



PACDS Newsletter

Parents Assistance Committee on Down Syndrome

Upcoming Events

Summer 2006

MAY

5/17 Parent/Child Group 10:00-11:30 Children's School For Early Development Contact Kathy Higgins 347-3227x107

JUNE

6/6 Golfing for Kids Westchester Hills Golf Club White Plains (details page 3)

6/14 Parent/Child Group 10:00-11:30 Children's School For Early Development Contact Kathy Higgins 347-3227x107

6/28- 6/29: Summer Inclusion Conference (details page 3)

JULY

7/12 Parent Child Group Gedney Park, Millwood (details page 4)

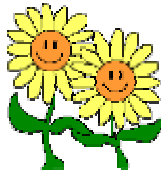
7/21 - 23: NDSC National Conference Atlanta, GA www.ndsccenter.org (details page 3)

7/23 PACDS FAMILY PICNIC Noon Downing Park, Yorktown, NY

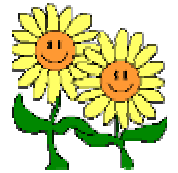
AUGUST

8/16 Parent Child Group Pool Party Chappaqua (details page 4)

8/22- 26 World Down Syndrome Conference Vancouver, Canada (details page 3)



Welcome Summer!



Summer is almost upon us and going to the pool, staying up late and vacationing will become part of our routine over the next few months. This is both a wonderful and challenging time. How will you keep your kids safe, busy and having fun, while not stressing yourself out through the long, hot days of summer?

Now is a good time to start brainstorming on quick and easy activities for when the children, who were so thrilled that school was out in June, begin to miss their teachers, routines, and friends in July. By organizing your thoughts now the level of panic that will set in around the third week of July might not seem so colossal and perhaps the whining will be minimized. Here are some fun ideas that have worked in the past: take out the sprinkler and the ice cream, let them have a little fun, getting messy and sticky won't seem as bad if water is involved; visit the library, they usually have a few free programs; make a craft, there are many quick and easy ideas on-line that can spice up a day; have a camp out, barbeque, cook marshmallows, throw up a tent in the backyard and let the kids sleep out under the stars; have a picnic and fly a kite, you can even make your own kite first and then test it out. Finally, don't forget the "PACDS Annual Family Picnic" this is a fun filled day where you can eat, greet and play. Have fun!

CALL FOR NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PACDS is presently seeking interested and spirited new committee members. NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY! The PACDS organization is expanding and it is important that we continue to provide support and programming for our families. Committee members can plan activities, educate new members, execute events, and make decisions that directly affect you and your child. It is extremely rewarding and will keep you connected to what is happening. For our organization to continue to provide assistance, education, and support we need you! If you are interested in finding out more please contact Anne Majsak, 328-7909, or Roberta Lieber, 997-5066.

Annual PACDS FAMILY PICNIC This summer's picnic will be **July 23** back at Downing Park in Yorktown! Please save and post the attached flyer.

PACDS Contacts

Co-Chairpersons:

Anne Majsak
328-7909

Roberta Lieber
997-5066

New Parent Contact:

Terri Hunt 243-5874

Newsletter:

Caroline Furry
949-3948

Roberta Lieber
997-5066

Parent/ Child Group:

Anne Majsak
328-7909

Elem. Age Playgroup:

Caroline Furry
949-3948

Fran Cignarella
686-1104

Teenage Group:

Jean Corvino
693-5392

Magaly Olivero
949-2594

Spanish Liaison:

Rosa Sanchez
293-0130

PACDS Hotline

739-4085

New Books Hitting the Bookstores

Understanding How Children with Down Syndrome Learn by Susan J. Peoples (www.specialoffspring.com), (206) 625-6493, 2004, 86 pages, paperback, \$14.95 +SH). The author is an experienced elementary teachers as well as the mother of a child with Down syndrome. She has based her book on the 1996 NDSS study on educational inclusion adding her experience as a teacher and mother. Though the book is geared more for the classroom teacher, it does give the parent some insight on how our kids process their world.

I Just Am by Bryan and Tom Lambke (www.ijustam.org), (866) 471-0777, 2006, paperback, \$14.99 +SH) "All too often, we shroud ourselves in ignorance, thus preventing us from learning from others whom we consider to be somehow "different." In a book that is both charming and disarming, Bryan Lambke-a young man with Down syndrome-invites us into his world where he lets us know he shares the same dreams and emotions as everyone else. "I have a disability," says Bryan. "It is not my fault. I just am." Bryan, with the help of his father Tom, helps us all examine what is normal about each of us. The book includes additional information about Down syndrome."

Special Education: A Parent's Guide For Children's Success by Michael T. Bailey (father of an daughter with Downs) (www.publishamerica.com), (301) 695-1707, 2006, paperback, \$18.95 +\$3.50SH) The complex web of laws, regulations, personalities and stresses, combined with anxiety over raising a child with a disability, have made special education advocacy an impenetrable maze to many parents. This book presents the complexities of the process in a simple-to-understand way and offers practical tips, checklists and strategies on how to make the system work to insure the educational success of all children.

Sign to Communicate

By Christine Mavra

As a mom of four children, I understand the importance of communicating with our kids. Although verbal communication is the preferred choice, it is a difficult one to achieve among some children, especially children with special needs. So, what is a parent to do? Use sign language! There are many benefits to learning sign language and some include: to communicate, higher IQ scores, and to stimulate a child's learning through different senses. Where do you go? Start at signingtime.com. It is easy, fun and educational and signingtime.com is the place to go. They have 13 volumes available, also 2 baby sign volumes available on either DVD or VHS .Each volume runs for about 30 minutes and teaches ASL (American Sign Language).They are filled with catchy songs, many children and vibrant colors (including background animation).The signs are shown clearly and they are easy to learn for anyone at any age! You can order these products online at www.signingtime.com, or by phone at (801)533-0444 (call between the hours of 9am. to 5pm. MST). You can also order by mail. Go to their website and click on "Contact" on top right to get the information and address. Browse through the site and you'll be sure to find something that interests you. We did and now our daughter Rachel (age 2 ½) is fluent in sign language and is able to communicate with us. Our daughter doesn't get frustrated, as I feel the reason for this is because she is able to communicate. Her speech is also emerging nicely! I highly recommend signingtime.com because of the quality, ease, fun and educational videos they produce. The whole family will benefit from using sign language, so enjoy it!

Websites of interest

www.sparcinc.org
Provides social, recreation and therapeutic services including horseback riding and Tae Kwon Do

www.adaptivesportsfoundation.org
Ski and snowboard instruction; a variety of sports instruction during summer

www.steffinossen.org
"Moving Wheels and Heels" dance class

www.yogashine.com
yoga class specifically designed for children with special needs

www.narha.org
Pegasus – Therapeutic horseback riding

www.northeastsspecialrec.org
Swimming, Special Olympics training, day camp, etc.

www.secrec.org
Southeast consortium offers fitness, wellness and sports programs

www.heartson.org
Music and art therapy programs

Adopt a Mouse

A group of students have established a campaign to raise funds for The Down Syndrome Research and Treatment Foundation. The students are selling stuffed mice for \$21 each. For more information or to purchase visit www.adoptamouse.com

Conferences

The 34th NDSC National Convention Atlanta, GA

July 21-23

As your child grows and changes, so do your family's needs. Don't miss a chance to learn and share at the NDSC National Convention. This year's NDSC convention will be the only national DS convention in the USA. If you are not aware of The National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC), it was founded in 1974. The Organization promotes the welfare of people with Down syndrome and their families. Made up of parents, professionals, and other interested persons, the NDSC advocates for the improvement of human services and civil rights for people with Down syndrome, encourages research, and promotes public understanding of the condition. It also serves as a clearinghouse for information on the syndrome. To learn more about the conference or to register online, visit www.ndsccenter.org or call (800) 232-6372.

The World Down Syndrome Conference Vancouver, Canada August 22- 26.

NDSS National Conference is not being held this year. Instead the National Down Syndrome Society is participating in the 9th World Down Syndrome Conference in Vancouver, Canada in August. The world congress is held every three years to provide leading edge, broad based information providing a balanced perspective on current issues of concern for people with Down syndrome, their families, the professionals who work with them and researchers. If you want to find out more information about that, you can go to their website at www.wdsc2006.com. If you have further questions please contact Dagny Goldberg, Resource Specialist, National Down Syndrome Society, dgoldberg@ndss.org.

Future events to mark on your calendar



GOLFING FOR KIDS JUNE 6

The Children's School for Early Development holds their sixth annual Golfing for Kids event Tuesday, June 6. The golf outing benefits children with autism and other developmental disabilities. Registration and breakfast: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Shotgun Tee Time: 12:00 p.m. Awards Dinner: 6:30 p.m. Westchester Hills Golf Club, 401 Ridgeway, White Plains, NY 10604. Contact: Fran Higgins, 914-428-8330, ext. 3028, fhiggins@westchesterarc.org. For a complete schedule and details, visit www.westchesterarc.org.

SUMMER INCLUSION CONFERENCE JUNE 28- 29

Presented by the New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education and the Montgomery Township Public Schools. An opportunity for special and regular educators, families, administrators, advocates, and others to learn the keys to inclusion for the full range of learners. For more information and a registration form, go to www.njcie.org or contact NJCIE at 732-613-0400.

Parent Child Group Outings

The Parent/Child group that normally meets in The Children School has two outings planned for the summer:

- Wednesday **July 12** 11:00 am to 1:00 pm Gedney Park in Millwood, NY. Bring a picnic and multiple kids.
- Wednesday **August 16** 11:00 to 3:00 pm Pool Party at Birchwood Swim Club in Chappaqua. The day is always spectacular. Don't forget the kids!!

Remaining regular meetings are May 17th and June 14th 10:00am at the Children's School.

Please contact Kathy Higgins at The Children's School at 347-3227 for directions or further information.

Buddy Walk New York City September 17



The 12th Annual New York City Buddy Walk will be taking place on Sunday, September 17, 2006.

An estimated 3500 participants are expected to attend this year's walk. Individuals with DS, families and friends walk a one mile course to promote inclusion and awareness of Down syndrome. John C. McGinley, who plays Dr. Perry Cox in the hit NBC show "Scrubs," is the 2006 National Buddy Walk Spokesman and will lead the New York City Buddy Walk.

The day starts in the heart of Times Square to view the 2006 Times Square Video on the Panasonic Astrovision Screen. Photos can be submitted on-line or via postal mail for the 2006 Times Square Video Contest beginning May 1st. Check out the requirements at www.buddywalk.org.

The day then continues at the Great Hill in the north west corner of Central Park. Busses will be available to transport between Time Square and The Great Hill. The walk is an easy one-mile loop – very stroller friendly. And then there is the party afterwards with games, music, goody bags and lots of new friends.

We will be coordinating a meeting spot for PACDS families. If you are interested in this late-breaking news, please contact Anne Majsak at 328-7909 or email her at amajsak@optonline.net. Hope to see you there!

Resources

The My Gym-Challenged America Foundation

Challenged America is an organization that gives grants of up to \$500 for individuals with disabilities to purchase items they need to improve their quality of life. Randy Bertish, President of The My Gym-Challenged America Foundation, created Challenged America for the purpose of helping physically challenged children attain an improved quality of life.

The Challenged America Website is a medium through which disadvantaged, physically challenged children (or their parents) submit requests for medical attention, rehabilitative therapy and/or assistive devices they would otherwise be unable to obtain. The benefits to the children go far beyond the physical. Assistance from Challenged America can improve their quality of life, help them gain confidence and self-esteem, and ease their reentry into the community. For more information please go to: www.challengedamerica.com

Croton AYSO

Croton AYSO is planning to start a soccer team for kids with disabilities in the Fall. Ages 4 - 18, participants do not have to be ambulatory. Croton AYSO are dedicated volunteers committed to a healthy competitive atmosphere for youth soccer players and work towards developing responsible young people. If you want more information contact Croton AYSO at: 827-3941 or www.crotonsoccer.com

PACDS
Westchester Arc
121 Westmoreland Ave
White Plains, NY 10606



Parent Assistance Committee on Down Syndrome
Cordially invites you to our 33rd annual

PACDS FAMILY PICNIC

and softball game

SUNDAY, JULY 23, 2006
At NOON

At John Downing Park in Yorktown

Come join us for an afternoon of fun and families. Renew old friends, make new friends.

We will again post a board for pictures so please sort through your photos and bring some to contribute to our collage. As usual, please also bring some food for the buffet- **a main dish, salad or dessert**. We'll provide the hot dogs, drinks & paper supplies.

Directions:

- Take the Taconic Parkway to Yorktown - Rt. 35/202 exit.
- At end of ramp, turn east (right turn for northbound, left turn for southbound)
- John Downing Park is ½ mile ahead on the right.

Reminder - please bring:

- ✓ Food for buffet
- ✓ Pictures for Memory Board
- ✓ Gloves for softball game
- ✓ Other picnic games and toys
- ✓ Picnic blankets or chairs

For more information and to let us know what food you are bringing, please contact Ivy Lewis (914-827-8277 or ivylewis@optonline.net) or Mary Dantin (914-428-7714 or madantin@optonline.net)