



For Parents who have received a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome...

The Anne Arundel County Down Syndrome Connection would like for you to know that you are not alone. Many of us are parents who also received a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome and we truly understand how difficult it is to hear that unexpected news. We are a safe place to turn to with your questions and you are invited to share your feelings with people here who understand. We pledge to you that we will reach out to you with compassion and great care. We will not judge.

There is no right or wrong way to react to a prenatal diagnosis. We all have our distinctive situations and come from unique life experiences. The thing that we all have in common, however, is that we **all** have hopes and dreams for our children. That extra 21st chromosome just usually isn't part of the plan as we set out to start our families.

Some expectant parents react by experiencing intense emotions at first: shock, dismay, fear, anger, etc. Please know that such emotions are a **perfectly normal response**. Many expectant parents enter a time of decision-making. We offer to you the opportunity to speak with experienced parents who can answer your questions and provide a realistic picture of raising a child with Down syndrome. We will answer your questions honestly and do our best to describe the joys and challenges we have experienced in our own personal journeys.

Some expectant parents consider adoption as an option. Many are quite encouraged to learn that there is actually a *national waiting list* of families wishing to adopt a baby with Down syndrome. If you would like adoption resources, we can provide those to you.

Other expectant parents are surprised and sad at first, but they make plans to welcome the baby into their lives. They gather as much information as they can and become determined to make adjustments during the pregnancy so that the birth will be a joyous occasion. Some are able to let go of their initial dreams and create new dreams for their child before the child arrives.

We have excellent information packets available to you, and we could get one in the mail quickly. We are also available to visit on the phone, in person, or on email. Wherever you find yourself this moment, please know that we care and we will try to meet your needs for information and support at this time.

According to the National Council for Adoption, babies, regardless of medical problems, who are "free for adoption," generally don't wait long for families. There are waiting lists of families wishing to adopt infants with Down syndrome.

National Council for Adoption
1930 17th Street
NW Washington, DC 20009-6207
202-328-1200

Robin Steele – manages a waiting list for those wishing to adopt babies with Down syndrome.



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Adoption Awareness Committee
Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati
1821 Summit Road, Suite 102
Cincinnati, OH 45237
513-761-5400
513-761-5401 FAX

“The Adoption Awareness Committee of the Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati strives to insure that all children born with Down syndrome grow up in a family. We provide support and information to birth families, adoptive families, and agencies who are seeking homes for a child in their custody.”

NATHHAN/CHASK – Christian Homes and Special Kids – has over 350 families signed up, ready and wanting to adopt children with special needs.
PO BOX 39
Porthill, ID 83853
www.chask.org
208-267-6246

Adoption Alliance
2121 S. Oneida St., Suite 420
Denver, CO 80224-2575 USA
Phone: 303-584-9900
Fax: 303-584-9007
Email: info@adoptall.com

Or

300 Main Street, Suite 201
Grand Junction , Colorado 81501
Phone 970-255-8441

Reece's Rainbow Down Syndrome Adoption Ministry
P. O. Box 2055
Dacula, GA 30019-9998

Also, please feel free to call around to local social services agencies and adoption agencies. They are able to offer professional birth parent counselors who will be able to help you decide whether adoption is the best decision for you and your family.

We wish you **all the best**, and please feel free to contact us for more information. As always, your interactions with our association are confidential.

Sincerely,

Anne Arundel County Down Syndrome Connection

The *mission* of the Anne Arundel County Down Syndrome Connection is to encourage, empower and embrace children and adults who have Down syndrome and their families.