



F.R.I.E.N.D.S. - Families **R**aising, **I**nspiring, **E**ducating, and **N**etworking for **D**own **S**yndrome (FDSWF) is a 501c3, non-profit, private-operating foundation. Providing services to individuals with Down Syndrome and their families since 2007. FDSWF is an affiliate of the National Down Syndrome Society, a member of the Global Down Syndrome Foundation, Temple Terrace Chamber of Commerce and Brandon Chamber of Commerce.

FDSWF MISSION

The Mission of F.R.I.E.N.D.S. DOWN SYNDROME WEST FLORIDA is to provide all encompassing educational and support services to families who have been impacted by Down Syndrome; while promoting complete community integration of those impacted by Down Syndrome. We achieve this through our website, social media outlets, parent liaison programs and community gatherings where parents can receive up-to-date information related to Down Syndrome. We serve Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Pasco County.

FDSWF GOALS

F.R.I.E.N.D.S. DOWN SYNDROME WEST FLORIDA goals are to provide broad reaching educational services for families impacted by Down Syndrome in West Florida. To provide financial and social service support, educational outreach, and community integration for families impacted by Down Syndrome. We proudly serve Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Pasco Counties.

F.R.I.E.N.D.S. DOWN SYNDROME WEST FLORIDA P.O. BOX 677 BRANDON FL 33509 (813) 245-2782
WEBSITE: www.friendssupport.org EMAIL: info@friendssupport.org
FRIENDS SUPPORT, INC EIN#651261646

FDSWF HISTORY

F.R.I.E.N.D.S. Down Syndrome West Florida was founded in 2006 as FRIENDS SUPPORT, INC. a non-profit 501C3 Private Operating Foundation. Our tax EIN #651261646. FDSWF promotes the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down Syndrome.

FDSWF PROGRAMS

FDSWF PARENT PACKETS - FDSWF provides free FRIENDS Parent Packets and Down Syndrome resource materials for new and expectant parents receiving a diagnosis of Down syndrome. Each packet comes with the book "Babies with Down Syndrome, A New Parents Guide". FRIENDS Parent Packets are distributed free of charge to:

- St. Joseph's Hospital
- St. Joseph's Women's Hospital
- St. Joseph's Children's Hospital
- South Florida Hospital
- Brandon Hospital
- Tampa General Hospital
- Florida Hospital Tampa
- Florida Hospital North
- Florida Hospital Wesley Chapel
- Mease Countryside Hospital
- All Children's Hospital

PARENT LIAISON PROGRAM - The FRIENDS Parent packets are provided in English and Spanish. If you would like to receive a free FRIENDS Parent Packet send your request to info@friendssupport.org. FDSWF Parent Liaisons program offers peer to peer counseling for families for support and information. Parent Liaisons visits are available upon request. FRIENDS Parent Packets are also available in Spanish and a bilingual Parent Liaison is available.

FDSWF SCHOLARSHIPS - FDSWF provides financial support through our scholarships to help offset the costs of

- Special Needs conferences – FDSWF will provide funds for special needs conferences and workshops.
- Recreational Programs – funds can be used for any type of recreational program.
- Educational programs – funds can be used for any type of education program.
- Medical Program – funds may be used for PT, OT, Speech.
- Hope Haven Clinic Evaluation – funds can be used for the Hope Have Clinic Evaluation.
- Hardship Fund – for families in need/crisis.
- Buddy Walk Registration – funds can be used to register for the Buddy Walk and obtain t-shirts for each family member.

You can find the FDSWF Scholarship form on our website, www.friendssupport.org. Approval will be at the discretion of the FDSWF Board of Directors. Requirements:

1. You must be an active FDSWF member.
2. You must donate four volunteer hours of your time to FDSWF.
3. You must submit a short article for our FDSWF Newsletter.
4. Only one scholarship per year, per family or individual.

FDSWF MEMBER CONNECTIONS PROGRAMS

We understand that a strong support system can make a great impact in the lives of parents raising a special needs child. We provide connection and support through our monthly Playgroups and Social Clubs.

- **“BABY FRIENDS” PROGRAM** - for the birth to 5yrs and meets in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties at We Rock the Spectrum and Playdates.
- **“TWEEN FRIENDS” PROGRAM** - for the 6-12yrs, meets for fun outings quarterly in Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties.
- **FDSWF “TEEN MEET” CLUB PROGRAM** - for the 11-14yrs. We need a host to volunteer.
- **FRIENDS SOCIAL CLUB (FSC) PROGRAM** - for our 15yrs plus and is available for *all* special needs young adults and meets quarterly for various fun activities.
- **“BEST FRIENDS” PROGRAM** – is for our FDSWF Dads. They meet quarterly for fun events.
- **FACEBOOK “FRIENDS DOWN SYNDROME WEST FLORIDA” TWITTER** - is F.R.I.E.N.D.S._TampaBay.
- **TRADITIONAL TAEKWON-DO** Center is working with FRIENDS in creating of a Special Needs Martial Arts Program. Traditional Taekwondo Center has been in Tampa since 1997. They have Afternoon Program, Little Tiger program (ages 4-6), Evening programs for Adult and Children and Kimoodo classes (Korean Tai Chi). Please send an email to taekwondotampa@gmail.com; 9250 N. 56th St, Temple Terrace FL 33510, 813-988-3349.
- **DANCING FOR DONATIONS** – (941)716-3647 Sara Battaglia Our purpose is to offer an all-inclusive dance environment for kids and adults, while supporting the community through donations instead of charging for the dance classes. Dancing for donations has openings for new dancers! Free classes in exchange for donations to charitable organizations. Classes are held at We Rock the Spectrum - 1076 E Brandon Blvd #102, Brandon, FL 33511.

FDSWF NEWSLETTER - FDSWF Newsletter is published monthly and furnishes information on our programs, event's and connections.

FDSWF FAMILY AWARENESS, CONNECTIONS, AND FUN

For Down Syndrome awareness, advocacy, family fun and friend connections FDSWF hosts these events each year:

- March - World Down Syndrome Day Picnic
- July - Temple Terrace 4th of July Parade
- July- Down Syndrome Awareness Picnic & Pool Party
- October- Buddy Walk at Raymond James Stadium
- October - Halloween Party in Pinellas
- December - Pinellas Christmas Parade
- December F.R.I.E.N.D.S. Holiday & Cookie Swap Party. See you soon!

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FDSWF MEMBERSHIP

Want to join FDSWF it's free and easy! Log onto our website and fill out our membership form. By joining our community, you will receive our Newsletters and Events emails. FDSWF is run by a dedicated group of volunteers made up of Down Syndrome parents, business and community leaders, and professionals. If you would like to participate on our board, volunteer to help with a function, become a parent liaison, or volunteer on a committee we'd love to have you! We have Chapters in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco Counties. We are looking forward to getting to know you and your family.

FDSWF FUNDRAISING

Your donations make a difference in our community. FDSWF is funded by donations from individuals, employee giving, corporations, and fundraising events. Our largest fundraiser is our annual Buddy Walk in October, where we advocate for people with Down Syndrome, their families & friends, and the professionals who support them. Your donations allow us to continue the important work we do to promote the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down Syndrome.

Your donations help to provide:

- Printed materials for our FRIENDS Parent Packets and Parent Liaisons program.
- Resource materials for our families affected by Down syndrome
- Support for our playgroups, social clubs, and dad's club.
- Educational programs for our physicians and community.
- Special Needs workshops
- Scholarship Funds
- Community activities, picnics, and parties.

SPONSORS

We Need You!! Your company can reach a large community audience in a fun and upbeat atmosphere while supporting the mission of FDSWF. There are many ways your business or organization can be a part of the Buddy Walk, from sponsorship packages to forming a team and much more! For more information call (813)245-2782 or visit our website, www.friendssupport.org.

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for your interest in volunteering. You can earn your volunteer hours while meeting some really wonderful families. We appreciate the people from our community who are willing to join us in making a difference with our Down Syndrome individuals and families.

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Check our website calendar and Facebook Events for the dates and time of meetings and events, www.friendssupport.org.

FACEBOOK PAGE

Our public page is FRIENDS DOWN SYNDROME WEST FLORIDA – we also have a “closed page” just for our West Florida families.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

FDSWF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ann Foyt – President	(813) 245-2782
Craig Woodard, Sr. - Vice President Marketing/Media	(814) 882-9191
Belinda Romero – Vice President Spanish Outreach	(813) 233-6395
Roger Reinhardt – Treasurer/Pinellas Lead	(727) 709-0197
Liz Johnson – Board Secretary	(727) 463-1707
Kathy Boisseau - Playgroup Director	(603) 438-2886
Brenda Wando – Records	(813)750-3949
Robert Taylor - Provisional Manager	(727) 331-9482
Laurie Ohall - Special Needs Attorney	(813)417-5920
Matt Cooper - FDSWF Accountant	(636) 248-9636
Julie Hirsch - FDSWF Photographer	(813) 765-2697
Natalie Killebrew – IT Specialist	(813)948-8808

PINELLAS TEAM LEADS

Roger Reinhardt – Treasurer/Pinellas Lead	(727) 709-0197
Sylvia Costa – Vice President Spanish Outreach	(954) 650-7691
Robert Taylor – 2nd Team Lead	(727) 331-9482
Liz Johnson – Pinellas Secretary	(727) 463-1707

PASCO TEAM LEADS

Terry Larson-Messmer – Pasco Lead	(727) 505-8144
Lisa Mezzei	(813) 323-2800
Debbie Long	(912) 660-1377

ADVISORY BOARD

Joe Wright	(813)943-9500
Dana Reinhardt	(727)686-8809
Evan Johnson	(727)463-1707
Paul Foyt	(813) 309-1023

We are currently seeking to fill FDSWF Board seats with medical professionals and school board members from Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Pasco counties, and Medical Professionals. If you are interested in joining a wonderful group fulfill its mission, please send your request to info@friendssupport.org.

WEST FLORIDA IEP/MARKETING DIRECTOR

Cheryl Moscal (407) 323-9836

CONTACT US

ADDRESS P.O. Box 677, Brandon FL 33509
PHONE (813) 245-2782

F.R.I.E.N.D.S. OFFICE

1219 Millennium Parkway #119
Brandon, FL 33511

EMAIL info@friendssupport.org

WEBSITE www.friendssupport.org

SPECIAL NEEDS ATTORNEY

Law Offices of Laurie E. Ohall, P.A. - Estate Planning, Elder law, Probate and Guardianship
1464 Oakfield Dr., Brandon, FL 33511 813-438-8503 (office)

Laurie Ohall is a Florida Board Certified Elder law attorney who has been practicing law since 1994. She concentrates her practice in the areas of estate planning, elder law and planning for special needs families – her areas of practice include the related fields of asset protection planning, probate, special needs trusts, guardianship advocacy and trust administration.

A-Z BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

FDSWF has partnered with A-Z Business Solutions for our accounting and bookkeeping needs. A-Z Business Solutions. Matt Cooper - 9340 Soaring Hawk Lane, Seffner, FL 33584 (855) 553-2665

A-Z Business Solutions – “We succeed by educating and partnering with Small Business owners, enabling them to thrive and prosper by supporting their business financial and administrative requirements; empowering them to focus on their True business objectives and strengths”.

JULIE HIRSCH PHOTOGRAPHY

Julie Hirsch has been FDSWF photographer for the last four years. She captures our memories and wonderful moments in her professional pictures. In a word she is wonderful! Call (813) 765-2697;
julie@jhirschphotoanddesign.com.



“Down syndrome is an intellectual disability that about 5,000 babies in the United States are born with each year. A person with Down syndrome has 47 chromosomes, microscopic structures that carry genetic information to determine almost everything about a person. Most people have only 46 chromosomes. It’s the extra chromosome that can cause certain physical characteristics (such as short stature and an upward slant to the eyes) and speech and developmental delays. Still, people with Down syndrome are a lot like you: They are unique people with strengths and talents.”

Melissa Riggio – DS Self Advocate

Tampa Bay Resource List

Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) Suncoast Region

(Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco)

(813) 233-4319; 1313 N. Tampa St. #515 Tampa FL 33602
[www.APDcares.org/resource directory](http://www.APDcares.org/resource_directory)

APD works with local communities and private providers to support people who have developmental disabilities and their families in living, learning, and working in their communities. APD also aids in identifying the needs of people with developmental disabilities for supports and services so they can reach their full potential.

The agency also works to educate the public on disability issues and focuses attention on employment for people with disabilities. APD provides:

- Medicaid HCBS Waiver through iBudget Florida
- Placement in an intermediate care facility for those with developmental disabilities
- Supported employment services
- Supported living services
- Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+)
- IFS funding for non-waiver customer expenses

http://411.myflorida.com/apps/411/tel411.public_411 (866)693-6748 to get phone numbers for Florida state agencies

www.211tampabay.org or call 2-1-1- to find out about help with food, housing, employment, health care, counseling and more. 14155 58th St N Suite 211 Clearwater Florida 33760, Phone 727-210-4233

www.rehabworks.org or call 800-451-4327 for help getting or keeping a job.

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Bay Area Early Steps (birth to 3yrs)

<https://www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/services/west-central-early-steps>

Regional FRS : Paula B Keyser (727) 767-4403

All Children's Hospital Center for Child Development

480 7th Ave S St Petersburg, FL 33701

Email: achearlysteps@jhmi.edu

Best Buddies - Tampa Office

200 South Hoover Boulevard, Suite 191 Tampa, FL 33609 florida@bestbuddies.org

Phone: 813.254.9025 Fax: 813. 254.9085 Area Director – Shane Fletcher

Services One to one friendships with a nondisabled peer for one year; activities for pairs and groups; Programs for middle, high school, college, citizens, and jobs. Supported Employment opportunities; e-Buddies online.

Bright Expectations

Bright Expectations is Florida's site dedicated to helping our residents with unique abilities find support, resources, and inspiration.

Website: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/people-with-disabilities/bright-expectations/index.html>

Children's Medical Services (727) 469-5800 www.floridahealth.gov

A collection of special programs for eligible children with special needs. We have a variety of services for expecting moms, newborn babies, infants and toddlers, school-aged children, adolescents and young adults. All of our services are provided by highly qualified physicians, nurses, social workers and other health care providers around the state. Through our family-centered programs, we make sure your child gets the care he or she needs.

Easter Seals – Tampa

2403 E. Henry Ave; Tampa, FL 33610; Phone: (813)988-7633 Fax: (813)914-0403

Primary Contact: Chantel Stampfer

Offers Childcare, Early Intervention, Child development centers, Speech, PT, OT

Ages birth to school age. Cost: Florida child scholarships; private tuition; Medicaid/Medicare.

Easter Seals Southwest Florida

Adult Day Training at Easter Seals Southwest Florida provides a variety of activities and social interactions, reflecting the needs and goals of adults with disabilities, including educational programs, recreational outings, community volunteering, working on service contracts, and creating art, guided by our art instructor. We create solutions and change lives. Website: www.swfl.easterseals.com

FAAST Florida Alliance for Assistive Services (866) 732-88734202 E. Fowler Ave, Tampa FL 33620

Improve the quality of life for all Floridians with disabilities through awareness activities that increase access to and acquisition of assistive services and technology. Hands on assistive technology, demonstrations, and trainings. Assistive device lending programs and no charge.

DREAMMS For Kids, Inc

www.dreamms.org Assistive technology for special needs children.
Family Center on Technology and Disability www.fctd.info
Information on assistive technology for special needs children.

FDLRS – Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System Gulfcoast Associate Center

Home office address: 2929 County Rd 193 Clearwater, FL 33759
Parent Liaison: Mary Massimo Manager: Kristen Redding
Phone # (727) 793-2773

www.pcsb.org/fdlrsgulfcoast

The Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System is a discretionary project of the Florida Department of Education that provides diagnostic, instructional, and technology support services to district exceptional education programs and families of students with disabilities. FDLRS Gulfcoast is one of nineteen service centers statewide that directly serves [Pinellas](#), [Pasco](#), and [Hernando](#) Counties

Pinellas County Schools – <https://www.pcsb.org/Page/848>

Pinellas County Schools ESE Parent Services: Tracy McMannus, (727) 588-6062, email, mcmannust@pcsb.org.

The Pinellas County Schools Office of Exceptional Student Education strives to provide stakeholders with valuable information to promote highest student achievement for students with disabilities.

Be involved by creating an ongoing line of communication with your student's educational providers. Each ESE student is assigned a classroom teacher and case manager. Your child's classroom teacher can give you the name of your child's case manager if needed. The case manager can provide information regarding your child's IEP, services providers, and progress, as well as assist the IEP team in monitoring student progress. Unresolved concerns can be addressed at an IEP meeting coordinated through the school-based case manager. Ongoing concerns can be brought to the attention of the school-based administrator, ESE liaison, IDEA Team Leader, or the assigned area superintendent.

CEC Suncoast (Council for Exceptional Children)

President: Julie Bush - Bushju@pcsb.org

Florida's Voice on Developmental Disabilities

ARLENE LAKIN, ESQ.-President PO Box 24531 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307; (954) 975-5159
E-mail: FVDDorg@aol.com; Website: www.Floridasvoice.org

A statewide independent advocacy and networking non-profit organization comprised of families and friends of persons with developmental disabilities. Our organization advocates a full array of services in the most cost effective manner possible - community programs, family home care, group homes, and larger centers (over six beds) for only the most severely developmentally disabled. Cost: \$25 family membership fee; \$15 for those with financial hardships

13) 245-2782

GiGi's Playhouse Tampa

Down syndrome achievement centers; changing lives through free, results-driven programs for individuals of all ages, families and communities. GiGi's Playhouse is an inspirational and dedicated place for families to celebrate their child and benefit from free programs that unleash joy, confidence and continuous improvement. Nicki Rawlings, President; nrawlings@gigisplayhouse.org; 813-843-7629

Goodwill Industries

727-523-1512/888-279-1988 The mission is accomplished through employment services, training programs and affordable housing. Headquartered in St. Petersburg, we provide services to people in 10 counties – Pinellas, Pasco, Hillsborough, Polk, Hernando, Marion, Citrus, Sumter, Levy and Highlands counties.

Head Start/Early Head Start/Pinellas County

(727) 547-5900 2210 Tall Pines Drive Suite 200 Largo, FL. 33771-5347

Head Start/Early Head Start assists children with all types of disabilities including but not limited to those with developmental, hearing, language, and visual disabilities as well as emotional, medical, mental, and social needs. Enrolled children with special needs are provided with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and/or Individual Family Support Plans (IFSP). Children with special needs are given the same opportunities to participate in the classroom as other children and if necessary, modifications may be made to make their experience a fun filled learning one. The Special Needs Advisory Committee meets quarterly to guide these efforts.

IEP Advocate

Claudia Roberts Special Ed Advocate Phone # 512-784-2480
701 S Howard Ave Ste 106-349
Tampa Florida 33606

Mark Kamleiter – Special Education Law and Advocacy
Phone # 727 323-2555
Website : WWW.flspedlaw.com
2509 1st Ave S
St Petersburg Florida 32371

Jewish Community Centers and Federation-Pinellas

13191 Starkey Rd Ste 8 Largo, Florida 33773 | jewishpinellas.org
Phone # 727-530-3223

We work to strengthen family life, promote the health, education and welfare of our membership and our community. Family counseling, job skills for developmentally delayed.

McDonalds Training MTC

(813) 870-1300 | Fax (813) 872-6010
5420 W. Cypress Street; Tampa, Florida 33607-1706

Primary areas of service include educational, vocational and residential supports for persons with disabilities. MTC day services includes vocational skills training and life enrichment activities from computer lab and fine arts instruction to recreational outreaches for people with developmental disabilities. Additionally, MTC provides supported employment counseling and placement services for people with a wide variety of disabilities. Provide people in community living the opportunity and resources to lease their home or apartment, pay their own expenses, make their own decisions, and receive services that promote choice and self-sufficiency.

The Arc / Uparc Agency

1501 N. Belcher Road, Suite 249 Clearwater, FL 33765 Phone: 727.799.3330

The Arc Tampa Bay has a long history of advocacy efforts in support of our mission. As a service provider for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for 58 years, The Arc Tampa Bay has been a key affiliate member of The Arc of Florida. Affiliate members have a voting seat on The Arc of Florida Board and are affiliated with The Arc of the United States. Thank you for your interest in our organization. We invite you to learn more about the history) of our organization and the services we provide in support of our mission.

Medicaid

Pinellas County Health Human Services

2189 Cleveland St Ste # 230 Clearwater Florida 33756

<http://www.pinellascounty.org/humanservices/default.htm>

Medicaid is the medical assistance program that provides access to health care for low-income families and individuals. Medicaid assists people with disabilities with the cost of nursing facility care and other medical and long term care expenses.

Medicaid Waiver Programs

800-342-0778 <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/demo/BrainSC/Medicaid/ACFHomepage.htm> The Home and Community Based Services Waiver, also called the HCBS/DD Waiver or "Big" Waiver, is one of Florida's Medicaid Waiver Programs that assists people who have disabilities. The HCBS/DD Medicaid waiver program helps cover the cost for things that regular Medicaid does not pay for.

The HCBS Waiver currently has 28 services^[1] and there is a spending cap based on the individual's needs. However, services must be "medically necessary".

Individuals that meet the following criteria are eligible to receive services under the Home and Community Based Services Waiver:

- Be under 65 years of age
- Reside in a Diversion Project service area
- Be a Florida resident
- Be a U.S. citizen or qualified noncitizen
- File for any other benefits to which they may be entitled
- Disclose any rights to third party liability (i.e., health insurance)
- Meet the income limit of \$2022 for an individual or \$4044 for a couple
- Meet the asset limit of \$2000 for an individual or \$3000 for an eligible couple

BOX 677 BRANDON FL 33509 (813) 245-2782

MAIL: info@friendssupport.org

IN#651261646

- If your monthly income exceeds \$2022/month you still can benefit from Medicaid Diversion by setting up an income trust. This is a legal document and it must be done by an attorney^[2]

In 2012 there was a waiting list of over 22,000 people for this waiver.^[3] Some of the people on the waiting list receive services from the FSL waiver.

Parent Support Center

727) 523-1130 2196 Main Street, Suite L, Dunedin FL 34698; This program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), is the Parent Training Information (PTI) center for the Central and Northeast of Florida, (Brevard, Citrus, De Soto, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lake, Manatee, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Lucie, and Sumter). These PTI services help to ensure that parents of children with the full range of disabilities have the training and information they need to prepare their children for not only school, but to be able to lead productive, independent lives to the fullest extent possible.

Largo Parks and Recreation

<http://www.largo.com/departments/index.php?structureid=22>

Highland Recreation Complex

Manager: Chip Potts

400 Highland Ave Largo, Florida 33770

Phone # 727-518-3016

Southwest Recreation Complex

13120 Vonn Rd Largo, Florida 33774

Phone# 727-518-3125

Adaptive Activities:

Manager: Jessica Newsome Email: jnewsome@largo.com

Program Supv: Megan Leavy Email: mleavy@largo.com

Through its facilities, cultural center, park system and sports complexes, the Recreation, Parks & Arts Department offers opportunities for individualized leisure pursuits, and passive enjoyment of the natural environment.

The department has been nationally accredited and named as "Agency of Excellence" by the State of Florida. Participating in recreational activities provides endless benefits including an increased life expectancy, decreased chance of obesity, increased family bonds, building self-esteem and personal growth.

Quest's Camp Thunderbird

909 E. Welch Rd., Apopka, FL 32712. 407-889-8088. campthunderbird@questinc.org Camp for persons with developmental disabilities. Quest, Inc. 1404 Tech Blvd., Tampa, FL 33619 813-630-4710. Housing, Adult Day Training, Camp Thunderbird. www.questinc.org Suncoast New Options. 9502 N. Florida Ave., Tampa, FL 33612 813-933-1476.

30X 677 BRANDON FL 33509 (813) 245-2782

MAIL: info@friendssupport.org

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Pinellas Life- Group Homes

<http://www.pinellaslife.com/group-homes/>

Deirdre Cavener, MCP
Founder and Owner of PinellasLife.com

Ridgeland Group Home, Inc.

Carol Josephs (813) 810-6257

Adult Day Training center in Brandon Florida. Ridgeland Group Home and its staff are dedicated people striving to provide clients the opportunity for a meaningful life through various supports needed to improve their quality of life. We hope to accomplish this by exposing them to various experiences and, education that would enable them to achieve individual goals.

Royal Care Group Home

813-623-6333 Licensed Standard & Behavior Focus homes and provide a variety of Supportive Residential & Community Based Services for adults in South Tampa, Brandon & Plant City. We currently serve males 18 + and adult females on a case by case basis. We are dedicated to providing quality supportive services in comfortable homes.

Sunrise Community of Hillsborough County

2714 West Kirby Street Tampa, Florida 33614 Phone: (813) 830-7823 hillsborough@sunrisegroup.org
<http://www.sunrisegroup.org>. Group homes; Respite; adult training programs; Behavioral Analysis Services; Personal Assistance services; day services; and transportation.

Quest Training and Group Home

1404 Tech Blvd. Tampa, FL 33619 contact@questinc.org (813) 423.7700; Quest provides a variety of residential living options for people with disabilities, including group homes, intermediate care facilities and transitional and support environments. Quest's vocational program provides individuals with disabilities in the Orlando and Tampa areas the opportunity applies job skills and gain meaningful employment through the Adult Day Training (ADT) and the Supported Employment programs.

Social Security

www.ssa.gov; 1-800-772-1213 2340 Drew St, Clearwater, FL 33765 ; The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program pays benefits to disabled adults and children who have limited income and resources. Visit Apply For Disability Benefits – Child (Under Age 18) to find out how to apply.

Special Olympics

Special Olympics Florida – Pinellas County 2235 N.E. Coachman Rd. Clearwater, FL 33765

<http://specialolympicsflorida.org/pinellas/>

David Haines County Director 727-669-1221 x2008

Roger Edwards Area 6 Training Director 727-465-3422

(677 BRANDON FL 33509 (813) 245-2782
IL: info@friendssupport.org
#651261646

Special Olympics provides year-round sports training and competition to children and adults 8 years of age and older with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Cost is free, need a doctor's clearance on physical exam, sometimes provided free of charge.

Sunshine Line Transportation

Scott Clark Director P: 813-272-7272

Reservation Hours Monday – Friday 8 AM - 5 PM

Provides door-to-door transportation and bus passes for elderly, low-income, and disabled persons who do not have or cannot afford their own transportation.

Transportation is provided primarily to medical appointments and Aging Services day care and nutrition sites, but nonmedical trips are provided on a space-available basis. Sunshine Line does not provide Medicaid transportation.

Fees & Eligibility- Vehicles used for door-to-door service are wheelchair accessible. Fees are charged for some trips; the amount of the fee charged is based on client eligibility and funding source rules. Clients may call to be screened for eligibility and to make appointments for transportation or to request a bus pass.

PSTA

3201 Scherer Drive St. Petersburg, FL 33716 <https://www.psta.net/programs/accessibility/>

Phone: 727-540-1800

InfoLine: 727-540-1900

Email: cserv@psta.net

Agencies Federal Transportation Administration Michele Ogilvie 601 E. Kennedy Blvd, 18th floor, Tampa, FL 33602. Call: 813-272-5940 ext 317. Email: ogilviem@plancom.org

TSA

855-787-2227 The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has a toll free helpline designed to assist travelers with disabilities and medical conditions, prior to getting to the airport. It is available Monday through Friday 9am–9pm EST, excluding federal holidays, with questions about screening policies, procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint.

The USF Regional Genetics and Metabolism

(813) 259-8772 2 Tampa General Circle, 2nd Floor Tampa, FL 33606; Usf.edu/medicine/pediatrics

Established in 1977 to provide comprehensive medical management to individuals and families with a genetic condition. This includes an initial evaluation and examination, genetic testing as appropriate, genetic counseling and follow up as appropriate.

Van Dyke Church Special Needs Ministry

17030 Lakeshore Rd., Lutz, FL 33558. www.vandyke.org jatkinson@tampabay.rr.com.
Embrace Special Needs Respite Care ggharmon@vandyke.org 813-968-3983 x 156.

Vocational Rehabilitation Florida Department of Education

1313 North Tampa Street, Suite 801 Tampa, FL 33602 Phone: (813) 233-3600

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a federal-state program that helps people who have physical or mental disabilities get or keep a job. VR is committed to helping people with disabilities find meaningful careers.

VSA Arts of Florida

<http://www.vsafl.org> - Brings the arts into the lives of people with disabilities.

FLORIDA SPECIAL NEEDS WEBSITES

Able Trust of Florida www.abletrust.org

Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities www.advocacycenter.org

Best Buddies bestbuddies.org

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services www.fldoe.org

Career Education for Students with Special Needs www.myfloridaeducation.com

Down Syndrome Foundation of FL Info@dsfflorida.org

Down Syndrome Association of Central FL www.dscf.org

Family Network on Disabilities, Inc (birth to 26) <http://fndfl.org>

FL Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged www.dot.state.fl.us/ctd

FL Department of Health www.doh.state.fl.us/family

FL Diagnostic and Learning Resource www.paec.org/fdlrsweb

Florida Developmental Disabilities Council www.fddc.org

Florida Developmental Disabilities Resources www.flddresources.org

Florida's Voice on Developmental Disabilities www.floridasvoice.org

Florida Center for Inclusive Communities flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu

Family Care Council www.fccflorida.org

Hillsborough County's Head Start <http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/headstart/>

Job Accommodation Network www.askjan.org

Kidcare www.floridakidcare.org

Learning Disabilities www.ldonline.org

Macdonald Training Center www.macdonaldcenter.org

Medicaid www.cms.gov/special

National Organization on Disability <http://www.nod.org/>

Project Appleseed www.projectappleseed.org

The Pacer Center www.pacer.org/index.asp

Social Security www.socialsecurity.gov

Shriner's Hospital for Children www.shrinershq.org

State Agency for Workforce www.floridajobs.org
School to Work Transitions www.rehabworks.org
Special Olympics specialolympicsflorida.org/Hillsborough
Teaching Resources for FL Exceptional Student Education <http://www.cpt.fsu.edu/ese/>
Tops Soccer www.topsoccer.usa
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wic

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WEBSITES

ABLE Account www.ablenrc.org.
Administration on Developmental Disabilities www.acf.dhh.gov
American Speech/Language/Hearing Assoc. www.asha.org
American Occupational Therapy Assoc. www.apta.org
ARC of United States www.thearc.org
Council for Disability Rights www.disabilityrights.org
Dating for the Disabled www.dating4disabled.com
Down Syndrome Research Foundation www.dsrf.org
Family Network on Disabilities (birth to 26yrs) www.fndfl.org
Global Down Syndrome Foundations info@globaldownsyndrome.org
IDEA www.ideapartnershop.org
Learning Disabilities Association of America info@ldaamerica.org
March of Dimes www.marchofdimes.com
National Association for Down Syndrome www.nads.org
National Ataxia Foundations www.ataxia.org
National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities www.nichcy.org/babies
National link for information about law www.fape.org
National Down Syndrome Congress www.ndscenter.org
National Down Syndrome Society www.ndss.org
National Organization on Disability www.nod.org
National Resource for Parents www.zerotothree.org
National Society of Genetic Counselors www.nsgc.org
National Info Center for Children & Youth with Disabilities www.nichcy.org
Parent Support Network (PSN) Project www.parentcenter.org
Social Security www.myflorida.com
Technical Assistance Alliance, Parent Centers www.taalliance.org
Technology for Children www.kidsmartearlylearning.org
Teens Against Bullying www.pacerteensagainstbullying.org
Wrights law www.wrightslaw.com
Yes! Of American United, Inc. www.yesunited.org

EDUCATIONAL REFERENCES

Down Syndrome Books www.woodbinehouse.com
Babies with Down Syndrome – A New Parents Guide by Karen Stray-Gunersen
Medical and Surgical Care for Children with Down Syndrome by Philip Mattheis, M.D.

SCHOOLS

Pinellas County - The ESE Resource Connection is a resource that provides families and persons with disabilities specific resource information, community events and opportunities. This webpage is located on the Pinellas County School Exceptional Student Education site at <http://www.pcsb.org/Page/16045>. There is an option for anyone interested to get automatic notifications of updates. The only action required is that interested persons subscribe to webpage content. The RSS feed that is located in the ESE Resource Connection page.

Anyone interested will need to go to the PCSB Exceptional Student Education Resource Connection page found at <http://www.pcsb.org/Page/16045> directly or 1Go to the Pinellas County School Board Home Page at <http://www.pcsb.org/Page/1>

- 1) Click on Departments & Divisions
- 2) Scroll down the page to Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and choose
- 3) Scroll down the short cut column to ESE Resource Connection and choose
- 4) Subscribe for the RSS feed (orange icon) for automatic notifications

Center Academy (2 locations)

6710 86th Ave, Pinellas Park, FL 33782 (727) 541-5716

34054 US Hwy 19 N, Palm Harbor, FL 34684 (727) 781-2986 <http://centeracademy.com/>

Center Academy is a fully accredited, independent private school, family-operated since 1968, providing a college prep curriculum for students with learning disabilities in grades 4-12. Our staff and teachers are experienced with a range of learning disabilities and challenges, including dyslexia, ADHD, and autism spectrum / Asperger's, and our individual student assessment helps each student to set and reach his or her own personal educational goals. We also offer dual enrollment and summer programs for maximum enrichment, and accept McKay, Gardiner, FTC, Step Up, AAA and Georgia Special Needs Scholarships. If you are looking for a well-rounded educational experience that will give your child the support and motivation he or she needs to succeed, please contact us today to learn more.

Classical Christian School For The Arts 4981 78th Ave N, Pinellas Park, FL 33781 (727) 547-6820
<http://www.ccsa.us/>

Founded on faith-based principles and believing in the equality of all persons before God, Classical Christian School for the Arts is non-denominational and is committed to providing a Christian education for all students regardless of race, sex, or religious background. We believe the task of Christian Education is shared by the school, the church, and the home. We believe in the development of the whole child and seek to involve students individually and collectively in activities which allow them growth – intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual. We believe that the avenues to understanding and knowledge are diverse. We believe in a Christian liberal arts education, exposing students to various viewpoints under the guidance and interpretation of a

Christian teacher who will relate the material to the level of understanding of the student. "Test all things; hold fast what is good." (I Thess. 5:21) We believe learning is a lifelong process. We believe in the importance of building genuine Christian maturity by stressing a reliance on God's love and grace and a conscientious pursuit of truth and excellence.

Blossom Montessori School for the Deaf 14088 Icot Blvd, Clearwater, FL 33760 (727) 539-7879
<http://www.blossomschool.org/>

At Blossom, we believe that every child can learn. We also believe that any child can easily be left behind and because of this, we implement an extremely individualized course of study for each child. Our philosophy of combining the programming of Montessori with expertise in Deaf education creates the perfect environment for our students. Each child is treated as an individual and we strive to do everything it takes to advance every child to his or her maximum potential.

Morning Star School 4661 80th Ave N, Pinellas Park, FL 33781 (727) 544-6036
<http://www.morningstarschool.org/>

Morning Star Catholic School, a mission of the Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg, recognizes the unique educational needs of students. The administration, faculty, staff, and parents work together to provide an ungraded academic curriculum in which students can achieve their potential academically, socially, and spiritually. MSSPP is dedicated to helping our students develop into educated, well-rounded, productive and successful members of society. We offer a caring, Christian learning environment where kids are able to succeed. The positive is accentuated to help our students recognize their potential. We understand that children with special education requirements need more care and attention than is often offered in a traditional school setting. These students necessitate individualized instruction from caring professionals who are trained to understand and meet each student's unique needs.

Tampa:

Focus Academy info@focusacademytampa.org (813) 433-5558 The curriculum at Focus Academy is structured with dual purposes: academic achievement and social success. Many students are scholastically capable but are hindered by struggles in dealing with peers

Morning Star Academy – A mission of the Catholic Diocese. Children with special needs who have learning disabilities and developmental delays. 210 E Linebaugh Ave, Tampa, FL 33612
Phone: (813) 935-0232 or 4661 80th Ave. North, Pinellas Park FL 33781 (727)544-6036

Pepin Academy – 813-236-1755 Serves over 700 students between 3rd and 12th grade, and young adults 18 to 22 with specific learning disabilities. Approximately 80% of our students graduate with a standard high school diploma, and we provide individualized instruction, along with all the services your child needs to succeed and the opportunity to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities. 3916 East Hillsborough Avenue, Tampa, FL 33610

BOX 677 BRANDON FL 33509 (813) 245-2782
MAIL: info@friendssupport.org
EIN#651261646

Special Needs School List - For a list of special needs schools in your area log onto:
<http://www.privateschoolreview.com/florida/special-education-private-schools>.

CHARITIES & CONFERENCES

Deliver The Dream - Offers an all-expense paid weekend retreat for families. Contact@deliverthedream.org

Sunshine Foundation Dream Villages – Offers an all-expense paid family vacation in Orlando, Florida@sunshinefoundation.org.

Family Café Conference – yearly conference for families with children who have disabilities. When you register, you can apply for assistance to cover the cost of the hotel room, www.familycafe.net