

Homeschooling Your Student with Down Syndrome

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that all students, including students with Down syndrome, have accessed education. While federal guidance has made it clear that school districts are still legally required to uphold the provisions of a student's individualized education plan (IEP) and ensure that students with disabilities are given a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), many students with Down syndrome and other disabilities have faced barriers to accessing the traditional school environment. This has given rise to an increased interest in nontraditional schooling, including homeschooling, for students with Down syndrome.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:



Once you withdraw your student from the public school system, the school is released of all legal obligations for implementing the IEP, including related services*.



Socialization is a huge part of school, so when deciding to homeschool, it is important to consider how you will ensure your student has access to socialization.



Access to specific programs that teach academic content and are used by the school may not be available for in-home use or can be costly to purchase on your own.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS:



The flexibility allows for the option to school at a time of day when your student is most attentive and around any therapy appointments.



Learning is self-paced and the curriculum can be matched to the student's preferred learning style(s).



Fewer distractions in the learning environment can allow for more focus.

**Some states have programs in which related services such as speech, occupational, and physical therapies are still provided to students who are homeschooled. Please check your state Department of Education (DOE) for your state's policy.*

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) does not take a position for or against homeschooling as an option for educating students with Down syndrome. We recognize that every individual family is different and has different educational needs.

It is important to note that homeschooling laws and policies vary state to state. Be sure to look at your state level Department of Education to ensure you follow the proper steps to notify the school you will be homeschooling and know the process of reporting progress.



Strategies & Resources for Homeschooling Your Child with Down Syndrome

Tips for Success:

1

Take advantage of technology tools.

2

Maintain a consistent routine each day.

3

Plan short, individualized lessons for your student.

4

Allow student to make choices (i.e., “Do you want to do math or writing first?”).

5

Integrate learning into real life situations and student experiences.

6

Repeat lessons and teach content in a variety of ways for mastery.

7

Use lots of visuals (for lessons/activities & daily schedules).

8

Schedule opportunities to interact with same aged peers in activities such as sports & clubs.

Resources

Curriculum & Lessons:

<https://www.time4learning.com/homeschooling/special-needs/down-syndrome/>

State Regulations

<https://hslida.org/legal>

Support Groups on Facebook

[Down Syndrome Homeschooling Q&A](#)

[Homeschool and Down Syndrome](#)

[Homeschooling & Teaching Kiddos with Down Syndrome](#)

[Homeschooling and Down syndrome](#)