

Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area



Annual Report 2013

The

goals and mission of the DSCBA were accomplished in many ways in 2013 due to the wonderful efforts and generosity from our community: our members, funders, volunteers, staff, and board members.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for allowing us to expand our services, which are making a significant difference. Together, we have been busy teaching educators and the community that people of all ages who happen to have Down syndrome should never be underestimated in what they can achieve.

Because of everyone's hard work, support, and commitment, we have been able to achieve great things in 2013:

- Trained 471 educators, thanks to our successful DS Educational Alliance program, with these classes: DS101, Behavior is Communication, Inclusion, Ability Awareness, Numicon, See and Learn, Total Communication in the Classroom, Augmentative and Alternative Communications (AAC), and Literacy.
- Conducted more than 16 Ability Awareness presentations throughout the greater Bay Area, educating classrooms with a total of 522 students about Down syndrome and why their classmates are more alike than different.
- Completed a pilot summer Communication Readiness Program to understand the impact of a summer immersion program in Communication, AAC, Oral Motor, and Literacy for preschool- and kindergarten-aged children.
- Welcomed 32 new member families, and provided referral for 16 more out of the area.
- Facilitated 35 support groups for parents and extended family members.
- Provided developmental Step classes in four locations throughout the Bay Area, four days a week for ages 0-61.
- Provided Individualized Education Program (IEP) support and assistance at IEP meetings.
- Organized a successful all-day Empowerment Conference, the Gala for Giving, the Step Up for DS walk, and many workshops for parents.
- Provided 10 Music Therapy sessions and offered Oral Motor Therapy and reading services on-site for all ages.
- Maintained a lending library, including an extensive technology library, full of AAC devices and materials.
- Gave the gift of expression to children, teens, and adults with our AAC program.
- Provided hundreds of hours of consultation, support, and referral to families for medical, legal, educational, and mentor services.
- Launched a medical outreach program.



SF Step in their garden area.

2013

New Programs Launched in 2013

Communication Readiness Program

In the summer of 2013 the DSCBA piloted the Communication Readiness Program (CRP) with a cohort of eight children ages four through six with Down syndrome, including one child dually diagnosed with Down syndrome and Autism.

CRP met or exceeded all of its stated objectives. Every single student in CRP improved their communication abilities as a result of the program. The level of improvement and the areas improved varied with each child, but some common themes emerged.

With regard to speech and oral motor therapy, the students increased the control of their jaw, lips and tongue for the precision necessary for speech sound production. Students also learned sight recognition of letters, words, colors, and objects; many learned to read and follow along with books that they previously pushed away in frustration.

Socialization dramatically improved for all participants, which includes paying attention and listening to others, as well as sharing and communicating. Most participants built enormous confidence through their newfound ability to express themselves and many found their "voice" by the end of the program.

"It was Monday morning of the third week when the parents started reporting all of the differences they were seeing at home...that was my first 'ah-ha' moment. Ainsley's mother talked about how she was commenting about so



(above) Leah sharing with Ainsley in CRP. (left) Children in Small Steps gain sensory experience with mud.



many things over the weekend, that they caught themselves almost 'shushing' her. This is a child that has always spoken in one to two-syllable approximations. Now she was approximating three to four regularly.... Her personality really began to show!"

—Heather Peterson, MS, SLP-CCC

Medical Outreach

We began the medical outreach program late in the year due to an awareness that often, medical staff are either uneducated or are not up to date about Down syndrome and the capabilities of people with DS; consequently, parents are often misinformed. In 2013, DSCBA created a medical pamphlet to be given to parents of newborns at hospitals, developed packets about DSCBA for medical personnel with information about how to deliver the news of a diagnosis, and is beginning to make face-to-face meetings with medical personnel.

With Gratitude...

The DSCBA could not accomplish all it does without the generous support of our members, volunteers, and donors. We would especially like to thank the following foundation and corporation funders in 2013:

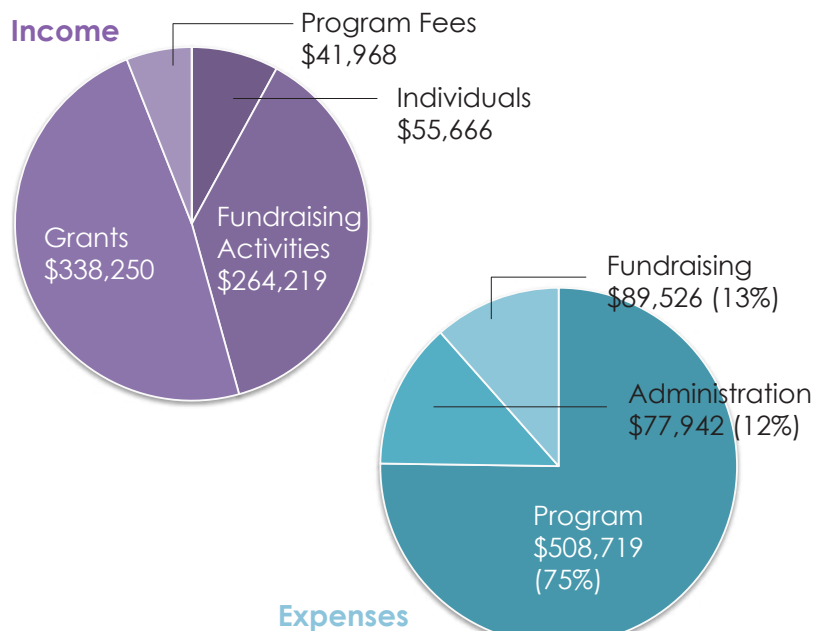
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