

# DanceSyndrome



The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service

*The MBE for volunteer groups*

## FUNDRAISING PACK



**DanceSyndrome**  
Dancer Led, Disability Inspired

Registered Charity No:1152664

# LEARNING DISABILITY & HEALTH INEQUALITY

A learning disability impacts on the way individuals develop in all core areas, and ultimately how they live their lives and access health care.

## 1.2 M

An estimated 1.2 million people in England have a learning disability.

Only 189,000 of those people are known to learning disability services - the majority live their lives without support from specialist services.



Half of all adults with a learning disability live in the family home.



Positive imagery of people with learning disabilities is often missing from mainstream media and public campaigns.

## HEALTH INEQUALITIES

People with learning disabilities in the UK are:

- less likely to engage in physical activity
- more likely to have at least 1 significant health problem
- more likely to have psychiatric illness
- have higher rates of dementia
- more likely to have a visual and/or hearing impairment
- are at increased risk of early death and have a shorter life expectancy

## FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SHORTER LIFE EXPECTANCY



Problems in advance health & care planning

Dependence on others for mobility & feeding



Carers' concerns not being listened to



Social inequalities impacting health including employment, housing, education, social stigma, harassment and social isolation.

## CONTENTS

This is what you can find in your DanceSyndrome fundraising pack:

**3 - Why DanceSyndrome?**

**4 - How your donation helps**

**5 - Case study - Jen Blackwell**

**6- Ideas for fundraising**

**7 - Tell us about your fundraising**

**8 - How to make your donation**

**9 - Poster - fill in your event details**

**10 - Sponsorship form**

**If you need help with your fundraising ideas, please let us know, we will try to help you as much as we can. You can call us on 07597 942494 or email: [info@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:info@dancesyndrome.co.uk)**





# WHY DANCESYNDROME?

Jen Blackwell has Down's syndrome but that has never stopped her living the life of her choosing. She went to mainstream school and whilst there she realised how much she loved to dance and decided that she wanted to become a community dance worker.

After leaving school in 1999, Jen found herself in the frustrating position of not being able to fulfil her ambition because there was no suitable dance training for a person with a learning disability.

After 10 years of unsuccessfully searching for training that was appropriate and inclusive it became clear that many other people with learning disabilities were in the same situation. Something needed to change and Jen and her parents took matters into their own hands. They formed DanceSyndrome in 2009 and it was registered as a charity in 2013.

## Supporting people with learning disabilities

We support people with learning disabilities and their families, improving **mental and physical health**, addressing **social inclusion** and **challenging perceptions of disability**. We do this by providing inclusive weekly dance workshops, dance leadership training with accreditation, dance choreography and performance opportunities (including prestigious events such as the Edinburgh Fringe Festival) and community dance outreach.

## We are truly inclusive

Uniquely our workshops are **co-designed** and **co-delivered** by a team of two dance leaders, one who has a learning disability and one who doesn't. Our dance leaders complete an in-depth **inclusive dance leadership training** programme to receive their **qualification** accredited by Sports Leaders UK. We now have 58 trained Dance Leaders.

As well as a **unique** understanding as '**experts by experience**' of how to design and deliver truly inclusive dance workshops, our dance leaders are **role models** who demonstrate that 'people like us' can progress to leadership roles. Our dance leaders start their journey with us as workshop participants and progress on to 'give-back' through **volunteering** their services. Some develop their skills even further and train to deliver our Dance Leader training programme.

We have over 40 **dedicated** and **passionate** volunteers working in a wide variety of roles.

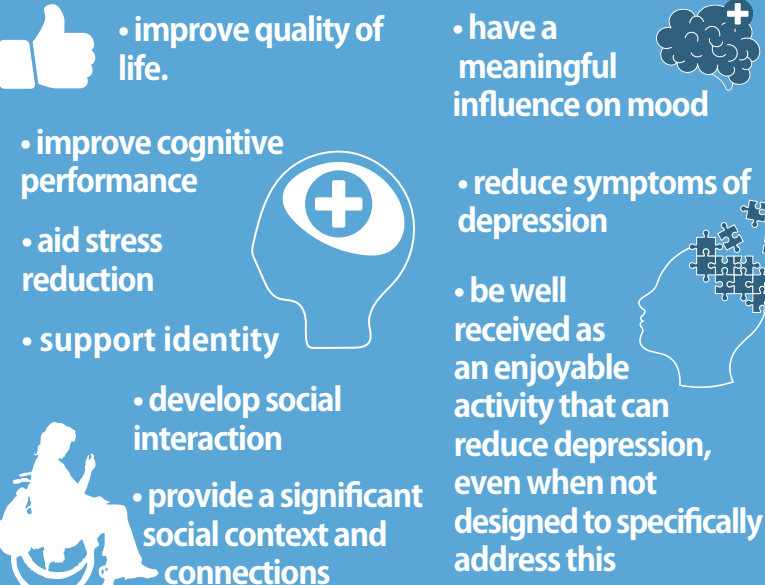
There is significant demand for our services and we are **creative** with our offering, achieving a lot on a small budget.

**As a small charity our only real limitation is financial.**

# THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF DANCING

Dance involves the body, emotion and mind: it is both a physical activity and a means of expression and communication.

## Dance has been shown to impact mental wellbeing:



- improve quality of life.
- have a meaningful influence on mood
- improve cognitive performance
- aid stress reduction
- support identity
- develop social interaction
- provide a significant social context and connections
- reduce symptoms of depression
- be well received as an enjoyable activity that can reduce depression, even when not designed to specifically address this

## Dance has been shown to impact physical wellbeing:



- improve balance and bodily awareness
- improve dynamic balance
- encourage and enable physical activity
- increase people's physical fitness, strength and abilities, often more effectively than other forms of exercise
- develop muscle strength

At DanceSyndrome we believe there is beauty and value in everyone's movements.

People with learning disabilities face barriers to joining in with mainstream dance. DanceSyndrome removes those barriers and empowers people to take part in an inclusive way and experience the many benefits of dancing.

**Everyone can dance!**

# How Your Donation Helps

The money you donate has a **significant impact** on our work. As a small not-for-profit organisation, every penny you donate directly impacts our business.

Previously, business sponsorship and charitable donations have paid for:

- trips to the Edinburgh Fringe in both 2017 and 2018 - a life changing opportunity for the whole team which empowered us to believe we can achieve anything!
- uniforms for our dancers - creating a sense of belonging and inclusion and adding value to our brand
- venue hire to enable our weekly workshops to continue
- leadership training to enable participants to complete Dance By Example and become visible leaders
- High profile conference appearances for our inspiring speakers

Your donation allows us to take the **pioneering, innovative** approach that if you include people of all abilities and **empower** them to take part in a way that means something to them, then they will start to believe in themselves and achieve things that they never thought possible.

You aren't just funding dance, you are **unlocking potential** - the skills that people learn in our sessions can be transferred to many other aspects of life beyond the arts. Together we are **enabling** people with learning disabilities to become visible, active members of society who are changing accepted beliefs about what people with learning disabilities are **ABLE** to do.

People are empowered for life after taking part in our sessions and there isn't any other provision like it in the North West, or further afield. We want to be able to continue this provision and even expand it, but to do that we need your help. In the current economic climate we are faced with increased pressure on our resources. Competition for funding is fierce and the major funding that we have had in recent years is coming to an end. We are now relying on the generous support of individuals and businesses to carry out our vital work. If you appreciate the work that we do and want to see more of it, please support us in any way that you can.

**Please help us to make the world a better, more inclusive place for people with learning disabilities.**





## PROVEN SUCCESS

We are very proud that the impact of our work has been recognised by the following awards, including The Queen's Award for Voluntary Services:

- Founder Jen Blackwell included on F: Entrepreneur list of top 100 female entrepreneurs for 2022
- Winner - People's Choice Award at the One Dance UK Awards
- Winner - Jen Blackwell won the Inclusion Award at the National Activity Providers Association (NAPA) Awards
- Dance Leader Team included on Learning Disability and Autism Leaders List 2019 (Sports, Arts and Entertainment category)
- Founder Jen Blackwell included on Shaw Trust Disability Power List in 2018, 2019 and 2020
- Jen Blackwell included on Lucozade Mover's List 2019
- Winner - People's Award at the National Learning Disabilities and Autism Awards 2019
- The Queen's Award for Voluntary Services 2019
- High Commended in the She-Inspires Awards 2019
- Dance Leader & Ambassador Becky Rich included on Learning Disability and Autism Leaders List 2019 (Sports, Arts and Entertainment category)
- Points of Light Award from the Prime Minister October 2018
- Winner - E3 North West Business Awards 2018
- Winner - Not-For-Profit Award at the Red Rose Awards 2017
- Winner - The Sporting Chance Award at The National Learning Disability and Autism Awards 2016
- Jen Blackwell won Inspirational Woman of the Year at the EVA Awards 2015



## CASE STUDY: JEN BLACKWELL

Jen Blackwell is Founder and Director of DanceSyndrome. Jen has Down's syndrome but at no point has that got in the way of her aspiration and determination.

In 2009 DanceSyndrome was started by Jen with help from her parents. 10 years on she is living a fulfilled life, immersed in her passion for dance - leading two of her own weekly workshops, participating in inclusive technique classes dancing, working with the performance team and speaking at high profile events and conferences. Jen has performed at the Edinburgh Fringe twice, the House of Lords and several major awards ceremonies. She was also thrilled to be given the opportunity to meet her hero Alexandra Burke at the prestigious Pineapple Studios in London as part of the National Lottery's Big Surprise TV show.

As a Dance Leader Jen is now a well recognised and respected role model and this has been acknowledged through a number of awards.

In September 2015 Jen was honored to win "Inspirational Woman of the Year" at the Enterprise Vision Awards. Jen has gone on to be included in the Shaw Trust Power 100 in 2018 & 2019, was chosen as the recipient of the Prime Minister's Point of Light Award in October 2018 and was included in the Lucozade Sport Movers List 2019.

Perhaps most importantly, Jen's involvement with DanceSyndrome has empowered her to live independently for the first time in her life and to feel a sense of belonging.

*"I hadn't discovered friendship before DanceSyndrome but now I have friends in my life - people who value me for who I am - it's the most amazing experience ever!"*

# 5 fun ideas for fundraising



## 1. Raffle

Ask local businesses to donate prizes. Tell everybody about your brilliant prizes and ask them to buy tickets!

## 2. Organise an event

Bake sales, craft fairs, film nights, charity balls, quizzes and casino nights are all great ways to fundraise!



## 3. Sell unwanted items

Have a sort through all your stuff, find things you don't need any more and sell them online or in-person.

## 4. Workplace donations

Get your workplace or community centre involved with dress up or dress down days for a small donation. Why not do it weekly?



## 5. Birthday fundraisers

Ask for donations to charity instead of gifts on your birthday. Facebook is a great platform to do this!



Don't forget to tell us about your fundraising! Email us at [info@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:info@dancesyndrome.co.uk)

## Fundraising ideas

There are lots of fun ways to raise money for your favourite charity!

Think about what you are good at and how you can make money from it.

Also, think about who you might ask to sponsor you and what will motivate them to support you with a donation.

You can do all kinds of activities and ask people to sponsor you. Ideas can include:

- **Dancing**
- **Running** - you could even do the London Marathon!
- **Swimming**
- **Walking** - this could be one long challenging walk or you could just walk to work every day instead of driving or using public transport.
- **Yes day** - get people to sponsor you to only say yes to requests!
- **Do something funny**, like shaving your head, sitting in a bath of beans or wearing fancy dress.
- **Do nothing!** Sponsored silences, fasting or giving up your favourite treat are easy ways to raise money!
- Think of a new **world record** to break!

There is a sponsorship form included in this pack for your sponsors to complete. Please ask them to tick the Gift Aid box if they can, so that we can raise even more money!

If you need help with your fundraising ideas, please let us know, we will try to help you as much as we can. You can call us on 07597 942494 or email: [info@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:info@dancesyndrome.co.uk)

If you need help promoting your fundraising activity, see the next page for ideas on how to spread the word!



**DanceSyndrome**  
Dancer Led, Disability Inspired

Registered Charity No:1152664



# TELL US ABOUT YOUR FUNDRAISING

If you are raising money for DanceSyndrome we would love to hear about it!

You can tell us about your activity via social media and we will share your story and encourage people to sponsor you.

Email: [info@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:info@dancesyndrome.co.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/dancerleddisabilityinspired](https://www.facebook.com/dancerleddisabilityinspired)

Twitter: @DancesyndromeUK

You can use the hashtag **#SupportDS** to make your messages easy to find.

## Tell us:

- What your activity is
- Who is joining in
- When and where it is happening
- Why you want to support DanceSyndrome
- How much you want to raise

## What can you do to publicise your activity?

- Use the **poster** in this pack to tell people when and where your activity is taking place
- Tell your **local newspaper** - we can help you with this if you want us to, just email [info@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:info@dancesyndrome.co.uk)
- Use **social media** to promote your event - make sure you tag DanceSyndrome so that we can share it too! You can use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or even a blog if you want to.
- Use **pictures** - If you take photographs or videos those are great for using on social media but please make sure you have permission from the photographer and the people in the photographs.



# How to Make a Donation

There are lots of ways that you can support our work.

## JUST GIVING

You can make a donation or fundraise for DanceSyndrome at:  
[www.justgiving.com/dance-syndrome](http://www.justgiving.com/dance-syndrome)

## FACEBOOK

You can make a donation or set up a fundraiser via Facebook - [www.facebook.com/dancerleddisabilityinspired](http://www.facebook.com/dancerleddisabilityinspired)

## TEXT MESSAGE DONATION

To donate £5, text DANCE to 70970  
To donate £10, text DANCE to 70191  
To donate £20, text DANCE20 to 70191

## ONLINE

You can donate via our website:  
[www.dancesyndrome.co.uk/donate](http://www.dancesyndrome.co.uk/donate)



## BY POST

You can send a cheque made payable to DanceSyndrome to:  
DanceSyndrome, C/O Pathways Associates,  
Suite 2, Waterside, St James Court West,  
Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 1NA

## IN PERSON

You can hand your donations to a member of the DanceSyndrome team.

## SPONSORSHIP

Please contact Julie Nicholson at  
[julie@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:julie@dancesyndrome.co.uk) to discuss business sponsorship opportunities.

For general enquiries please contact:

[info@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:info@dancesyndrome.co.uk)

[www.dancesyndrome.co.uk](http://www.dancesyndrome.co.uk)

Tel: 07597 942494

Tel: 07887 931510





# We're fundraising for DanceSyndrome!

**Come along and help us to raise money for this wonderful local charity!**



