
History and

Rationale

The idea of having a group for teens with Down syndrome came from observations that although many support groups are available for parents, there were few such resources for teens. Programs for young adults with Down syndrome have typically focused on social and recreational activities.

Although this type of support has been very successful, it may not emphasize the fact that teens with Down syndrome, like others their age, have unique concerns in areas such as independence, social relationships, employment and continuing their education.

Purpose

The PALS group was developed so that teens with Down syndrome could meet and discuss issues that are important to them among peers. The mission of PALS is to provide members with skills and knowledge that will assist them as they transition to adult life.



How Can My Teen Benefit?

Every teen that attends a PALS group will benefit in ways that are special and unique to them. While some participants learn to be more social and share their feelings, others may learn how to have empathy for others and nurture relationships.

Meetings

Every meeting of a PALS group may be very different, because it is the teens who decide what they will discuss. Although a facilitator is present to guide discussions and answer questions, the group members will always be encouraged to focus on themselves and each other. While activities may be used to introduce discussions, the focus is on the teens talking about their lives.

Topics in previous meetings have included:

- Improving self-advocacy skills
 - Resolving conflicts at work
 - Death and grieving
 - Maintaining relationships with friends, family and significant others
 - Respecting the differences of others
 - The value of education
-

Times and Locations

PALS groups will meet once a week for six to twelve weeks. Each meeting will last for one hour, and meetings are currently held at the Nisonger Center at The Ohio State University. New groups will be formed several times each year.

If you are interested in PALS and would like more information, please contact one of these individuals:

Mark Fairchild
PALS Coordinator and Facilitator
614-247-7151
fairchildm@yahoo.com

Tom Fish, PhD., LISW
PALS Advisor
614-292-7550
fish.1@osu.edu

PALS Support Group
The Nisonger Center for MRDD
The Ohio State University
McC Campbell Hall Room 257
1581 Dodd Drive, Columbus, OH 43210

P.A.L.S.

Partners

Achieving

Learning

**&
Support**



**A Support Group For
Teens with**

Down Syndrome