

All About Me!



Victoria Marsh

Dear Victoria's 4th Grade Team,

We are pleased to share Victoria's All About Me booklet with you. This booklet contains a lot of information about her and our family.

We hope that this information will help you to get to know Victoria and some of her interests, strengths and skills.

We have high expectations for Victoria as other parents do for their children. We expect her to follow school rules, perform to the best of her ability and be a contributing member of the class. Good teaching and positive peer role models will help Victoria be successful.

If you have any questions, please call us or e-mail us at the contact information below.

We look forward to working with you this year. Please let us know how we can help make this a great school year.

Sincerely,

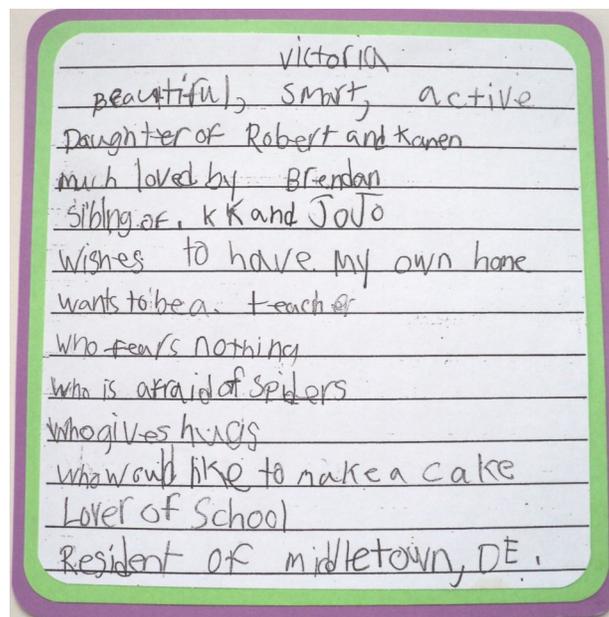
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Victoria's Vision Statement

We have many dreams and goals for our daughter, Victoria. But the goals that relate most directly to her educational experiences are:

1. To help Victoria maximize her potential by challenging her to discover and develop her gifts and to help her learn how to strengthen her areas of need.
2. To develop a network of loving and caring family, friends, teachers and individuals who:
 - a. Believe in Victoria's potential,
 - b. Accept and love her for who she is, and
 - c. See her as a unique individual with valuable gifts and distinct preferences to be respected.
3. To provide an environment that allows Victoria to develop spiritually and socially, interacting meaningfully with her typically developing peers and the greater community around her.
4. To help her be articulate, be able to help express her ideas meaningfully, as well as be easily understood by others.
5. To give her opportunities to help so that she can nurture her heart for others and develop a sense of community.
6. To facilitate her steps to independence with the sheltering respect and support of those individuals dedicated to her best interests.



Our Family's Dreams For Victoria



When Victoria was born we didn't know much about Down syndrome and worried about her not being included in family and social activities and not having friends. We worried that she wouldn't be able to talk or learn much, or walk and/or run well.

We could not have been more wrong. Victoria has a busy social life, lot of sincere friends, talks up a storm, walks, runs, jumps, rides a bike and even swims better than many adults. She is a social, energetic young girl who is a "sponge" of knowledge and is always amazing us with what she knows, is willing to try and can accomplish.

Some of the goals we have for Victoria include:

Kierstin: have Victoria continue to swim competitively and do what we all do.

Josephine: have Victoria continue being part of our swim team and go to college

Victoria: work at Just Comfort Shoes (Rehoboth Beach) in the summer, go to college and become a teacher

Mom and Dad: have Victoria go to college, have a career, live independently, fall in love, have an active social life and continue loving life all while making life better for those she interacts with.

Our hopes for this year are:

We want Victoria to be challenged to learn as much as she can, discover and develop her gifts, foster old and new friendships and learn how to strengthen her areas of need while accessing the 4th grade curriculum with her peers.



My Family and friends

My name is Victoria Elizabeth Marsh. I will be 10 years old on September 6. I was born in West Virginia and have lived in Delaware the past 7 years.



My mom's name is Karen. She is president of the Down Syndrome Association of Delaware. She likes to take pictures and bake sweets.

My dad's name is Rob. He works for a pharmaceutical company. He likes to fish and cheer on the West Virginia Mountaineers.

I have 2 older sisters. Kierstin is a freshman at Appo High and is on their volleyball team. Josephine is in 8th grade at Alfred G. Waters and enjoys drawing and painting. They both love to swim competitively and are on a summer swim team (Fairfield/Fairfield Crest) and a year round swim team (Delaware Swim Team) with me.

We have a pet dog. My dog's name is Coco (short for Coconut.). Our other dog, Keely, died a few years ago. I still remember her. She was black. I also just got a pet hermit crab. Her name is Missy.

Other family and friends that I want you to know about are:

- James Marsh is my cousin. He is also in 4th grade. We ride the bus together. He and his brother Matthew live in my neighborhood.
- My other cousins are Grace, Cecelia, Ally, Zack and Bodie (he is so cute).
- My two best friends are Charlotte (she lives across the street) and MacKenzie (she was on my summer swim team with me.)
- Brendan Popp is my friend. We have known each other for 7 years. I want to marry Brendan. (but I have to finish school and have a job first.)
- My Grandma lives in Pittsburgh. My Papa died last year. I miss him. Nonna and Uncle Joe also live in Pittsburgh. They like the Steelers.

I love school

I love going to school. I have been in school since I was 3 1/2 years old. My teachers have been:

Pre-K: Tracy Taylor AAEC
Pre-K: Chris DeCapua CLECC
Kindergarten: Amy Lillie and Tracy Taylor Calhoun CLECC
1st Grade: Amy Graff and Joanne Willits Cedar Lane
2nd Grade: Alisha Gravatt and Emily Nichols Bunker Hill
3rd Grade: Lauren Schultz and Amanda Benton Bunker Hill

Here are some ways you can help me be successful:

- I need focused instruction, clear direction and lots and lots and lots of repetition. I can learn a lot!
- Worksheets should be kept simple.
- Let me study the same things my classmates are studying. I learn from them and they learn from me.
- My receptive skills are better than my expressive skills.
- I have difficulty pronouncing some words so if you don't understand me, please ask me to slow down and say it clearly (I forget sometimes)
- I may need to be reminded to speak in COMPLETE sentences. (I can do it—it just takes time.)
- Please give me time to respond when you ask me a question. It takes me some time to process what is being asked.
- I am a visual learner so please use pictures and picture schedules as often as possible.
- I should be disciplined as soon as an unwanted behavior or action occurs.



Look what I can do!!

I am on two swim teams! My summer swim team (Fairfield Turtles) won every meet and won the championships! I got a trophy and lots of ribbons. I like to swim Backstroke, Freestyle and Butterfly—my favorite is Butterfly!

I also swim with Delaware Swim Team. I compete in meets with all the kids. I love being on deck with my teammates. Coach Matt is a great coach.



I love to play the piano and take lessons each week. I played a song at Papa's funeral last year.

I love books and can read a lot of them all by myself!!

I like to ride my bike. When we were on vacation we rode all over Lewes—it was fun. Usually I ride in the neighborhood with my sisters or Charlotte.

I lead Team Victoria each year at the Buddy Walk (a walk to raise awareness of Down syndrome.) Over the past 6 years we have raised lots of money and had lots of friends join our team. Our theme is "Marsharitaville"! Come and join us in May.



I help out around the house by doing chores. I unload the dishwasher, feed Coco, set and clear the table, and clean my room.

I have lots of friends!



Myths & Truths

About Down Syndrome

Myth: Down syndrome is a rare genetic disorder.

Truth: Down syndrome is the most commonly occurring genetic condition. One in every 800 births is a child with Down syndrome. There are currently 350,000 people in the U.S. with Down syndrome, with 5,000 to 6,000 births per year.

Myth: Most children with Down syndrome are born to older parents.

Truth: Eighty percent of children born with Down syndrome are born to women younger than age 35 due to higher fertility rates. However, research has shown a link between the incidence of Down syndrome and maternal age.

Myth: Down syndrome is hereditary and runs in families.

Truth: Most cases of Down syndrome are sporadic, chance events. In general, Down syndrome does not run families and a sibling or aunt has no greater chance of conceiving a child with Down syndrome.

Myth: People with Down syndrome have severe cognitive delays.

Truth: Most people with Down syndrome have cognitive delays that are mild to moderate. IQ is not an adequate measure of the functional status of people with Down syndrome. People with Down syndrome have great potential if given opportunities.

Myth: The life expectancy of people with Down syndrome is 30.

Truth: Thanks to advances in medical and clinical treatment and opportunities to thrive, as many as 80 percent of adults with Down syndrome reach age 55, and many live longer.

Myth: Behavior problems and depression are just part of having Down syndrome

Truth: Often, medical or mental health problems go untreated due to the assumption that it is typical of having this genetic condition. Complete examinations by appropriate health care professionals should always be pursued.

Myth: Children with Down syndrome are placed in segregated special education programs.

Truth: Children with Down syndrome are included in regular academic classrooms across the country. Students may be integrated into specific courses or fully included in the regular classroom for all subjects.

Myth: Adults with Down syndrome may be unable to work.

Truth: Businesses seek young adults with Down syndrome for a variety of positions. They are employed by banks, corporations, nursing homes, hotels and restaurants. They work in the music and entertainment industry. People with Down syndrome bring to their jobs enthusiasm, reliability and dedication.