

DSACO *News*



*Have you
visited the
DSACO
website
lately?*

www.dsaco.org

Pass it on!
When you're
through with
this newslet-
ter...pass it on
to another
family who
might benefit
from DSACO.



*2008 Buddy Walk
Saturday
September 20*

*Got your family team
together? See info inside...*

Hi Everyone-

It's almost time for Buddy Walk, the planning committee has been hard at work to make this year a huge success. I hope to see all the teens and adults, because new this year will be our Buddy Walk Lounge. This will be a room just for the teens (age 13 & up ONLY) and adults and will have karaoke, DJ music, video games, etc. It will be a lot of fun!

See ya at the Buddy Walk on Saturday, September 20th.

Sincerely,

Lori Wathen

President
Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma

October Planning/Board Meeting

Everyone is invited to attend the October Planning/Board Meeting. We will be discussing ideas (speakers/workshops) for the 2009 calendar plus other agenda items. Come and be a part of making DSACO a successful organization.

When: Thursday, October 9th

Where: Baptist Medical Center, Room F&G

Time: 7:00pm-9:00pm

**Childcare will not be provided.*

parent2parent

supporting all parents

DSACO offers regular meetings to provide education and support for parents and families of children with Down syndrome. The meetings also offer an opportunity for parents to meet other families. They are informal gatherings that allow individuals and families an opportunity to share experiences while creating new friendships.

SOUTH P2P MEETING

October 21, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Moore (135 & 27th Street in Moore). Topic: TBD. We will meet at Johnnies Char-broiler for DSACO night at 5:30 p.m. (a portion of whatever you spend goes to DSACO). Childcare is provided by RSVP only. RSVP to Melissa Smith at 405-378-2577 or msmith821@cox.net. NO SEPTEMBER MEETING DUE TO BUDDY WALK.

NORTH P2P MEETING

October 11, 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Quail Springs Church of Christ, 14401 North May (between Memorial Road & 150th Street on west side). TOPIC: Social Behaviors. Childcare provided by RSVP only. Contact Cindy Gould at 405-620-7501 or at agould2@cox.net.

STILLWATER P2P MEETING

September 18 & October 16, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, 504 S Knoblock (enter at far Northeast door). TOPIC: TBD.. Contact Jeanita Kearns-Shook at 405-372-5680 or Shelly Sitton at 405-641-0302.

HISPANIC P2P MEETING

September 18, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints (2440 SW 55th St., OKC). If you have questions please call Cathy Cardenas (405) 819-8963/email at JULIACARDENAS@aol.com or Olga DeLoera (405) 692-6156/email at olgadeloera@yahoo.com.mx.

18 de septiembre, 6:00-8:00 p.m. GRUPO DE APOYO PARA PADRES DE NIÑOS CON SINDROME DE DOWN. El grupo tiene encuentros mensuales. Las reuniones serán el tercer martes de cada mes. Lugar: La iglesia de Jesus Christ Saints 2440 SW 55th, Oklahoma City, OK. 73119 (La SW55 y Miller # 2440 esquina Villa) Para más información, por favor contacto: Cathy Cardenas (405) 819-8963/email at JULIACARDENAS@aol.com y Olga DeLoera (405) 692-6156/email at olgadeloera@yahoo.com.mx.

Buddy Walk Awards and Special Olympics Information Meeting

Saturday, November 8th

10:00am-12:00pm

Integrus Baptist Medical Center Auditorium

3300 NW Expressway, OKC OK



Special Olympics

Come and Support our Family Teams as the annual Buddy Walk Awards will be given out and Cathi Morris from Special Olympics will be here to discuss starting and or participating in community teams and school teams. She will have all the information you need to sign your child up for the Winter Games and Stars of the Future. Make plans to attend. Childcare will be provided, please RSVP to Lori Wathen at 405-329-8185 or email her at president@dsaco.org

2008 Buddy Walk Family Teams

Families are forming teams of family members and friends to walk at the Buddy Walk and raise money to support research and activities funded by DSACO. The Buddy Walk is one of the main fundraising events for DSACO.



A portion of the monies raised will be sent to the National Down Syndrome Society and the National Down Syndrome Congress to support research, education and advocacy initiatives at the national level. A portion will stay here in Oklahoma to fund various activities and programs.

If you would like to form a family team you can register your family team online at www.firstgiving.com/dsaco and click "Get Started". You can also contact Jennifer Joy at 405-324-6930, joyj@mustangps.org or Julia Trotter at 405-912-1059, julia_trotter@yahoo.com with any questions or for a Family Team Packet. You can visit our website at www.dsaco.org for more information or to download the Family Team Packet.

Rachel Coleman, Emmy-nominated host of *Signing Time!* to Perform at Buddy Walk

Rachel Coleman will perform at the Buddy Walk on September 20, 2008 from 11:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. at the AT&T Bricktown Ballpark, located at 2 South Mickey Mantel Drive in Oklahoma City.

Coleman, who co-created *Signing Time* to teach children to communicate using American Sign Language (ASL), has seen firsthand the miracles that can come from using sign language. As the mother of a daughter who is deaf, and another with cerebral palsy and spina bifida, Coleman has spent the last few years making sign language fun and accessible for all children through the *Signing Time* series with DVDs, music CDs, books, flashcards and a public television show.

For more information about Rachel Coleman and *Signing Time!* Visit www.signingtime.com



Know someone who should come to the Buddy Walk?
INVITE THEM.



Free—Come Children, Sing! Online Music Classes for Infants, Babies and Toddlers

The Come Children Sing Institute is offering free gift certificates for Come Children, Sing! Online Music Classes for infants, babies and toddlers with special needs. The \$35 gift certificate will provide one 10-week Online Music Class. Request a free gift certificate for your child by sending an email to ccs.online@comechildrensing.com. Mention that you have a child with special needs. Your gift certificate will be sent via email and you can start the Online Music Class at any time.

Come Children, Sing! is a developmental music program that makes learning music as natural as learning language. You can now engage with your little one in music classes online, in your own home and on your own schedule, whatever your musical background, and whatever the developmental level of your child. MP3 files, music activities, and parent tips are all provided online, and you can make Come Children, Sing! portable with an iPod or CD.

Listen to the Free Audio Presentation, "Parenting Music," and view Free Sample Lessons of Come Children, Sing! Online Music Classes for infants, babies and toddlers, at www.comechildrensing.com.



September 20

11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION: begins at 11:00 a.m.

THE WALK: begins at 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: AT&T Bricktown Ballpark
(Reno & Mickey Mantle Drive)

PARKING: FREE Parking at the Coca-Cola Event Center
(east side of Ballpark)

SOME HIGHLIGHTS THIS YEAR:

- Clowns, balloons, games, prizes, face painting, balloon artists, FUN!
- Silent Auction
- **Performance by Rachel Coleman, from "Signing Time"**
- **"The Lounge" for teens & adults (13 years & older only)** - featuring dancing, XBOX, Wii, karaoke, & more!
- Connecting with other families with children with Down syndrome
- And so much more!

See YOU there!

THANK YOU TO THESE BUDDY WALK SPONSORS!



Pediatric Surgery
David W. Tuggle, M.D.
P. Cameron Mantor, M.D.
Nikola K. Puffinbarger, M.D.
Robert W. Letton, M.D.



2nd Annual Hope Hunt
October 16-19
Hollis, Oklahoma

We are preparing an event for 6 youth (ages 10-18) who have a disability or terminal illness. The youth need to arrive in Hollis on Thursday afternoon. They will hunt Friday and Saturday mornings and evenings. Everyone will have the opportunity to attend church services with us on Sunday. These kids will be hunting white-tailed deer. Each child will be paired with a guide from Hunt4Him Ministries. If at all possible, each child will also need a parent or guardian in the deer blind with them. No hunting experience is required. If you or someone you know would be interested in participating in this event please contact us. For more information check out www.hunt4him.com or www.hopeoutdoors.com. If you would like to speak to a parent of a child who attended last year's event, please let us know and we can send you their contact information. Contact us at: *Darrionn Luce, 580-318-1347, darrionnluce@hotmail.com or Jay Wheat, 405-471-4798, jaywheat@hotmail.com*

Attention All 2009 Calendar Participants

The unveiling of the calendar will be at the Buddy Walk, September 20! The 2009 Bountiful Blessing calendars will be available for distribution during the last hour of the Buddy Walk (2 p.m.-3 p.m.). If you are wanting to get calendars to sell, you must get them during this time. Otherwise, you will need to contact Rebecca Klehm to coordinate a calendar pickup.

E-mail:
rebecca.klehm@gmail.com
Phone: 405-749-1629

SAVE THE DATE

2009 OK Statewide Down Syndrome Conference

When: Saturday, March 7, 2009

Where: Moore Norman Technology Center, South Penn Campus, Oklahoma City, OK

What: All day conference including Keynote Speakers, Self-Advocates and workshops to learn more about helping individuals with Down syndrome to live productive, independent, successful lives.

Be looking for more information coming. Any questions, please email conferenceinfo@dsaco.org.

Don't miss it!



**SUPERIOR PRECISION EYEWEAR FOR
CHILDREN WHO ARE SPECIAL**

SPECS4US, Superior Precision Eyewear for Children who are Special, introduces a new concept in eyewear for children with Down Syndrome that eliminates the problems regular eyeglasses never could. The mission is simple: To improve the sight and quality of life for children with DS by providing custom **frames that fit your children's unique needs. The frame-line entitled *Erin's World*** provides frames that are custom designed to fit the unique facial features of your children with shortened temples (arms), extra wide frame fronts and a lowered bridge. The frames are made from titanium and memory flex that creates a flexible bridge and temples that can spring out 180 degrees to keep up with your **children's active lifestyles. These special features will allow your children to explore the world with clear vision, as they will no longer be hindered from the problems associated with ordinary frames.** Created and founded by an optician and fellow DS mother, Maria Dellapina, SPECS4US frames are available in a variety of sizes and colors made especially for your children. Please feel free to email info@specs4us.com with names of trusted local doctors and optical shops **so we can contact them in regards to carrying Erin's World frames in your area,** which will enable you to use vision coverage if needed. To order frames directly or request more information visit SPECS4US.com or call us at 1-800-586-1885. These glasses are now available the following local Optometry office: Dr. Bradley Fielding, 13 North University, Edmond, OK 73034, (405) 341-3567

Dr. Fielding's office does accept Medicaid for the cost of the lenses only. The frames cannot be covered under Medicaid, but if you have private vision insurance that they accept, you can use your vision coverage for the cost of the frames.

NDSC Conference Makes Big Impact

New Parents Attend NDSC Conference

As new parents to a young son with Down syndrome, we have learned so very much. One of the most enjoyable and educational adventures so far has been the trip to the 36th Annual NDSC Convention in Boston, MA. We cannot tell you how exciting it was to see all the wonderful people at the conference. Over 2,500 people from 27 different countries gathered in Boston for the NDSC Convention. The Seaport Area of Boston became our own quaint little village of caring, friendly people all touched by Down syndrome. We met people from all over the country. We saw all kinds of interesting books, toys and products made for children with Down syndrome. We learned and absorbed all we could from the exhibitors, speakers and families we met.

The NDSC Conference seminars taught us so many things that will guide us as parents. We have **learned ways to improve our son's physical and speech therapies, nutrition and feeding skills, and talking/communication ideas.** We also gained insights into inclusion and Down Syndrome Research.

One of our favorite experiences at the conference was meeting Karen Gaffney (the young woman with DS who swam Lake Tahoe). She signed a poster for my son. Many wonderful key-note speakers shared their stories during the conference from Emily Perl Kingsley (writer on *Sesame Street* and author of *Welcome to Holland*) and her son Jason (self-advocate and co-author of *Count Us In*) to Dr. Brian Skotko (Down syndrome researcher and advocate).

The NDSC Convention in Boston was a fantastic, growing experience that we will take with us and help guide us. We will cherish all the kindness, friendship and camaraderie we have encountered while in Boston. I know in the years to come, our son, Beckett will love to be involved, too. Maybe attending the Teen/Youth Conference or maybe as self-advocate and speaker.

One of the best philosophies about Down Syndrome came from Emily Perl Kingsley. She said, "**we are all in the same boat together. It doesn't matter if we are in the front or the back or somewhere in the middle. The important part is that we keep rowing together. As long as we keep rowing together, we will all get to where we are going and have great company all along the way.**]"

By Matt and Fara Taylor

Proud Parents of Beckett Taylor (18 month old with Down syndrome)

NDSC National 2009 Brother/Sister Conference

Two siblings from our group attended the Brother/Sister Conference at the NDSC National 2009 Conference in Boston, MA in July. They were Sarah Bogumil, sister to Brian, and Kayla Killingsworth, sister to Katy Ann. Both girls will be entering the 7th grade this school year. This was the second year for both of the girls to attend the Brother/Sister conference.

Sarah says, "It was a great experience to be able to go to Boston to the Brother/Sister conference. I learned that we are more alike than different. It was nice to see that other brothers and sisters go through the same things that I go through, like their siblings are getting picked on and



made fun of and that sometimes they feel like their siblings are getting more attention that they get. I had a lot of fun and learned a lot of things that I didn't know before. I would like to thank DSACO for helping me to be able to go."

Kayla says, "We met people from all around the country such as Illinois and Michigan. There were almost 100 middle and high school siblings. The people that were in charge were older siblings that have been coming to the Brother/Sister Conference when they were younger so they were able to share their experiences with us. It is nice to meet people that you can really relate to. We did fun things like asking questions about Down syndrome and then everyone tries to answer the question. We are both really excited about the 2009 conference in Sacramento. We have already told our moms that we want to go again. Thank you DSACO for assisting my mom and me to go to the conference."

The Brothers & Sisters Conference is two separate workshop tracks for the siblings: rising 6th through 8th graders – Middle School Group and rising 9th through 12th graders – High School Group. Returning siblings and college students donate their time to produce an innovative and fun program for all participants based on their past conference experiences. The conference includes question box time and an off-site trip as well as other fun activities. There is an additional registration fee for the sibling to attend this. Make plans to attend the Brother/Sister conference in Sacramento, CA, July 31 – August 2, 2009.



PO BOX 892592
Oklahoma City, OK 7315-2592

www.dsaco.org

The Buddy Walk is coming!

Please join us on Saturday, September 20 at the Bricktown Ballpark for a fun-filled day! You and your family have from 11 am until 3 pm to enjoy all the exciting games, entertainment (including a show by Emmy nominated Rachel Coleman from Signing Time), petting zoo, clowns, inflatables, music, exhibitors, face painting and much more! Teens and adults will enjoy the new Teen Lounge with karaoke, xbox, Wii and more! Our silent auction and door prizes are going to be bigger and better than ever! Amy McRee of News 9 will welcome everyone at the walk kick off at 2 pm (please denote change). **Don't miss this year's Buddy Walk for DSACO, our biggest fundraiser of the year!** For more information, go to our website www.dsaco.org/buddywalk.



DISCLAIMER: DSACONews does not promote or recommend any therapy, products, treatment, etc., and will not espouse any particular political or religious view. Individuals or organizations referred to, do not necessarily endorse this publication. We wish to bring together those interested in Down syndrome and attempt to create an optimistic outlook and attitude. DSACO leadership and contributors endeavor to use People First Language. The contributors write as non-professionals, and reserve the right to make corrections and revisions as needed or where appropriate in accord with established editorial practices in material submitted for publication. Submission deadlines are always the 15th day of the months in which the DSACONews is published: January, March, May, July, September, and November. Contact the editor of DSACONews at dsaconews@sbcglobal.net.