



Promoting Mental Wellness in People with Down Syndrome Tuesday, August 26, 2025 6:30-8:00PM (VIRTUAL)

Susan Fawcett, PhD, RSLP

Many mental health diagnoses are more typical in individuals with Down syndrome than in the neurotypical population, including anxiety and depression. In this presentation, participants will learn about mental health issues in adolescents and young adults with DS. Topics include the trajectory of mental health across the lifespan, the relationship between behavior and mental health, and issues more common in individuals with DS, e.g., processing of grief, fantasy worlds, and self-esteem and identity issues. Focus will be on learning appropriate therapeutic approaches for individuals with DS, including practical strategies for promoting mental wellness.

Susan Fawcett, PhD, RSLP - Director of Therapy, Behavior and Family Support

Susan began her career at DSRF as the head Speech-Language Pathologist from 2003 to 2019, and helped develop the therapy, adult, and summer programs during that time. She has been thrilled to watch the therapy and teaching team and programs grow vastly since she started. Susan has particular interest in the areas of social communication, mental health and problem behavior in people with Down syndrome, as well as giving families the positive reinforcement they deserve. As part of completing her doctoral degree with Dr. Joe Lucyshyn in the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology and Special Education in 2020, she completed a dissertation project evaluating a preventative parent training program for families of young children with Down syndrome who exhibit mild-to-moderate problem behavior. During her schooling, Susan also completed a two-year practicum with a clinical psychologist at the Vancouver CBT Centre, where she learned how to provide cognitive-behavior therapy techniques to adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities and mental health diagnoses such as depression and anxiety.

**See details and zoom link info
on our calendar of events:**

