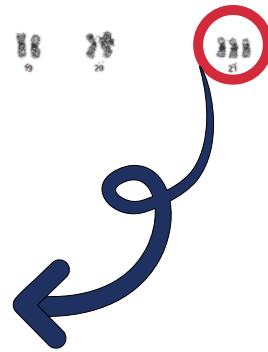
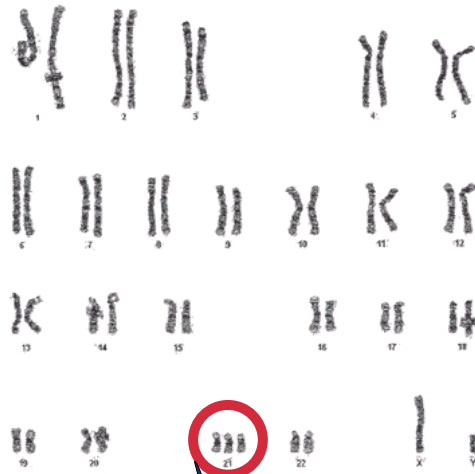
Two cheerleaders are shown from the waist up, wearing blue and yellow uniforms with "LIONS" printed on the chest. They are holding blue and white pom-poms. The background shows a white building and a green canopy.

World Down Syndrome Day in the Classroom

This toolkit is intended to provide educators with activities to celebrate WDSO in their classrooms. We encourage parents and caregivers to share it with their child's teacher!

What is Down syndrome?



**His actual
karyotype.**



Every cell in the human body has a nucleus, where genetic material is stored in genes. Genes carry the codes responsible for all of our inherited traits and are grouped along rod-like structures called **chromosomes**.

Typically, the nucleus of each cell contains 23 pairs of chromosomes. **Down syndrome occurs when an individual has a full or partial extra copy of chromosome 21.**

What is World Down Syndrome Day?

World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) is celebrated globally on March 21st, which is significant as it represents the third copy of the 21st chromosome present in individuals with Down syndrome! This is a day to come together to celebrate Down syndrome and raise awareness. There are many ways to get involved with the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) on World Down Syndrome Day, including our annual virtual event, **Racing for 3.21!**



What is Racing for 3.21?

Every year on World Down Syndrome Day, we host our virtual Racing For 3.21 event! While it sounds like a running event, it doesn't have to be! You can move however you'd like for 3.21 miles or minutes on March 21st or do another activity that incorporates 3.21. Register your classroom as a team and ask your friends, family, and co-workers to support your efforts! The awareness and funds you raise on WDSO support NDSS in our mission to empower individuals with Down syndrome and their families. Learn and register [here](#).

How do I participate with my class?

Click the bib below to download our official Racing for 3.21 bib and print one for each of your students!



If 3.21 miles doesn't work for your class, consider:

- 3 rounds of 21 jumping jacks
- Run, skip, or jump around your track or gym for 3 minutes and 21 seconds
- Read to another student for 3 minutes and 21 seconds

Other ways to celebrate with your class:



There are many wonderful books to help teach kids about Down syndrome, as well as classroom kits that provide thoughtful activities to promote inclusion in schools and communities. NDSS recommends *You Are Enough* by Sofia Sanchez and the book and classroom kit *Everyone Belongs* by Heather Avis from The Lucky Few. NDSS also has 21 Facts you can share with your students, common Q&As for Kids, and our NDSS Coloring Pages.

Rock Some Socks



For many years, people have been wearing mismatched or “crazy” socks to celebrate WDSO. The socks represent the shape of a chromosome when seen from a karyotype, while the fun and bright colors grab attention and make it easy to spread the word.



Please enjoy this
Random Act of Kindness
in honor of World Down
Syndrome Day.



Please enjoy this
Random Act of Kindness
in honor of World Down
Syndrome Day.



Coloring Pages



3.21



Activities for Peers Without Down Syndrome

Socks with Pennys

1. Lay out a tray of pennies
2. Place socks on both hands
3. With your hands in socks, pick up the pennies and place them in a cup
4. Ask if it was more difficult to pick up the pennies with the socks on their hands and discuss how this may be similar to the experiences of an individual with Down syndrome who has low muscle tone.

Writing Skills

1. Place socks on both hands
2. Write your name
3. Ask if it was more difficult to write with the socks on their hands and discuss how this may be similar to the experiences of an individual with Down syndrome who has low muscle tone.

Notable Athletes with Down syndrome

Chris Nikic



- Chris was the first individual with Down syndrome to do a full iron man which includes running, biking, and swimming.
- Chris has completed all the World Major Marathons.

Daniel Chaplin

- Daniel was the first individual with Down syndrome to complete a half marathon in all 50 states.
- Daniel ran the New York City Marathon in 2023 and plans to run the Chicago Marathon in 2025.



Chelsea Werner



- Chelsea is a 4x Special Olympics USA Gymnastics Champion and 2x World Champion.
- When she's not competing in gymnastics, Chelsea models and has been featured in magazines such as Teen Vogue, and campaigns for Aerie, Tommy Hilfiger, and Target.

Caleb Prewitt

- In February 2024, Caleb became the youngest individual with Down syndrome to complete a half marathon. He finished in 3 hours and 21 minutes.
- Caleb has completed 28 triathlons.

