Dear Parent,

We know that oftentimes getting the news that your baby has Down syndrome can be overwhelming. We can help you meet other families, give you information about enrolling your baby in early intervention services, help you find helpful websites and more. We are here to listen and help. **Just call us at 561.752.3383 or email info@goldcoastdownsyndrome.org.**

Our weekly **Best Start Music Therapy Program** runs Wednesday mornings from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at our Resource Center, 915 S Federal Highway in Boynton Beach. The music program is open to babies and toddlers, brothers and sisters, families and friends.

Our **Website**, GoldCoastDownsyndrome.org, and our **Face Book Page** will also be a good resource for you.

Para **Informacion en Espanol**, favor de llamar Lupe Torres al 561.289.5748.

Sincerely,

**Anne**
Anne Dichele
Executive Director
GOLD COAST LINKS

Gold Coast Web Page
http://goldcoastdownsyndrome.org

Facebook Page
https://www.facebook.com/Gold-Coast-Down-Syndrome-Organization-353891528893/

Facebook Groups
Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization Parents Group -
https://www.facebook.com/groups/674381909287207/

GCDSO Playing and Learning Together Birth Through Three
https://www.facebook.com/groups/GCDSOnewestmembers/

GCDSO Learning Program
https://www.facebook.com/groups/125004374246937/

Contact us:
Email info@goldcoastdownsyndrome.org | Phone 561-752-3383
INFORMATIVE SITES FOR NEW PARENTS:

**Down Syndrome Pregnancy:**
The articles included here offer a wide variety of constantly updated online resources. The articles also share stories from parents about their experiences with issues ranging from breastfeeding to preparing siblings to dealing with comments.

http://downsyndromepregnancy.org/

**National Down Syndrome Society publication links in both Spanish and English:**


**Global Down Syndrome Organization:**
Down Syndrome Misconceptions vs. Reality

https://www.globaldownsyndrome.org/about-down-syndrome/misconceptions-vs-reality/

**Down Syndrome International:**
Bitesize introductions to topics including: prenatal testing and diagnosis, early development, and information for families, siblings and friends.

https://www.ds-int.org/Pages/FAQs/Category/new-parents/Tag/new-parents

**Easter Seals Early Intervention:** https://www.easterseals.com/our-programs/childrens-services/early-intervention-1.html

**Florida’s Early Steps:** http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/childrens-health/early-steps/index.html
Welcome to Holland

I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability – to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It’s like this......

When you’re going to have a baby, it’s like planning a fabulous vacation trip – to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It’s all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, “Welcome to Holland.”

“Holland?!?” you say. “What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I’m supposed to be in Italy. All my life I’ve dreamed of going to Italy.”

But there’s been a change in the flight plan. You’ve landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven’t taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It’s just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It’s just a different place. It’s slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you’ve been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around.... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills....and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they’re all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say “Yes, that’s where I was supposed to go. That’s what I had planned.”

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very very significant loss.

But ... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn’t get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland.

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