

OLDER SIBLINGS WORKSHOP

Age: Over 10 years old

Duration: 1 hour

Schedule

15 minutes: Icebreaker Activity

- Go around the room and have everyone say their name & dream job

5 minutes: Welcome

- Go over bathroom locations, confidentiality, respecting one another

20 minutes: Understanding Down syndrome: *Jeopardy*

DOWN SYNDROME JEOPARDY

Supplies Needed:

- Jeopardy board (attached to end of document)
- Facilitator's copy of questions and answers

Lessons learned:

- Participants will learn important facts about Down syndrome in a fun, memorable way.

This a great activity to use with brothers and sisters to teach them some good facts and FAQ's about Down syndrome. You may want to adjust the

questions for the age of the participants. If your brothers and sisters are too young for this activity, see the activity titled “Similar and Different: Sibling Drawings.” Use the topics covered in this game as a jumping off point for further discussion about what Down syndrome actually is. Make sure to revisit topics brought up in Jeopardy during the Question Box session.

For more information about the facts and science of Down syndrome, check out Dr. Brian Skotko’s and Sue Levine’s book, *Fasten your Seatbelt: A Crash Course on Down Syndrome for Brothers and Sisters*, Chapter 1, Gearing Up to Go: getting the facts about Down syndrome!

10 minutes: Question Box

QUESTION BOX

Supplies Needed:

- Index cards
- Markers/pens
- Shoe box

Lessons learned:

- Participants will have the freedom to ask questions about Down syndrome and their sibling, specifically, that they may not normally ask
- Participants will get accurate answers to their questions about Down syndrome, learning good facts
- Participants will benefit from the discussion and requisite growth around a particular topic

The Question Box is a great activity that gives brothers and sisters the opportunity to anonymously write any questions they have about their sibling on an index card and drop it into a shoe box or bag positioned in the room. You may want to start with a time to write some questions down at the beginning of the Workshop and then follow up with some designated time throughout the rest of the Workshop. Brothers and sisters should also know that they can write questions throughout the Workshop, outside of the designated times, as well.

It will be important to leave the index cards and pencils out for participants to use through the Workshop. At other times throughout the Workshop, assemble the brothers and sisters into a circle (different circles for each age group). Ask one of the participants to pull a question and read it out loud, and then you can ask for some advice from the other participants. Oftentimes, siblings can help each other and answer their own questions! Other times, you might need to jump in and offer some direction or reflections. Use these questions as opportunities to talk about some larger topics that are important to brothers and sisters. Make sure you create a safe environment so that brothers and sisters feel safe to share their thoughts and ask any questions there that they may have.

10 minutes: Closing Remarks

- Share with them the *Benefits of Having a Sibling with Down syndrome*
- Have siblings come up with their own list of benefits

BENEFITS OF HAVING A SIBLING WITH DOWN SYNDROME

There is a long list of all the benefits of having a sibling with Down syndrome. Your sibling will show you things about the world and your life that you never would have learned except through them. We are a special group of people; I can promise you that. Things can be tough; there's no doubt about it. But your sibling will provide you with unconditional love and teachings about yourself and others. Siblings of people with Down syndrome listed the following things as just a few of the benefits they've gotten from being the sibling of someone with Down syndrome.



KEEP IN MIND...

1. Acknowledge the range of feelings that siblings may bring to the workshop.
2. Say what they feel is common—others experience that, too.
3. Give them practical things to do to remedy the situation.

RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT

1. Read up on different Topics to prepare for any questions that may arise!
2. Look under Activities to download worksheets and explore different games.
3. Check out Dr. Skotko & Sue Levine's book *Fasten Your Seatbelt: A Crash Course on Down Syndrome for Brothers and Sisters* for more helpful information!

Down Syndrome Jeopardy

Science

100 The number of chromosomes in every cell of a person with trisomy 21 (47)

200 It is this numbered chromosome that is often tripled in someone with Down syndrome (21)

300 The name of this genetic test can be used to count the number of chromosomes after a child is born (karyotype)

400 This type of Down syndrome can be inherited (translocation Down syndrome)

500 Research into this condition is helping scientists learn more about memory formation in persons with Down syndrome (Alzheimer's disease)

Celebrities

100 The first name of the person who named Down syndrome (John)

200 She was an actress on Glee and frequently advocates for people with Down syndrome (Lauren Potter—real name; Becky Jackson—character on Glee)

300 The name of the children's television series that first had an actor with Down syndrome (Sesame Street)

400 It was this U.S. President who first formed a committee on cognitive disabilities (Kennedy)

500 She was the first person with Down syndrome to swim the English channel (Karen Gaffney)

Education

100 Its initials are IEP (Individualized Education Plan)

200 This term means that people with disabilities are educated alongside with students who do not have disabilities (inclusion or mainstreaming)

300 People with disabilities have a right to a public education through this age (21)

400 This professional, abbreviated OT, oftentimes helps people with Down syndrome learn fine motor skills (occupational therapist)

500 This educational bill ensures that students with disabilities are receiving an appropriate education (IDEA)

Organizations 100 This athletic organization was founded by Eunice Kennedy Shriver (Special Olympics)

200 This national DS parent organization puts on national conferences about Down syndrome for family members (NDSC)

300 This national DS parent organization organizes Buddy Walks (NDSS)

400 This program, established in school systems, befriends people with disabilities and students without disabilities (Best Buddies)

500 This national DS organization helps fund research efforts about Down syndrome (LuMind Foundation)

“Down” Syndrome

100 When doing this, one must be careful not to catch a computer virus (download)

200 A common nickname for Australia (down under)

300 This fabric softener is often used to fluff towels (Downy)

400 This popular TV series, featuring the fictional Crawley Family, took place in 1920's England (Downton Abbey)

500 He plays a super hero that is part of the Marvels Comics (Robert Downey Jr.)