



WAISMAN CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

16th Annual

In-Person and Online

Waisman Center Day with the Experts: Down Syndrome

Learn about advances in research and clinical services and hear from a panel of experts—individuals with Down syndrome and family members.

Saturday, March 7, 2026 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Coffee & Connections at 8:30 a.m for in-person attendees. Virtual via Zoom.

8:30-9:00 a.m.

Coffee and Connections:

If you are attending in person, please join us for Coffee & Connection prior to the start of the presentations. Representatives from the Waisman Center's Down Syndrome Clinic and the Children's Resource Center – South, along with DSAW and GiGi's Playhouse will be available for conversation and to answer questions. Coffee and refreshments provided.

9:00 - 9:05 a.m. Welcome: *Maria Stanley, MD, Director, Waisman Center Clinics*

9:05 - 9:30 a.m.

"Small Bites: Nutrition Needs and Sensory Preferences for People with Down Syndrome"

Maria Stanley, MD, Developmental Behavioral Pediatrician, Director, Waisman Center Clinics, Mary Marcus, MS, RDN, CSP, CD, and Jaclyn Bender, MS, OTR/L, Waisman Center Clinics

9:30 - 10:00 a.m.

"Cardiometabolic Health in Individuals with Down Syndrome"

Sigan Hartley, PhD, 100 Women Distinguished Chair in Human Ecology, Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, School of Human Ecology, Waisman Center Investigator

Down syndrome is the most common genetic cause of intellectual disability with an estimated incidence of 1 in 700 live births in the U.S. and 1 in 1000 worldwide. The extra copy of chromosome 21 impacts gene expression to affect every major organ system. One result of these effects is that individuals with Down syndrome experience a unique profile of cardiometabolic health. This presentation will discuss what is known about the cardiometabolic health of children and adults with DS and lifestyle factors that shape these outcomes.

10:00 - 10:30 a.m.

"Moving More Together: Exercise for Children With Down Syndrome and Their Parents"

Luis Columna, PhD, Professor, Department of Kinesiology, Waisman Affiliate

Being active is important for children with Down syndrome and for their parents. In this talk, we will share simple and practical exercise ideas that families can use in daily life. We will discuss aerobic activities (such as walking, biking, dancing, and swimming) and strength activities (such as bodyweight exercises, resistance bands, and playground-based movements), and how these activities can support health, strength, and everyday movement. When talking about swimming, we will also highlight important safety tips families should keep in mind. In addition to supporting children's physical activity, we will talk about the importance of parents, especially mothers, taking time to care for their own health. Families will leave with easy, realistic ideas to help their children stay active while also finding ways to move and feel better themselves.

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. **PANEL DISCUSSION** that includes individuals with Down syndrome and family members.

Scan to register



*Hosted by the **Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin (DSAW)- South Central, GiGi's Playhouse, and the Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison** Sponsored by the **Friends of the Waisman Center***



Waisman Center | 1500 Highland Avenue | Madison, WI
EVERYONE WELCOME

For additional details, call 608.263.5837 or email palumbo@waisman.wisc.edu