



March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and March 21st is World Down Syndrome Day.

March 2021 marks the 34th anniversary of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. In 1987, President Reagan first recognized March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month to “increase public awareness of the needs and the potential of Americans with developmental disabilities” and to provide the “encouragement and opportunities they need to lead productive lives and to achieve their full potential.” This campaign seeks to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with [developmental disabilities](#) in all facets of community life, as well as awareness of the barriers that people with disabilities still sometimes face in connecting to the communities in which they live.

[World Down Syndrome Day \(WSDSD\)](#), 21 March, is a global awareness day which has been officially observed by the United Nations since 2012. The date for WSDSD being the 21st day of the 3rd month, was selected to signify the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome which causes Down syndrome. WSDSD seeks to amplify the voice of those living with Down syndrome by way of increasing public awareness, encouraging advocacy, and strengthening alliances.

This March, celebrate Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and World Down Syndrome Day (3/21) by joining DHSS for a Facebook Live event featuring Director Dr. Randall Williams, advocates Todd & Elijah Mayfield, and moderator Sara Hart Weir, Co-Chair of the Missouri Advisory Committee on Equitable COVID Vaccine Distribution. This event will discuss the importance of people with disabilities receiving and having equitable access to the COVID vaccine, and will also include an ASL interpreter. **Join us on the Department’s [Facebook page](#) for this live event on Thursday March 18th at 11:30 a.m.!**