



**21<sup>st</sup> March** is a very special day. Every year, this day is commemorated, globally, as **World Down Syndrome Day**, to raise awareness about Down Syndrome.

21<sup>st</sup> of March was selected to signify the uniqueness of the triplication of the 21<sup>st</sup> chromosome which causes Down syndrome.

'**#InclusionMeans**' is the topic for World Down Syndrome Day this year.

It emphasises the need for worldwide awareness and discussion about Down Syndrome, which will enable people all across the world to campaign for full inclusion of people with Down syndrome and disabilities in society.

### WHAT DOES INCLUSION MEAN TO YOU?

When you think about your daily life; when you take part in activities like school, work, recreation or public life, alongside other people -

Are you included?

Do you have the same opportunities as others? Or do you face barriers?

Do you participate in inclusive activities? Or are they segregated?

How does this make you feel?

### Should it be any different for the differently-abled?

Let us now pause this day to reflect on these questions.....

All of us may have come in contact with those with Down syndrome, at some point in our lives. There's so much we can learn from them.



While their happy, wide innocent smiles, and joyful spirit is most endearing, it is their ability to derive enjoyment and pleasure from the little things in life, that is noteworthy; something that so many of us can't ... or don't ....

So many have also shown such grit and determination and gone on to successfully achieve their desired career & family life. All around the world there are numerous stories of people with Down syndrome who have achieved success in fields like medicine, music, dance, fashion, education and so on.

However, this positive attitude of theirs does not make them immune to the challenges that they have to face on an everyday basis; things that we take for granted so easily. A vast majority of people with Down Syndrome, and other disabilities too, do not benefit from full and effective participation and inclusion in society even today.

Each of us however, can make a positive difference in their lives. That's why we should all take some time this World Down Syndrome Day to learn a bit more about this disorder and reflect on how we can help those who have it live better lives.

We can get involved. We can choose to do the right thing.

So what are you waiting for?

Let us, this day, pledge –

*To include, not exclude,  
To seek similarities, not differentiate  
Be kind, in thought and action....  
Love.*

