CLOTHING RANGE DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME

Downs Designs aims to produce clothes for people with Down syndrome that suit their body shape as well as being stylish.

When Karen Bowersox’s granddaughter was born with Down syndrome, she saw the challenges her mother faced trying to find clothes that fit her properly. After extensive research she still could not find any clothes made specifically for people with Down syndrome and so took matters into her own hands, launching her own fashion line Downs Designs. Bowersox’s goal is to produce clothes for people with Down syndrome that suit their body shape as well as being stylish. In 2010, she hired a designer to develop a new size of clothing which she calls “down sizing”. They started with a basic range of adult-size jeans and long-sleeved t-shirts, and used Down syndrome models to ensure the sizing was correct. Many factories were reluctant to produce their designs due to the irregular sizing, but they soon found a willing supplier in China. Sample garments were taken to the National Down Syndrome Conference in Florida, in order to get feedback and make final adjustments. The products proved popular — with easy-to-use fasteners and specific tailoring around the knees and elbows — and are now available to buy via the website. There are full instructions online about taking measurements and calculating sizes, and free phone consultations are available. Sale items start at USD 30 and the range covers adults, teens and kids. Downs Designs have plans to expand with more designs and a range of outerwear. As we’ve seen many times in the past, personal experience is so often the catalyst for innovative solutions. One to be inspired by! Spotted by: Murtaza Patel

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