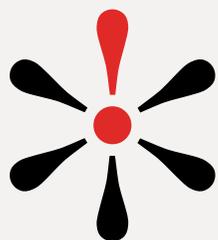


ANNUAL REPORT  
**2020**

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Canadian  
Down Syndrome  
Society

Société  
canadienne de la  
trisomie 21

## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

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Dear Canadian Down Syndrome Society Members,

As you will see in this report, 2020 marked the second year of our current three-year strategic plan, and it was filled with many accomplishments, milestones, and learnings. As with many organizations, CDSS had to make some unplanned pivots as a result of the pandemic, but despite this, we were very successful.

Our success this past year would not be possible without the efforts and enthusiasm from CDSS staff, self-advocates, CDSS membership, local organizations, volunteers, and many more. By working together, we make a greater impact to not only meet the needs within our community but to raise awareness and change public perceptions within the Canadian general public and beyond.

As we enter into our final year of the current strategic plan in 2021, CDSS staff and board are committed to building upon the great accomplishments that were made over the past year. Also in 2021, we will begin strategic planning for the next three years to further support the CDSS mission and vision.

As an organization, our future is bright and we are determined to work together to continue to inspire Canadians to *See the Ability*.

Sincerely,



**Ed Casagrande**

Board Chair

Thank you to Hilary Gauld-Camilleri for many of the beautiful photographs in this report.  
You can find more of Hilary's work at: [oneforthewall.ca](https://www.oneforthewall.ca)

Cover Story, *One Canadian Reflects on 2020* by Ren, Page 26



## GREETINGS FROM OUR INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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It was a different year for all of us. With the pandemic raging, we had to react quickly in March. This caused us to quickly review all our operational procedures and policies, looking for efficiencies and streamlining. Our dedicated staff transitioned to work from home and most continue to do so.

During this time of uncertainty about Covid-19 and how it affects our community, CDSS published Covid-19 informational resources and as news became available, we provided the connections to additional global resources. We also helped to ensure that individuals with Down syndrome had information about the pandemic and how to follow regional public health recommendations in understandable, easy-read resources as well as offering them in English and French.

Later in the year, to further streamline our organizational expenditures, we decided to downsize and relocate to a shared office space in downtown Calgary. In an effort to support remote working capability, we transitioned to a cloud-based system for all staff. Our staff was dedicated and committed throughout the many changes of 2020.

Despite the many challenges of the pandemic, we were able to continue to deliver on our mission. In this report you will read about our successes during 2020 including our new fundraising initiatives, improving our Resource Hub and creating a new Employment Workbook and Hub for job seekers of all ages and our continued advocacy efforts to help ensure that our community is heard.

Our 2020 Annual General Report is full of wonderful stories and would not be possible without our amazing staff, board members, supporters and community partners. Thank you everyone for your time, commitment, and support during this most difficult year.

We look forward to a wonderful 2021.



**Laura LaChance**

Interim Executive Director



## VISION:

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All people are valued, fully participating citizens.

## MISSION:

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To empower Canadians with Down syndrome and their families. We raise awareness and provide information on Down syndrome through the prenatal, early childhood, school years, adulthood, and retirement stages of life.



## 2020 STAFF:

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Executive Director: Kirk Crowther (on leave)

Interim Executive Director: Laura LaChance

Director of Development: Kate White

Marketing & Communications Manager: Kristen Halpen

Resource Coordinator: Liza Kiegler

Bookkeeper and Facility Coordinator: Marion Lauzon

Database Coordinator: Debbie Monaghan

Awareness Leader: Paul Sawka

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Ed Casagrande, Board Chair

Paul Crowley, Board Vice Chair

Yelman Siddiqi, Board Treasurer

Jackie Charchuk, Board Secretary

Maria Borges

Jennifer Crowson

Dave Fischl

Dewlyn Lobo

Christine McConnell

Ben Tarr



**Thank you for  
championing the  
lives of people with  
Down syndrome.**

*2020 Survey Respondent*

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## CDSS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2019-2021

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- 1.** *To broaden the understanding of Down syndrome in Canada*
- 2.** *To build strong relationships with key stakeholders in Canada*
- 3.** *To diversify our fund development*
- 4.** *To develop workplace support resources for job seekers and employers in Canada*





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

*To broaden the understanding of Down syndrome in Canada:*

### **World Down Syndrome Day 2020**

In our ongoing efforts to raise awareness for Down syndrome, CDSS developed the World Down Syndrome Day Celebration Kit that includes downloadable, printable and shareable resources including a teaching plan, presentation, posters and videos focused on awareness and acceptance of Down syndrome. Teachers, parents and anyone who wants to help raise awareness about Down syndrome in their communities continue to download and share these impactful resources. Prior to the Covid-19 shut down in March 2020, almost 20,000 children across Canada received fun swag items through the mail to help celebrate World Down Syndrome Day.



Due to Covid-19, March 21, 2020 celebrations for WDSY were not exactly as expected. Across Canada things were changing quickly in homes, communities, businesses and schools. The Down syndrome community across Canada stayed safe and made the most of this unique time by virtually celebrating World Down Syndrome Day in March 2020.



## Project Understood

Much more than an awareness campaign, Project Understood's tangible goal is to help make voice recognition more inclusive and accessible for people with Down syndrome. Voice technology currently does not recognize one in every three words that people with Down syndrome speak. If improved, voice technology can make independent living more possible, helping with everything from managing schedules, to staying in touch, and to reaching out for help when needed.

To improve Google AI's voice recognition model, CDSS needed 500 registered participants who have Down syndrome to become Google's 'teachers', by providing voice data to improve Google's speech recognition algorithm.

On March 21, 2020, World Down Syndrome Day, CDSS was invited to speak with the United Nations to help move this effort forward and to recognize the then 600 project participants from around the world. By the close of 2020, over one million recordings from 650+ participants had been submitted to GoogleAI from the community. The UN presentation is available [here](#).



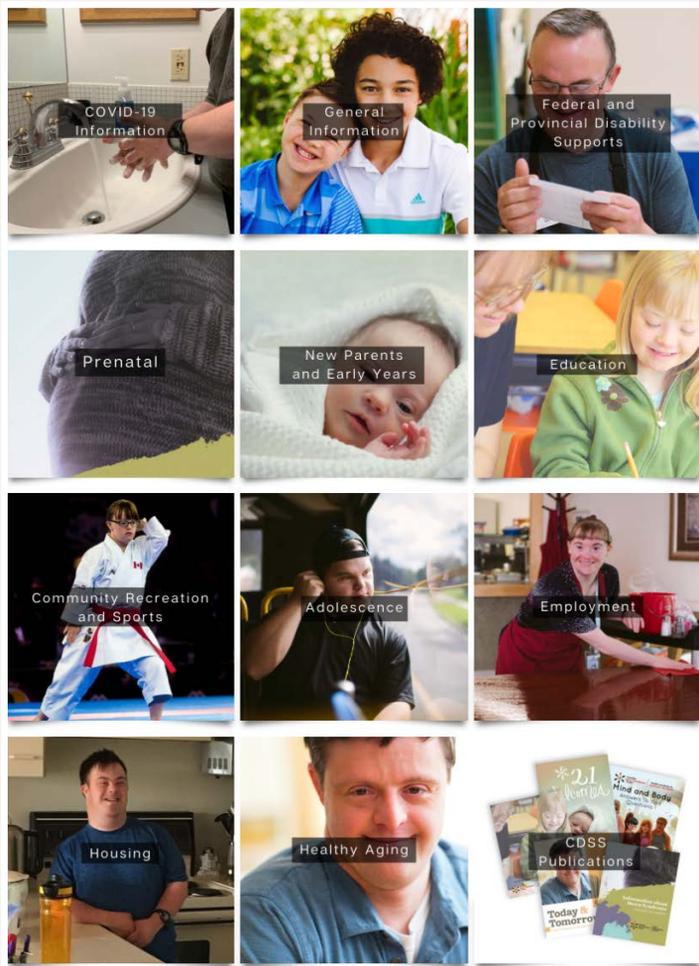
This project also serves to challenge every technology company to make accessibility a bigger priority, to eventually support people with Down syndrome with greater independence. Project Understood is still accepting voice recordings from people over 18 who have Down syndrome. The more voice samples shared by the Down syndrome community, the closer we get to a world where every person is understood. You can learn more about this project at: [projectunderstood.ca](https://projectunderstood.ca)



## Resource Hub

CDSS has curated a vast collection of relevant resources, services and supports available to the Down syndrome community across Canada. In Spring 2020, we launched an updated version of the Resource Hub to help improve information sharing and enhance the website user experience for the community. The Resource Hub is organized by each life stage and other relevant topics. This virtual library is comprised of helpful information, inspiring stories, and important connections to community resources.

The online **Resource Hub** has proved to be an accessible resource tool that helps to ensure the community has continuous, up-to-date information, and has also helped to reduce the negative impact on Mother Nature by reducing the amount of printed CDSS resources!



**It seems that there is always so much to learn and know to help our daughter as she grows and transitions through different life stages. Right now, we are working on dating, high school, and a desire for a job and more independence. It is scary for us but we are trying to be supportive.**

*2020 Survey Respondent*



## Back to School Fall 2020

For students, teachers and parents across Canada, school looked very different in 2020. The beginning of a new school year always brings feelings of nervousness and excitement about things like taking the school bus for the first time or starting at a new school. But as families prepared for Fall of 2020, additional concerns and anxieties became apparent around school opening schedules; learning from home; navigating classroom setups; masks; cohorts; hand sanitizer and so much more.

While CDSS could not eliminate those uncertainties, we wanted to ensure that parents and educators had some resources and tools to help ease some worries around building acceptance, awareness and understanding for Down syndrome in the classroom and community. This included things like teaching plans, videos, presentations and posters. We also offered webinars from education experts and the Fall 3.21 Magazine featured articles focused on sharing stories and tips on handling back to school in this unparalleled time.

**Nolan & Ashlan want to answer your questions about: Down Syndrome**

**Q. What should I say to someone who has Down syndrome?**  
**A.** Talking and learning from those who are different than ourselves is what makes the world great! So go ahead, ask someone who has Down syndrome anything. As long as you are using language that is respectful and kind.  
*Making everyone feel accepted and valued is important to remember when joking around with friends.*

**Q. What is person first language?**  
**A.** When someone has a disability and you are talking about them, always say **WHO** they are before anything else. You want to focus on the person, not the disability. This is called **person first language**.  
*"This is my friend Ethan. He loves playing piano!"  
 "My friend Maggie has three older brothers! She also has Down syndrome."*

**Q. Are people with Down syndrome always happy?**  
**A.** This is not true. People with Down syndrome can experience lots of emotions. They can get angry, frustrated and excited just like you.  
 Labels like this are not helpful when getting to know someone new. Some people with Down syndrome are very social while others can be shy.

**Q. Should I feel bad for someone with Down syndrome?**  
**A.** Not at all! A person is not "suffering from" Down syndrome. People with Down syndrome like and do many of the same things as you!  
**See The Ability!**  
 - Nolan & Ashlan

Canadian Down Syndrome Society | Société canadienne de la trisomie 21  
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 f @ t v

**TRISOMIE 21: APPRENDRE POUR TOUT LE MONDE**

TEMPS DE COURS 4E AGE ANNÉE.

**PLAN D'ENSEIGNEMENT**

Canadian Down Syndrome Society | Société canadienne de la trisomie 21  
**CDSS.CA**  
 f @ t v

**We want to continue to help promote inclusivity and accessibility! CDSS continues to offer all of our digital resources free via easy download. Most are available in French and English!**



## 3.21 Magazine

The Canadian Down Syndrome Society together with BC's Down Syndrome Resource Foundation brought the community four new issues of 3.21 Magazine in 2020. CDSS circulates 3.21 Magazine quarterly to over 20,000 subscribers! The free magazine shares inspirational advocacy stories, helpful advice on all stages of life, expertise from the community, and current project and event information.

Thank you to our community of 3.21 Magazine contributors from across Canada, including independent authors, specialists, parents and self-advocates.



**We appreciate the magazine you produce and the way your website is organized. It helped us a lot in the beginning of our journey. Took the edge off of our fears.**

*2020 Survey Respondent*





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

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*To build strong relationships with key stakeholders in Canada:*

### **CDSS Advocacy Efforts**

Over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, CDSS remained actively involved in advocacy initiatives on behalf of individuals with Down syndrome of all ages and circumstances. We are active across the country in federal, provincial and territory-specific communications. Our Interim Executive Director reached out and attended numerous disability organization virtual meetings and delivered responses to ensure that the Down syndrome community was heard.

We attended numerous public policy meetings and international forums on behalf of Canadians with Down syndrome. We reported on Canadian activities to global survey platforms about life with Down syndrome in Canada. Among others, we were in direct contact with the Federal Minister of Health, Provincial Ministers of Health and Education, the Federal Minister of Employment, Workforce Development & Disability Inclusion, the new Federal Disability Advisory Group, Inclusion Canada (formerly Canadian Association of Community Living), regional Members of Parliament, People First Canada and other disability coalitions, advisory groups and bioethicists. We have discussed provincial disability issues, and will continue to participate in the development of a newly proposed Canadian Disability Benefit.



Additionally, due to the pandemic we have directly and repeatedly spoken about vaccine prioritization with the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and critical care triage with various provincial authorities on behalf of Canadians with Down syndrome. We continue to support the work of grassroots advocacy movements across the country. We have spoken to multiple media outlets and appeared on national news channels. We also contributed and shared information through the enactment of Bill C7 Amendments.

We actively support both the Charter of Rights and Human Rights of Canadians with Disabilities.

“

**Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to have a voice.**

*2020 Survey Respondent*

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# 2020 Webinars

As people across the country continued to stay at home during lockdowns forced by Covid-19, CDSS had to look at creative ways to continue sharing updated and relevant information with the Canadian Down syndrome community. Sector experts joined the CDSS community to share information on accessibility, meaningful experiences, unique learning situations, planning and managing learner needs, sibling relationships and inclusion in the workplace. We look forward to planning more valuable webinars for the community in 2021.

**Education Webinar Series:**  
**Planning for Students Requiring Personalized Supports in the Classroom and at Home**

**Monday, Sep. 21 | 7-8 PM EDT**  
**Distance Learning & Managing School At Home**  
How to do home support of distance learning with a focus on not going crazy, what happens when school goes online, and useful free resources.  
**CHRIS LEMONS, Ph. D.** Associate Professor of Special Education in the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University

**Tuesday, Sep. 22 | 7-8 PM EDT**  
**The Special Education Priorities Matrix**  
How are you feeling about making good decisions about your child's education goals this year? Confident? Could use help? Or overwhelmed in between?  
**GENIA STEPHEN** Founder and host of the 'Good Things to Life For Kids With Disabilities' Podcast

**Wednesday, Sep. 23 | 7-8 PM EDT**  
**Support ALL Learners: Resources, Research & Inspiration!**  
Empowering schools and classrooms to support ALL learners: resources, research and inspiration!  
**SHELLEY MOORE** Ph.D. candidate and highly sought after teacher, researcher, consultant and speaker. [www.helloshelley.com](http://www.helloshelley.com)

Email [WebinarRegistration@cdss.ca](mailto:WebinarRegistration@cdss.ca) and mention the webinars you wish to attend—we encourage you attend all three!  
Each webinar will run for approximately one hour on Zoom.  
[#CDSScanada](https://twitter.com/CDSScanada) [#DownSyndromeAdvocacy](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeAdvocacy) [#DownSyndromeEducation](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeEducation) [#DownSyndromeInclusion](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeInclusion) [#DownSyndromeWork](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeWork)

**FREE WEBINAR!**  
**Introduction to the CDSS Online Employment Planning Hub:**  
Learn How to Support Job Seekers with Down Syndrome

**Wednesday, Dec. 9**  
**7pm EST**

**SPEAKER:**  
**Sean McEwen**  
Director of RealEYES Capacity Consultants

As a Workplace Inclusion Consultant, Sean works with service providers and employers to build their capacity and improve workplace inclusion outcomes. As a creative leader in the non-profit sector, he has been designing and overseeing employment services for job seekers with disabilities and other barriers for over 20 years.

*The CDSS Employment Planning Hub was designed for people with Down syndrome along with their family supports and employment service providers. The Hub can help with developing their personal career portfolios and achieving their employment goals. Join us as we introduce our Hub and discuss topics including how to improve employability skills and identifying suitable careers.*

Pre-register on or before **Dec. 7**

Email [WebinarRegistration@cdss.ca](mailto:WebinarRegistration@cdss.ca) to register. Webinar will run for approx. one hour on Zoom.  
[#CDSScanada](https://twitter.com/CDSScanada) [#DownSyndromeAdvocacy](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeAdvocacy) [#DownSyndromeEducation](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeEducation) [#DownSyndromeWork](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeWork)

**FREE WEBINAR!**  
**A Lively and Rewarding Discussion of Sibling Issues Across the Lifespan**  
Wednesday, Nov. 4 | 7pm EST

**EMILY HOLL**  
Director of Sibling Support Project

*Emily is a social worker, writer, trainer, and sibling. Over the past 20 years, she has provided workshops, training, and groups for siblings, families, and individuals with disabilities. She has presented and written extensively on sibling issues. She has conducted and published sibling research, and has facilitated Siblings for young brothers and sisters of children with disabilities.*

**SPEAKER:**  
**EMILY HOLL**  
Director of Sibling Support Project

Did you know that siblings of children with developmental and health needs have many of the same concerns as parents? Siblings also share the longest-lasting relationships with the family member with a disability, spend a considerable amount of time together, and often help to care for their brothers and sisters.

CDSS will be sponsoring Sibling Workshops Training for interested Down syndrome groups across the country. Details will follow.

**ABOUT THE SIBLING SUPPORT PROJECT & KINDERING:**  
The Sibling Support Project is the first national program dedicated to the life-long and ever-changing concerns of millions of brothers and sisters of people with special health, developmental, and mental health concerns. The Sibling Support Project is also proud to be a program of Kindering, an award-winning organization that embraces abilities of diverse abilities and their families by providing the best education and therapies to nurture hope, courage and the skills to soar.

Email [WebinarRegistration@cdss.ca](mailto:WebinarRegistration@cdss.ca) to register. Webinar will run for approx. one hour on Zoom.  
[#CDSScanada](https://twitter.com/CDSScanada) [#DownSyndromeAdvocacy](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeAdvocacy) [#DownSyndromeEducation](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeEducation) [#DownSyndromeWork](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeWork)

**Interested in Future Employment?**  
In conjunction with National AccessAbility Week (May 31–June 6), CDSS invites you to attend a FREE WEBINAR SERIES.  
*Let's change the way we think, talk and act about accessibility and inclusion!*

**JUNE 1:**  
**In Changing Times: Where do I Fit into the Labour Market?**

**Sean Withshire** has been working in the employment and disability community for almost 30 years. As CEO of Asson Employment in Newfoundland, Sean and his team support over 8000 hours of paid employment each year for people with disabilities. Sean has served on two national ministerial advisory committees, and served 10 years on the board of CDSS.

**JUNE 2:**  
**Preparing Students for a Future that Includes Meaningful Employment**

**Reginald Moushira** is King, has over 20 years of experience in corporate, entrepreneurial, and non-profit settings. As Diversity & Inclusion Specialist with the Ontario Disability Employment Network since 2015, she has helped more than 1000 people who have a disability into employment, and delivered the CDSS Disability Awareness and Confidence Training to over 200 business members. Reginald has recently completed the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification Training from Athabasca University.

**JUNE 3:**  
**Supported Employment Across Canada**

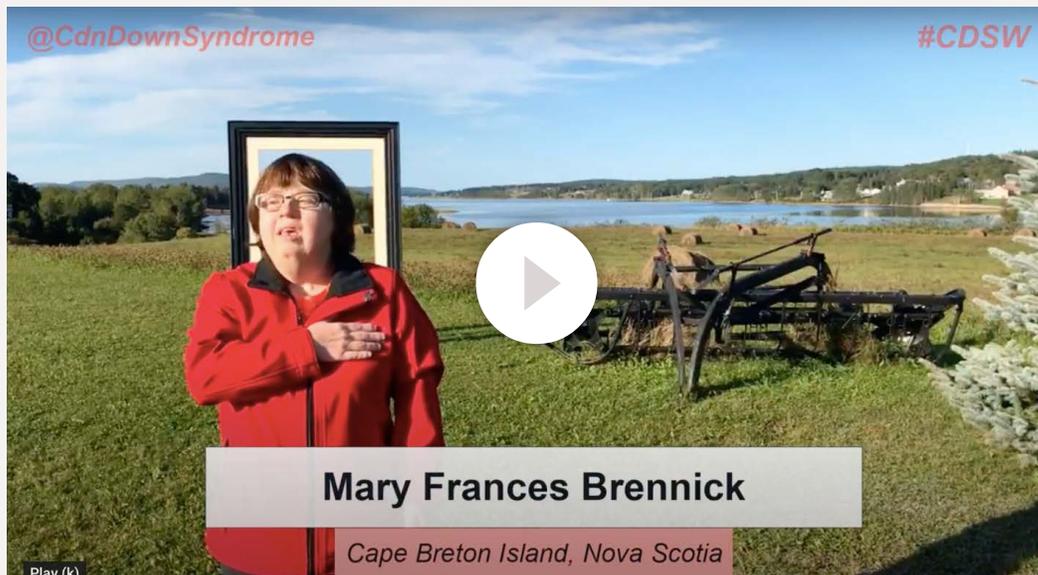
**Joanna Goode** is Executive Director for The Canadian Association for Supported Employment. She has many years' experience supporting diverse Canadian to plan for and build the lives that they want in a community, having worked as the Executive Director of an independent facilitator organization, and a member of the Ontario Independent Facilitator Network. Joanna holds degrees in exceptionally in human learning, social services, and voluntary and non-for-profit sector management.

Email [WebinarRegistration@cdss.ca](mailto:WebinarRegistration@cdss.ca) and mention the webinars you wish to attend—we encourage you attend all three! Each webinar will begin at 7pm EDT and run for approximately one hour on Zoom.  
[#CDSScanada](https://twitter.com/CDSScanada) [#DownSyndromeAdvocacy](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeAdvocacy) [#DownSyndromeEducation](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeEducation) [#DownSyndromeWork](https://twitter.com/DownSyndromeWork)



## Canadian Down Syndrome Week November 1-7, 2020

To kick off Canadian Down Syndrome Week, a patriotic video was created with the help of self-advocates from across our beautiful country singing O Canada.

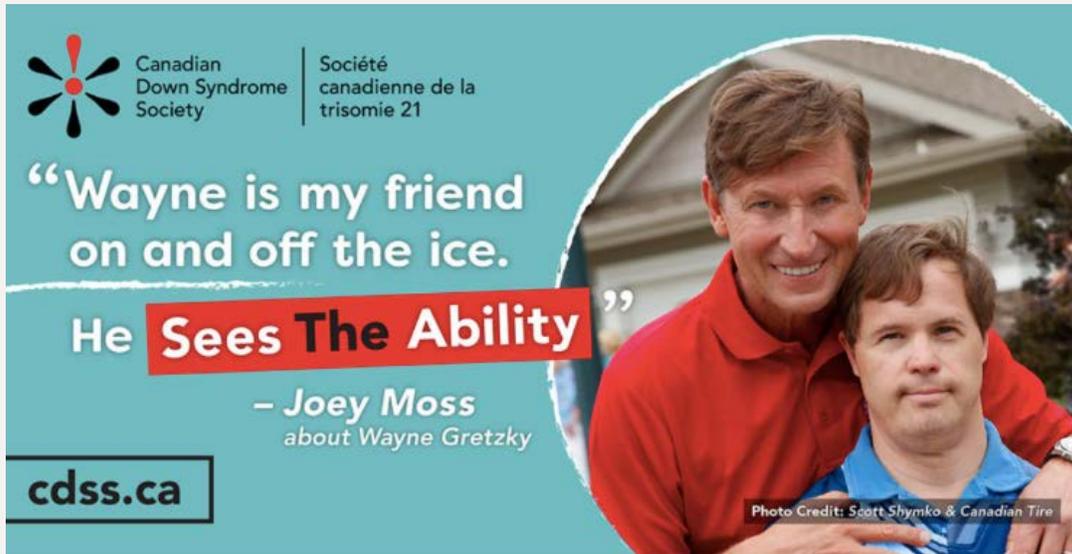


*We continued to celebrate Canadian Down Syndrome Week by sharing these awareness activities:*

- Sibling Workshops
- Light displays and other community awareness events, including proclamations
- Launched the first ever CDSS Community Survey to better understand the issues facing the Down syndrome community across Canada
- Shared inspirational #SeeTheAbility stories about employment, education, community involvement and presentations
- Facilitated an inaugural meeting that included a small number of Down syndrome groups from across Canada. We hope to build this up on a yearly basis to help enhance connections and targeted project collaborations.



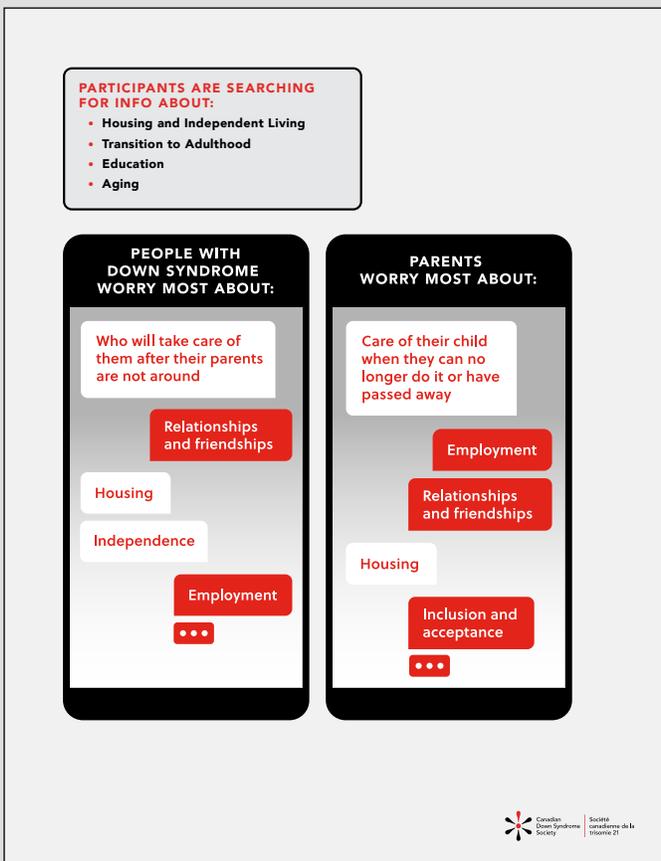
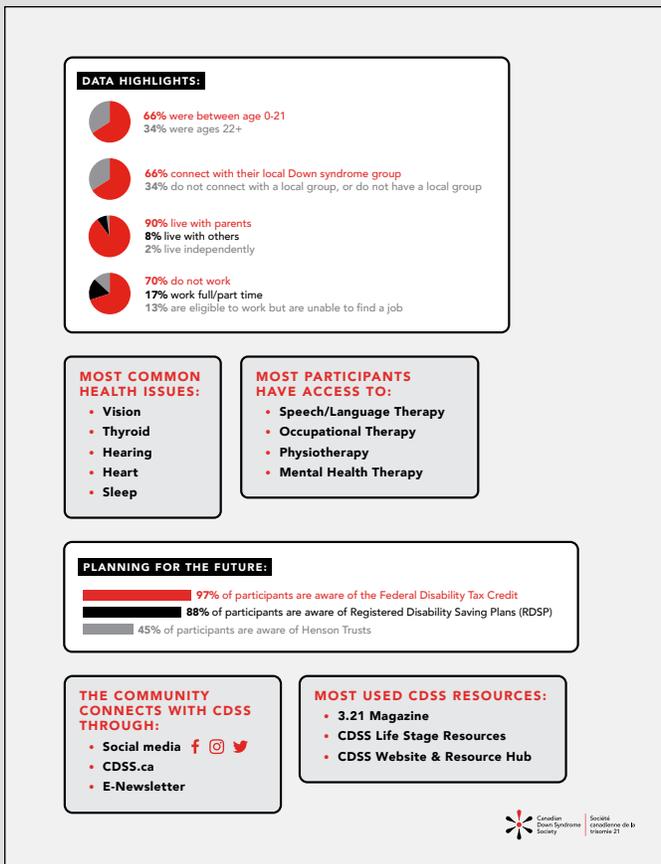
## In Memory of Joey Moss



CDSS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN BILLBOARD 2016

During CDSW, we educated, celebrated, and shared individual and community accomplishments from across our great country. This week also brought sadness to our community as Joey Moss passed away on October 26, 2020, just before CDSW. As reported by the National Post, “As Canadians prepare to celebrate Canadian Down Syndrome Week, we can take inspiration from Joey Moss’s legacy. He not only showed that there are no limits to what people with developmental disabilities can do. He challenged the rest of us to be better.”





## Community Survey 2020

The CDSS launched a first ever community survey during Canadian Down Syndrome Week 2020 to connect with our community and address a gap in data collection. We wanted to collect some demographic data and to better understand the pressing issues in our community. The survey results will inform our future planning and projects.

We share these results to provide some insight into the specific issues concerning the Canadian Down syndrome community at the present time.



**WHAT WE HEARD FROM INDIVIDUALS WITH DOWN SYNDROME:**

*"We want easier access to programs."*

*"Being included. Having a job that pays fair wage. Being supported in the activities that I do in the community."*

*"Finding a full-time job. Learning to live independently. Finding the love of my life"*

*"When my mom and dad are no longer living. How I will make money? I worry about living on my own."*

**WHAT WE HEARD FROM FAMILIES:**

*"His only worry is when will he be able to order the next wrestling DVD. As aging parents, we worry about what will happen when we're not here."*

*"I am a parent of an adult daughter with Down syndrome. I worry about how she will be supported when we are not around to keep things under control. Will there be people to respect her needs, give her the support she needs without stifling her abilities and potential?"*

*"He doesn't worry about anything - I worry! He wants to get married, have a beach house, a boat and a Mustang car. That is his goal in life! His hopes and his dreams."*



## Survey Learnings

- What parents worry about
- What individuals with Down syndrome worry about (not the same worries as parents!)
- What participants seek information about
- Availability of funding limits access to available programs
- Inequity of available programs
- Specialized medical and support services are more readily available in larger centers





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

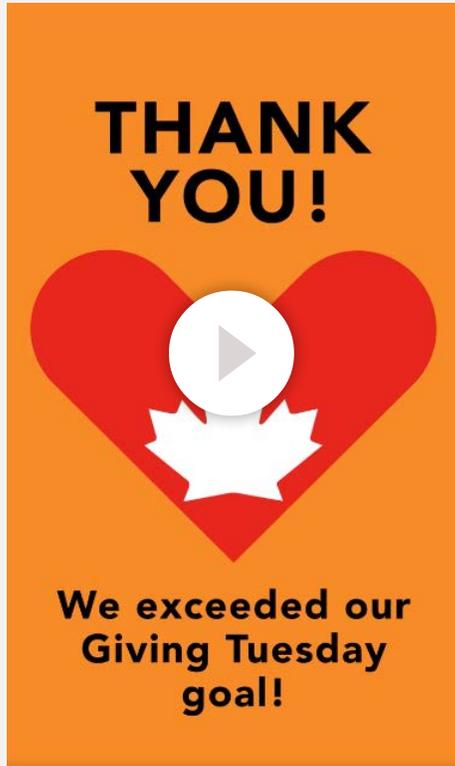
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*To diversify our fund development:*

We rely on individual donors and our corporate partners to fuel our efforts to progress advocacy in the areas of education, employment, social participation and health on behalf of people with Down syndrome.

In 2020 we created new Ways to Give. Whether a one-time gift, monthly gift or to celebrate someone special, donating online became easier and more convenient. We added personalized e-cards to send special occasion messages. Our new Gift of Securities process became a great benefit for those who wish to give a larger gift of stocks or mutual funds and save significantly on capital gains tax.





## Thank you!

Our holiday campaign and December 1st global day of giving, known as Giving Tuesday, was a success thanks to your support.



Our new corporate partner, TD Bank Financial Group and our very generous donors helped us triple our single day fundraising goal – we raised \$32,000 on Giving Tuesday!

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted thousands of Canadians with Down syndrome. They continue to be disproportionately affected by social isolation, drastic reductions in available supports and job losses. You continued to support our fundraising initiatives in 2020, so we could continue to help meet the needs of the community.

2020 brought us a new sense of purpose in our mission. Through new fundraising initiatives we experienced an 11% increase in new CDSS donors. We also welcomed new corporate partners.

---

*Thank you for your continued support of our work!*



*We would like to acknowledge the following donors for their generous gifts in 2020:*

## INDIVIDUAL GIFTS

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David Bailey	Russell Finch	Sally's Marathon
Grace Banash	Brian Fung	Derek Nardone
Nancy J F Caney	Geraldine Gilbert	Joe & Beverly Remail
Ed & Mary Casagrande	Douglas Giles	Barbara Ritchie
Jackie Charchuk	Sergio Ieropoli	Joan Schefter
Beverley Coburn	Carol Jamieson	J Dennis Stiles
Benjamin Cotter	Gail Janes	George Strmotich
Michael Cotter	Elaine Keillor	Orlando Toews
Paul Crowley	Ronald Kerr	Ross Walker
Jennifer Crowson	Ashley Kruyne	John Warren
John Farrow	Ramona Kuiack	Reid Wilson

## BUSINESS GIFTS

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Cajoda Holdings Inc.	Tech To U Inc.
Executive Millwork	Trans Canada Engines
Spargus Industries Ltd	Tronnes Geomatics Inc.
Superior Contracting	Wellmount Capital Inc.
TD Bank Financial Group	



## FOUNDATION GIFTS

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Butler Family Foundation	Malcom J. Jenkins Foundation
The Calgary Foundation	PayPal Giving Fund Canada
Canadian Online Giving Foundation	The Printing House (TPH)
Gift Funds Canada	TD Financial Bank Group
Google AI	United Way (various locations)
FCB Toronto	Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society



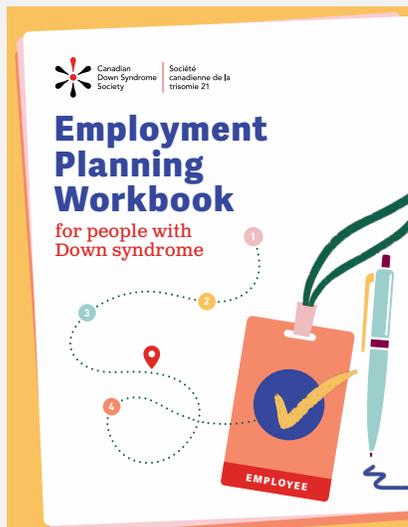


## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

To develop workplace support resources for job seekers and employers in Canada:

### NEW Employment Resources

Our new Employment Planning Workbook was created to be an easy read resource to help people with Down syndrome and their families as they begin preparing for the work world - at any age. The workbook was developed to help start conversations around employment and inspire critical thinking about joining the workforce. This resource is also available in French!

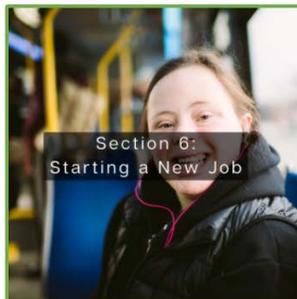
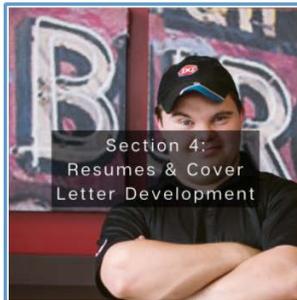
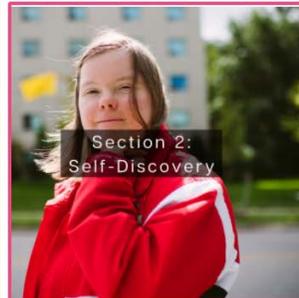


## CDSS Employment Planning Hub

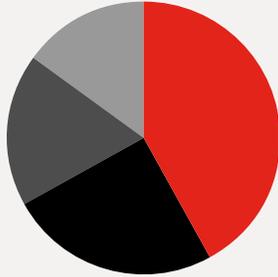
When the person with Down syndrome and their supports have worked through the Employment Planning Workbook and they are ready for the next steps in the employment journey, they can visit the new Employment Planning Hub. It was designed and launched in 2020 to help guide career exploration, uncover skills, answer common questions, develop their personal career portfolios and achieve employment goals.

### CDSS Employment Planning Hub

Ready for your next steps in your employment journey? The Employment Planning Hub was designed to be used by people with Down syndrome along with their family supports and their employment service providers who can help them develop their personal career portfolios and achieve their employment goals.



## 2020 AT A GLANCE



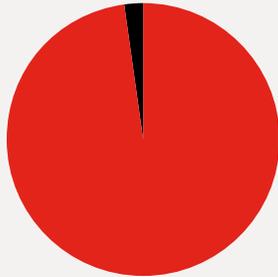
### Information Requests:

**42%** Resources, Education & Links

**25%** Donations & Receipting

**18%** Marketing & Events

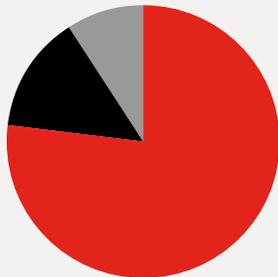
**15%** Administration



### Where money came from in 2020:

**98%** Donations

**2%** Memberships & Product Sales



### What money supported in 2020:

**77%** Public Education, Awareness Events and Promotions

**14%** Administration

**9%** Resource Development

### New Social Media Followers in 2020:

Current total social media followers: 23,334

 **Facebook + 590**

 **Twitter + 408**

 **Instagram + 864**



## LOOKING INTO 2021

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*Here are some highlights to look forward to:*

- New Fundraising Initiatives and CDSS Walk for Awareness
- Project Focus: National Reading Initiative
- Webinar Themes: Planning for the future, training for sibling support, estate planning, literacy and education
- Revision of Education Resource
- New CDSS website to help improve the user experience, date to launch Summer 2021
- Mindsets Study, partner in research study



# COVER STORY, ONE CANADIAN REFLECTS ON 2020

## *My Name is Ren*

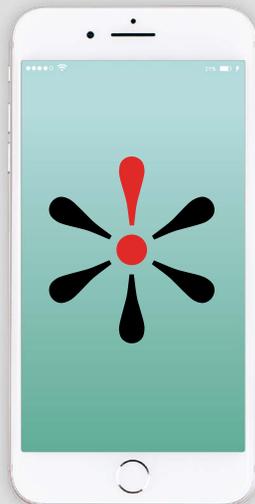
I was born in Montreal in 1995. I live with my parents and older brother, Rylee. My brother and I went to the same school until I graduated. That same year, we moved to Ontario, and I enrolled in another high school. I graduated a second time!

I collect snow globes. I love being creative. I write stories, draw and do photography. The highlight of my day is always interacting with my friends.

2020 definitely had its challenges. My birthday was disappointing. Then all of my daily activities were cancelled. I had to learn how to do classes online like singing, dancing and cooking. Zoom Christmas with family was really hard. Another difficult challenge was not being able to continue my two jobs – one at a seniors residence and one at a restaurant.

Some highlights of 2020 were visiting family in Montreal. I also cut and donated my hair to a charity! I started to take better care of myself with more exercise and nutrition. I have lost 20 pounds so far.

I can't wait for things to get back to the way it used to be. I want to see my friends and my work friends, and the senior residents at work, who I brought coffee, tea and cookies to. I want to hang out with friends at the cottage and camping with my dad and just be normal.



## **Our Paperless Efforts**

*In 2020 we had a go green initiative and successfully converted 17% more of our database to receive communications from CDSS digitally. We want to continue to help minimize Canada Post mail, help Mother Nature and help CDSS stretch donor dollars even further, because every dollar counts!*





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