

# Internet: Working With Children With Down Syndrome

by Judith Maginnis Kuster

Listening to the real experts—parents and other advocates for individuals living with Down syndrome—has been the impetus for exploring the resources available online for clinicians working with children and adults with special needs, specifically (but not limited to) Down syndrome. There is so much we can learn listening to the families of people in our caseload!

## Language

- "Speech and Language Development for Infants with Down Syndrome (0–5)" (<http://www.down-syndrome.org/information/language/early/>) by Sue Buckley and Lillian Bird, offers an extensive program of activities and advice designed to assist the development of speech and language skills for children with Down syndrome.
- See and Learn (<http://www.seeandlearn.org/en/gb/default.aspx>) offers step-by-step, illustrated activities designed to promote the development of language, reading, speech, memory, and number skills. Check especially the free downloads of **language and reading resources**. (<http://www.seeandlearn.org/en/gb/resources/>)
- "A Multicultural/Bilingual Mainstreaming Day Care Program for Young Children with Mild to Moderate Disabilities" (<http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED298733.pdf>) [PDF] by Beatrice de al Brosse, is a 101-page document describing "basic considerations in developing services for mildly and moderately developmentally handicapped young children in a mainstreamed,

multicultural/bilingual day care setting."

- Down Syndrome Foundation of Orange County's Learning Program ([http://dsfoc.org/learning\\_program\\_registration.php](http://dsfoc.org/learning_program_registration.php))

offers free literacy materials and daily activity guides.

- Jon Miller's "Language and Communication Characteristics of Children with Down Syndrome"

(<http://www.riverbendds.org/index.htm?page=miller.html>) has an extensive, if dated bibliography (Chapter 9, 233–262), excerpted with permission from New Perspectives on Down Syndrome.

- James D. MacDonald's "Down Syndrome and Learning to Talk," (<http://www.riverbendds.org/index.htm?page=comtalk.html>) a National Down Syndrome Congress 1997 convention handout, offers answers to frequently asked questions about language acquisition.

## Augmentative and Alternative Communication

- "Using Augmentative Communication With Infants and Young Children With Down Syndrome" by Phil Foreman and Geoff Crews, is an article that appeared in *Down Syndrome Research and Practice*. (<http://www.down-syndrome.org/reports/71/>)
- "Signing and Lexical Development in Children with Down Syndrome" (<http://www.down-syndrome.org/reviews/119/?page=1>) by John Clibbens also appeared in *Down Syndrome Research and Practice*.
- "Down Syndrome and Sign Language Benefits" (<http://www.babies-and-sign-language.com/downs-syndrome.html>) discusses how use of simultaneous signs supports the formation of spoken language.

## Articulation and Phonology

- "A Facilitating Technique to Improve Speech Intelligibility in

Individuals with Down's Syndrome" by Simalee Smith–Stubblefield and Karen Guidi (<http://www.riverbendds.org/visualphonics.html>) looks at the use of Visual Phonics to improve speech intelligibility in individuals with Down syndrome.

- The use of the telephone is reported by parents of young adults to be an excellent motivator. A parent of an 18–year–old said that the biggest motivator for working on better articulation is the **Dragon Dictation** speech–to–text app, (<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/dragon-dictation/id341446764?mt=8>) downloaded to his iPhone. Words spoken into the app are typed into text. The parent reported "It's so cool to see him repeating words and really enunciating them to make sure the right thing is typed out so he can text his friends!" According to another parent, when her daughter moved to her own apartment and often had to answer the phone, "this did much more than any speech treatment to improve her vocabulary and articulation and grammar."

## Fluency/Stuttering

A number of articles and brochures address fluency issues in individuals with Down syndrome:

- "What Can We Do about Dysfluency, Stammering, Getting Stuck?" ([http://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/images/stories/DSA-documents/Publications/speech-language/dysfluency\\_stammering\\_getting\\_stuck.pdf](http://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/images/stories/DSA-documents/Publications/speech-language/dysfluency_stammering_getting_stuck.pdf)) [PDF] by Leela Baksi from the Down's Syndrome Association newsletter.
- "Dysfluency, Stuttering and Down Syndrome" (<http://www.riverbendds.org/index.htm?page=stutter.html>) by Monica Bray.
- "Stuttering and Down Syndrome Abstracts" (<http://www.riverbendds.org/index.htm?page=bray.html>) by

Monica Bray (2006).

- "The Nature of Dysfluency in Down's Syndrome"  
(<http://www.riverbendds.org/bray.html>)
- "Treating Children with Down Syndrome Who Stutter"(  
<http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/isad11/papers/eckardt11.html>) by  
Judith Eckardt.
- "Down's Syndrome and Stuttering," a brochure from the Stuttering  
Foundation.
- "The nature of Dysfluency in Down's Syndrome,"  
([http://www.stammering.org/downs\\_survey.html](http://www.stammering.org/downs_survey.html)) Monica Bray's  
survey on dysfluency in Down syndrome and level of success of  
different treatment approaches.

## Feeding and Swallowing

- Jennifer Perez and Gwenyth Gorlin's PowerPoint presentation  
"Feeding and Swallowing in Children with Down Syndrome" [PPT]  
(<http://www.childrenshospital.org/clinicalservices/Site2845/Documents/Feeding Children with Down Syndrome 2010.ppt>) (note –  
you may have to cut and paste this URL)
- "Feeding Dysfunction Down Syndrome Abstracts" (through 1999).  
(<http://www.riverbendds.org/index.htm?page=feedab.html>)
- "Suggestions for Enhancing Feeding Skills and Language  
Developments"  
(<http://www.riverbendds.org/index.htm?page=splangsu.html>) by  
Laura Drower and Julie Levin.
- "Oral Motor and Feeding Skills"  
(<http://www.riverbendds.org/index.htm?page=fiocca.html>) by  
Sharon Fiocca.
- Libby Kumins' "Resource Guide to Oral Motor Skill Difficulties in  
Children with Down Syndrome" [PDF]  
(<http://www.ndscenter.org/resources/documents/speech/OralMotor.pdf>)

## Additional resources

- "Memory development for individuals with Down syndrome" ([http://www.down-syndrome.org/information/memory/overview/Default.aspx?page=7#Implications for activities](http://www.down-syndrome.org/information/memory/overview/Default.aspx?page=7#Implications_for_activities))
- "Down Syndrome Issues and Information: Speech and Language" (<http://www.down-syndrome.org/information/language/>)
- "Down Syndrome Issues and Information: Reading, Writing and Literacy" (<http://www.down-syndrome.org/information/reading/>)
- "Noah's minute," (<http://noahsdad.com/noahs-minute/>) an archive of minute-long daily videos, many demonstrating appropriate activities being introduced.
- "Speech and Language Therapy for children with Down Syndrome" ([http://www.ndss.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=138:speech-a-language-therapy&catid=51:therapies-a-development&itemid=142&showall=1](http://www.ndss.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=138:speech-a-language-therapy&catid=51:therapies-a-development&itemid=142&showall=1))
- "Speech and Language Resource Guides for Individuals With Down Syndrome," by Libby Kummin ([http://www.ndscenter.org/?page\\_id=66](http://www.ndscenter.org/?page_id=66)) – a series of nine helpful guides from first word and phrases to adults.
- "Supporting Children with Down Syndrome," (<http://www.tes.co.uk/downs-syndrome-sen-teaching-resources>) a guide for teachers on the best strategies to use in the mainstream environment (available only on Windows).

Finally, although not all of the articles are freely available online, searching on the key words "Down Syndrome" on **SpeechBITE**, (<http://www.speechbite.com/>) the Australian Speech Pathology Database for Best Interventions and Treatment Efficacy, uncovers 32 research articles.

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**One additional resource that missed the deadline (JAK)**

- Libby Kumin's "Comprehensive Speech and Language Treatment for Infants, Toddlers, and Children with Down Syndrome" (<http://www.ds-health.com/speech.htm>)