

News

Welcome to all to another exciting year with CNCK events! This year we are still planning our major fund raising event of The Bread and Honey Race in Streetsville for Sunday June 4th, 2006. Don't forget we always need volunteers the morning of the race, please contact Ellie at earruda@rogers.com. As well, join our usual July Family Picnic event, flyer with details to follow.

CHRISTMAS 2005



We'd like to thank everyone's involvement in our annual Christmas Party last December. Everyone had a great time. Thank you to Santa, Zellers and The Mississauga Firefighters for coming and bringing gifts and joy all around. Jerry the D.J. for the great dancing music. Daniel Wright for the catering and door prizes. The Richies once again for the coffee and desserts from Second Cup, we couldn't do it without your generosity. The executive for pulling together the crafts and games everyone enjoyed. If you haven't already, check out the Christmas party pictures at www.cnck.org under Gallery.

If you are interested in your son or daughter joining a soccer team this coming spring contact The North Mississauga Soccer Club and ask regarding the Special Needs Soccer team. You can call at 905-858-1227.

Some of you showed interest in buying extra tee-shirts with the "What makes you different, makes you beautiful". Ellie still has some for sale at cost of \$10.00, children and adult sizes available. Contact Ellie at earruda@rogers.com.

Here are two new policies from Special Services at Home Services we thought could be of interest to our families. If you still do not receive money for a contract worker, call their offices at 905-567-7177 ext.345, to ask for an application form and information package. New additions for qualifications are as follows:

1. Primary caregivers can use their SSAH funding to compensate some family members to provide respite and/or personal development and growth. exceptions are
 - primary caregivers regardless of residence
 - a child under the age of 18
 - spouse of the individual who has a developmental disability, regardless of residence.

2. Eligibility for SSAH funding is expanded to include children with a physical disability and/or a developmental disability or adults who have a developmental disability who are NOT living at home with their families.

We need your input!

Make sure you send us any great ideas of what you would like CNCK to provide for you. For new members and to all, here are your 2006 executive. You can find our email addresses on the website.

President: Lisa Drummond
Vice-President: to be determined
Secretary: Diana Padilla
Treasurer: Ellie Arruda
Special Committee Directors: Anna Mancini, Tina Nicholson and Francesca Bell.

If you show any interest in joining us at our next executive meetings please let Lisa know at 905-896-3890 or email to; lisa.drummond@sympatico.ca.

Movie review: The Ringer

The National Down Syndrome Society is proud to join the Special Olympics in support of "The Ringer," a Farrelly brothers film that uses humor to challenge destructive stereotypes of people with intellectual disabilities. The film opened at theaters nationwide on December 23, 2005, and invites all our constituents across the country to support the film. "The Ringer" tells the story of Steve Barker, a young man who pretends to have an intellectual disability so he can

compete in and "fix" a Special Olympics event. However, Barker's attitude changes as he develops friendships with several of the Special Olympics athletes. He learns, as will moviegoers, that people with intellectual disabilities are more like the rest of us than they are different. The athletes in the film listen to music, play video games, watch the latest movies, and work together toward athletic excellence - all while having fun. Instead of tugging at the heartstrings, "The Ringer" uses the typical outrageous Farrelly Brothers humor ("There's Something about Mary," "Stuck on You," "Shallow Hal") to promote the message that just like everyone else, individuals with intellectual disabilities are people first, each with their own interests, talents, abilities, and personalities. The movie also features more than 150 people with intellectual disabilities in small parts and supporting roles. We are very excited about the opportunity that "The Ringer" offers to raise the profile of people with intellectual disabilities in their communities. We encourage all affiliates, Buddy Walk organizers, and constituents to attend screenings at your local theaters and to join us in publicizing the film.

***Our personal movie review critic for CNCK*:**

I watched the Ringer today and I LOVED it. A must see. I think you will all love it too. I won't spoil it by saying too much but I highly recommend you see it at your earliest opportunity. Take your kids. I left the theatre feeling really good and having more respect for people who are intellectually challenged than I already had. (I didn't think that was possible) Ellie.

DSAO Conference Midland October 2005

Last October Tina and I were fortunate to attend the annual DSAO Conference in Midland. Again, a variety of workshops were offered as well as an exciting performance by The Black Cap Players.

Many young adults with disabilities demonstrated their tremendous *abilities* while performing many musical numbers, changing costumes and props in the **DARK!** The whole audience was mesmerized by the unique talent of every individual.

Keynote Speaker, Rob Chubb entertained as well with his sense of humor and foresight in the positive power of laughter in every day life. As educators and parents, all could receive valuable information and techniques to nurture self-esteem and improve memory in ourselves and our children. You can find out more about Rob Chubb at www.colourspectrum.com.

Other workshops included Educational Advocacy by Lindsay Moir. Promoting health in Adults with Down syndrome by Dr. Dennis McGuire who discussed interesting findings from a multidisciplinary clinic which serves adults in Glenview, Chicago.

Nutritional Needs of Individuals with Down syndrome was presented by nutritionist Joan Jory. Ms. Jory discussed the biological differences of individuals with Down syndrome and offered an Ultimate Smoothie recipe which improves the immune system in individuals with Down syndrome. This smoothie can be enjoyed by the whole family. This recipe includes:

- 1 raw egg (sulphur, iron, zinc, B12, methionine, n3 fats, protein)
- 1 tsp. cod liver oil (molecularly distilled for essential fatty acids, Vitamin A) half a tsp. for children under 4 years of age.
- half cup of yoghurt (friendly bacteria and protein)
- berries and/or pineapple (antioxidants)
- Nutritional yeast* (selenium, zinc, folate, B12)
- *Found at natural food stores, not to be confused with baker's yeast
- Filtered water for desired consistency.
- Blend and enjoy!

The conference also offers valuable networking with parents from across Ontario. Look for next fall's DSAO conference information.



A Family's Thanks and Wonderful story.

Hello Anna,

I felt compelled to send you a note about the wonderful time our family had at the Caring Network Christmas party. We danced, we did crafts, we played games, we saw Santa Claus and the children were given very generous gifts. But most of all we had a fantastic time with some great families. You always make us feel welcomed.

As a family we look forward to the various events that the CNCK offers each year. It has connected us to many families that we enjoy seeing each year. We have an opportunity to talk to the parents whom we share advice and experiences with to seeing their beautiful children and how much they have developed over the year. The families that we have connected with inspire me each year and I can count on coming home with a renewed energy. The events are always done with thoughtfulness, style and fun. They cater to all of us from the awesome buffets to the summer picnic at the ranch and of course Christmas party with Santa Claus. The organizers of the event and any of the parent volunteers always have a smile to remind us of how precious our network is.

When we gave birth to our son Jacob my husband and I were devastated. We were in deep pain and extremely confused about how we felt about this little baby with Down syndrome. In my state of shock I made a call to Ellie at the Caring Network, I could barely talk with out sobbing. The only words that I could get out were that I had a baby with Down syndrome and could she provide me with some direction. She opened her heart and talked with me for two hours about her son, Michael, and how wonderful he is, that it will only get better from here and that I should just love my boy with no conditions. I felt that I could really

trust her so I blindly followed Ellie's advice and loved him as hard as I could. That was the first time that I reached out for help and from a stranger at that. From then on I continued to reach out for help emotionally or otherwise and I discovered how many remarkable people there are in this world. I was humbled. The CNCK has provided tremendous support over the years, they have given me many doses of honesty, they are candid and all of this is packaged with a healthy helping of humour.

I feel so fortunate that our experience with Jacob has been so positive. Jacob has made mine and my husbands' relationship stronger, we are much closer since we had to bear our souls to each other and really trust each other while we were so vulnerable. Julia (Jacob's older sister) has said to me that she is proud of Jacob and that she thought it was really cool to have a brother like Jacob and none of her friends do. She said that Jacob has made her a good person because he taught her how to be accepting and how to forgive. Christian (Jacob's little brother) instinctively protects him and slows down the pace if he finds that Jacob cannot keep up. There is an incredible bond between those boys they eat, play and bathe together. They are inseparable. As a family we are much more sensitive to each others needs and are more considerate and patient with each other.

Having a child with a disability has changed me completely. When Jacob came along he was my gift and my shot of reality. Before, I was impatient and judgmental now I offer words of encouragement. I believe in the saying don't judge until you have walked a mile in someone's shoes. In fact, I live by that. Jacob has taught me how to appreciate life in its purest form. I have become more empathetic and all of the material things that I strived for are no longer important.

What is important to me now is at the end of the day when we are in the family room and I stand back and watch my husband wrestle with the kids on the floor and I hear their laughter that I realize that I have made it. It's not the vacation property and the great job that will make us happy but the fact that my family is together, we are healthy and compassionate and are willing to help anyone who crosses our path. The devastation I felt at Jacob's birth versus the joy that Jacob brings me today has humbled me to my knees and I thank God everyday for my son Jacob. Anna, I realize that you asked for a quick note but once I started I found it hard to stop writing about our lives with Jacob.

Take care of yourself and your family.

*Sincerely,
Susanne Cupido*