



Making The Connection

Second Quarter 2008 Edition • April - June

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AROUND THE CONNECTION

It has been a long time since our newsletter has been published. We apologize for the lack of communication and yet rejoice in the fact that “Making the Connection” is back. We hope we will hear from all of you as we now connect in print and on our new website.

Our web site is up and running and looking pretty good. We intend to add to it as we go along so that we can reach all of you with the daily news around the Connection as well as important information that can be accessed by the Internet. Please send us pictures of your children and anything you would like to share with our members.

We have a new Executive Director!!! Nancy LaBelle has just joined us as of March 1st. She comes to us with much passion, enthusiasm, talent and hope for a bright future for the Connection.

Our programs are flourishing. We have classes and support groups in Danville as well as satellite classes for our kids, teens and adults in Castro Valley, Oakland, Albany and San Francisco. We continue to be blessed with a staff and teachers that are talented and devoted to each and every child and family they serve. A new program at the Connection is the brainchild of one of our parents, Bernadette Fatehi. It is called “Buddy Play” which is an all inclusive experience for young children with Down syndrome along with their siblings and peer buddies. It is hugely successful and growing fast. You can find out more about Buddy Play on Bernadette’s website www.buddyplay.org. Thank you Bernadette!!!!

Fundraisers have been very successful and continue to grow with each year. The Bowl-a-Rama, the Buddy Walk and the Cajun Fest just to name a few. We also have two charity golf tournaments that are held for the Connection in June and in September. Elliott’s Charity tournament and the Knights of Columbus have helped our organization so much over these past few years. The tournaments are great fun and the proceeds help to keep our organization’s doors open. We need all of you to help support these events that give so much to our families. Foundations remain faithful in their partnerships with us and needless to say without their support we would not be able to exist. Thanks to all who help to keep us alive and well. Please see our sincere thanks in this newsletter for all of you who give so much of you time and donations to this wonderful place.

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WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

National Down Syndrome Society
www.ndss.org

National Down Syndrome Congress
www.ndscenter.org

Education Research
www.downsnet.org

Special Olympics
www.specialolympics.org

Wrightslaw
www.wrightslaw.com

Disability Solutions
www.disabilitysolutions.org

Down Syndrome Quarterly
www.denison.edu/dsq/

Woodbine House
www.woodbinehouse.com

Regional Center of the East Bay:
www.rceb.org

CARE Parent Newwork
(925) 313-0999
www.contracostaarc.com

Family Resource Network
(510) 547-7322, e-mail address
0-FRNOAK@inreach.com

MATRIX Parent Network
& Resource Center
(415) 884-3535
www.matrixparents.org

Parents Helping Parents
(408) 727-5775
www.php.com

Support For Families of
Children With Disabilities
(415) 282-7494
www.supportforfamilies.org

Give Books
www.givebooks.org/dsc

A NOTE FROM NANCY



I'm writing this note three weeks into my new position as Executive Director of the Down Syndrome Connection. It is truly an honor to work for an organization that brings joy and hope to people of all ages. To know me better would be to know my passion for people, love for children and my respect for community. I bring to the Connection over twenty five years of business, marketing and management experience. I have a bachelor degree in business management and a master's in management of technology. Currently, I am also a real estate agent with Empire Realty in Danville and believe in networking and building relationships with honesty and respect. My husband Rick and I live in Danville with our fun loving cat named Muffin.

In these past few weeks I have observed and participated in many fun Step classes where I got a chance to learn new dance moves. I have met talented teachers, dedicated staff, strong board members, and inspiring beautiful children and young adults. I have had the opportunity to also meet several parents who are amazing people and my husband and I had a lot of fun at the Bowl-a-Rama too! Are you sure it's only been 3 weeks? ☺

I believe the foundation of the DSCBA is its members. As your Executive Director, a few things I am committed to in 2008 are:

- Creating positive awareness within the community about the DSCBA so that everyone has the chance to be involved or at least understand what it means to be involved with this great organization.
- Networking with chamber members and reaching out to small business and corporations for support will be important for our future fundraising efforts.
- Starting an online support community for parents as there is nothing more powerful than a group of people with a common goal sharing what they have found to be true, fun, interesting or of value.
- Driving operational efficiencies and membership to its full potential.

In my spare time, ☺ I will enjoy the wonderful new relationships I'm gaining and the people that work and volunteer here. My door is always open so please come say hello to me.

Sincerely

Nancy LaBelle
Executive Director



*Don't know
what you want to eat on
April 23rd?*

**In Honor of
Cole Kelley's Birthday
Please take your friends
and family to**

Marie Calendars in
San Ramon
18070 San Ramon Valley Blvd
San Ramon, CA 94583
925-355-0757

*10% of the proceeds
from the day will be donated to
the Down Syndrome
Connection of the Bay Area.*

All you need to do is show
up, eat and put your receipt
in the designated box before
you leave!

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
COLE!**



MARTHA'S THOUGHTS

This year the Down Syndrome Connection turns 10 years old. It is hard to believe those 10 years have passed so quickly. In looking back at this most incredible journey I have been privileged to learn many valuable lessons. I would like to share my thoughts about a few of these lessons if I may.

First I have learned that anything is possible even when you are faced with enormous challenges. We started 10 years ago on a hope and a prayer, with no resources, no home base and very little knowledge of what it took to start a non-profit organization. The small yet very talented group of people, that were determined to continue to serve children born with Down syndrome and their families, went forward and never looked back and most importantly, never gave up the dream of the Connection.

Through our struggles I have learned to be a better leader, listener and organizer. I learned to be more accountable to those I worked with and for. I have learned to be humble and to ask for help from friends, family and community. I experienced the miracles of giving on everyone's part and the joy, growth and results that came from enormous sacrifice and passion for work to be done. I learned it is not possible to fix people, that it is more important to listen, help, educate, console and reach out to those in need. I have learned that all of you and your beautiful children have taught me more about life and the beauty that lies within each individual than I ever thought possible. I have learned that you give more to me as an individual than I can ever give back to you. And for this I am eternally grateful. I have learned there is so much value in each person we meet; no matter how impacted their lives are with Down syndrome and other challenges. Parents have taught me to understand my own sons better and to appreciate everyday we have together. I have learned that both life and the passing of those we love is a journey that enriches our souls. I have learned it is good to cry and wonderful to laugh no matter how hard some days are. I have learned that I love working with all of you and realize that even though I no longer am in the role of Founder or Executive Director that my commitment is far from over. My work in many ways is more rewarding and, there is still so much to be done. I have learned that growth in each individual never stops. Our children will continue to amaze us no matter what their ages. I have learned that nothing replaces the love of family. Your families and my own, especially my husband and son Blair, have helped these 10 years to be an extraordinary journey.

I thank you for listening and I congratulate all of you for helping to make the Down syndrome Connection of The Bay Area the wonderful organization it has become.

Martha



2008 CLASS SCHEDULE

MONDAYS

Small Steps - 3:30 pm - 4:45 pm Danville
Castro Valley Step - 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Castro Valley
Step Together 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Albany

TUESDAYS

Express Yourself - 4:00 pm-5:30 pm Danville
SF Step - 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm San Francisco
Parent Support Group (4th Tues) 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Danville

WEDNESDAYS

Baby Steps (1st and 3rd Wed) 10:00 am - 11:30am Danville
First Steps - 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm Danville
Step Out - 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Oakland

THURSDAYS

Step In - 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Danville



STEP CLASSES : The STEP program is an educational and developmental therapeutic program geared specifically to the needs of a children born with Down syndrome. The STEP Program embodies a unique combination of cognitive skills and social/behavioral interaction.

BABY STEPS (pre-natal, birth to 3ish) This group meets twice a month and is helpful in understanding and supporting your baby's development and provides the opportunity to share friendship, information, and the celebration of our delightful kids together! Music therapy is offered the second group of each month.

FIRST STEPS (Danville ages 5-9) Focuses on improving motor skills, through our challenging obstacle courses; working on cognitive tasks, as we learn to follow, interpret and comprehend a story; and social interaction as we learn to wait our turn, encourage others, and adapt to an environment of cooperation, interaction, and socialization.

EXPRESS YOURSELF (ages 9-14) Goal is to improve each student's language development (both expressive and receptive), self expression through art and movement, social communication and interaction, and friendship. Self care and personal hygiene are also addressed. This exciting active class also improves cognitive and academic skills as well as fine motor skills.

STEP IN (Danville), **STEP Out** (Oakland), **STEP Together** (Albany) are teen and young adult groups which support key skills for this 'transition' aged population. We focus on skill building in three main areas: Social/Friendship, Leisure/Recreation and Inter/Independent Living. These very active and fun groups emphasize positive communication and social values, personal awareness and empowerment through vital peer and group relationships, fitness and recreation and creative movement and the expressive arts. Emphasis is on "Ability" and personal responsibility in a safe and exciting group. We utilize peer volunteers called PALS-Peer Assistance Leadership and Support.



ASK DR. TROTTER

Q: Our teenage son was recently diagnosed with a mental health problem the doctors called a “psychotic break”. He was delusional and very agitated. He required medication prescribed by a psychiatrist to get his symptoms under control. Is this more common in individuals with Down syndrome and should it be treated any differently than usual?

A: A number of recent studies have shown that the incidence of mental health or psychiatric disorders in individuals with Down syndrome [DS] is somewhat higher than the general population. The estimates run from 15- 20% for children with DS to 20-30% for the adult population. The term frequently used to describe the combination of a person with a developmental delay/mental retardation syndrome AND a psychiatric disorder is “dual-diagnosis”. The majority of DS individuals with dual-diagnoses suffer from the mood disorders: depression, anxiety and bipolar disease; with a smaller number affected by obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia and other psychosis. In general, these disorders are not treated any differently in patients with DS, although the diagnosis can be considerably more difficult to make.

The difficulty in diagnosing mood disorders [and mental illness in general] in patients with DS is the overlap of many features. The following behaviors, often seen in patients with mental health

diagnoses, would likely be considered normal in many children with DS: routine-oriented, resistant to change, stubborn, repetitive motor acts, self-talk, teeth grinding, and hypersensitivity to touch. So how to tell if these behaviors are indications of a mental health issue that should be addressed? Watch for behaviors that are occurring more frequently, increasing in severity or intensity, or lasting longer. Behavior that represents possible self injury or injury to others should be a signal to be aware of these types of changes.

There are other clues to look for besides the behavior itself. These include physiological changes such as abnormal sleeping or eating patterns, dramatic increase or decrease in activity, and actual loss of established skills.

DS patients with mood disorders [depression and anxiety being most common] are typically treated with SSRIs [selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors] such as Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil, and others, and with ongoing counseling. The success rate of therapy in this group is reasonably high.

With a psychosis you will see a loss of contact with reality. These individual often hallucinate or report delusional beliefs, and may exhibit personality changes and disorganized thinking. This is frequently accompanied by bizarre behavior, as well as difficulty with social interaction and impairment in

carrying out activities of daily living. A wide variety of nervous system stressors can cause a psychotic reaction. The reaction is considered a symptom, not a diagnosis. Causes of psychosis may be primary, which includes the psychiatric disorders [schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, severe psychosocial stress], or secondary, which includes many neurological and medical disorders [Down syndrome may well be one of those, although thus far unproven], as well as an adverse response to certain medications.

The treatment of psychosis I depends on the cause or diagnosis. The first line treatment for many psychotic disorders is antipsychotic medication [Haldol, Risperidol, Zyprexa] accompanied by counseling. Brief hospitalization is sometimes needed.

As with many other medical issues, children and adults with Down syndrome are somewhat more susceptible to many of these mental health disorders. As parents and physicians, we need to remain vigilant to mental health changes that lead us to a diagnosis and to early intervention. Remember, you know your child best. If something doesn't seem right, you are probably correct and should bring it up to your physician.



FUNDRAISING IS A TEAM EFFORT!

By Nancy LaBelle

As you are aware the DSCBA does NOT receive funds from the government. We are strictly a 5013C charity organization that keeps wonderful things like our advocacy support and Step classes going with grants from foundations or generous donations from folks like you.

Most people want to help and they don't know how to get involved. Here are some ways you as a member can get people involved in our great organization.....

CORPORATE/BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP: Ask people who work for a corporation or business if they would like to be a sponsor for one of our events. Remember this is *also a benefit to them* by getting their name out to our members, their families and friends. For example; in most cases we are going to have a sign with their name on it or they will appear on a promotional item such as a tee shirt and their generosity will be mentioned in our newsletter and website. If you have corporate contact information you can call our Director of Development Erica Robertson at 925-484-4818 and she will initiate a call or letter. Remember if the corporation/business doesn't want to be a sponsor we would also love an auction or raffle item.

LOOKING FOR FOUNDATIONS/ GRANTS: Ask people if they know of any foundations that may give to such worthy causes as the Down Syndrome Connection and pass that information on to Erica Robertson, Director of Development. If you are a web surfer and come across something interesting please don't hesitate to call Erica at 925-984-4818 about what you have found and she'll check into it further.

HOW TO HELP IMMEDIATELY: If friends or coworkers ask you how they can get involved right away they can donate any amount on our website at www.dsconnection.org via Pay Pal.

UNITED WAY: If your work place or your friends or families work place does United Way drives don't forget to tell people they can choose the Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area as their preferred charity. People *appreciate knowing this* as it comes right out of their paycheck for a given period of time.

GETTING INVOLVED: Volunteer for fundraising events. Call a board member and be on a committee.... *Even your friends and family can volunteer for a committee.* Donate a raffle or auction item. As you know we have several fundraisers that need your

help such as the Bowl-a-Rama, Cajun Festival, and Buddy Walk to name a few.

SMALL BUSINESS BENEFITS: Lastly, we all know people who provide awesome products and services on a daily basis such as our massage therapist, handyman, travel agent, cleaners, painters, printers, artists and the list goes on..... *These folks want to grow their businesses* and would most likely be flattered if you ask for a product or service for an auction/ raffle item. Remember their business is getting recognition and their product gets used. Word of mouth sales is very powerful.

SHOWCASING STUDENT ART: Do you know anyone that owns a store that will be happy to sell our beautiful note cards and display art work? Call the DSCBA office at 925-362-8660 and we'll make it happen.

If you have other ideas for raising funds please don't hesitate to call Nancy LaBelle, Executive Director at 925-362-8660.

LOOKING FOR BELL PLAYERS FOR

THE ANNUAL DINNER ON MAY 31ST!!!

SIBLINGS WELCOME.... MUST KNOW COLORS AND BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN A FEW PRACTICE SESSIONS

CONTACT NICOLE PATTON, MUSIC THERAPIST VIA EMAIL AT MRSMUSIC@MAC.COM



THEY INSPIRE ME

by Bernadette Fatehi

Raise your hand if you've asked yourself why you were made the parent of a child with Down syndrome (or any child with special needs, for that matter.) I have asked myself that question a few times since Lily was born. There's got to be a reason.

It has occurred to me that up until about a year ago I still felt like I hadn't become what I was supposed to be "when I grew up." I have had many jobs in my life; I've tried lots of different things to feel fulfilled. Still, it is only recently that I feel like I have a real purpose.

Lily is almost four years old now and it's become clear to me that she is destined to be a star. I know, I know. I'm her mom; of course I would say that. I am serious though; she is one of the souls that moves through this world and makes a difference in people's lives every day. I see it all the time. When we go to the grocery store and I am trying to find bananas that are just right for eating tomorrow. Inevitably, someone is quietly watching us while Lily is saying, "Mom, let me do it, let me do it." She wants to choose the ones that will go into the bag. I try to remember that every exercise and experience is an education for her. At the same time, it is an education for those who watch her in the store, at the pool, at the library, at the service station while we get the car's oil changed. Those who know a child with Down syndrome know the delights they behold.

Those who don't, I think, are amazed at the intelligence and charm our children have.

Quite awhile back I found a quote in some article I was reading. The quote is from an unknown source and reads, "Inclusion of children with special needs in all environments in which typical children participate is critical to their development and achievement of their potential." I clipped it out and taped it onto our refrigerator along with all the other magnetic collectibles, artwork, and photos that live there. I wish I knew who wrote it, because I would like to thank that person for giving me such a practical philosophy to live by.

How could I make that "inclusion" happen for Lily? She is in a segregated special education class and unfortunately with the way the system currently works, that is where she will remain for the time being. That's when I got the inspiration to start Buddy Play. I felt like someone lit a fire under me, that I had to hurry up and give Lily something more to help her reach higher. People put playgroups together all the time; why not start one myself that would provide more opportunity for role-modeling? After all the time I had spent

volunteering in Lily's classes, I realized I had learned a thing or two about incorporating various therapies into fun, kid-friendly activities. Yes, I was definitely inspired.

I think everyone would be lucky to have someone in their lives that inspired them the way Lily inspires me. She is the reason I started Buddy Play, a playgroup for children with special needs and their typically developing peers. Buddy Play offers themed playgroups that provide activities to promote exercise in developmental skills. Since October 2007, I have been coordinating the playgroups and inviting all children with or without special needs to participate. Our first Buddy Play was a play dough party in the park. There was a mix of kids with special needs and typically developing kids that spent the afternoon together playing harmoniously with the colorful dough. That day was the first of many fun and rewarding experiences that have continued whenever our group meets. We have read stories to each other, decorated Christmas cookies, created snowflake art, been tattooed together, crafted old-fashioned Valentines, made pizza, and arranged beautiful Spring flowers, just to mention a few activities.

Along the way, the kids have learned some American Sign Language they may not have used before, sung some songs with a great music therapist, Nicole Patton, and made new friendships to last for years to come. I love to see the kids help and support each other as they interact. Sometimes the typical children, (what I call the TD kids) will ask a question about one of the kids with special needs. It's always a great opportunity to let them know that some of the kids have different abilities and may need some extra help, but are basically there to have fun just like them. Some of the parents have told me that they appreciate having a social group where their kids are safe, accepted, and their wide range of abilities is considered and accommodated.

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The kids with special needs have received help and role-modeling from our TD kids, while our TD kids have learned empathy and how to be a good “buddy” to their peers with special needs. As for the parents, I think they have enjoyed watching all that happens at Buddy Play just as much as I have. I always leave with a very gratified feeling, and a brain churning with new ideas for future groups.

Now, let me say, that as with most movements and ideas, Buddy Play has only grown and been successful with help coming from all directions. Martha Hogan offered the classroom at Down Syndrome Connection for one of our meeting places, Kathryn Valdez from the Hope Center offered another. Several of the mothers who bring their children on a regular basis have been an enormous help. They have taken turns bringing snacks for the kids, vacuumed up after we’ve made a mess, or helped to do an activity. Many people answered the call when my own mother did some secret fund-raising without my knowledge. Apparently there are a lot of guardian angels who have high hopes for Buddy Play and want to help make it a success! It has taken on a life of its own.

BOWL-A-RAMA HUGE SUCCESS!

Strikes, spares and good family fun was the order of the day when 188 bowlers gathered at Earl Anthony’s Dublin Bowl on March 9th, 2008 to raise money for the DSCBA. Through the hard work of everyone who solicited donations, our lane sponsors, the top fundraisers and the fun raffle prizes we were able to raise **\$14,865.00!**

Special thanks go to the four top fundraisers:

1. Carter/Harkins Team raised \$905.00
2. Gallagher/Upton/Jones Team raised \$900.00
3. Torin Wallace raised \$850.00
4. Catherine Cannon raised \$635.00

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed to this fun event.

So....now when I ask why I was made the mother of a child with Down syndrome, I have an answer for myself. It’s to do what I can for Lily and all the other kids that come to Buddy Play. I love them. I want to be around them. They inspire me more than anything ever has before!

If you would like more information about Buddy Play and a schedule of playgroups, please visit our website at www.buddyplay.org



A huge thank you to our lane sponsors:

Engineering Enterprises
Huether Insurance Agency
Jared Wong & Family
Kasie Robertson with J. Rockcliff Real Estate
The Casadont Family
The Hogan Family
The Chatowski Family
The Barker Family
Mac & Marise McIntosh
The Carl Gellert Foundation
Rago & Son, Inc.



Winter/Spring SF Step and Step Out “Check-in”

by Jamie Lantz

In our groups we always ‘check-in’ with other each other with a question like, “How was your weekend?” Since we haven’t checked-in with you, our wider community this is our check-in! Thanks to everyone who is a part of these great groups!

SF STEP celebrated our one year anniversary of meeting on Tuesdays at John O’Connell H.S. in the Mission. Jamie and Christina have a great time keeping up with these amazing dancers. The six gals and the two guys in this group are experts in the latest music and dance moves but they’re great artists as well. Besides dancing for a half-hour most days they have also done a lot of art, holiday cards and cards for friends. Last fall the group spent all their car-wash earnings dining together at a local Mexican restaurant. We’re planning a Mexican food garden this spring with all our favorite foods. Plans are also in the works for painting a mural to go above the garden. The most important thing about the group is the friendships, though. There have been a number of parties, sleepovers and weekend movies shared among folks. Though we do lots of skill-building to support friendships, and parents help a lot, it is the magic that happens in the group that makes it possible and so valuable. **Robert**, said it best last spring, “**Thank you for giving me new friends. Thank you for having me in this group, this loving place.**”

STEP OUT team continues to rock Oakland on Wednesday afternoons. Also a mighty dance force this gang has a repertoire that includes everything from classical to African dance. Last fall we had the pleasure of having Marsha Treadwell, Teodros’ mom, teach us a series of African dances. She brought wraps to wear, everyone learned new moves *and* got to solo in the middle. Teodros continues to coach us on his specialty, the Iskista dance which he introduced at the “Survival Angel Island” kayaking trip. As great as the dancing is, cooking (or helping by tasting and enjoying) delicious recipes continues to be a focus for these young chefs. But don’t *even* get us started talking about food! We happily spent our car-wash earnings on Lanesplitter Pizza but we worked it off the next week with dancing to R & B, Mary J. Blige, Shrek II. Etc. Almost everyone is enjoying working regularly in this group, besides chores at home, of course! Folks are working at Safeway, Peet’s Coffee, Pasta Pomodoro, The Independent Way and other places. Many live independently (or interdependently, as we like to say) and two of our members are planning to live together in their own apartment soon! We want to thank our fantastic PAL Joanna Swanton, who’s become a valuable member

since joining us last fall. These eight Step Outters are tops for calling each other during the week and they get to see each other frequently at Special Olympics, SPREAD, Bananas and other groups and events. We are looking forward to hosting our annual adult/teen STEP DANCE PARTY in April at Virginia’s house. Oakland rocks! SF STEP and STEP OUT leave you with our- **POEM TO SPRING:**

Sun, sleepy from daylight savings Green warm Flowers
music Baseball pink roses fresh vegetables
Easter eggs and chocolate bunnies Hearts & romance
Butterflies...Birds & bees... YES SPRING!



Step Friends' Dancing Party

Sunday April 20th - 4-6pm
Mark your calendars for FUN &
dancing with old and new friends!
Bring your favorite CD.
Call your Step friends and come together.

WHERE: Virginia’s house: 435 37th St., Oakland
One block south of MacArthur Blvd. just east of
Telegraph Ave on the south side of the street, a blue
Victorian with a small front porch. If we’re not out-
side, come to the front door on the right.

Ask your Step teacher if you have questions or call
Virginia 510-384-7201



KATE'S CORNER

March 2008

When I started working with children and adults with Down syndrome, there was nary a grey hair on my head, and no wrinkles on my face. I had more bounce in my step, and Martha Hogan and I shared the ability to get up from sitting on the floor with absolutely no effort at all. This is only to let you know it's been a long, long trip with the Down syndrome community.

Partly because I've been around this long, I have the reputation for knowing a great deal about Down syndrome. It's fun to be able to share the information, to put together workshops, classes and handouts that help parents and teachers and the kids themselves. It's wonderful to meet new people of all ages, to find out what new things parents are exploring and then to share that information with another group. The little faces of your children never cease to charm me, and their progress and energy are amazing and heartening. Most

importantly, I continue to learn so much from parents and children. Often the learning has something to do with what works for kids or parents, what new technologies, scientific advances, behavioral strategies, teaching methods are proving helpful. Usually I'm learning something about the kids – but when I'm lucky I am learning about myself. Here's the latest thing I'm learning from this work:

A most wonderful possibility exists; instead of working so hard to change how or what a child learns, I could relax into and enjoy what they already know. While I'm offering new information, I could focus instead on changing how I react and what I expect. What about believing that it's perfectly okay to move differently, that toilet training will happen in due time (yes, it really will!) and that taking time to learn and grow is a natural and good way to be? What if I showed someone how

to do something new, and then waited to see what they did with that information? What if I acted as if their perspective was just as important as mine?

The most amazing thing about this paradigm shift is that when I apply it to people with disabilities, I am able to apply it to myself. When I accept that another's way of being is fine for them, that they have room for improvement but are really great right now...well, then I can begin to view myself in the same way. What would happen if we turned away from fear and sadness as a motivation for working on ourselves and our children? We could certainly learn better, feel better about ourselves, make better changes, better friendships if we didn't feel the need to 'get fixed' first. What a gift we would give to ourselves and to our children if we accepted that we really are all fine right now!

Guess who's in the Danville 4th of July Parade this year?

The Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area!



We need volunteers to work on the float and to donate time to this event. Please call Nancy LaBelle at 925-362-8660 if you are interested. Thank you for your support!



DSCBA 2008

FUNDRAISERS , EVENTS AND OTHER IMPORTANT DATES :

May 31

Annual Dinner with Guest Speakers
Moraga

June 9th

Elliott's Bar 12th Annual Charity Golf Tournament
Crow Canyon Country Club. Sign up at Elliott's Bar 837-9955
(*This tournament benefits the DSCBA as well as other childrens charities*)

July 4th

Kiwanis 50th Anniversary Hay Days Parade
Downtown Danville (DSCBA will have a float this year in the parade. Call Nancy LaBelle for more information or if you would like to help out or ride on float).
Call the DSCBA for more information.

Aug 23

Cajun Festival
Pyramid Alehouse, Walnut Creek

Sept 27

**Knights of Columbus of San Ramon,
Golf Tournament, Wine Tasting & Dinner.**

Oct 12

Buddy Walk and Family Picnic
Heather Farms, Walnut Creek

Dec 7

Holiday Party
Moraga



Board Meetings
730-900pm
Danville DSCBA office.

Jan 15
Feb 19
March 18
April 15
June 17
July 15
Aug 19
Sept 16
Oct 21
Nov 18



Other dates you might want to know about:
24th Annual "Special Kids Day". Saturday May 10th - 10am to 330pm. The De Luna Ranch in Brentwood. No cost: Petting Zoo, Motorcycle rides with pictures, Clowns, Face painting, Jump house, Hayrides, Lunch, Gift bags and so much more.
Call Rene' or Maggie De Luna at 925-516-2506 or email renedeluna@msn.com

49ers Football Camp
Boys/Adults with Down syndrome ages 15 and up:
Friday, June 20th & 21st
Valley Christian High School, San Jose
9:00-2:00pm- lunch included





**The Down Syndrome Connection
of the Bay Area**

117-A Town and Country Drive
Danville, CA 94526
Phone: 925-362-8660
Fax: 925-362-8663
www.dsconnection.org

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WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!

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Holy Cross Episcopal - Castro Valley

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Kimo Fouts

Kiwanis Club of San Ramon

Knights of Columbus St. Joan of Arc Council #9206

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And many wonderful volunteers who support us throughout the year!