



NATIONAL
DOWN SYNDROME
CONGRESS

DALLAS, TEXAS
JULY 24 - 27



2025 NDSC CONVENTION
CELEBRATING ALL

DALLAS DETAILS

JULY 24 - 27, 2025
HILTON ANATOLE, DALLAS, TEXAS

Got questions? Email info@ndsccenter.org



DALLAS DETAILS

JULY 24 - 27, 2025

HILTON ANATOLE, DALLAS, TEXAS

CONFERENCE PRICING

GENERAL REGISTRATION - March 11	\$275 per person
April 30 - June 30	\$375 per person
July 1 - On-site	\$475 per person

YOUTH & ADULT CONFERENCE	\$200 per person
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SIBLINGS CONFERENCE	\$150 per person
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KIDS CAMP	\$50 per person per session
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EDUCATORS CONFERENCE	\$150 per person
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ADD-ON PRICING

MEAL PLAN	\$125 per person
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DEEP DIVES	\$75 per person
April 30 - June 30	\$100 per person
July 1 - On-site	\$150 per person

BANQUET	\$75 per person
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HOTEL ROOM PRICING

ONE NIGHT	\$189+ per room
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THE BREAKDOWN

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Each year, thousands of people from around the globe attend the National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) Convention. For many, it's to hear from world-renowned experts; for others, it's to take a one-of-a-kind vacation. But what brings all of us back, year after year, is the feeling of an international family reunion unique to the NDSC Convention weekend.

YOUTH & ADULT CONFERENCE

Our Youth & Adult Conference (Y&A) brings together 300+ individuals with Down syndrome between the ages of 15 - 70+ to build friendships, attend conference sessions, and to have fun. Conference sessions cover topics including self-advocacy, marriage and relationships, job and career pathways, and physical and mental wellness.

KIDS CAMP

Kids Camp is for children between the ages of 6 months to 14 years, both with and without Down syndrome. This is a great option for parents who wish to attend workshops while knowing their kids are overseen by professionals. Kids will participate in educational and therapeutic play, arts and crafts, physical movement, board games, entertainment, and more.

SIBLINGS CONFERENCE

NDSC's Siblings Conference is a place to learn, be inspired, and grow, geared towards rising 7th graders through 12th grade. Our siblings will be encouraged to ask tough questions in a supportive environment, while learning about Down syndrome and disability-related issues, including how to be an advocate for their siblings.

EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

Our Educators Conference is practical in nature and will engage participants in identifying and implementing strategies applicable to K-12 classrooms. We offer hands-on, research-based strategies that general education and special education teachers can implement immediately to best support their students with Down syndrome and intellectual disability.

ADVOCACY TRAINING BOOT CAMP (ATBC)

ATBC features information from self-advocates who are making a difference through their personal advocacy efforts, parent advocates, elected officials, and disability policy experts including the NDSC Policy & Advocacy Team. ATBC is designed to empower advocates and self-advocates with the skills needed to impact policy change.

CELEBRATING ALL AWARDS BANQUET

National Down Syndrome Congress is proud to recognize individuals and organizations who are doing exceptional work for the Down syndrome community. Our Celebrating All Awards Banquet at the NDSC 2025 Annual Convention is a night to honor these outstanding award winners. This inspiring night is an opportunity to get glammed up, get a dinner, drinks and dessert, and connect with people in the community who are making a difference.

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

*ALL DETAILS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

THURSDAY

10:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Human Trisome Project

11:30 AM - 7:30 PM
**NDSC Convention
Registration**

12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
**GLOBAL Research &
Medical Roundtable**

3:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Exhibit Hall

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM
**Self-Advocate Council
Meeting & Dinner**

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Welcome Session

8:30 PM - 10:00 PM
Family Fun Night

FRIDAY

7:00 AM - 4:30 PM
**NDSC Convention
Registration**

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM
Zumba with Yulissa

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM
Breakfast Meal Plan

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Educators Conference

7:30 AM - 11:45 AM
Kids Camp Session 1

8:00 AM - 11:30 AM
**Advocacy Training
Boot Camp**

8:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Deep Dive Sessions

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Exhibit Hall

9:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Human Trisome Project

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Lunch Meal Plan

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Hispanic Lunch

1:00 PM - 5:15 PM
Kids Camp Session 2

1:15 PM - 3:15 PM
**Youth & Adult Conference
Kickoff Party**

1:15 PM - 3:15 PM
**Siblings Conference
Kickoff Party**

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM
**General Workshop
Cycle 1**

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Multicultural Films

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM
General Workshop Cycle 2

4:15 PM - 5:00 PM
**General Workshop
Cycle 3**

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM
**African American
Reception**

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Inside NDSC

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
NDAC Town Hall

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Sharing Sessions

8:30 PM - 10:30 PM
Giddy Up & Glow Dance

SATURDAY

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM
**Bodyweight, Strength &
Fitness Class**

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM
Breakfast Meal Plan

7:30 AM - 2:00 PM
**NDSC Convention
Registration**

8:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Human Trisome Project

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
Exhibit Hall

8:15 AM - 11:30 AM
**Kids Camp
Session 3**

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Youth & Adult Conference

8:30 AM - 5:00 PM
Siblings Conference

8:45 AM - 9:30 AM
**General Workshop
Cycle 4**

9:45 AM - 11:15 AM
**General Workshop
Cycle 5**

10:30 AM - 1:30 PM
College Fair

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Lunch Meal Plan

1:00 PM - 5:15 PM
**Kids Camp
Session 4**

1:00 PM - 5:15 PM
**Youth & Adult
Conference**

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM
**General Workshop
Cycle 6**

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM
**General Workshop
Cycle 7**

3:30 PM - 5:00 PM
**General Workshop
Cycle 8**

5:45 PM - 6:30 PM
VIP Reception

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
**Celebrating All
Awards Banquet**

8:30 PM - 10:30 PM
Boots & Bling Dance

SUNDAY

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM
Yoga

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
**Kids Camp
Session 5**

8:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Human Trisome Project

8:15 AM - 12:15 PM
**Siblings Conference
Field Trip**

8:15 AM - 12:15 PM
**Youth & Adult Conference
Talent Show**

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM
**General Workshop
Cycle 9**



2025 NDSC CONVENTION CELEBRATING ALL

MEAL PLAN \$125 PER ATTENDEE

The Meal Plan includes Friday breakfast, Friday lunch, Saturday breakfast and Saturday lunch. The dietary restrictions entered on the contact information page will be accounted for in your meal plan.

Breakfasts: Hot Sandwich

Boxed Lunches: Turkey & Cheese Sandwich, Ham & Swiss Sandwich or Caesar Salad. Served with Chips and a Drink

You will be given the opportunity to add additional meal plan when entering in information for others in your group as part of their registration.

AWARDS BANQUET \$75 PER ADULT | \$35 PER CHILD

Adult Regular Meal:

- Caesar Salad with Croutons
- Chicken Tinga, Spanish Rice, Black Bean Corn Relish, Guajillo Beef Jus
- Vanilla Cheesecake with Seasonal Berries and Raspberries Coulis
- Rolls and Butter

Child Regular Meal:

- Chicken Fingers
- Tater Tots
- Fruit Cup
- Brownie

Adult Vegetarian Meal:

- Roasted Cauliflower Steak
- Wild Rice Pilaf
- Raisin Caper Relish
- Saffron Citrus Tahini Puree
- Chimichurri

Child Vegetarian Meal:

- Vegan Chicken Tender
- Tater Tots
- Fruit Cup



2025 NDSC CONVENTION KIDS CAMP

\$50 PER CHILD PER SESSION

Kids Camp is for children between the ages of 6 months to 14 years, both with and without Down syndrome. This is a great option for parents who wish to attend workshops while knowing their kids are overseen by professionals. Kids will participate in educational and therapeutic play, arts and crafts, physical movement, board games, entertainment, and more. Kids Camp is only available to those who are attending General Conference.

SADDLERS | 6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS

WRANGLERS | 3 YEARS - 5 YEARS

BUCKAROOS | 6 YEARS - 8 YEARS

SPURS | 9 YEARS - 11 YEARS

LONGHORNS | 12 YEARS - 14 YEARS

Session #1 | Friday, July 25 | 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Session #2 | Friday, July 25 | 12:30 PM - 5:15 PM

Session #3 | Saturday, July 26 | 8:30 AM - 11:15 AM

Session #4 | Saturday, July 26 | 1:00 PM - 5:15 PM

Session #5 | Sunday, July 27 | 8:00 AM - 12:15 PM



2025 NDSC CONVENTION CELEBRATING ALL

DEEP DIVES

Deep-dive sessions are offered in addition to our regular workshop cycles as an opportunity to spend 3 hours with an expert. Because not all General Conference attendees are interested in these intense sessions, an additional charge (\$75) is applied to only the individuals interested in participating in Deep-Dive sessions. Only choose one Deep Dive per attendee.

**FRIDAY, JULY 25
8:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Aging and Down Syndrome Deep Dive: Using existing tools and NDSS resources to prepare for a healthy future

Dr. Daniel Combs, MD, Assistant Professor, Pediatrics and Medicine, University of Arizona

Dr. Michael Rafii, MD, PhD, Medical Director, Alzheimer's Therapeutic Research Institute (ATRI) and Professor of Clinical Neurology at the Keck School of Medicine

Dana Sciallo, MOT, OTR/L, Manager of Health Programs, National Down Syndrome Society

Medical

This expert panel (speakers to be added) presentation will address the potential needs of individuals with Down syndrome as they age including Down Syndrome Regression Disorder, mental health, Alzheimer's disease, and sleep quality which affect overall quality of life. Our panelists will identify key factors for healthy aging through the provision of up-to-date research and information for individuals, families, and caregivers. NDSS will present resources and useful tools to help you build a healthy future for your loved one with Down syndrome.

Creating the Best Possible Life for Your Child: Life Planning, Independence, and Affordability

Hal Wright, CFP (Retired)

Financial

The speaker passionately believes that all people with Down syndrome have a right to an appropriate place in the community and the right to make decisions affecting their own lives to the extent capable. He believes that living independently is possible for many of our children with adequate planning, supports, and financial resources.

This "Deep Dive" covers:

- 1) Life planning for an adult with Down syndrome, including developing a life plan, establishing a circle of support, writing a letter of intent, and estate planning, including funding a special needs trust
- 2) "A Home of Her Own", living in supported independence
- 3) The Angel Herrera Case Study

The Case Study presents a summary life plan for a twenty-one year old woman with Down syndrome, the estimated cost of her lifetime support and funding for her special needs trust. The purpose is to give parents a realistic picture of what a comprehensive life plan might look like.



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The Gifts and Challenges Exchange, for and by Families of Teens and Adults

Dr. Dennis McGuire, LCSW, PhD, (private practice)

Adult Life

Following a brief introduction of the 7 key challenges reported by families at the Adult Down Syndrome Center, including self talk, the 'groove,' social emotional issues, expressive language limitations, the need for independence, concrete thought and behavior, participants will be invited to share:

- Challenges from their recent and past experiences
 - Solutions to challenges, including creative and innovative ideas and strategies
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Let's Raise Expectations For Speech Clarity & Verbal Language

Sarah Bookout, CCC-SLPD, Speech-Language Pathologist, GraySpeak Therapy

Jennifer Gray, MS, CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist, Grays Peak Speech Services, LLC

Communication

This session will outline how speech therapy should assume ability and expect competence by planning for future independence. It can be argued that speech and language therapy is the most important part of intervention services for children with Down syndrome if we wish to promote their cognitive (mental) and social development. Speech and language therapy must, therefore, prepare children with Down syndrome to achieve and maintain verbal language abilities throughout the lifespan. Especially considering 97% of those with Down syndrome will choose to use speech to communicate, even in the absence of success. Challenges with speech clarity, language development, and social communication due to structural differences and intellectual development should be addressed in infancy and continue through adulthood. Every person with Down syndrome has the ability to learn, speak, prepare, plan, and achieve goals when practiced with high frequency and intensity.

Supporting Mental Health: Practical Strategies for Parents and Caregivers of People with Down Syndrome

Dr. Ruth Brown, PhD, Clinical Psychologist, Assistant Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University

Dr. Jill Fodstad, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Indiana University School of Medicine

Dr. Emily Meudt, MD, Medical Director, Down Syndrome and Developmental Regression Clinic at Indiana University Health

Behavior

This deep dive session provided by a panel of mental health providers in the fields of psychology and psychiatry offers practical, evidence-informed strategies to help parents and caregivers foster mental health and emotional wellness in individuals with Down syndrome, across all stages of life. Participants will learn how to identify early signs of emotional or behavioral changes and understand the critical connection between physical health and emotional well-being. A brief discussion on when to reach out to a licensed mental health professional for diagnostic evaluation or mental health services and what to expect from these professionals will occur. The session will provide actionable advice on using structured, visual-based approaches to support emotional regulation. Attendees will also explore ways to encourage social connectedness, physical activity, and effective communication, ensuring that individuals with Down syndrome feel empowered and supported in their emotional growth.



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Estrategias para Educación Sexual y Afectividad: DEEP DIVE

Macarena Lizama

Sexuality/Relationships

Taller teórico práctico de estrategias para enseñar educación sexual y afectiva a personas con discapacidad cognitiva. El taller está basado en el libro sobre educación sexual y afectividad para personas con discapacidad cognitiva, que contempla tanto teoría como actividades prácticas, secciones de aprendizaje en podcast y lectura autónoma en formato de lectura fácil. Se enfoca en poder enseñar desde la infancia y siempre, abordando temas de autorreconocimiento e identidad, autocuidado, desarrollo puberal, ciclo menstrual, masturbación, relaciones de pareja, relaciones sexuales, entre otras.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

National Down Syndrome Congress is dedicated to improving the world for individuals with Down syndrome. We are the leading national resource of support and information for anyone touched by or seeking to learn about Down syndrome. Each year, thousands of people from around the globe attend the National Down Syndrome Congress Convention. For many, it's to hear from world-renowned experts; for others, it's to take a one-of-a-kind vacation. But what brings all of us back, year after year, is the feeling of an international family reunion unique to the NDSC Convention weekend.

**July 24 - 27, 2025
DALLAS, TEXAS
HILTON ANATOLE**

WHAT DOES THE GENERAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INCLUDE?

Registration includes all 9 cycles of general conference workshops, access to the Exhibit Hall, Advocacy Training Boot Camp, Welcome Session, Friday night Dance, College Fair, and the Saturday Night Dance. What does the Youth & Adults Conference include - Y&A workshops and spotlights, the Talent Show, and Exhibit Hall, Advocacy Training Boot Camp, Welcome Session, Friday night Dance, College Fair, and the Saturday Night Dance.

CAN I BOOK MORE THAN ONE HOTEL ROOM?

Yes, but the booking system only allows for three bookings at a time. If you would like to make additional reservations, you will need to go through the process for each reservation. To request rooms near each other be sure to navigate to the special request section for each reservation to note that you would like your rooms to be close by or connecting to the other reservations being made however connecting rooms is not a guarantee and is accommodated as best as possible.

IS FREE CHILDCARE PROVIDED DURING THE CONVENTION

While there is no free Childcare available, we encourage you to consider Kids Camp.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH MY KIDS WHILE I ATTEND THE CONVENTION?

Kids Camp is available for children with and without Down syndrome from the ages of six weeks to 14 years old. There are 5 separate camp sessions offered during the convention. The cost for each session is \$50 per child. To register for Kids Camp there must be a General Conference registration purchased.



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ARE CHILDREN ALLOWED IN THE WORKSHOPS?

Children are allowed in the workshops and parents/caregivers are asked to be respectful of the audience by keeping noise and distractions to a minimum. In workshops where space is limited, children must sit on their parent's lap or on the floor to allow registered attendees a seat.

CAN RELATIVES COMING TO HELP WITH CHILDCARE ATTEND THE CONVENTION SESSIONS?

To attend Convention sessions, each individual must purchase a Convention registration.

CAN I BRING MY BABY TO THE SATURDAY AWARDS BANQUET?

Yes! if you will be holding your baby, there is no need to purchase a banquet ticket. If you would like a highchair or seat at the table, a Banquet ticket is required.

WHAT IS THE DRESS CODE FOR THE SATURDAY AWARDS BANQUET?

Anything you would like! Some attendees will come in suits and dresses, while others prefer something a bit more casual, such as slacks for men and sundresses for women. This year, the theme is Boots & Bling and many will dress accordingly.

CAN I BRING MY WHOLE FAMILY TO THE DANCE ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHT?

All registered attendees are invited to the dances and Welcome Session.

WHY CAN'T MY VERY MATURE 14-YEAR-OLD ATTEND THE YOUTH & ADULT CONFERENCE?

The minimum age to participate in the Youth & Adult Conference is 15 (on the first day of convention). From past experience, we have found this to be the cut off that allows the most attendees to benefit from our program.

WHY CAN'T WE REGISTER OUR SELF-ADVOCATE FOR THE YOUTH & ADULT CONFERENCE ON-SITE?

Registration is not accepted on-site for the Youth & Adult Conference due to the extensive planning required to support the needs of each individual attendee.

WHY CAN'T WE REGISTER OUR CHILD FOR THE SIBLINGS CONFERENCE ON-SITE?

Registration is not accepted on-site for the Siblings Conference due to prior planning needed for space, logistics and the off-site trip.

CAN YOU MAKE AN EXCEPTION FOR MY 6TH GRADER TO ATTEND THE SIBLING CONFERENCE?

Unfortunately, no, the minimum grade level to attend the Siblings Conference is students entering the 7th grade. From experience, we have found this to be the cut off that allows the most attendees to benefit from our program.

WHY ARE THE DEEP-DIVE SESSIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE GENERAL REGISTRATION?

Deep-dive sessions are offered in addition to our regular workshop cycles as an opportunity to spend 3 hours with an expert. Because not all General Conference attendees are interested in these intense sessions, an additional charge is applied to only the individuals interested in participating in Deep-Dive sessions.

CAN I ATTEND MORE THAN ONE DEEP DIVE?

Since there is only one Deep Dive Cycle attendees will only be able to attend one session.



2025 NDSC CONVENTION CELEBRATING ALL

I WANT TO ATTEND THE DEEP DIVES. HOW DO I DECIDE?

A description of the pre-conference sessions, as well as the biography for each presenter, is available for each session in the Agenda to help you decide which Deep Dive is the best for you.

CAN I SWITCH DEEP DIVES AFTER I HAVE REGISTERED?

Yes, you can switch to another deep-dive session as long as it is prior to the registration deadline and there is space available. Changes are not permitted after the registration deadline or onsite.

WHEN SHOULD I ARRIVE IF I WANT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ENTIRE CONVENTION?

The NDSC Convention has grown into a four-day event with multiple options for learning, fellowship and enjoyment. If you wish to attend the Global Roundtable (12:00 pm Thursday), you should plan to arrive in Dallas on Wednesday evening or early on Thursday morning. The Convention concludes on Sunday afternoon.

CAN I BUY TICKETS FOR THE SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET DURING THE CONVENTION?

No. Tickets must be purchased before the registration deadline in order to accommodate the hotel food and beverage guarantee deadline.

WHEN WILL I GET ACCESS TO THE CONFERENCE RECORDINGS?

We will no longer be providing recording of the sessions. You are encouraged to view the materials provided by the presenters on the Event Power website/app. Feel free to ask the presenters for their email address after the presentations if you would like more information. Please remember that not all presenters will be comfortable providing this contact information.

CAN SPEAKERS SEE OR EVALUATE MY CHILD?

Families interested in professional evaluations and therapeutic services should make arrangements directly with the professional prior to or after the conference.

HOW CAN I GET CEU CREDITS?

NDSC does not currently partner with any professional organizations for CEU Credits. You may contact your individual organization to determine if they will count the sessions you attended towards your CEU Requirements.

IS TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED TO/FROM THE AIRPORT TO HOTEL?

No, Convention attendees are responsible for their own transportation to and from the hotel.

WHY DID MY RESERVATION CHARGE ME A RESORT FEE?

The resort fee is included in the negotiated hotel rate and is a required fee.

ARE THERE LIFEGUARDS AND LIFE JACKETS AT THE POOL?

Yes, lifeguards are stationed in designated areas where required. Areas without lifeguards, such as Leisure Cove, have clear signage indicating they are unguarded. JadeWaters offers a limited number of children's life jackets for rent at \$15 each.



2025 NDSC CONVENTION CELEBRATING ALL

DO ALL ATTENDEES HAVE ACCESS TO THE POOL?

Only registered hotel guests may access the pool with their resort pass from check in.

ARE THERE REFRIGERATORS IN THE HOTEL ROOMS?

There are mini refrigerators in each hotel room.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Registration for Youth & Adult Conference, Siblings Conference, Kids Camp sessions, banquet tickets, meal plan, and are NOT refundable after June 30, 2025. The General Conference and Deep Dives are NOT refundable after July 8, 2025.