

## **K-2 Down Syndrome Education Program**

Adapted from Special Olympics Get Into It  
We'll Paint the Octopus Red by Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen

### Overview:

An interactive discussion and project about people's differences and similarities, Down syndrome and the Buddy Walk for students K-2.

Contact Dawn Durante, 2008 Buddy Walk Education Chair, at [dawnd@homesc.com](mailto:dawnd@homesc.com) with questions or comments.

Estimated length: 1 hour  
Materials needed: School-approved wall adhesive  
Cut out of student on large green piece of paper  
Masking tape

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Ask:

**Think about a time when you learned to do something new. An example might be learning how to ride a bike, skate or play a new game.**

*Have children give examples of new things they have learned to do.*

Ask:

**What was the new thing you learned to do?**

**How did you learn it?**

**Who taught it to you?**

**What did you think was easy about it?**

**What did you think was difficult?**

**What did you do to get better at the difficult thing?**

Explain:

**All of us can learn to do things, but different people learn in different ways. Some people take longer to learn than others. Some people need more practice than others to do something well.**

**Because no two people in our class are exactly the same, there are many different things all of us like to do. If we were all the same, life would be boring. The differences in other people make life interesting.**

Ask:

**Who can give examples of some of the ways we are all the same?**

*Encourage answers such as we all have eyes, ears, arms and legs*

Ask:

**Who can give us examples of some of the ways we are all different?**

*Encourage answers such as hair and eye color, height, clothes*

Explain:

**Sometimes kids are mean to kids who are different from them. To show us how hurtful saying mean things are, let's play a game called "Greenie".**

*Cut out a silhouette of a child from a large piece of green paper. Hold the cut-out in front of the class.*

**This is Greenie. Let's say Greenie is a new kid in our class who looks or acts a little different from you. I am going to hold Greenie and I want you to say something hurtful to him and tear off a piece of Greenie as you say the hurtful thing. Keep the piece of Greenie that you tear off. I'll start, "Greenie, you talk funny!"**

Ask:

**What are some things someone might say to Greenie that would hurt his feelings?**

*Guide each child individually to walk to Greenie, say something mean and tear a piece of him off.*

*Encourage the class to say things like Greenie dresses funny, Greenie talks funny, Greenie walks funny.*

*After every one has said something hurtful to Greenie...*

Say:

**Now, look at Greenie. He looks very different from when we first saw him. He looks like he has been hurt. The things you all said to him have hurt him but how can you make him better?**

*Encourage answers such as apologize, be friendly, sit beside him at lunch, play with him on the playground.*

Say:

**Although we can try to make up for mean things we say, we can never take mean things back. The best thing to do is to not to tease or say mean things at all. Let's see what happens if we all apologize to Greenie for what we said. Please bring your piece of Greenie to me, apologize for what you said and tape the piece of Greenie back on to him.**

*Offer each child a piece of masking tape. Please only use colored tape so the students can see the "wounds" on Greenie.*

*After each child has taped his piece of Greenie back onto the cut-out...*

Say:

**Greenie looks more like himself now, but he will never be the same. He will always remember the mean things we said.**

**Let's put Greenie up on our wall as a reminder to always say nice things and never tease other people.**

*Tape Greenie on the wall and leave for the year.*

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Explain:

**One way we are different is that some people have Down syndrome and others do not.**

Ask:

**Do you know anyone with Down syndrome?**

**Do you know what Down syndrome is?**

Explain:

**Down syndrome is something that causes differences in the way a person looks and learns. No two people with Down syndrome are quite the same, but they are often extra flexible, have eyes that slant upward, have small ears and a small nose, and grow more slowly than other kids. They also tend to learn more slowly than other kids. But every person has his own personality and will look like other members of his family.**

**People with Down syndrome are born with one extra chromosome in some or all of their cells. Chromosomes are tiny, thread-shaped things inside your body. They contain the directions that tell your body how to grow. These directions tell your body what color your eyes and hair will be, how big your nose will be, whether you will be a good singer, and many other things. When a person has an extra chromosome, it mixes up his body's directions a little. That is why kids with Down syndrome look a little different from other kids and have to try harder to learn.**

**Nobody knows why some people are born with Down syndrome, but we do know it is nobody's fault.**

**Sometimes people say that kids with Down syndrome are special because they need extra time and help to learn some things. But they are also special in the same ways that other kids are special. All kids, with or without Down syndrome, are special because they have their own interests, talents, and personalities.**

**The Buddy Walk is a celebration of all people with Down syndrome. It will be here in Charleston in a few weeks and we would love for you to come. We will have lots of jump castles, face painters, games and food. We could all go together and have a great time. You will see kids with Down syndrome there doing all the same things you enjoy doing.**

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### **Project Ideas**

1. Make Buddy Walk posters to hang around school.
2. Make posters about Down Syndrome to hang around school.
3. Read books about Down Syndrome from your local library.

# The 2008 Buddy Walk

## Down Syndrome Education Week September 8-12, 2008

*An Educational Project presented by the Down Syndrome Association of the Lowcountry (DSAL)*

Dear Parents:

The week of September 8-12 has been designated as ***Down Syndrome Education Week*** presented by the Down syndrome Association of the Lowcountry (DSAL). This is a week long educational project designed to promote acceptance and inclusion of all people with Down Syndrome. Students helping other students through education and support is the key to breaking barriers between people with disabilities and without. The ***Down Syndrome Education Week*** is one way of accomplishing this.

The Down Syndrome Education Week will culminate in an afternoon celebration known as the **BUDDY WALK**. The Buddy Walk is a one-mile fun walk which celebrates the lives and accomplishments of individuals with Down syndrome. It will take place on **October 5th at 12:30** on **Daniel Island**. This is a national event that is held in over 275 cities around the world. The Buddy Walk is an incredible day of celebration with family, friends and people who, like you, want to raise awareness and the hope of a better world for all people with Down syndrome. You may register for the Buddy Walk at <http://www.dsalowcountry.org/buddywalk/>. Registration is \$10 per person and includes a t-shirt, food, drink, jump castles, face painting and entertainment.

Please contact Dawn Durante at [dawnd@homesc.com](mailto:dawnd@homesc.com) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Dawn Durante, 2008 Buddy Walk Education Chair



Dear Educators,

The **Down Syndrome Association of the Lowcountry (DSAL)** would like to help your school initiate a Diversity Awareness Program. Several schools in the Lowcountry have successfully brought Diversity Awareness Programs to their students in an effort to kindle kindness and acceptance among their student bodies.

One way to start a Diversity Awareness Program in your school is to participate in the **Down Syndrome Education Week** offered by DSAL. The week of **September 8-12, 2008**, is Down Syndrome Education Week throughout the Lowcountry. During this week, we plan to educate our community about Down Syndrome and promote the **Buddy Walk**, a celebration of all people with Down Syndrome held October 5th on Daniel Island.

You may visit <http://www.dsalowcountry.org/buddywalk/> for grade-level, scripted lesson plans about appreciating differences among all of us and learning about Down Syndrome. At our website, you will also find templates of letters to parents and other ideas about how to include your school in the Down Syndrome Education Week and Buddy Walk.

Your school may choose to only participate in the Down Syndrome Education Week September 8-12 and use the material found on the website as it is; or you may like to continue diversity awareness through the school year and educate your students about a different form of diversity monthly. If you choose to use the Down Syndrome Education Week program as a spring-board to introduce other disabilities to your students, you will see that the plans at the website can easily change according to the topic.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dawn Durante, 2008 Buddy Walk Education Chair  
dawnd@homesc.com

# 2008 Buddy Walk

## Down Syndrome Education Week September 8-12, 2008

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### 2008 Lowcountry Buddy Walk Presented by the Down Syndrome Association of the Lowcountry

**When:** Sunday, October 5, 2008

Registration and festival 12:30

1 mile fun walk 3:00

**Where:** Etiwan Park, Daniel Island

**Why:** To celebrate people with Down syndrome

**Cost:** \$10 per person

**Registration:** <http://www.dsalowcountry.org/buddywalk/>

1. Pick a team name for your class or school.
2. Each individual/family in the class may go to <http://www.dsalowcountry.org/buddywalk/> and follow the Buddy Walk online registration prompts or download a form to mail to DSAL.
3. Enter your class/school's team name when prompted in order to be identified as a group. (This is optional, you do not have to be part of a group.)
4. Make signs for the Buddy Walk with your team's name so everyone can find each other and walk together.
5. Come to the Buddy Walk's pre-registration table to pick up your t-shirts.
6. Enjoy food, drink, jump castles, face painting and entertainment all included in your registration.

**Questions:** Dawn Durante, 2008 Buddy Walk Education Chair  
[dawnd@homesc.com](mailto:dawnd@homesc.com)

*Proceeds from the Buddy Walk provide local programs such as baby packets for families of new babies with Down syndrome, education for families and professionals and self-advocacy programs.*