

# Down Syndrome Development Council

## FORUM- April 2007 volume 7

### Please contact us at:

DDC  
PO Box 906  
Mundelein, IL 60060

**Our Meeting Place:**  
**Community Protestant Church**  
**418 N. Prairie, Mundelein**

Meetings held  
Second Monday of the  
month

### Our Mission:

To promote a greater acceptance and understanding of Down syndrome, by enlightening the broader community to recognize the individuality, uniqueness and capabilities of individuals with DS.

### April Monthly Meeting: Summer Camps

Monday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm

Theresa Walker of Special Recreation Association of Central Lake County (SRACLC) will be at the April meeting to present information on day camps that are offered in the summer through SRACLC. This summer's theme is "Back to the Future".

Campers will have an adventure of a lifetime as they travel through time. Camper groups are determined by age and ability with counselors who will plan many great activities. If there are other camps that you know of or have attended, please bring along that information to share. "The more information the better."

Theresa Walker is the Regional Coordinator at SRACLC. She has been working for SRACLC since June of 2003. Theresa graduated with a B.S. from Western Illinois Univ. under the Recreation, Parks and Tourism Admin department with an emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation. Some of her responsibilities at the agency include staff supervision, weekly and special events and day camp programming. Or you could just come for the cookies.



### April Birthdays

4	Julianna Cerda	23	Alexandra Rodriguez
12	Megan Witt	25	Faith Brown
17	Anthony Lopez	30	Jeremiah Hendricks
23	Kevin Kinder		

### UPCOMING DDC EVENTS:

- 4/9 Monthly Meeting, 7pm - "Summer Camps"
- 4/14 Sat. Playgroup 10:30 - 12:30am
- 4/19 Thur. Playgroup, 5:30 - 7:30pm
- 5/5 PECs Workshop with Pat Bryant
- 5/14 Amber Petersen- Special Olympics

## For Illinois Residents

There is very important legislation that could impact insurance coverage for medically indicated therapy, such as but not limited to, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy for children with Down syndrome. As many parents have learned, rehabilitative therapy (to restore lost skills, if a child is in an accident and loses the ability to walk or talk) is covered by insurance. Unfortunately, for many of the babies, children and adolescents born with a congenital disorders such as Down syndrome, these medically-necessary services are not covered by insurance because the therapy being provided is to develop new skills (habilitative therapy), not to regain lost skills.

House Bill 1247, introduced by Illinois State Representative, Elizabeth Coulson, protects children with congenital neurological conditions such as Down syndrome, autism, mental retardation and cerebral palsy from discrimination by the insurance industry. Requiring coverage for habilitative therapies for these children tears down a barrier to appropriate medical treatment that exists for no medically justifiable reason. Commercial insurance carriers should be good corporate citizens and provide the same coverage already provided by the State of Illinois in the All Kids program. Passing this law in Illinois is a service that all children and families deserve.

Please contact your Illinois State Representative today and ask him or her to support House Bill 1247.

Need to find out who your Illinois legislators are? Go to:

<http://www.illinois.gov/government>

Under - How Do I?

Click on: Find Districts/Officials.

Click on: search by address.

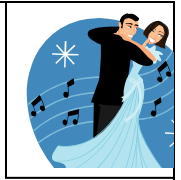
Type in your 9-digit zip code and it will bring up all your legislators and your district numbers. Click on your House Representatives name and it will bring up their contact info. Then make that call, you can leave your message with the person who answers the phone, or write up your story and fax it to them.

If you have questions about this legislation please contact  
Amy Brennan (773) 727-9340 with the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Sheila Hebein

### Insurance Grants available.....

Illinois parents with children in need of medical services or equipment not fully covered by fully covered by health insurance can apply for a grant up to \$5000 from UnitedHealthcare Children's Foundation online a [www.uhccf.org](http://www.uhccf.org). Examples of the types of medical services covered by UHCCF grants include speech therapy; physical therapy and psychotherapy sessions; medical equipment such as wheelchairs, braces, hearing aids and eyeglasses; orthodontia and dental treatments. To be eligible for UHCCF grants, children must be 16 years or younger. Families must meet economic guidelines, reside in U.S. and be covered by a commercial health insurance plan.

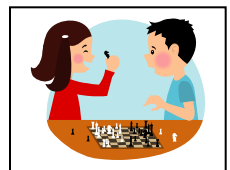


## Here Is Someone You Should Meet March 8, 2007 –

The success of ABC's 'Dancing With the Stars' has encouraged children and adults to take up ballroom dancing. A young couple with Down syndrome has also joined the dance craze. For the past ten months, Blake Peacock and his girlfriend of six years, Carly Ziesemer, have been learning the hottest steps at Fred Astaire Dance Studio in Buffalo Grove and they are good. It was Blake's idea to take dance lessons.

"Because I thought that we could do a lot of things together and that we could do something different in our lives," said Blake. Dance instructor Elle Cardana works with them 40 minutes once a week. "I kind of met them on accident. They were in someone else's schedule for their very first lesson and Blake had bought Carly a gift certificate for a dance lesson and something happened with scheduling that they ended up in my schedule and I got to take them and we've been together ever since," said Elle. Elle says Blake and Carly are just like any other student. "They came in here as beginners just like everybody else and they struggle with it just like everybody else but because of their work ethic because of the fact that they practice and are so committed to it, the whole idea of me accommodating things or change the way that teach people it wasn't really necessary because they were just like any other student," said Elle. So far, they have mastered the waltz, push pole and they are getting better with the fox trot. "The fox trot has that little bit of bounce to it. They really have a good feel for it. The song and how to correlate the dancing with the song," said Elle. Their favorite dance is the push pole. "I know that Blake and Carly have grown up in a world where a lot of time they get kind of negative feedback from their surroundings and people tell them that they can't do something and that they shouldn't be able to do something and not even to try but these guys have over and over and over again in their lives decided that they wanted to do something and gone out and succeeded in it," said Elle. Blake would always welcome a chance to dance with one of the stars. "I would like to partner with Monique Coleman from High School Musical," said Blake. If you want to learn ballroom and Latin dancing from Fred Astaire Dance Studios go to [www.fredastairechicago.com](http://www.fredastairechicago.com).

## Let's get together and make friends!!!



The "Playgroups" are therapist coordinated group sessions, geared toward preschool aged children with Down syndrome, but all ages are welcome. It is also a great chance for families to socialize and ask questions. Siblings are welcome. There is a Spanish translator at each session. Please RSVP if you would like to attend by calling Belinda Hidalgo at 847-838-4398 or Kris Murray at 847-630-4991

**Thursday Playgroup** is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs. of the month at 5:30-7:30pm. Location will be announced when you RSVP. A light dinner will be served.

**Saturday Play group** is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of the month from 10:30am - 12:30pm. Location will be announced when you RSVP.

# The DDC Sports Page Calling all boys and girls.....



## **BATTER'S UP!**

Hi, I am Andrea O'Donnell and I am the Challenger Division Director for the Libertyville Little League and I am looking for more players for my team. What, you don't know what the Challengers are? Well, the Challengers is a Little League sanctioned special needs baseball team available to kids as young as 6 years old. We Practice once a week starting in late April and have games on Saturday mornings. We play against other special needs teams. Our home games are played at the Little League fields at Butler Park in Libertyville. The away games will also be on Saturdays. This year, for the first time, we will have on home night game, playing on the Major's field under the lights!!! Each player receives a uniform and hat. The players are responsible for their own baseball mitt and shoes. Each player needs to have a sibling or parent at every practice and game. We need each "buddy" to help out the player, not play for them, but to be there to assure the player does not get hurt. Our coaches run the practices like regular baseball. There are warm ups, hitting practice (using both pitching and a batting tee), and fielding practice. If you are interested in joining our team or need more information, please call me at 847-949-1975.



**Special Olympics**

## **Special Olympics**

Join us on Monday, May 14<sup>th</sup> for an informative presentation by Amber Petersen of Special Olympics-Illinois. Learn about the wonderful opportunities for every special needs child, and volunteer opportunities for family and friends. Special Olympics are really for everyone!



## **The YMCA SWIMMING PROGRAM IS GREAT!**

There is a fantastic program for our children to learn to swim at the Central Lake County YMCA in Vernon Hills. The modified program runs from 4/16 to 6/3 and is taught by a group of YMCA coaches and a registered Pediatric Therapist. The cost for the 8 week program is only \$75 and registration begins on April 2. Several DDC kids have tried this program and given it thumbs up. Call Mary Craig at 847-367-6797 for dates and times, or for questions about how the lessons are modified call Debbie Morettini at 847-573-9486 ext. 11. The YMCA is located at 700 Lakeview Parkway in Vernon Hills (behind the Target store).



## Picture Exchange Communication Workshop – May 5<sup>th</sup>

The Down Syndrome Development Council (DDC) is pleased to offer a full-day parent involvement make-and-take workshop on Picture Exchange Communication (PECS) facilitated by Pat Bryant, SLP and AIMEE Solutions, Inc. The workshop will be held on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at the Grayslake Area Public Library from 10:30am to 4:30pm. There is a \$20.00 fee for the workshop that covers all materials and lunch. If you are unable to afford this fee please contact RaeAnn Collins for available scholarship information.

Each participant will learn how PECS is used in schools and how it can be customized for your child to enhance communication at home and in the community. Picture communication can grow with your child's needs as their language and communication skills develop. PECS has many applications and can be helpful for kids with emerging language and communication skills, for kids who have a good grasp of language but are difficult to understand, for kids whose first language is not English, for building sentence structure and for kids who are non-verbal...the possibilities are limitless.

During the workshop participants will make a file folder communication system with several laminated communication symbols AND a set of essential communication cards on a ring holder that your child can carry with them to communicate wants and needs while they are on the go. Time permitting you will be able to laminate some of your own images to be incorporated into your Picture Exchange Communication System. Please watch in upcoming newsletters for a more detailed description of the day's activities.

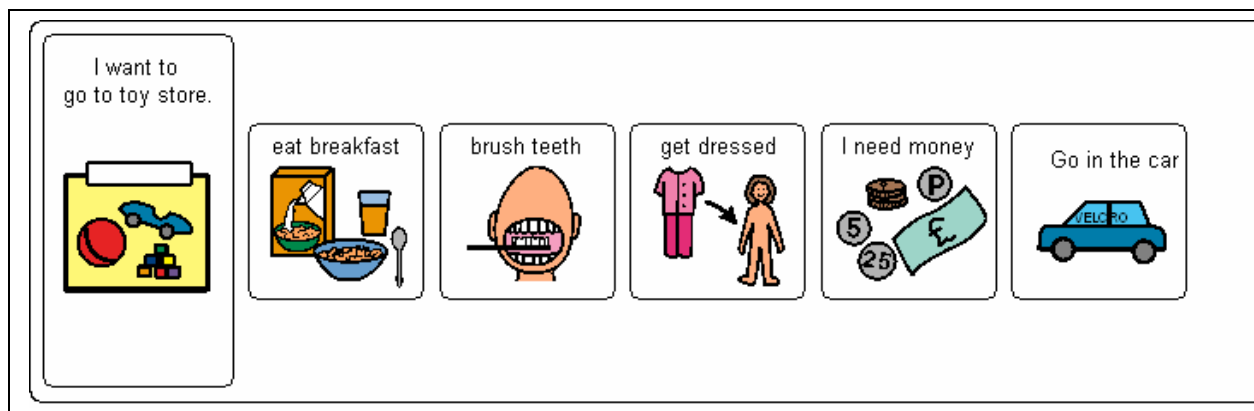
This is an ADULTS ONLY workshop. Due to the length of the workshop and available space, babysitting will NOT be provided.

The basic picture communication symbols will be available in both English and Spanish versions and a Spanish interpreter will be provided for the workshop. Please request the version of your choice on the registration form.

Space is limited so please make your reservation early. Application deadline is April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

If you have any further questions please contact RaeAnn Collins at 847.265.8482 or [rjohncol@comcast.net](mailto:rjohncol@comcast.net)

Here is a sample of PECs used for reinforcing a day schedule:



The **Down Syndrome Development Council (DDC)** is pleased to offer a full-day parent involvement "Make and Take" workshop on Picture Exchange Communication (PECS) facilitated by Pat Bryant, SLP and AIMEE Solutions.

Date: May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
(please RSVP with your completed application form and check before April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007)

Time: 10:30am-4:30pm (box lunch will be provided)

Location: Grayslake Area Public Library (meeting room ABC)  
100 Library Lane  
Grayslake IL

\*\*For directions please call the library at 847.223.5313\*\*

Cost: \$20.00 per person (includes lunch and all materials)

**Please bring a pen/pencil for notes (handouts will be provided), scissors and a ruler to the workshop**

You may also bring close-up photos of specific items that are important to your child (ie a favorite toy, family members, self etc). Time permitting, your images can be laminated and incorporated into your take home PECS communication system.

Please make checks payable to **DDC**.  
Send your check and the below registration form to:  
RaeAnn Collins  
2945 Farmington Drive  
Lindenhurst IL 60046

For more information please contact RaeAnn Collins at 847.265.8482 or [rjohncol@comcast.net](mailto:rjohncol@comcast.net) (put PECS in the memo)  
For information in Spanish please contact Belinda Hidalgo at 847.838.4398

Please keep this half as your reminder

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Please send this half in with your check to reserve your space or go to the DDC website for a printout of this application.

**If you are unable to print this application from your email newsletter, call RaeAnn.**

Please reserve my space for the  
PECS parent involvement make-and-take workshop

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address,  
phone/email \_\_\_\_\_

Number of persons attending \_\_\_\_\_ (no children please)

\_\_\_\_\_ I want my PECS materials in English.

\_\_\_\_\_ I want my PECS materials in Spanish.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I will need a Spanish interpreter.

**Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_**  
**Make checks payable to DDC.**

## **SAVE THE DATE!**

**The DDC Buddy Walk** is scheduled for  
Sept. 16th at Lamb's Farm.

More Info to come in future newsletters.

Please call Pat Collins or Mary Lou Paff  
if you'd like to help out!

### **Last Month at the DDC – March 2007**

Our newly reconfigured website is up and running – check out [www.theddc.org](http://www.theddc.org) for info on our organization's past, present, and future doings! In addition to a calendar of events and contact information for the DDC Board, you'll find links to our newsletter and to other resources related to Down syndrome (coming soon – a catalog of our library of materials that is housed at the Center for Independent Living!).

At our March meeting, we looked forward to our upcoming spring events (discussed in more detail in the pages of this newsletter and on the website), including our featured speaker for the April meeting, Teresa Walker from Special Recreation of Lake County, who will be providing information on Special Olympics as well as the wealth of programs available through her organization. Other spring highlights consist of our Movie Club's March "meeting" on March 31 and our PECS workshop on May 5 (register now to ensure your spot for the latter!).

Looking ahead to the summer (aren't we all?!), planning is under way for the return of the Buddy Walk in September; as in years past, this event functions as both fund-raiser and vehicle for community awareness, and we welcome any and all members who would be willing to assist in making this year's walk a success (talk to Pat or Mary Lou for more info on how you can help!).

*- Jennifer Jenkins, Secretary*

### **DDC Board Members 2006-2007**

President	Patrick Collins	847-265-8482	<a href="mailto:rjohncol@comcast.net">rjohncol@comcast.net</a>
Vice Pres	Mary Lou Paff	847-548-4852	<a href="mailto:mlpaff@aol.com">mlpaff@aol.com</a>
Secretary	Jennifer Jenkins	847-970-6797	<a href="mailto:only_connect@msn.com">only_connect@msn.com</a>
Treasurer	Janis Kern	847-548-4417	<a href="mailto:Janiskern@comcast.net">Janiskern@comcast.net</a>
Past Pres	Andrea O'Donnell	847-949-1975	<a href="mailto:odonna@sbcglobal.net">odonna@sbcglobal.net</a>
Playgroups	Belinda Hidalgo	847-838-4398	<a href="mailto:Hidalgob@comcast.net">Hidalgob@comcast.net</a>
Board	RaeAnn Collins	847-265-8482	<a href="mailto:rjohncol@comcast.net">rjohncol@comcast.net</a>
Newsletter	Terri Christolini	847-267-1169	<a href="mailto:christoliniben@comcast.net">christoliniben@comcast.net</a>
Foro (Spanish Issue)	Anna Roeser	847-362-0980	<a href="mailto:roeser1984@yahoo.com">roeser1984@yahoo.com</a>

Downs (Down Syndrome) Development Council, DDC, is a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organization and volunteer support group established in 1978 by parents of children with Down Syndrome.

**Please note:** The Forum newsletter is written on a volunteer, non-professional basis. Information presented should not be construed to be objective or definitive, but represents the opinions and understanding of the editor and it's contributors. Your contributions are welcome. Please contact Terri at [christoliniben@comcast.net](mailto:christoliniben@comcast.net)

For every newsletter we email, the DDC saves money.  
Please send Terri your email address so she can forward  
the news to you directly. Thanks for helping.

[www.christoliniben@comcast](mailto:www.christoliniben@comcast)



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