

# Down syndrome children interaction with family and peers



## Down Syndrome Children Interaction with Family and Peers: Group Literature Review.

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Down syndrome is the most frequently identified genetic form of mental retardation (Sherman, Allen, Bean & Freeman, 2007). It is the prominent root of medical conditions and specific birth defects (Sherman, et al., 2007). It is caused by the malsegragation of the chromosome 21, where there is a third copy of the chromosome (Sherman, et al., 2007). Down syndrome cannot be cured, but it can be diagnosed at an early stage itself; during pregnancy.

There are several ways of identifying Down syndrome, which usually can be identified by the child's physical features and intellectual disabilities. Many early intervention programs, treatments and facilities have been provided for the families and caretakers to help them with the child with a down syndrome.

People with Down syndrome have physical features that can be identified. The physical features that are normally notified are the flat nose, the folds in the corners of their upwardly slanting eyes, and the small mouth with a flat roof that makes the tongue stick out somewhat (Barlow & Durand, 2012). Down syndrome does not have specific psychological problems but they are still susceptible to having mental health and behavioural issues. In a research done, it was shown that they are prone to problems like depression, anxiety and obsessions (Spendelow, 2011). Apart from psychological and

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cognitive issues, Down syndrome is also vulnerable to many medical issues, like heart disease and dementia (Zigman & Lott as cited in Spendelow, 2011). In this paper, we will be looking at the interactions of the family and peers with the down syndrome children.

According to Fogel,; Greenspan; Harris, Kasari, & Sigman; Marfo, Cynthia, Dedrick, & Barbour; Marcheschi, Millepiedi, & Bargagna; Pino; Sander; Sroufe; Venuti, de Falco, Giusti, & Bornstein, as cited in Falco, Venuti, Esposito, & Bornstein (2009) parent's association is as crucial to the early improvement of children with extraordinary needs as it is for youngsters experiencing ordinary advancement. As in our perspective, parents are suggested as the majority of the obligations regarding their children to develop mentally. It is exceptionally essential for a child to figure out how to correspond with others, as it is one of the principle methodologies to trade feeling and sentiments.

A common youngster may postulate on how to confer as it creates a more established interaction rather than a futile Down syndrome youngster. Concerning this, parents should take more activity to allow them to figure out how to express and impart their insights. According to Bornstein, Putnik, et al.; Martin, Clements, & Crnic; Weinberg & Tronickas, as cited in Falco et al., (2009) down syndrome kids expresses emotions through their voices, activities whereby folks are able to enamour their young people, guide and maintain adolescent attention, and build the state of mind of expectable dyadic companionship.

According to Falco et al., (2009) the study designed on 44 parents-child dyads, 22 children were first conducted with 10 minutes of video as the observations of mental developments of their children. After that, the children were given age-appropriate toys, the parents (mother-child and father-child) were asked to play along with them by using those toys, and their emotional evaluation was recorded and analysed by the video observations. The parents were asked to play individually and together later on, to investigate the gender differences, which focus on emotional evaluation to the Down syndrome children.

The results show that during the chronological age of the child, the responsiveness and involvement showed positive effect on the father side rather than the mothers. As such, it may be the case that discerning the uncommon child rearing requirements of their youngsters. Fathers tailor their association style considering their children passionate trades. The moderate level of strength confirms that the child emotional availability, which is additionally identified with singular parental intuitive style, that is most likely due to the historical backdrop of the parental-child relationship. Children with Down syndrome in the study landed at a “sufficient” level in responsiveness, which showed that they were generally positive and enthusiastically receptive. This does not include their childhood where they demonstrated less clear happiness or adaptation of a situation with more response than being anticipated ideally Biringen et al., (1998). Dyads were similarly conveyed over bunches for the both mother and father relationship with their children.

Dealing with Down syndrome children may need extra understanding and extra efforts to bring out their emotional expression as Down syndrome children may not indicate interest by their facial expressions, however they keep their feelings or interest to themselves (Falco et al., 2009), we must handle our children with care especially if they are mentally challenged.

It is an undeniable fact that the development of language involves the negotiation between two individuals. Down syndrome individuals are also bound to have difficulties in communicating with typical individuals. Parents play a significant role in early intervention of Down syndrome individual. According to a research that was done, both fathers and mothers display different levels of interactions among typical children and Down syndrome children. Graham and Scudder (2007) have stated that the development of both verbal communication and sign language in Down syndrome children highly depends on both the parents of the child.

Both Graham and Schudder have videotaped the interactions of a father and mother with their twins where one child is a Down syndrome, and the other a typical child. The mother of the twins chose to be videotaped when she took the twins out for a walk alone and the mother with both the children reading books. The father on the other hands chose to be videotaped when he bathed the twins one at a time and when he played chase-and-tickle with the twins.

As a result, both twins had almost three times more vocalizations when interacting with their mother. The twins were more vocal with their mother when they were with her alone, but were more vocal to their father when

they were together. It has also been noted that the mother used more sign language towards the Down syndrome child and more verbal interactions with the typical child. In contrast, the father did not show sign language but used verbal interactions with both the children.

The factors that were taken into consideration is the surrounding situation in the house as the mother would not have free time to spend with the Down Syndrome child as she has seven children to look after. The parents would also have been more cautious about their behaviour as they were conscious that they were being videotaped. As a conclusion, this study has showed that both parents play significant roles in the development of the child's language.

Apart from what is explained above, the other part of a family that plays an equal vital role in the life of a person even a Down syndrome child are siblings. Based on the research by Rampton, Rosemann, Aimee, Latta, Mandleco, Roper & Dyches (2007) siblings of children that are down syndrome preferred to take photographs of CWDS(children with down syndrome) simply because some of them implied that they could now identify and understand people who had disabilities. The siblings also mentioned during the experiment that they like their sibling, which has disability and that some they makes them a better person. Even though the central focus of this research was on the siblings of children with Down syndrome, this positive affection, love and care does affects the child that has Down syndrome as they too have feelings and are as human as a typically develop child. This clearly shows that siblings are important in the

life of a Down syndrome child. The age group difference brings another aspect to the research as age differences delivers different results.

Saying this, based on Rampton etc. (2007), siblings at the age of 7-9 years old are more involved in the success and triumph of themselves as they are in the industry vs inferiority stage as seen in Erikson's theory. They tend to take more photos of themselves rather than the CWDS. In contrast, siblings at the age of 13-15 years old are more engaged with the CWDS as they tend to be more likely to provide attention and concern towards CWDS than the younger children as the older sibling have greater than before obligation to be concerned for their siblings. One can come up to the assumption that siblings do play an importance on the life of a Down syndrome child as the siblings to express care and love towards their siblings that has a disability.

The other interaction that plays yet another significant role in Down syndrome children lives are peers. Peers, as we are aware off, play an equal important role whether in a typically functioning child or a child with disability. Based on the research conducted by Guralnick, Connor & Johnson (2009), the social contacts with peers for children that are Down syndrome is comparatively rare. Only a lesser amount of children are capable to form real camaraderie and the large amount of children tend to fall back alone and into aloneness which leads them to make a choice to play unaccompanied rather with peers. Postulating from the above content, one may tend to assume that a Down syndrome child might face challenges to interact with a peer Guralnick, Connor & Johnson (2009). On the contrary, according to Iarocci, Yager, Rombough & McLaughlin (n. d) Down syndrome children have

been, portrayed as friendly with their peers, well behaved in societal condition and relatively energetic in fitting together in a peer group.

In conclusion, children who have Down syndrome have limited form of communication as compared to a child who performs normally and having said that, children are still able to interact with their families even given at a minimal scale. It is difficult for them to go out to the society, as they might be bullied or worst still they are unable to voice out or defend as their physical movements too are challenged. Families of Down syndrome children are urged to always keep an eye on their children like a shadow. It is important for parents to know their whereabouts and have a close relationship with them to enable good rapport. There is no cure for Down syndrome and more research ought to be conducted on how to bring more new and effective insights for Down syndrome children, which may prove to be more helpful.

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