

Information Sheet for parents, carers, support staff and other professionals

Referral Criteria

Friends Connect is for young people (16+) and adults with Down's syndrome who:

- Are not currently receiving or have very little support to access community facilities or participate in leisure activities.
- Don't have many friends, find it hard to keep their friendships going or whose social life is limited.
- Are dependent on family members / support staff to facilitate social activities and friendships.

NB. Not all of the above criteria need to be met.

Referral Process

A referral form has to be completed. They can be posted to Friends Connect or emailed to Brenda@dsscotland.org.uk Once we receive a referral, the Project Manager or Project Worker will arrange a home visit.

Unfortunately, there are only 8 places available in each Friendship Group. Getting a place will be dependent on other referrals and potential 'friend' matches. We want to match members with similar interests and age group as well as living within a reasonable distance from each other.

Friendship Groups

Friendship Groups will be set up in Edinburgh, Glasgow, East and West Fife, Dundee, Aberdeen, North Aberdeenshire and Inverness. Groups will start running from November 2014.

They will start with 3 meetings approximately every 2 weeks. Location of group meetings is to be confirmed but will either be central to group members or rotate localities.

Group meetings will move to approximately every 6 weeks after members are paired with each other and start community activities. They will meet up with the volunteer mentor in between group meetings. They should have something on with Friends Connect every 2 weeks but this will depend on holidays and volunteer availability.

At the friendship group meetings, members will plan their outings, learn how to find out what's on in their local areas, participate in confidence building and speaking up activities as well as learn about positive friendships, being safe and social media.

Volunteer Mentors

Volunteers support and facilitate the friendships between group members. They are not unpaid carers and will not provide any personal care or assist with any medication. They will not provide advocacy.

The role of volunteer mentor is subject to membership of the PVG (Scotland) Scheme.

If you require further information please contact
Brenda Hepburn, Project Manager on 0131 313 8614 or
Email Brenda@dsscotland.org.uk



Down's Syndrome Scotland

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