



# Borough of Caldwell

**WHEREAS,** Down syndrome is a genetic condition that occurs when an individual has a full or partial extra copy of chromosome 21. It is the most frequently occurring chromosomal condition. It occurs in 1 in every 792 live births. About 6,000 babies with Down syndrome are born in the United States each year. The population of people with Down syndrome in the U.S. has been estimated to be over 400,000; and

**WHEREAS,** Down syndrome is not a disability or an illness. It is not related to race, nationality, religion or socioeconomic status; and

**WHEREAS,** The lives of people with Down Syndrome have been transformed over the past half century; as recently as the early 1980s, the average lifespan of those with Down Syndrome was 25 years; today, the life expectancy is approximately 60 years; and

**WHEREAS,** People with Down syndrome have an increased risk for certain medical conditions such as congenital heart defects, respiratory and hearing problems, Alzheimer's disease, childhood leukemia and thyroid conditions. Many of these conditions are now treatable, so most people with Down syndrome lead healthy lives; and

**WHEREAS,** In spite of this progress, there is a major lack of funding for research benefiting people with Down syndrome. Today, Down syndrome is the least-funded major genetic condition in the U.S.A. Continued research is necessary in order to find ways to improve classroom experiences for children and to increase recovery rates of disease; and

**WHEREAS,** Many adults with Down syndrome live semi-independently or on their own, leading healthy and productive lives, complete with jobs, volunteer work, recreational activities, and personal relationships including dating and marriage; and

**WHEREAS,** Possessing a wide range of abilities, people with Down syndrome are essential members of our community and make significant contributions to the fabric of our lives. They are active participants in educational, occupational, social, creative, athletic and recreational circles; and

**WHEREAS,** Individuals with Down syndrome should have equal opportunity to achieve the universally desired goals of self-fulfillment, pride in their achievements, inclusion in their community and schools, and reaching their fullest potential; and

**NOW THEREFORE,** I, John Kelley, Mayor of the Borough of Caldwell do hereby proclaim October as Down Syndrome Awareness month and urge all citizens to be inclusive and supportive of people with Down syndrome, and to recognize the many talents, accomplishments and skills people with Down syndrome contribute to our community; and most importantly, to encourage and practice acceptance of people who have the same dreams and needs as everyone else: to love and to be loved, to be treated as normal, and to be included in everyday life as full and valued citizens.

*John Kelley*  
Mayor Kelley