Down Syndrome Association of the Valley (DSAV) is a non-profit, 501c3 organization that was formed in 2007 by Michele Jones and Kelly Donadio after the births of their children with Down syndrome (DS). In 2007, they formed DSAV to bring hope to other new parents through education and to enhance the status of people with DS as citizens so that they can achieve maximum independence and participation in the community. In October 2009, the DSAV opened the DSAV Center for Success with financial assistance from the Hine Fund. This centralized location has served as the DSAV office in addition to a location for the resources, lectures and meeting place for families.

DSAV has grown to nearly 300 families since 2007; its membership is made up of families who have a child or sibling with DS. In addition, over 250 medical professionals, 190 educators, and therapists have benefitted from DSAV information. The DSAV members envision a day when people with DS will be active participants in a fully inclusive society. To make that vision a reality, DSAV provides support, resources, advocacy, education and opportunity for those with DS, their families and our communities.

Since 2007, the Down Syndrome Association of the Valley continues to implement its five-point mission: support, community awareness, education, advocacy and resources.

- **Support**
  Bring people who are dealing with Down syndrome together and provide understanding, information, resources and encouragement.

- **Community Awareness**
  Stimulate awareness of the needs and abilities of people with Down syndrome.

- **Education**
  Share DS information and resources with other service providers, health care professionals, educators, students and government bodies.

- **Advocacy**
  Preserve the rights and advance the interests of people with DS.

- **Resources**
  Ensure that people with DS have the assistance they need to enable them to reach their potentials.
Annual Buddy Walk
DSAV's main fundraiser attracts more than 2,000 people each year and has raised over $980,000 since 2008. DSAV held the Buddy Walk at The Shops at Boardman Park from 2008 to 2016 and moved to a larger venue in 2017. The 12th annual Buddy Walk was hosted at Eastwood Field on Sunday, September 22, 2019. DSAV is the only local authorized organizer of the Buddy Walk®, a national walk sponsored by the National Down Syndrome Society. Net proceeds from the event go directly to the programs and services provided by DSAV.

Designer Purse Bingo
More than 300 women filled the tables at this fundraiser in its second year at St. Mary's Assumption Social Hall in Youngstown.

DSAV Online Store
DSAV's online store features DSAV T-shirts, hoodies, bibs, caps, totes and more in toddler, youth and adult sizes.

Shop Amazon Smile
When DSAV members and friends shop Amazon Smile, DSAV receives .5% of the price of purchase. Visit smile.amazon.com

Ohio Down Syndrome License Plates
Ohio Down syndrome awareness license plates are available for purchase through any Ohio BMV. For every license plate sold, $25 goes to support advocacy and awareness efforts at six Down syndrome associations in Ohio and DSAV is one of them.

DSAV Calendars
DSAV sells it calendars each year featuring photos of our members.

321 Cycle to Celebrate
Held at Pure Cycle Studio in Canfield near 321 World Down Syndrome Day, this event attracts more than 30 riders who raise money for DSAV.

Texas Roadhouse Gift Card Fundraiser
For the last five years, DSAV members sold gift cards and DSAV received 10 percent back each card sold.
**DSAV Yoga**
Held at the DSAV Center for Success, DSAV hosts yoga classes with a certified yoga instructor who specializes in the practice of yoga to persons who are differently-abled. More than 15 members participated. DSAV members pay $25 for seven sessions, with DSAV underwriting the additional cost.

**DSAV Learn to Swim**
DSAV partners with All Abilities Swim and the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown to offer Level 1 and Level 2 swim lessons. 36 classes were hosted. DSAV members pay $30 for seven sessions, with DSAV and the JCC underwriting the additional cost. This program won the 2018 Best Recreational Program for Small Organizations Award from the Down Syndrome Affiliates in Action.

**Buddies not Barriers**
Youngstown State University Health Professions Affinity Community held a day of inclusive fun for DSAV members and students from the Rich Center for Autism on the campus of Youngstown State University at the WATTS Center.

**I Can Ride Bike Camp**
25 DSAV members and other friends who are differently-abled learned to ride a two-wheeled bicycle during the one-week camp, using patented adaptive equipment through the nationally-recognized iCAN Bike program, held at Boardman Glenwood Junior High. Over 125 participants with disabilities have benefited from this program, since DSAV brought the program to the Valley in 2014. Each rider pays $50 (members) or $75 (non-members) to attend while DSAV contributed the balance of the costs. The majority of the cost of this program is funded by a grant from the Hine Fund of the Youngstown Foundation.

**Buddy Up Tennis and Fitness**
Held on Saturdays from September to May for ages 5 and older, the Buddy Up Tennis program attracted more than 18 DSAV members at 22 sessions and over 45 community volunteers. The program consists of 60 minutes of professional tennis instruction and 30 minutes of fitness conditioning each Saturday. The cost is $35 for DSAV members, per seasonal session, with DSAV underwriting the balance of the cost, paid to the national Buddy Up Tennis organization to bring the program to the Valley. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Western Reserve Health Foundation. It received the 2017 Best Recreational Program for Small Organizations Award from the Down Syndrome Affiliates in Action.

**Music, Movement & Literacy**
Ms. Lindsay teaches this 45-minute session with music, movement and literacy component for ages 8 and under on select Sundays, 18 times a year at the Center for Success. There is no fee for this program for DSAV members, as DSAV underwrites the entire cost of the program.

**Effective Communication and Social Skills Therapy**
This therapy program provides direct instruction on effective communication and how to improve social skills in inclusive settings. Speech, language, music and behavior masters-level therapists from Aaris Therapy Group provided programming for six members per four week session.

**Literacy, Arts & Math Program: iPad Distribution**
DSAV has distributed 82 iPADS to its members to use for education purposes since the program began in 2011.

**Family Grants**
$14,700 was disbursed to 52 DSAV families to assist them with non-insurance covered therapies, activities and educational costs for DSAV members to enhance their quality of life. Since the inception of this program, DSAV has distributed over $106,000 in Family Grants to DSAV members.
World Down Syndrome Day Dance Party
To raise awareness of what Down syndrome is, what it means to have Down syndrome, and how people with Down syndrome play a vital role in our lives and communities, a dance party is hosted on a Saturday night in late March at St. Mary’s Assumption Social Hall. WDSD is hosted on 3-21 (March 21), representing the third copy of chromosome 21 in Trisomy 21, the most common form of Down syndrome. The event features a DJ, dancing and pizza. The event is free to DSAV members and their immediate families, with all costs underwritten by DSAV.

DSAV Christmas Party
This annual event attracts more than 300 DSAV members and their family members. Hosted at St. Mary’s Assumption Social Hall, the party features Santa’s visit, crafts, dinner and dancing. The cost is free to DSAV members and their immediate families. DSAV underwrites the entire cost of this family event.

Santa’s Hideaway Hollow
DSAV members are invited to a private “Christmas in July” preview of Santa's Hideaway Hollow in Middlefield. Sponsored in full by Santa!

DSAV Halloween Party
Meinke’s Creekside Gardens in Warren hosts this party for DSAV members. More than 80 attended and enjoyed Halloween crafts, games and food. The event was free to members and their immediate families. The venue, crafts and snacks are provided annually by sponsor Meinke’s Creekside Gardens.

DSAV Paint Party
Two sessions of creative canvas painting were offered and attracted more than 10 DSAV members per session. The event was free to DSAV members, with DSAV underwriting the costs of the events, held at the DSAV Center for Success and Imagination Creative Arts Studios in Girard.

DSAV Parents’ Night Out
More than 25 parents of DSAV members enjoyed the quarterly Parents’ Night Out at local venues. Attendees pay for their own refreshments, while DSAV underwrites the costs of some hors d’oeuvres.

DSAV Playgroup and Coffee TIme
DSAV hosts this playgroup where members stop by the DSAV Center for Success for toddler time, a cup of coffee, or to browse the DSAV Lending Library. This informal gathering is a way to meet new members and visit the Center for Success. All members ages newborn and up and their families are welcome anytime between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. on select Thursdays.

Family Outings to Sporting Events
DSAV member families are invited to attend sporting events, such as a special Youngstown State University tailgate prior to a home football game, DSAV Day at Mahoning Valley Scrapper’s baseball game and DSAV Day at a Mahoning Valley Phantom's hockey game.
**DSAV Birthday Club**
DSAV sends birthday wishes to its members. 125 greetings were sent.

**DSAV Cares**
DSAV sends care packs to members to remind them that their DSAV friends care while they are recovering from surgery or procedures. In 2019, 12 packages were sent. This program won the 2018 Best Outreach Award for Small Organizations from the Down Syndrome Affiliates in Action.

**New Baby Welcome**
13 new babies with Down syndrome were welcomed into DSAV. A welcome basket with baby blankets, new parent resources and information for the new or expectant parents were distributed as well as outreach to health care professionals that serve them.

**DSAV Education Series**
This quarterly lecture series, held in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Education, State Support Team 5, presents various topics of importance to parents of children with Down syndrome. The information presented pertains to preschool through grade 5, but all DSAV families are welcomed, with child care options available at some of the lectures. The event is free and held at either the SST5 office or at DSAV Center for Success.

**Lending Library**
Resources are available in the Lending Library at the DSAV Center for Success and updated regularly. Families, educators and the community are invited to peruse the resources available at the Center. We are proud to distribute up-to-date and pertinent information to schools, public libraries, educators, families and health care professionals free of charge.

**Parent Connection Facebook Group**
DSAV parents are invited to join the DSAV Parent Connection Facebook group. This private Facebook group gives families an open forum for positive discussion, questions, etc. of all things related to raising a loved one with Down syndrome.

**DSAV Scholarships**
Five college students were awarded scholarships totaling $3,250. The scholarships go to students who are from DSAV families or those studying fields that will directly benefit persons with Down syndrome. Since the inception of this program, over $21,000 has been awarded to deserving students within our service area.
TOP 5 FUNDRAISING TEAMS

The “A” Team
Cruisin’ for Christian
Lovin’ Lauren
Serafina’s Six-Winged Angels
Walkin’ for Wesley

AWARDS

2017 Best Recreational Program for Small Organizations
DSAV Yoga (from the Down Syndrome Affiliates in Action)

2018 Best Recreational Program for Small Organizations
DSAV Learn to Swim Program (from the Down Syndrome Affiliates in Action)

2018 Best Outreach Program for Small Organizations
DSAV Cares (from the Down Syndrome Affiliates in Action)

SAVE THE DATES

Designer Purse Bingo
Friday, March 27, 2020
Doors open at 6 p.m.; Bingo begins at 7:15 p.m.
St. Mary’s Assumption Social Hall
$30 per ticket; Reserved table of 8 = $240

7th Annual I Can Ride Bike Camp
June 2020
Boardman Glenwood Junior High School

13th Annual Buddy Walk
September 2020
Eastwood Field in Niles
THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 SPONSORS

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Mahoning Valley Scrappers • Great Lakes Cheese • Austintown Bounce
Eye Care Associates • Rotary Club of Poland • HBK CPAs & Consultants
Photography by Sandi (Sandi Rich) • Memory Lane Photography • Exp Realty
GreenStar Cooperative, Inc. • Tri Medical • PARTY ON! • YoFresh • Castle on a Cloud
Oh WOW! • Champion Insurance Austintown • Hastings Mutual

Bronze
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Accessible Home Services • Sangeetha Sethi, DM
Briarfield Rehabilitation ~ Elder Care ~ Senior Living • AM Door & Supply Company
Pantalone Paving, Inc. • Wedgewood Pizza • Gionino’s Pizzeria Lake Milton • All-Abilities Swim

Grant Funders and Community Partners
Ohio Edison • Jewish Community Center of Youngstown • The Youngstown Foundation
Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley • KidCents Rite Aid Foundation
Global Down Syndrome Association • Western Reserve Health Foundation
Youngstown Rotary • Hine Foundation • All Abilities Swim • Boardman Local School District
Springfield Local School District • Pure Cycle Studios • Youngstown Phantoms • Texas Roadhouse
DJ Richie • Photography by Sandi • The Tribune Chronicle • iHeart Radio • WYTV • WFMJ • WKBN

DSAIV is an affiliate member of

as well as an active participant in the
Ohio Coalition of Down syndrome organizations that meet in Columbus quarterly.