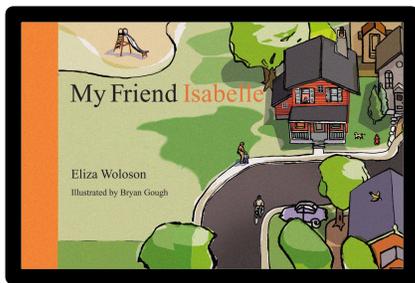
"47 Strings"  
-BECKY CAREY



"You Are Enough"  
-MARGARET O'HAIR AND SOFIA SANCHEZ



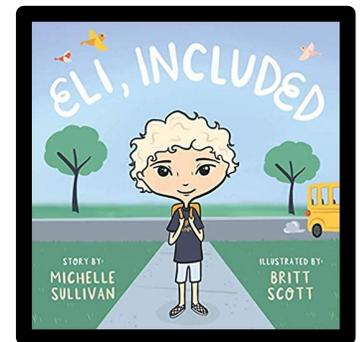
"My Friend Isabelle"  
-ELIZA WOLOSON



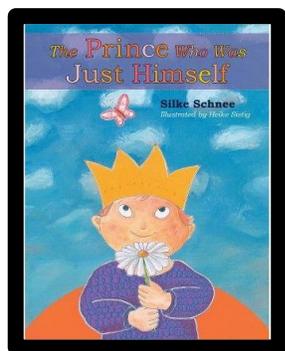
"Different- A Great Thing to Be"  
-HEATHER AVIS



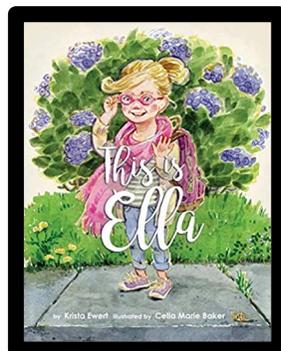
"Eli, Included"  
-MICHELLE SULLIVAN



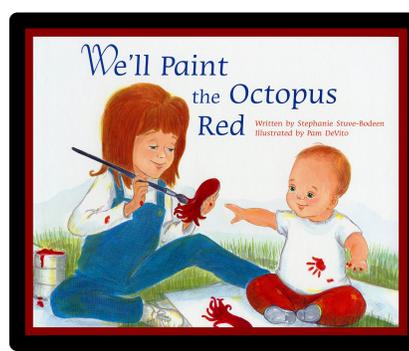
"The Prince Who Was Just Himself"  
-SILKE SCHNEE



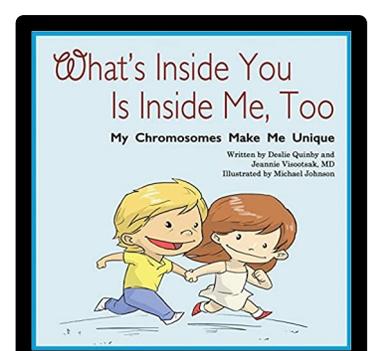
"This is Ella"  
-KRISTA EWERT



"We'll Paint the Octopus Red"  
-STEPHANIE STUVE-BODEEN



"What's Inside You Is Inside Me, Too"  
-DESLIE WEBB QUINBY



# Down Syndrome videos

These videos are all linked from YouTube. You can click the URL to take you directly to the video, or type in the title in the YouTube search bar. You can pick one to show, or show them all!



## "Cyndi Lauper - True Colors (MattyBRaps Cover ft Olivia Kay)"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0BvqMJJaog>

THIS IS A MUSIC VIDEO COVER PERFORMED BY MATTYB, A YOUNG RAPPER. MATTYB'S SISTER HAS DOWN SYNDROME, AND IS THE STAR (AND INSPIRATION) OF THIS VIDEO. IT TOUCHES UPON RELEVANT ISSUES SUCH AS BULLYING AND ACCEPTANCE.



## "Just Like You Down Syndrome"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4p9GyWXWcw>

THIS VIDEO IS NARRATED BY A FEW TEENAGERS, SOME WITH DOWN SYNDROME AND SOME WITHOUT. THESE PAIRS OF FRIENDS TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON, AND WHAT MAKES THEM DIFFERENT. THE VIDEO HAS A GREAT LASTING IMPACT ON STUDENTS, AND IS ALSO INFORMATIONAL. \*\*THIS LINK TAKES YOU TO A 3 MINUTE CONDENSED VERSION OF THE VIDEO. THERE IS ALSO A 13 MINUTE FULL LENGTH OPTION YOU CAN FIND AT:

[HTTP://WWW.JUSTLIKEYOU-DOWNSYNDROME.ORG/](http://www.justlikeyou-downsyndrome.org/)



## "What Is Down Syndrome?"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOC5exzIHeQ>

THIS IS AN ANIMATED VIDEO EXPLAINING ALL ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME IN A WAY THAT IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND FOR KIDS.



## "Down Syndrome Explained By Kids!"

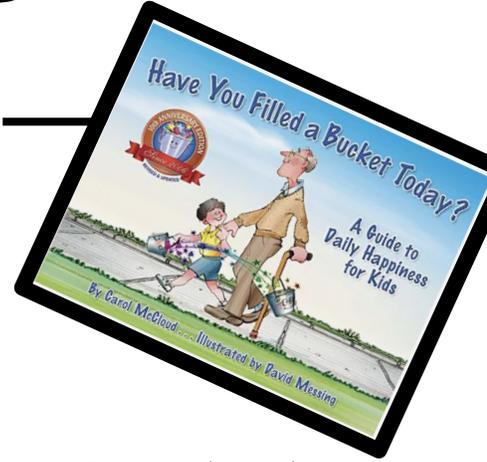
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JQGNbD00QM>

KIDS WHO HAVE A SIBLING WITH DOWN SYNDROME ANSWER SOME COMMON QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT THE CONDITION. IT IS A FUN, UPBEAT AND INFORMATIONAL VIDEO THAT KIDS WILL RELATE TO.

# Kindness books



"Be Kind"  
-PAT MILLER

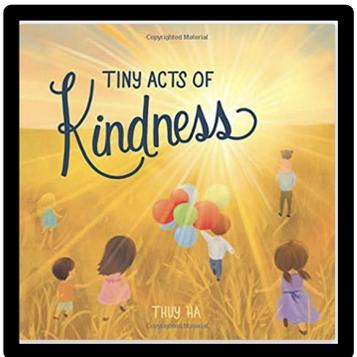


"Have You Filled a Bucket Today?"  
-CAROL MCCLOUD

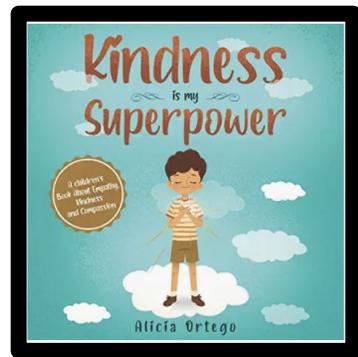
"Tiny Acts of Kindness"  
-THUY HA

"Kindness is my Superpower"  
-ALICIA ORTEGA

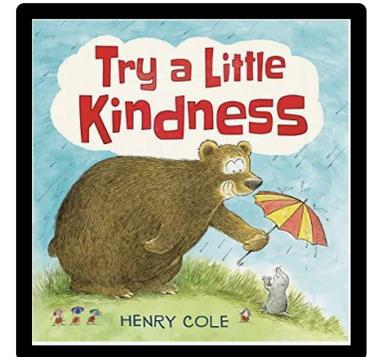
"Try a Little Kindness"  
-HENRY COLE



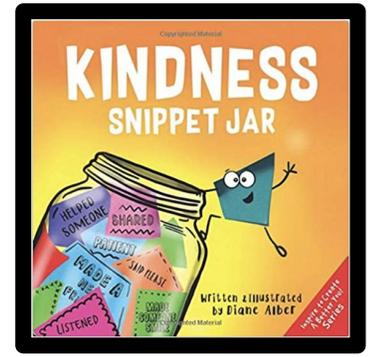
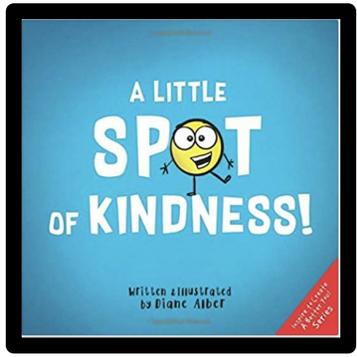
"My Way to Kindness"  
-ELIZABETH COLE



"A Little Spot of Kindness"  
-DIANE ALBER



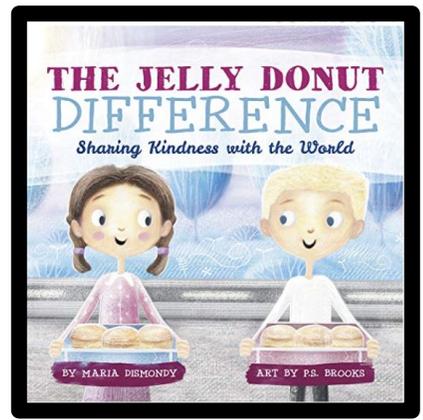
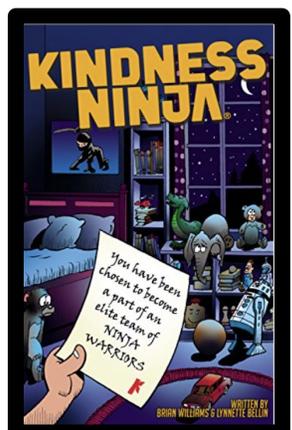
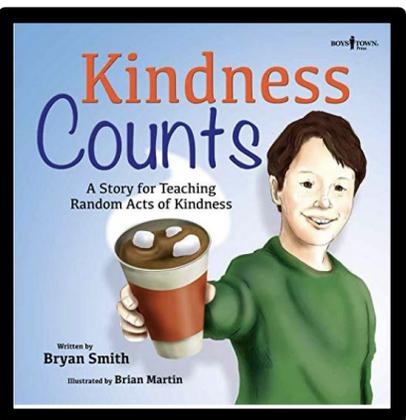
"Kindness Snippet Jar"  
-DIANE ALBER



"Kindness Counts"  
-BRYAN SMITH

"Kindness Ninja"  
-BRIAN WILLIAMS

"The Jelly Donut Difference"  
-MARIA C DISMONDY





# HOW TO INTRODUCE AND USE THE RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS CARDS

A popular way to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day is to spread awareness through *random acts of kindness*.

Students will receive a “Random Act of Kindness Card”. As a class, or small group, fill out the brainstorming page to think of great ways to hand out the cards. When the student preforms the act of kindness, they hand the card out to the individual receiving the act.

Some teachers have also turned it into “*21 days of kindness*”. In this example the class will brainstorm 21 ways to preform different acts of kindness and as a class will complete one act a day.

This is a great pay-it-forward activity! Here are a few examples of how you can get your students involved in this wonderful activity:

- Have students create get well cards for local hospitals.
- Create handmade thank you gifts for custodians, receptionists or cafeteria workers at school.
- Hand out flowers/happy notes to people who pass by your classroom
- Hold the door open in a busy section of school.
- Give someone a nice compliment.
- Send a thank you note to service members.
- Give a birthday note to someone in school.
- Leave a kind note or small gift on another student or teacher’s desk.

Please enjoy this

# Random Act of Kindness



In honor of celebrating individuals with  
Down syndrome!

Kindness is contagious

Please enjoy this

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# Down Syndrome

## discussion cards

Use these cards to start discussions about Down syndrome and acceptance either as a whole class, or in small groups.

1 Did you know anything about Down syndrome before today? Do you know anyone that has Down syndrome?

2 After learning about DS, what will you do differently now in your school or community?

3 What is something new you learned about Down syndrome today?

4 Why is it important to make sure everyone is included?

5 Do you think the world would be better if everyone was the exact same, or if everyone was unique? Why?

6 How can you teach others about Down syndrome?

# Down Syndrome discussion cards

Use these cards to start discussions about Down syndrome and acceptance either as a whole class, or in small groups.

How did you feel when we read the book/watched the video about Down syndrome and inclusion?

7

Did any information you learned about Down syndrome surprise you?

8

What are some ways that you can be a good friend and make sure everyone feels included?

9

What is something you did once that showed kindness?

10

What should you do if you see someone not being kind to another person?

11

What are some kind things that you can say to others?

12