



DOWN SYNDROME GUILD
OF DALLAS

INCLUSIVE Community Living

Over the last 25 years, the Down Syndrome Guild has been a strong voice in our community for including students with disabilities in regular education classes with their non-disabled peers at their neighborhood schools. When young adults with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities finish their education and vocational training, where will they live? Housing choices have been limited to six-person group homes or large “disabled only” communities in rural areas of Texas. The Down Syndrome Guild advocates for “inclusive” community living.

What you should look for:

- Safe location in the community where the person with Down syndrome grew up and has a network of people who know him/her
- Appropriate level of supervision to ensure safety but allow for the person to grow and become more independent
- Ability for a person to have some choices regarding roommates, activities, staff, schedule, etc.
- Accessibility to jobs, recreational activities, grocery shopping, worship opportunities, and public transportation
- Staff who will assist in organizing activities in the community and facilitate the participation by a person with Down syndrome—not the “disabled only” rec center, Special Ed Sunday school class, day habilitation facility, 6-person van to leisure outings, etc.
- “Circle of friends” or a team of family and friends who are NOT PAID to interact with the person who has Down syndrome
- Permanency provided by a system of supervision so that a person can maintain the same lifestyle even when his/her parents are not involved due to death or disability
- Flexibility to change living arrangements as the person ages
- Resources (special needs trust and/or government program) that will not be depleted before the death of the person with Down syndrome