



30 Mansell Court, Suite 108
Roswell, GA 30076
770-604-9500
www.ndscenter.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT TAMARA PURSLEY
ndsc@ndscenter.org
(770) 604-9500

NDSC CONDEMNS STATEMENT MADE BY NORM MACDONALD ON HOWARD STERN PROGRAM

September 13, 2018, Atlanta, GA – The National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) strongly condemns Norm Macdonald’s statement that “You’d have to have Down syndrome to not feel sorry for” victims of sexual harassment. The comment, made in an interview with radio personality Howard Stern, was in response to Macdonald’s earlier controversial statement about the #MeToo movement.

“To assert that individuals with Down syndrome lack empathy for victims of sexual assault displays incredible ignorance, insensitivity, or both,” notes NDSC Executive Director David Tolleson. Macdonald’s statement is additionally painful, he notes, as individuals with Down syndrome and other intellectual or developmental disabilities are more likely to be victims of sexual assault than are members of the general public.

Macdonald went on to say, “You’d have to have Down syndrome – my new word,” to which Stern responded, “Down syndrome, good word.” Macdonald has previously been known to use the r-word and admitted that he was substituting Down syndrome to infer stupidity. Earlier today he appeared on *The View* and remarked, “I realized at that moment I did something unforgivable. The remark I made about people with Down syndrome was a terrible, terrible thing for me to say.”

“Men, women and children with Down syndrome aren’t a joke or a code word,” Tolleson said, adding, “They are people who deserve respect and dignity. People with disabilities are more likely to be victims of bullying. Comments such as those by Macdonald and Stern promote a culture of casual cruelty. While many celebrities are claiming that political correctness is killing comedy, the NDSC sees nothing funny in using language that dehumanizes an entire population.”

About the National Down Syndrome Congress

Founded in 1973, the National Down Syndrome Congress is the country’s oldest organization for people with Down syndrome, their families, and the professionals who work with them. A 501(c)(3) non-profit advocacy organization, the NDSC provides support and information about issues related to Down syndrome throughout the lifespan, as well as on matters of public policy relating to disability rights. The National Down Syndrome Congress is committed to creating a national climate in which all people will recognize and embrace the value and dignity of people with Down syndrome. For more information about the NDSC, please visit our website at www.ndscenter.org.

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