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New Parents of Down Syndrome Children Receive Help

Thanks to a grant made through a fund at the Hendricks County Community Foundation, Down Syndrome Indiana was able to distribute 302 New Parent Packets in 2016. Down Syndrome Indiana provides comprehensive New Parent Packets that contain helpful, up-to-date information to parents that have a newborn with Down syndrome or have learned of the diagnosis during pregnancy.

As the 2nd fastest growing county in Indiana, Hendricks County also has a growing number of families that have a child with Down syndrome. Down Syndrome occurs in one out of every 691 babies born. When a parent learns that their baby has Down Syndrome, they may and do often feel anger, despair, guilt, shame, rejection of their baby, depression, and helplessness. “No matter what a parent feels once learning of the diagnosis, every parent wants more information,” said Lisa Wells, DSI Executive Director. "If you type 'Down Syndrome' into a search engine, you can obtain 37,000,000 results. With that many items on the web, how does a new parent know where to begin finding accurate and up to date information? That is why DSI considers the distribution of its New Parent Packets as one of its most important programs."

Down Syndrome Indiana is dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with Down syndrome. Their mission is to serve as a conduit of information, support and advocacy for individuals with Down syndrome and their families, which promotes growth and inclusion in the community. DSI was the first Down syndrome advocacy organization in Indiana when they opened nearly 20 years ago and has paved the way for groups like Best Buddies Indiana, GiGi’s playhouse and many other groups and programs. In 2016, DSI reached over 800 families in Indiana with a Down syndrome child.

In a typical year, 50% of HCCF grants support health and human services programs just like those at DSI, with over $370,000 granted in 2016 alone. This grant was made from a donor advised fund of the Community Foundation created by a family desiring to give back to their community anonymously. "A donor advised fund is a great way to make a real difference in your community and offers the donor the opportunity to participate in the grantmaking process and give to the causes they care about the most," said HCCF CEO William Rhodelhamel. "We love helping donors match their passions with the needs in Hendricks County, improving the quality of life in our community for us all."
The Hendricks County Community Foundation partners with generous people to realize their charitable goals while addressing community needs in meaningful and lasting ways. The Community Foundation manages assets of over $12 million in a collection of funds created by individuals, families, businesses and organizations for charitable purposes. In 2016, the Community Foundation gave over $860,000 in grants to charitable organizations and scholarships to local students. For more information, call 317-268-6240 or visit www.hendrickscountycf.org.
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