

Contents

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT	3
AUSTRALIA	4
BANGLADESH	5
CHINA	8
HONG KONG	14
INDIA	18
JAPAN	20
MYANMAR	21
NEPAL	22
PAKISTAN	24
PHILIPPINES	26
SRI LANKA	30
TAIWAN	32
UAE	36
VIETNAM	42

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT



As we commemorate World Down Syndrome Day, we celebrate the incredible individuals with Down syndrome who enrich our lives and communities. This year, amidst global challenges, it's crucial to reaffirm our commitment to inclusion, empowerment, and advocacy.

At the Asia Pacific Down Syndrome Federation, we stand united in our mission to champion the rights and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. Our work extends beyond awareness; it's about fostering environments where every person, regardless of ability, can thrive and contribute meaningfully.

This World Down Syndrome Day highlights the talents, achievements, and aspirations of individuals with Down syndrome. Let's amplify their voices, break down barriers, and promote equal opportunities in education, employment, and society at large.

Together, we can build a more inclusive world—one that recognizes the inherent dignity and worth of every individual. Let's embrace diversity, celebrate differences, and pave the way for a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

N. Ramachandran President APDSF

AUSTRALIA

World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) 2024 was a fantastic celebration for Down Syndrome Australia (DSA). Our team travelled to Canberra for two days of festivities, starting with a warm welcome from our Patrons at Government House the day before WDSD.

The main event was a fantastic breakfast at Parliament House, where self-advocates, supporters, team members, MPs and Ministers came together to celebrate the lives and achievements of people with Down syndrome. We reflected on the progress we've made in embracing people with Down syndrome in our families, schools, workplaces and communities. We also discussed the work ahead to ensure everyone feels valued and included.



Following the breakfast, some of our self-advocates and team met with ministers to discuss important priorities like the NDIS, healthcare, jobs and education. The two days were filled with positive energy, friendships and meaningful conversations. It was encouraging to see politicians actively listening to the challenges we discussed and offering genuine support.



We extend our gratitude to our dedicated self-advocates for their hard work. Their voice is crucial as we continue striving for a world where everyone is celebrated for who they are and empowered to reach their full potential.



BANGLADESH

Bangladesh observed World Down Syndrome Day-



2024

Down Syndrome Society of Bangladesh as a national voice for people with Down syndrome had celebrated WDSD-2024 with Ministry of Social Welfare Government of Bangladesh and likeminded organizations. On the occasion of the 11th National and 19th World Down Syndrome Day, an event was organized in the auditorium of the National Disability Development Foundation on 21st March 2024, DSSB team actively participated in this event.

DSSB student Rafan Razzak stood 3rd position in a nationwide art competition organized by NDD Trust, Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh. He received the appreciation from the Honorable Minister Prof. Dr. Dipu Moni, Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh. In addition nine Self Advocates of DSSB were awarded special scholarships from Neuro Developmental Disabilities

Protection Trust, Ministry of Social Welfare.

On the occasion of WDSD 21st March 2024, a TV Talk show was organized by renowned TV Channel i, Episode: 7537, Chairman, Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital, Managing Director (Joint Secretary), Neuro-Developmental Disability Protection Trust, Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh and Chairman, Down Syndrome Society of Bangladesh were present in the talk show.



On 28th March, DSSB and AMDA Bangladesh jointly organized a seminar and prize distribution ceremony at the community level to mark the WDSD-2024. Local leaders, stakeholders and government bodies participated in this event. A colorful rally was organized to raise the voice in the community.

Impeccable presentation by self-advocate vlogger with Down syndrome S Rafan Razzak at the gala event of WDSD-2024 organized by NDD Trust, Ministry of Social Welfare.











(END)

CHINA

Up for Down's Shanghai China

On March 21, 2024, we held a West Lake tour in Hangzhou. Our relationship with Hangzhou Huanhu Sightseeing Co., Ltd. began in 2012, almost every year the committee of the company invites people with Down Syndrome and their families to take a free sightseeing bus to visit the West Lake on March 21. This activity has been going on for the 12th year, thanks to Secretary Jiang and the successive secretaries and their volunteer team, because of the activity, more DS families can enjoy the beautiful scenery of Hangzhou West Lake leisurely.





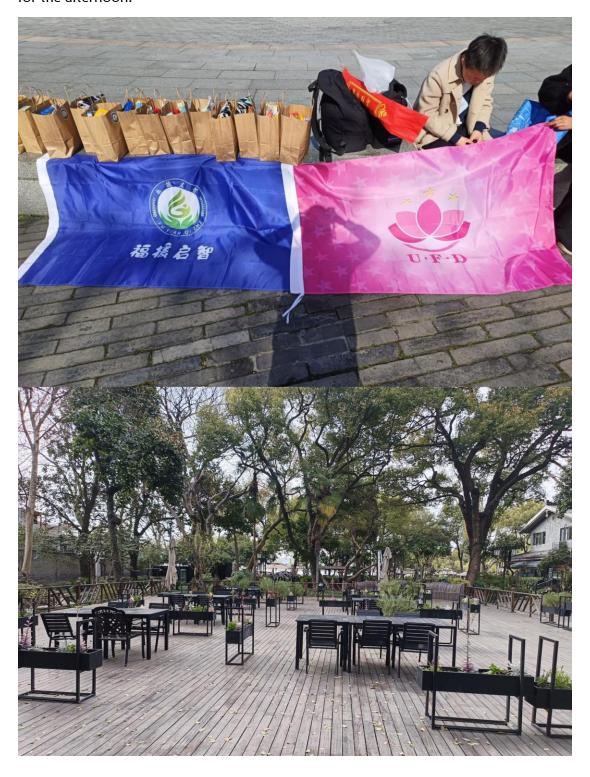
Smiles from the DS children during the activity.



Thanks to Mr. Dong and volunteers along the way to ensure the safety of the trip, the docents explained very well.



Thanks to our friends, Hangzhou Fuyuan Qizhi Co., Ltd, for preparing the lunch and the venue for the afternoon.



After lunch, we began to perform songs and dances, as well as martial arts and African drums.



The event ended at 2pm, thanks to all the organizations and volunteers who supported the event.



HONG KONG

To celebrate World Down Syndrome Day 2024, the Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association unveiled the "THIS IS ME" Catwalk Show and Stage Performance on 16 March 2024. Twelve enthusiastic members with Down syndrome had been participating in fashion design and catwalk training workshops since December. They diligently crafted their own fashion designs and practised their catwalk skills in preparation for the event.

On that day, they confidently showcased their self-designed outfits and walked the T-stage, sharing their dreams. Their performance won significant applause, highlighting the transformative power of providing equal opportunities to all. We hope this can help further convey our message: "End the Stereotypes."

The event was a big success, with our members benefiting from the guidance of volunteers and event professionals. Everyone enjoyed their time in the fashion show, stage performances from different organizations, and engaging booth games. We have once again proven the importance of collective efforts in fostering an inclusive society. Let us continue to work together to build a more inclusive and diverse community for our friends with Down syndrome.





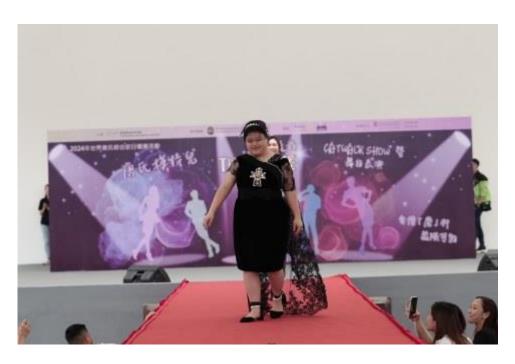
















INDIA

World Down Syndrome Day is all about celebrating Trisomy Twenty-One

World Down Condition Day (WDSD) festivities in India have advanced into lively and comprehensive occasions that feature the capacities and accomplishments of people with Down syndrome. Here we present a list of WDSD festivities in India this year:

Illuminating Significant Milestones: India celebrates WDSD by illuminating prominent buildings and monuments with blue and yellow lights to raise awareness of Down syndrome. This year, too many prominent structures were illuminated in the vibrant Yellow and blue - Structures that were illuminated in Chennai were the Ripon Building, the Secretariat, Apollo Medical clinics. In Delhi, Madan Mohan Malviya Hospital and the Vidhan Soudha shone brilliantly in yellow and blue. Chandigarh also had lit up some of its major buildings.









Buddy Walk: The Buddy Walk is an occasion where individuals of any age and capacities meet up to walk along with people with Down syndrome. These were held in different urban areas and towns, to raise awareness for Down syndrome and celebrate variety.

Health Camps: On WDSD, medical camps are frequently held to provide free consultations, screenings, and health exams for persons with Down syndrome.. Camps were coordinated in Delhi, Indore, Mumbai and Jalandhar this year.



Gatherings with Guardians: Meetings and seminars on WDSD are frequently held by parent support groups and organizations, allowing parents of persons with Down syndrome to connect, share experiences, and access resources. This year also caregivers got together in different areas to observe WDSD.





Events at Colleges and Schools: Instructive establishments assume an essential part in WDSD festivities by putting together exceptional occasions, studios, and mindfulness meetings. Cultural programs, art exhibitions, sports, and interactive sessions that showcased students' talents and promoted inclusion included Down syndrome students.



Online Conversations: WDSD in India also saw online campaigns, webinars, and social media initiatives as a result of the rise of digital platforms. Rights and inclusion, educational and employment opportunities, advancements in healthcare, and personal stories of Down syndrome and their families were all discussed in these virtual discussions.

Visit On board a Coast Guard ship: This year, a novel initiative was launched in Chennai that saw our self-advocates board a Coast Guard ship. They were given memorable experiences, exposure to maritime operations, and the opportunity to interact with personnel on this adventurous excursion.







By and large, WDSD festivities in India mirror a developing mindfulness and obligation to making a comprehensive society where people with Down syndrome are esteemed, upheld, and engaged to achieve their potential.

JAPAN

Advocating for Health Equity: Actor with Down Syndrome Delivers Speech at WDSD event in NY

Aoi Yoshida, a 17-year-old Japanese actor with Down syndrome, participated in the World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) event organized by Down Syndrome International (DSi) in New York on March 21st.

Alongside his friend and fellow actor, Jason Hancock, Yoshida delivered a speech in both Japanese and English, advocating for health equity to ensure equal access to healthcare worldwide for individuals with Down syndrome. Yoshida, who himself has a mild heart condition, addressed the common concerns that his peers in the Down syndrome community have regarding their health.



Aoi Yoshida (second right) and Jason Hancock (right) at the WDSD event in New York

He emphasized the importance of everyone being comfortable with their bodies and staying healthy, stating, "It would be wonderful if everyone could be happy and healthy." He then expressed his hope for equal provision of necessary medical care globally.

Yoshida, a high school student at a special needs education school in Tokyo, appeared in the Academy Award-nominated movie "PERFECT DAYS," starring actor Koji Yakusho. He was also cast as the younger brother of the main character in an NHK family drama aired in 2023.

MYANMAR

CELEBRATING EMPOWERMENT, AWARENESS, AND WELL-BEING IN YANGON,

Our recent event in Yangon marked World Down Syndrome Day with a remarkable showcase of empowerment and community support. Over three impactful days, we engaged in activities aimed at celebrating aspirations, fostering understanding, and promoting holistic well-being.



The "Let Them Dream" training sessions on the first and second days catered to different audiences with Down syndrome, each session employing unique techniques.

With 22 participants per session, individuals explored various career paths, expressing their dreams through engaging discussions and drawings. In the afternoons, tailored awareness sessions featured advocacy songs, interactive activities challenging stereotypes, and quizzes for guardians, all designed to foster support and inclusivity while honoring the global observance of World Down Syndrome Day..



As the third activity, water therapy was offered to participants for enhanced balance, strengthened muscles, and a profound sense of relaxation. This therapeutic experience boosted self-confidence and alleviated fears, fostering empowerment among participants.





With overwhelmingly positive feedback, including 98 quotes reflecting the event's impact, we reaffirm our commitment to empowering individuals with Down syndrome, promoting awareness, and nurturing well-being within our community.

NEPAL

Highlights of WDSD 2024 events

1. 21 March

Picnic / Interaction among parents and children with DS. Memorable day spent in Picnic Farn & Resort, Nagarkot with lots of fun, dance, play, hiking experience, learning, and sharing. A parent and sibling of a 22-year-old adult girl with Down syndrome from Germany accompanied us and gave us valuable tips to teach math logically. In turn, they also learned about our cultural diversities and the difficulties in raising our children in Nepal.

2 27 March

AWARENESS WORKSHOP "Positive professional Attitude Towards Down Syndrome " for Faculty members, Medical students, Interns, and PG residents organized at Nepal Medical College & Teaching Hospital, Kathmandu. Around 102 participants attended. Presentations by President & Founder DSSHA – Nepal Dr Lalita Joshi & Self Advocate Ashish Joshi followed by Q & A among Participants and presenters. There have been requests for further such events.

A pre & post-test workshop Questionnaire was filled by participants to assess the change in the level of knowledge gained. The result showed a remarkable upgrading of the participant's knowledge acquired post-workshop.

An **Awareness drama** was also staged to show how our children are underestimated by the general population in their capabilities, giving knowledge of prenatal testing and postnatal counseling and achievements attained with good medical support, therapies, and awareness raising in the community and family.















PAKISTAN

PDSA Pakistan observes World Down Syndrome Day in Karachi.

Pakistan Down Syndrome Association (PDSA) with the collaboration of DEPD and NDF celebrated 21st March as World Down Syndrome Day in Karachi. On this occasion, Additional Secretary DEPD Mr. Ghulam Muhyiddin Asim said that the Sindh Government is very serious about the rehabilitation and empowerment of the children with disabilities especially Down Syndrome. The Non Government Organizations have also taken great steps to establish child rehabilitation centres funded by the Sindh Government, the PDSA and NDF are also prominent organizations that have done significant work for children with Down syndrome.

The Government of Sindh always appreciates and encourages these NGOs. Mr. Abid Lashari CEO PDSA Pakistan said that Pakistan Down Syndrome Association (PDSA) & NDF with the financial support of Sindh Government are running 03 Rehabilitation Centers in Nawabshah, Larkana and Karachi, where more than 300 children are under rehabilitation. He further informed that intellectual disability Down Syndrome, Autism, CP and other related intellectual disabilities are rehabilitated through various life therapies i.e physiotherapy, psychotherapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy.

The rehabilitation of children is in dire need in the Country and is one of big challenges to be addressed and needs a lot of attention. The seriousness and interest of the Government of Sindh is commendable. It is fortunate to have facilities through centres where children with intellectual disabilities are admitted so that the children can be involved in the rehabilitation process. Down Syndrome is an intellectual disability that is better than other intellectual disabilities and can be rehabilitated through normal therapeutic exercises. Well-known Social activist Mr. Mehboob Ali Shaikh, Ms. Kiran Zubair, Alishba, Prof. Iffat and others addressed on this occasion.

Honorary shields were also given to the guest speakers. On the occasion Ms. Alishba Aminuddin Self advocate was officially announced as PDSA Ambassador.











PHILIPPINES

The Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines Inc. (DSAPI) takes the lead in initiating, developing, and promoting support programs and projects related to Down Syndrome. Down Syndrome is a random genetic disorder that occurs in 1 out of 800 childbirths, meaning there is a significant number of Persons with Down Syndrome in every city and municipality around the Philippines. Recognizing that new parents often experience emotions like disappointment, sorrow, fear, guilt, confusion, and anger, DSAPI aims to replace these with positive attitudes of acceptance, understanding, love, and hope. Aside from educating parents, the organization also advocates for acceptance and inclusion across other sectors of society, that ultimately benefit families and Persons with Down Syndrome to live more normal lives.

In celebration of the National Down Syndrome Consciousness Month in February, DSAPI in partnership with SM Cares and SM Megamall staged a half-day conference dubbed, "HAPPY TALK – USAPANG DOWN SYNDROME."

Said conference was well attended by around 300 officials and representatives from seventeen (17) municipalities in National Capital Region and the National Council on Disability Affairs!







The League of PDAOs of the Philippines - NCR Chapter and the Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines, Inc., (DSAPI) had a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly pursue activities towards meeting these objectives.



Activities shall be the following but not limited to:

- Each PDAO in NCR shall organize parent support groups for families of Persons with Down Syndrome;
- Each PDAO in NCR should organize Sensitivity Training Sessions to be conducted by DSAPI for all service providers at least once or twice a year;
- An Activity in February to highlight the celebration of the National Down Syndrome Consciousness Month (Proclamation No. 157);
- Actively join and send delegates to the Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines' annual Happy Walk;
- An activity in July in celebration of the National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation (NDPR) Week (Proclamation No. 361);
- Other possible partnership that will promote awareness and acceptance of Persons with Down Syndrome.





















We would like to thank everyone for the strong support of the heads and members of the League of PDAOs (Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office) Philippines - NCR (National Capital Region) Chapter, Barangay Officials, Public Safety Officers, Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team, the Philippine National Police, City Fire Stations, Municipal Social Welfare Development Office, Public Utility Vehicle Organizations, Women and Children Protection Desk Officers, City Market Admin Officers, Emergency Medical Responders & Technicians, SpEd Teachers and SM Security and Housekeeping Personnel.

Together let's make it our mission, to make communities in the Philippines friendly, safe and inclusive for every Person with Down Syndrome and their families.

1. Awareness programs for the medical professionals and medical students

Dr. K. G. Dayaratne and our medical team successfully covered two Districts and one of the main government medical Colleges. It was a very fruitful event with the participation of more than 150 edical students. We could first time introduce pre and post session feedback forms. It was a productive move to improve subsequent academic events.



Session at the Medical faculty, University of Rajarata Sri Lanka





2. Welfare clubs- Another welfare club for the parents of individuals with Down syndrome was formed in the Puttalam District in parallel to world Down syndrome day

3. Aged people with Down Syndrome

It is a great achievement that we have two elderly homes which accommodate aged people with Down Syndrome. We are getting many inquiries from parents.



Elderly home situated in a calm environment

TAIWAN

Taiwan Down Syndrome Foundation has been celebrating World Down Syndrome Day in Taiwan for over a decade. This year, we continued our mission with renewed energy, with a focus on ending stereotypes and promoting inclusivity for people with Down syndrome.



Vice President William Lai (賴清德) has also been advocating for increased support and encouragement for the Down syndrome community in Taiwan, where over 30,000 individuals live with the condition. During his participation in celebrating the World Down Syndrome Day event in Taipei, Lai emphasized the importance of social civilization in assessing the greatness of a nation. He stated that true greatness lies in the quality of life that people experience, not just landmass, population size, or military prowess. A great country is one that upholds democracy, cherishes freedom, prioritizes human rights, and ensures the happiness of its citizens. This means that all 23 million people in Taiwan should receive equal care and opportunities to live happily in the country, regardless of disabilities. Achieving a high level of civilization requires collaborative efforts among the government, NGOs, private enterprises, and social workers to foster an inclusive environment and dismantle barriers.

Moreover, the department store CEO has provided free venues, stating that every individual is unique and that diversity and inclusivity are the most precious values of Taiwanese society. They will strive to provide a friendly and inclusive environment, allowing people with Down syndrome to integrate into society comfortably and creating more opportunities for them to be seen.



Celebrating World Down Syndrome Day in a department store makes it more accessible to the public, especially those who may not have much exposure to information about Down syndrome. Department stores are bustling centers where people frequently gather for shopping and socializing, providing an excellent opportunity to spread awareness and understanding.

Furthermore, this venue attracts a diverse audience, including families, youth, the elderly, and individuals from different backgrounds. This diversity widens the reach of World Down Syndrome Day, enabling more individuals to engage, learn, and build connections with those people with Down syndrome and their families.

The department store has taken a positive step by holding the "Down Syndrome Friendly" campaign. They have encouraged shops to participate in the campaign by displaying markers and committing to providing quality service, kind interactions, and discounts. The goal of this initiative is to create an inclusive shopping environment

where families with Down syndrome feel a sense of warmth and acceptance.

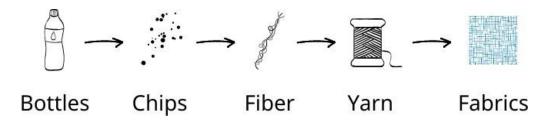


As part of the Lots Of Socks campaign, a special edition eco-socks gift box has been launched in honour of World Down Syndrome Day. These socks are made from recycled PET bottles. Taiwan's annual consumption of 4.5 billion PET bottles is staggering, which is the equivalent of over two Taipei 101 towers. This has a significant environmental impact. However, by recycling PET bottles, we can reduce the use of plastic and mitigate carbon emissions associated with their production and disposal.





The process of converting crushed, cleaned, and purified PET bottles into fibers or fabrics is an eco-friendly solution for producing clothing and other items. We encourage people to wear ECO-mismatched socks on March 21st as a symbol of their support for the Down syndrome community and their contribution to a greener, more sustainable future.



People with Down syndrome are the same as anyone, as we all go through different stages in life. They are no different from us, but only a bit extraordinary. People shouldnot look at their appearance and misunderstand but rather choose to give them more support and encouragement. As the exhibition will be running for 23 days, we encouraged everyone to support people with Down syndrome by visiting the exhibition.





UAE



The UAE's Most Iconic Landmark, The Burj Khalifa, Lights Up in The World Down Syndrome Day 2024

People with Down syndrome, their families, advocates, and specialists enjoyed the amazing look of Burj Khalifa lightened up with EDSA Logo and powerful messages promoting an inclusive society.

This came in the celebration of the Emirates Down Syndrome Association of the World Down Syndrome Day, which falls on March 21 every year.

Dr. Manal Jaroor, EDSA chairperson, praised the strategic partnership with Emaar, emphasized the significant impact of such initiatives in raising social awareness about people with Down syndrome, both locally and globally.

*Watch Burj Khalifa WDSD Projection: https://bit.ly/3Utt45l







EDSA and Shangri-La Hotel Dubai Celebrate World Down Syndrome Day 2024

Emirates Down Syndrome Association hosted its celebration of World Down Syndrome Day 2024, which falls this year during the month of Ramadan, at the Shangri-La Hotel Dubai. The hotel hosts a Ramadan Iftar event for EDSA annually, bringing together board members, people with Down Syndrome and their families, employees, and volunteers.

Dr. Manal Jaroor, EDSA Chairperson, expressed deep gratitude to Shangri-La Hotel Dubai for their generous and longstanding support for more than fifteen years. She said, "We are proud of our partnership with Shangri-La Hotel Dubai, not just for hosting this celebration and extending generous hospitality, but also for their commitment to implementing various initiatives that empower people with Down syndrome and bring joy to them and their families. This embodies the essence of social responsibility and reflects the deeply rooted spirit of giving in this generous country."

* Learn more about the event: https://bit.ly/3xVXuEw







EDSA Board Member Discusses Down Syndrome Achievements on Al Hurra TV Channel In recognition of World Down Syndrome Day 2024, Al Hurra TV Channel featured Ms. Safia Al Safi, Board Member and Treasurer of the Emirates Down Syndrome Association (EDSA). Ms. Al Safi discussed the association's work and the inspiring achievements of people with Down syndrome across various aspects of life.

* Watch the full interview: bit.ly/4alEubp



EDSA Hosts Virtual Lecture on Adolescence and Down Syndrome

EDSA, in collaboration with various people of determination centers under the Ministry of Community Development across the Emirates, hosted a Virtual Awareness Lecture on Adolescence and Behavioral Challenges for people with Down Syndrome. The lecture





was delivered by Prof. Eman Gad, a founding member, and Volunteer Education Consultant.



Awareness Sessions about Down syndrome

As part of raising community awareness during the World Down Syndrome Day 2024, Dr. Nadera Alborno, a volunteer member of EDSA, delivered an informative lecture about Down syndrome at Dubai National School - Al Barsha, generating a lively discussion and positive engagement from the students. Concurrently, Ms. Farah Masoud, a speech therapist at EDSA, conducted a virtual awareness session about Down syndrome for the faculty members of Bateen World Academy. During the session, she addressed their inquiries on diverse topics such as teaching methodologies and inclusion.



A Day of Joy and Activities: EDSA and Early Intervention Center Host Joint Event





On the occasion of World Down Syndrome Day, the association organized a collaborative entertainment event with the Early Intervention Center affiliated with the Ministry of Community Development at the association's headquarters. The event included many entertainment, education, and competitive activities, creating an atmosphere filled with joy and happiness.

*Discover more about the event: https://bit.ly/49UI5I7



Kintsugi Technology held an engaging programming workshop at the association's headquarters in honor of World Down Syndrome Day. Designed to be both interactive and fun, the workshop provided a unique learning experience for participants.

*Discover more about the workshop: https://bit.ly/3Jvojlz







A Day of Double Celebration: EDSA Members Share Love for Their Mothers

As 21st of March marks both World Down Syndrome Day and Mother's Day. EDSA members with Down syndrome extend warm heartfelt messages to their mothers, expressing deep gratitude and love for their unwavering care and support.

* Watch their warm message: https://bit.ly/3WgWPbb





VIETNAM

A month of connection for DS in Vietnam:

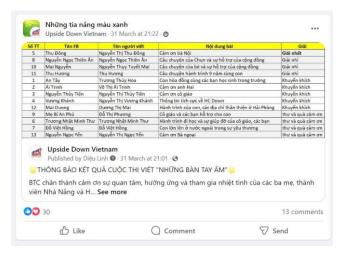
- 1. FP Upside Down Vietnam hosted a Writing Contest named "Warm Hands" about Kindness that DS and families received from people around. From 15 to 31 Mar 2024, the contest attracted thousands of reactions and attention from FB communities, received dozens of entries that were really touching, revealed their tough journeys and gratitude to helping hands from the community. It drew more attention from the public for people with DS, and inspired other families with DS, especially new one. This is the first time ever that such an online event was created and participants from corners of countries joined in.
- 2. Inclusive sport festivals for disabilities "Inclusion 1 Project"- was held in Hoi An, Central of VN on 30-31 Mar 2024. A team of 15 DS attendants from all over VN, together with 40 other competing teams (Autism, delayed development,...). Our "athletes" ran and swam with so much fun. It's also a rare chance to gather offline for families with DS in Vietnam, where we can talk, share and get support from each other.



Writing contest – gratitude from winner.







Writing contest - Result



Sports Festival – DS team







Writing Contest announcement



Sports Festival

