



Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area  
*Empower - Inspire - Support*

# UNDERSTANDING DS & HOW TO BE A SUPPORTIVE FRIEND Grades K-2



## What is Down syndrome?

Down syndrome is something a person is born with. People with Down syndrome may learn and talk more slowly, and their muscles can be stretchier, which means some things take more time and practice. DS is not a sickness, and you cannot catch it like a cold. It's also not a bad thing - it's just one part of who a person is. People with Down syndrome like to play, learn, and make friends just like everyone else.

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## Tips to Be a Supportive Friend

- Be kind and patient.
- Wait a little extra time after asking a question.
- Listen carefully when your friend is talking and if they have a hard time using words, find other ways to communicate.
- Invite them to join your games, sit with them at lunch, invite them on a playdate.
- Share toys
- Smile and use friendly words.
- Be a helper, but let them try first.
- Encourage them to do things all by themselves and cheer them on.
- Include them in group work and play.
- Treat them like you treat other friends.