

# A LITTLE EXTRA

Karachi Down Syndrome Program's Quarterly Newsletter

**Advocating the value, acceptance  
and inclusion of people with Down  
syndrome in Karachi**



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## EDITORIAL

Welcome to our 5th issue of A Little Extra!

We would like to begin with a big thank-you to the wonderful friends and family linked to KDSP through our ever-increasing Family Support Group. We welcome all new members, and say a warm hello to all of our old faithful, who take such an active part in helping KDSP make its programs such a success, whether its programs or publications like this magazine that you hold in your hands!

This issue will give you a detailed round-up of KDSP's activities from April to June. We have been very lucky to have had an extremely inspirational visitor from the United Kingdom, and we are very excited to share it with you! Check page "02" for details.

We have had also had some lovely personal stories and contributions by our very own Family Support Group members, which as you know, we love to share!

If you haven't done so yet, consider sharing YOUR KDSP story! Remember, by doing so, not only do you contribute to the development of a community that cherishes and appreciates our friends and family members with Down syndrome but you also help to do away with stereotypes associated with the extra, magical 21st chromosome. And of course – it's always nice to see your own name in print! Please write in to us anytime at [publications@kdsp.org.pk](mailto:publications@kdsp.org.pk) with any comments or queries. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Best wishes and happy reading!**  
KDSP team



## What is the Karachi Down Syndrome Program?

**KDSP is an organization formed by a group of parents and passionate individuals advocating the value and inclusion of people with Down syndrome in Karachi.**

# IN FOCUS

KDSP has partnered with the prestigious Down Syndrome Education International (DSEI) to launch an exciting pilot project, by which children with Down syndrome can be successfully integrated into an inclusive educational setting. Working with mainstream schools in Karachi, we hope to create a culture within these schools that respects and promotes inclusive education.

To do so, we invited Rebecca Baxter from the United Kingdom, to come to Karachi and teach us how to develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for each of the students based on the UK's Early Learning Goals.

Rebecca was present at the KDSP offices to conduct a 2 day workshop, attended by teachers from all 5 of our partner schools – the CAS School, A.M.I, The Learning Tree, Meezan Academy and Cornerstones.



# SPEAK OUT



Muhammad Ammar, aged 14, likes music very much and he dances well. He likes to play games on his tablet. He is very particular about his routine! We all love him, life without him is nothing. His social behavior is excellent and he is very friendly. He is studying in Ranges Special School.

**Written by:**  
**Shazia Waseem, Mother of Muhammad Ammar**



Muhammad Mujtaba Khan is 6 years old Alhamdulillah! He is a very energetic boy, he loves almost all sports, such as football, cricket, basketball. He can easily spend the whole day playing football. He loves to run and play and he hates sitting idle. He also really enjoys coloring painting and dancing.

Recently he took part in his school's annual function, where he took part in the Hamd and also acted as a dancer! He was awarded the title of Best Observer of the year and was also awarded for speech improvement. He is a lovely caring boy who takes care of everyone, and just can't see anyone crying. He is Allah's blessing for our family Alhamdulillah and we love him a lot!

**Written by: Mumtaz, Mother of Muhamad Mujtaba Khan**

# ACTIVITIES AT KDSP

## ARTS & CRAFTS CLASSES FOR ADULTS

KDSP holds weekly Arts and Crafts classes for adults aged 15 and older. These classes are taught by the lovely Mrs. Mahtab Pirzada, and began in April 2015. The initial focus was on teaching the very basics, such as how to hold a needle steadily, but one year later, our friends with Down syndrome have progressed tremendously. Not only have the participants gone on to create beautiful handicrafts that have been sold at our Annual Carnival (and will also be featured at the Indie Arts and Crafts Exhibition in July!) but they have greatly enjoyed the weekly social interaction and the delicious refreshments.



## KIDZDUNYA

Whether it's imagining yourself as a firefighter or a policeman out there to save the world, we all love to play pretend! KDSP arranged a trip to KidzDunya on Saturday, the 4th of June, for children aged 4-12. The children unleashed their imaginations as they dressed up in the costumes of our everyday superheroes. They indulged their creative sides as they designed their own pizzas and ice cream, and very proudly ate the resulting scrumptious meal for lunch!



# ACTIVITIES AT KDSP!

## Family Support Group Session (May) – Healthy Diet for Children with Down syndrome

On May 21st, Saima Rasheed who is a Consultant and a Dietician at National Medical Centre spoke on the Importance of Healthy Diet for Children with Down syndrome. A balanced and healthy diet lays the foundation of an active and healthy life, so it is essential to be aware of how to maximize this. The session was attended by 43 parents and family members, all of whom each showed a keen interest in their child's dietary habits and how best to improve them.



## Family Support Group Session (June) – Through the Eyes of Children with Down syndrome

On June 18th, Dr. Irfan Jeeva who is an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at the Aga Khan University Hospital spoke on the eye-care of children with Down syndrome. Dr. Jeeva took a very systematic approach to the topic and strategically tackled the anatomy of the human eye step by step, as he proposed solutions to common problems that parents of children with Down syndrome, may face in their daily lives.




## Workshop on KDSP'S Program on Inclusive Education

KDSP is collaborating with Down Syndrome Education International (DSEI) to pioneer a program on inclusive education. Rebecca Baxter, a teacher with DSEI, facilitated a 2 day workshop to train teachers from five different schools across Karachi – the CAS School, the AMI School, the Learning Tree, Meezan Academy and Cornerstones.



# "CHALLENGED"

An illustration on the left side of the page shows a young girl with brown hair in pigtails, wearing a red dress, standing on the top step of a wooden ladder. She is waving her right hand. Below her, a young boy with black curly hair, wearing an orange shirt and blue shorts, stands on the ground, also waving his right hand. The ladder is positioned on a green grassy area with a few colorful flowers (orange, purple, pink) and crayons scattered around. The background is a light blue sky with a single cloud.

*Some say I am disabled,  
But you know that isn't true.  
I simply have a challenge  
A little different from you.  
My slight troubles, have taught me  
Things they said I could not know.  
Each obstacle is a victory,  
Helping me to grow.  
I'm not really any different,  
I cry, I laugh, I snore.  
I don't want to be treated  
As if I'm someone different anymore.  
Sometimes I have to fall,  
And sometimes I need to cry.  
Out of good intentions,  
People are afraid to let me try.  
My family give me strength, dignity,  
and the courage to be all I can be.  
For they don't see me as disabled,  
They just see me as me.*

ANON

# A BUTTERFLY IN THE WIND

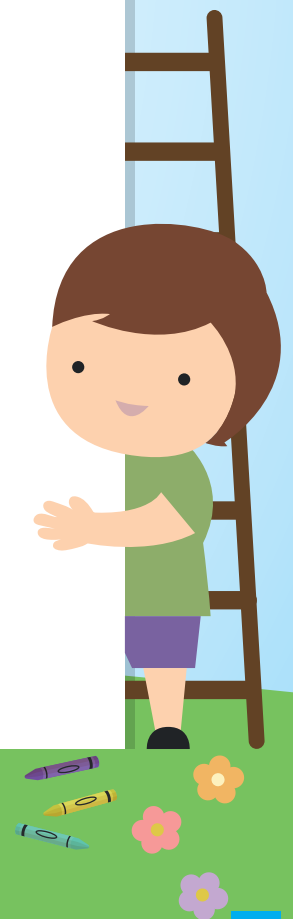
*A child is like a butterfly in the wind  
Some can fly higher than others,  
But each one flies the best it can.  
Why compare one against the other?*

*Each one is different.*

*Each one is special.*

*Each one is beautiful.*

ANON



# HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

## Inclusive Education

### What Is Inclusion?

Inclusion is an interesting word, especially in an educational context. We at KDSP take it to represent every single human being's inherent to fully participate in society. We understand it to mean tolerance and acceptance of differences, and a joyful welcome of diversity. Inclusion, by our definition, makes room for that person who would otherwise be excluded from the educational experiences that are fundamental to every student's development.

We feel that inclusion is beneficial for both parties : those who have special needs as well as typical students! Friendships develop, nondisabled students are more appreciative of differences and students with disabilities are more motivated. True acceptance of diversity ultimately develops within the school environment and is then carried into the home, workplace and community.

We do, of course, understand that others may be concerned about the need for special expertise to support the student's academic and social learning or the potential for students with disabilities to disrupt the classroom, but we feel that a combination of healthy dialogue and successful inclusion models allay these concerns.

In fact, models of inclusive education can be models for the education of all students, as they overcome barriers and offer a variety of approaches which reach a broader range of students and improve learning. These successful inclusion programs demonstrate how certain changes in the structure of school systems, classroom operations and the roles of teachers, students, parents and community members can enable equal access to general education curricula and related services for all students.

We hope KDSP's Project for Inclusive Education will be able to tackle these concerns!



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