

Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Supporting Your Child with Down Syndrome at Home

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✓ **Can I help my child at home?**

Yes. Help your child learn, communicate and take part in family life — celebrating every step at their own pace. This free program breaks it into simple weekly steps built from proven therapy techniques — things any parent can do at home, in everyday moments, at no cost. It doesn't replace a professional assessment where one is needed, but for many children it makes a real difference, and it never does harm.

Go at your own pace — a new, gentle focus each week.

Download the whole program as a printable PDF.

Includes the signs that mean it's worth seeking extra help.

Children with Down syndrome learn in their own beautiful way, and much of what helps them thrive happens in ordinary moments at home — in play, at mealtimes, getting dressed, and in the songs and stories you share. Your child is a learner first, and this program is built around their real strengths rather than what is hard.

One of those strengths is visual learning: many children with Down syndrome understand and remember things they can see — a sign, a picture, your gesture — more easily than words alone. This program leans into that, pairs it with lots of gentle repetition, and breaks skills into small, do-able steps. It supports the work of your therapists and teachers; it does not replace them.

♥ **Who this program is for**

✓ Children of any age with a diagnosis of Down syndrome

- ✓ Parents who want practical, everyday ways to help at home
- ✓ Families waiting for, or between, speech, occupational or other therapy
- ✓ Children who understand more than they can yet say
- ✓ Anyone wanting a strengths-based plan that respects their child's own pace

⚡ **Important – when to get professional help**

This is a supportive home program, not a diagnosis or a substitute for an assessment. Please speak to a professional promptly if:

Your child seems not to hear you, or has frequent ear or chest infections — ask for a hearing check early

A sudden loss of skills, words or movement they used to have

Feeding, swallowing or breathing that worries you, or poor weight gain

Eyes that seem not to focus or follow — ask for a vision check

Your own gut says something has changed — bring it to your child's doctor sooner rather than later

📍 **Getting help where you live**

Everything here is free to use **anywhere in the world**. If you'd like a professional to take a closer look, the best next step is someone local to you:

Work with us online, from anywhere. We offer **online sessions and parent coaching** worldwide — book an online consultation and we'll guide you and your child directly.

Talk to your child's **doctor, pediatrician, GP or health visitor** — share what you noticed.

Ask about **free early-childhood or early-intervention services** in your area — many countries offer them for young children (e.g. Early Intervention in the US, NHS referrals in the UK).

Search “**child speech & language therapist near me**”, or ask your doctor for a referral.

Near Multan, Pakistan? You're also warmly welcome in person at our centre — **contact us here**.

☆ **Your step-by-step roadmap**

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are a gentle order, not a race. Repeat any stage as long as it helps.

Stage 1 – Connect and tune in

Build warm, face-to-face back-and-forth as the base for all learning.

Get down to your child's eye level and follow their lead in play, joining whatever they enjoy.

Pause often and wait — give plenty of time for your child to look, gesture or respond in any way.

Respond warmly to every attempt to communicate, so your child learns that reaching out to you always works.

⚡ **Try** Sit facing your child so they can see your face and mouth — it helps them **this:** read your expression and copy sounds.

Stage 2 – See it to learn it

Use your child's visual strength — signs, pictures and gestures alongside words.

Pair a simple sign or gesture with key everyday words: “more”, “finished”, “milk”, “bye”.

Use photos or picture cards for daily routines and choices, so your child can see the options.

Keep signs and pictures for as long as they help — they support talking, they do not hold it back.

⚡ **Try** Always say the word as you show the sign or picture, so seeing and
this: hearing build the word together.

Stage 3 – Understanding comes first

Grow understanding, which for many children with Down syndrome runs ahead of speech.

Name things your child looks at or reaches for, in short, clear phrases the moment they show interest.

Play simple “find it” and “give me” games with familiar objects to build understood words.

Read the same few picture books often, pointing and naming rather than reading every word.

⚡ **Try** Trust that your child understands more than they can say — keep talking
this: to them richly, just in shorter chunks.

Stage 4 – Sounds and clear words

Support the mouth and speech muscles so words become clearer over time.

Model single words slowly and clearly, stressing the first sound: “b-ball”, “m-more”.

Enjoy blowing bubbles, straws, and silly mouth-and-sound play to strengthen and wake up the mouth.

Accept a child’s attempt warmly, then gently say the clear version back — never make them repeat it on demand.

 **Try** Repeat a new word many times across the day; children with Down **this:** syndrome often need extra hearings before it sticks.

Stage 5 – Move, balance and strength

Support motor skills gently, allowing for lower muscle tone.

Build in daily active play — climbing cushions, walking on different surfaces, carrying light things.

Give stable support for sitting and standing so your child can use their hands to explore and play.

Break bigger movements into small steps and expect them to take longer — steady practice is what counts.

 **Try** Follow the guidance of your physiotherapist or occupational therapist on **this:** positioning, and weave their exercises into play.

Stage 6 – Everyday independence

Turn daily routines into learning for self-help skills.

Break dressing, washing and eating into tiny steps and let your child do the last, easiest step first.

Keep the same order and words for each routine so repetition builds memory and confidence.

Offer real choices — which cup, which shirt — so your child practises deciding and communicating.

 **Try** Do one small step, then hand over the very next step to your child, **this:** adding more as they succeed.

Stage 7 – Play, friendship and belonging

Grow social play and a sense of taking part with others.

Practise simple turn-taking games — rolling a ball, stacking bricks, “my turn, your turn”.

Set up short, successful play times with siblings or friends, then gently step back.

Praise sharing, waiting and joining in, so your child feels the joy of being part of the group.

 **Try** Keep social play short and sweet at first — ending on a happy note makes **this:** your child want to come back to it.

Tricks that make it work

- ✓ Celebrate small steps out loud — progress at your child's pace is real progress.
- ✓ Keep instructions short and give one step at a time, with a picture or gesture to match.

- ✓ Repetition is a friend, not a chore — the same routines, songs and books build lasting skills.
- ✓ Turn off background TV so your voice and your child's attempts are easier to hear.
- ✓ Look after hearing and vision — small changes there can make a big difference to learning.

How you'll know it's working

- Your child understands and responds to more everyday words, signs or pictures
- New words, sounds or signs appear, even if they arrive slowly
- Your child does more of a daily routine — dressing, eating, tidying — on their own
- More back-and-forth, turn-taking and joining in during play



Is this based on real methods? This program reflects standard, established practice for children with Down syndrome — using visual supports and signing alongside speech, small graded steps with repetition, and building skills through everyday routines — and is meant to work alongside your child's therapy team, not replace it.

-  **Educational information, not a diagnosis.** Our guidance follows standard, research-based practice (CDC, NHS, ASHA and WHO), is written by our therapy team and **medically reviewed by a GMC-registered doctor**. Every child is different, so we can't promise specific results — always use your own judgement and speak to a qualified professional about your child. **Read our full disclaimer.**

