

European Down Syndrome Association news



Denmark Landsforeningen Downs Syndrom



Internet: www.downsyndrom.dk

Founded: 2000. Non profit organisation with individual members

President: Suzanne Udengaard

Members: ca. 550

Finances: member fees, financial support from state: lottery-money, donations from firms and from private, public and private foundations, starting to sell material and advertising in our magazine

Main goals

To work for the interests of people with Down syndrome

Services

- counselling
- some volunteering work
- answering e-mails
- organising seminars, courses and the national conference
- leisure activities: summer camps

Publications

- regular journal: "Down & Up", 4 issues per year
- information flyer about the association
- we have two different posters and two post-cards "we can climb mountains" and "enjoy life" (were posted to politicians and private individuals on 21 March 2006)

Awareness campaign

There was no regular Down syndrome awareness day in Denmark, but we started on 21 March 2006, on World DS Day. The local groups sent postcards to politicians, making them aware that now Down syndrome will come closer to everyday life, because of the new municipality law from 2007. Postcards were also sent to people in the neighbourhood.

Projects and campaigns

Our main project in the next years:

- courses for parents and professionals together, as a follow up to the 2005 conference

Successful campaigns or projects in recent years were:

- Conference in 2005 with 570 participants, among them 190 parents and almost 400 professionals

- Summer camp (family event)
- "pølsevognen" tour, with two well-known adults with Down syndrome going to Germany to visit Danish football players in German clubs. On that tour they raised around 70,000 kr. for our association and created a lot of publicity.

Useful project-tip for other EDSA members:

Always start in very good time beforehand with preparation of major projects.

Try to get a secretary if you can afford it – we did this in 2005, and the board has had more energy to work on other projects.

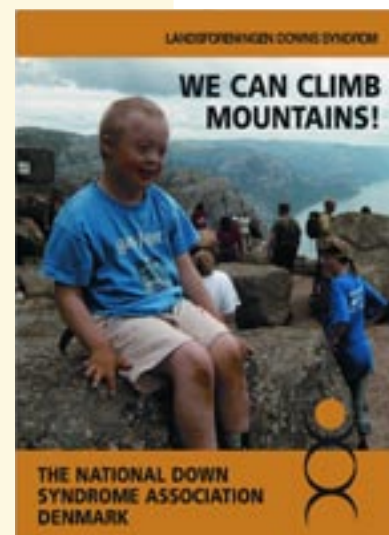


Suzanne Udengaard,
president

General information

The main problems in Denmark for persons with Down-syndrome are:

- difficulties integrating people with Down syndrome in a highly modern society
- the housing situation for adults is not developing well at all; on the contrary, there is a tendency of building bigger living environments = institutions again!
- the municipalities, who will have full responsibility for tasks concerning people with Down syndrome from 2007 on, might have economic problems and/or are more interested in other "trendy" disabilities, so that the development of opportunities for people with Down syndrome will become less.
- there is not enough knowledge about Down syndrome in the community, so they don't offer the best solutions for children and adults with Down syndrome.



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Collecting information and spreading knowledge about Down syndrome where it is needed is one of the important issues we need to work on.

Numbers

There are about 60-70 children born with Down syndrome in Denmark per year. This was before the screening methods became more regular.

We estimate that there are about 3500 persons with Down syndrome living in Denmark

Situation of babies and toddlers under 4 years

Medical care: generally fine. Physiotherapy, early intervention and other therapies (e.g. speech therapy) are generally good.

Situation of schoolchildren

About 50% of children up to 6 years are in main-stream kindergarten.

About 10% of children (6-12 years old) attend main-stream primary schools.

Only one teenager (12-18 years old) is in a main-stream secondary school.

There are only a few children who are in main-stream classes. Most children with Down syndrome are at special schools or in special classes.

Situation of adults

We do not know how many persons with Down syndrome over 50 years are alive.

We assume that they live in institutions.