

Family Footnotes' New Look!

With all the changes in the agency these past couple of years- new families, new staff, new location- we thought it an appropriate time to make another change: to the design of our newsletter. Consistent with the look of our website, the new format adds color and, fortunately, the cost to print it has remained the same! We hope you like the updated look as much as we do!

Wanted: Inclusive Summer Programs

It's official, spring is here! And as families begin to make plans for fun kid-friendly activities for Summer, we are often asked what programs are the most welcoming. In the last issue, we asked for families to respond about what inclusive programs have been most successful for their special needs child. Sure, there are a lot of great programs in Dane County specifically designed for children with disabilities only, but most kids want and need to be around typically developing peers too. Unfortunately, responses were few. Maybe families are already too busy to respond or maybe there just are not enough inclusive programs out there. Whatever the reason, we do have a few suggestions to share.

There are some great programs such as MSCR, Camp Shalom, and Karate America which have inclusive models. However, the samples below should encourage you to ask any and all programs how they can adapt to include special needs children. We hope this list will continue to grow with more success stories and ideas for your child.

Kehl School of Dance

Several children with special needs have successfully participated in Kehl dance classes. The school has a welcoming philosophy and is open to ideas on how to include children with varying abilities. The teachers are very personable and great team players. For more information, call 829-2003 or visit www.kehldance.org

Shorewood Drama

This is a great summer program for kids with wide imaginations who love pretend play. Shorewood has been accepting of children who need some modifications to fully participate in rehearsals and in their

productions. This can be a great self-esteem building activity for kids. For more information call 244-0425 or visit www.voice-piano.com/shorewood/req2005.htm

Monroe Street Fine Arts

This art center offers a variety of art classes for all ages. They are open to ideas on how to include children and teens into their inclusive programs. They can be flexible with the age ranges if needed and the instructors are very helpful and friendly. A variety of children with varying disabilities have had positive experiences in their classes. For more information call 232-1510 or visit www.msfac.org

Welcome Jolene Carviou

I am delighted to have recently joined Family Support as the newest case manager on staff. I grew up in a small town in north-eastern Wisconsin. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire with a degree in Social Work in 1992. Since then I have enjoyed working with individuals with developmental disabilities and brain injuries in providing advocacy and support. I have had the opportunity to work in Outagamie, Manitowoc, and Dane counties. I moved to Madison in 1995 and have worked most of this time at United Cerebral Palsy and more recently at Clearview Brain Injury Center in Juneau. I am married and have two young girls whom I enjoy spending time with when I am not at work. I am very excited to be back working in Madison and have this opportunity to be part of a great group of professionals in providing advocacy and support in working together with families and children.



Celebrate!Celebrate!Celebrate!



Donovan Richards, a 6th grader at Kromrey Middle School in Middleton, joined friends in an after school group that took part in the award winning CANstruction event. Creative structures were built using non-perishable food items that were later donated to local charities. Donovan's group constructed a huge bowling ball and pins. The work was displayed at West Towne mall during the weekend of March 11-12. Great work! Having fun and helping others.

Karen Pecotte has been busy. She made the High Honor Roll for the 1st semester at DeForest High School. Karen has also been participating in the Forensics group. She was a finalist at the Verona tournament, giving her Four Minute speech. Keep up the good work!



Mark Mathews and fellow athletes

Special Olympic news: **Mark Mathews** and fellow athletes from the Verona area presented local grocer, Carl Miller, a big Thank You card. They were saying "THANKS" for the great support from the annual Miller's Grocery brat sale fundraising event.



Steven Clerico

Spring brings lots of reasons to Celebrate. Graduations and final farewells to school years are happening all over the county. **Steven Clerico** started celebrating early with a BIG BASH on April 1 to celebrate his 21st birthday and June graduation from Oregon High School. Family and friends from all over the country helped him party! He plans to stay busy with his four jobs in the Oregon area.

Stacie Dahmen will say her farewells as she exits Middleton High School. She will continue working at St. Thomas Aquinas church and making new friends. **Jenny Lasky** and **Kyle Nied** will take part in graduation ceremonies for Madison Memorial students. Jenny plans to stay with her job at U-Haul and hopes to expand her hours. Kyle will return to Memorial in the fall for post grad and vocational studies. **Steve McConnell** is counting the days until his graduation from Verona High School and the PARTY that follows. He too is planning on guests from far away places. Steve will stay busy after high school with his job at Willow Pointe Assisted Living. **Ben Riccio** will exit Cambridge High School, ready to share his enthusiasm and great smile with the folks at six Cambridge area businesses. **Congratulations and Best Wishes To All!**

Connecting Families 2006

On Saturday, April 8, the 5th annual Connecting Families event was held at the Alliant Energy Center. This gathering is designed to provide opportunities for families of children with disabilities to talk together, learn about local resources, and participate in breakout sessions.

This year, we were fortunate to have nationally known trainer, writer, speaker, and parent, Lisa Lieberman, as the keynote speaker. She shared her insights and personal stories from her latest book, *A "Stranger" Among Us, Hiring In-Home Supports for a Child with Autism Spectrum Disorders or Other Neurological Differences*.

Survey results showed that more than 90% of attendees at Connecting Families found the presentation and panel topics informative and valuable. They also liked the vendors, the availability of resources, and hearing suggestions, stories and topics that were important to them. A huge thanks for all of those who volunteered their time, effort, and talents to make Connecting Families 2006 a success.



New, Improved LINK Website Facilitates Connections for Families and In-home Care Providers

For the past two years, the **LINKdanecounty.com** website has hosted a search tool that families can use to access the *In Good Company* (Respite Care Program) list of registered care providers. Families who are eligible for services can simply enter a set of search criteria and receive a list of matching providers to contact. This tool has proved to be helpful, with many families successfully using it to connect with care providers.

It's easy to use the website. Go to www.linkdanecounty.org. If you are a family, choose the link "Online Help Search" and "Search for a Provider." If you are visiting the site for the first time, follow the steps to verify that you are eligible. (The site is open to families who already use the *In Good Company* (Respite Care Program) services, as well as to those on the waiting list.) After receiving an email verifying your eligibility, you can log-in and you will be prompted to begin the search by updating information on your respite care needs.

In all cases, information about families and providers that is generated through the search process is coded to safeguard confidentiality. Program staff review the results of online searches and provide contact information only as instructed by families and providers.

Based on past experience with the site, we have recently made a number of improvements designed to make the search function work better for both families and providers. These changes, effective in April 2006, were made possible by a grant from the CUNA Mutual Group.

NEW: Provider Availability and Contact Information

Registered in-home care providers can now go to the "Provider Login" on the LINK website. There, they can update their own contact, availability, and skill information, at their convenience. Changes are reviewed by program staff, but this function now streamlines the process of making updates and insures that on-line information is as accurate as possible.

NEW: Provider Message Board

Another new function of the site is a Provider

Message Board. This is a tool we have added to enable providers to share the vast wealth of experiences and information they all possess with one another. They may post entries on various subjects, and even create a new subject. Program staff manage the content of the message board on an ongoing basis.

NEW: Provider Search for Families

Finally, there is now a link for providers called "Family Search". By clicking on this link, providers can generate a list of families whose needs match the provider's current availability, interest, skill, care location and zip code. Providers receive an immediate response regarding the number of matching families. Our program staff review the list of names and will facilitate matches, if desired by the family. This feature has been added to give providers a sense of how many families registered to the site may be seeking supports that meet their individual criteria. Please note that while the results of the Family Search may produce a large number of names, not all families are currently seeking new providers.

Training and Questions

Training sessions are planned for the near future and will include live demonstrations of all of the above mentioned functions.

If you have any questions about the website, how to use any functions of the site, or would like to attend training, please contact Jeremy Sanford at jsanford@fsrkdane.org or by phone at 608-237-7637.



Lisa Lieberman, keynote speaker at this year's Connecting Families conference, signs a copy of her latest book. See the article "Connecting Families 2006" on page 2. Please visit www.Linkdanecounty.org for more photos of the event.

Dane County Events Calendar



Throughout the summer...

- June 1-Aug 9** **Madison Mallards Baseball, Warner Park in Madison**
- June 3-Oct 13** **CowParade Wisconsin, Throughout Greater Madison**– The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board is bringing this large public art event to all of Madison. For more info: <http://Wisconsin.cowparade.com>.

JUNE 2006

- June 1-4** **Isthmus Jazz Festival, Memorial Union Terrace**– This 18th Annual Jazz Fest will be held on the shores of Lake Mendota. Come enjoy some amazing tunes! For more info: <http://thedailypage.com>.
- June 2-4** **Festa Italia, McKee Farms Park in Fitchburg**– Sponsored by the Italian Workmen's Club of Madison, this three day event features a variety of entertainment and children's activities. There will be authentic Italian foods for purchase. For more info visit: <http://iwcmadison.com> or call 258-1880.
- June 10-11** **2006 Cambridge Pottery Festival & U.S. Pottery Games, Cambridge**– There are many special events planned for the 15th Anniversary of this wonderful event. For more information, visit www.cambridgepotteryfestival.org.
- June 17** **Feast with the Beasts, Henry Vilas Zoo, Madison** - This annual event at the zoo features music, face painting, entertainment and great food. For more information call 608-266-4732 or visit www.vilaszo.org.
- June 22-25** **Oregon Summer Fest, Kiser Firemans Park in Oregon**– A four day event that boasts a variety of activities for people of all ages. For information please visit www.oregonwi.com or call 608-835-3697.

JULY 2006

- July 8-9** **Art Fair on the Square, Capitol Square in Madison**– Enjoy the unique and large selection of handcrafted works including ceramics, fiber, glasswork, graphics, jewelry, leather, mixed media, photography, sculpture, and wood. Also enjoy food and entertainment. For more information call 608-257-0158 or visit www.mmoca.org.
- July 15-16** **La Fete de Marquette in Central Park, Central Park in Madison**– A romantic summer weekend in Madison's central city! This is a celebration of Bastille Day featuring influences from West and North Africa, France and New Orleans.
- July 19-23** **Dane County Fair, Alliant Energy Center**– For more information on this year's fair, please visit www.danecountyfair.com or call 608-223-4054.
- July 29** **Fiesta Hispana, Warner Park in Madison**– This is the premier latino and Hispanic cultural festival in Dane County. Enjoy entertainment and authentic foods.

AUGUST 2006

- Aug 4-5** **Trollway Daze Sidewalk Sales, Main Street in Mt. Horeb**– Please contact the Mount Horeb Area Chamber of Commerce for more information. Email at info@trollway.com
- Aug 17-20** **Sun Prairie Sweet Corn Festival, Angell Park in Sun Prairie**– Steamed sweet corn is available, as well as many varieties of uncooked corn to take home and enjoy. The event also features a carnival midway, food booths, live music, kid's activities, and more!
- Aug 26** **AFRICA FEST 2006, Warner Park in Madison**– This event is meant to be both celebratory and educational. Members of the African Assoc. of Madison and the Madison African community will present their culture and traditions through food, crafts, music and dance.

*This events listing is gathered from information provided by www.visitmadison.com.
To print an extra copy of this calendar to post, go to www.fsrcdane.org and click on "Newsletter."*



“No Limits”

By Dennis Granzen

We received several responses to the request from the column in the last issue of Family Footnotes about how to address issues of disability and difference to labeled children, their siblings and their peers. I'd like to share some of those responses.

One mom shared how from a young age, her daughter with Down syndrome showed her awareness of her different physical appearance by pointing to pictures of others with Down syndrome and saying, “That’s me.” As a youngster, when offered opportunities to talk about her differences and to learn about Down syndrome, she showed little interest. Upon entering the middle school years, she demonstrated more of an active awareness of being different, and was open to learning more about Down syndrome.

However, towards the end of middle school and into high school she began making some negative statements about herself, i.e. “I’m stupid” and “I’m ugly”, and according to her mom her behavior deteriorated. Her mom attributed both the causes of her daughter’s negative self image and the ways to best address it to a number of factors, including a lack of meaningful inclusion in school (which only reinforced her feelings of otherness and undesirability) and some family dynamics that all children would struggle with. I’d also add that the age she developed these feelings is the same at which all children struggle with self image and belonging. She has been working with a therapist for almost a year, and has been addressing the issues she’s struggled with and is moving toward a healthier and happier image of herself. She’s also better included in school and better appreciated by her school staff and peers, which makes a difference. This story points to the credibility that peers and others have with a child, and that no matter how supportive a parent may be, these others can powerfully influence how the child sees herself. It also points to how as parents, our role is not necessarily to be everything to our children, but also to help them find the mentors and support they need that may not best come from us.

Another mom shared how at 10 years old her son with Asperger’s syndrome started asking why he was different and why he did “bad” things and made people angry. Acting on a suggestion from a therapist and utilizing her son’s love of books, this mom created a biography of

her son, using pictures, stories of his birth and explanations of his unique qualities, including a narrative and how they learned he has Asperger’s syndrome. It includes statements of what strengths and challenges are, and how people with Asperger’s syndrome share some of those as well as differ from each other. It also talks about how all of us can share our strengths and how we all need to work hard to address our challenges.

Heather Sarabia, a high schooler whose poetry appears in this issue of Family Footnotes, writes a letter to her classmates each fall to explain to them a bit about how she experiences autism. Her self understanding can point us to how to talk to others with autism about themselves. Last fall she wrote, “I have killer Autism. I am not ashamed to have this disease, but I am often embarrassed by the things it makes me do.” Heather’s distinction between herself and how autism affects her behavior is important for all to understand, including those with autism.

Let’s continue this conversation. Please continue to send us your thoughts and experiences, and we’ll share them in future editions. Also, if you’ve found any resources, written or otherwise, let us know and we can come up with a list to share. Contact us through e-mail: inclusion@fsrkdane.org or by phone at 608/237-7639.

You’ve Got Mail!

Today’s students gain computer skills even before they enter kindergarten. Computers help students develop fine motor, communication and social skills. Speech or conversational challenges don’t often translate to the computer. E-Buddies can help students gain computer skills and make new friends.

E-Buddies is an e-mail friendship program that matches students with developmental disabilities with their typically developing peers. To participate you must be ten years of age or older, have access to the internet, your own e-mail address and be able to receive e-mail at least once a week.

Is it safe?

All applicants go through a screening process which includes background checks and references. All e-mail between e-Buddies goes through the e-Buddies mail server and a copy of each message is kept on a secure server. Information is not shared with any other organization. Students are never matched with e-Buddies who live in the same state.

How do I sign up?

The e-Buddies application is found on line, at www.ebuddies.org. You can sign up as an individual or teachers can sign up a group of students.



Poetry & Writing by Heather Sarabia

Heather is an aspiring writer who is currently a student at West High School in Madison.

Water Joy

Joy out my eyes

Ran down my cheeks

No voice to express

Simplest of sentiment

But still cool I want to be

Even with most annoying

Disability

Joy this rapturous

Embarrassing I suppose

But normal elegantly cool

Is the girl who actually likes me

Spazy noisy hurky-jurky goofy old me

Has friend for real first time

So if a little tear you see

It's what just what I call joy!

Dear Students and Teachers,

I am autistic. This is surely obvious to see, but what is not so easy to see is the me inside. I have a mind that works fine. In fact I do believe I am quite smart. The body I am trapped in betrays me. I flap and hum and twitch and bounce but dear people I am listening to all that's going on.

Sometimes I dream of normal. In my dreams I sit quietly. I smile and say hello sweet person. I gaze up at my teachers and the answers I know so well pour out of my mouth. I sit with my student friends and they know who I am. Dreams end with the light of day. I am what I am, and I am not unhappy. Do not feel sad kind people, for I have found a voice in the wonderful awesome world of words.

How do I learn best is hard to answer. I listen good to lectures and my memory is quite excellent. I can read, but need help to keep the words from flying off the page. Explain I fear I must. Autism does odd things I have come to learn. When I turn the pages of a book by myself the words fly and my mind leaves the book and must follow the words as they go sailing away. My world is so very hard to explain I think.

One of my biggest goals I am now in the middle of making come true. I longed with all my dear sad heart to be able to go to school. A normal place of high learning. I can not describe the pure rapture of coming here to learn. Learning is what makes things possible for me. My most secret hope is to be a great fine writer one day. I crave most to learn all I can so I can be what I dream.

I have a big concern that I will not be accepted. I look like I do not care. I look stupid and act strange. I fear people will give up on me. So far many dear wonderful people have stuck with me.

I like to do normal things. When I do a simple normal thing without killer autism spoiling it I get most excited. Going to a restaurant, store, movie, or museum, what joy.

I will stop. I could write so much more. You see once I get started I am my favorite subject to write about. I ask you for patience, even though I do often lack it myself. You see inside I am just another high school kid.

With kindest regards,
Heather



Sharron Hubbard-Moyer to Receive Women of Distinction Award

On May 11, the President of our Board of Directors, Sharron Hubbard-Moyer, will receive a 32nd annual Women of Distinction Award from the YWCA of Madison. She is being recognized for her community service, professional achievement, integrity, leadership and dedication to the lives of others.

We at FSRC have been the recipient of Sharron's caring nature, dedication to families and commitment to making the world a better place since she became affiliated with our agency in 1989. During this time she has supported the agency and those we serve in many important ways. As a respite provider, she has cared for many of the children in our program, taking them into her home and personal life and involving them in community activities on weekends; as a Board member for three years and President of the Board for one, she provides extra support at our annual fundraising dinner and other agency events and activities.

Of her level of support to FSRC, Executive director Terri Johnson says, "It's truly astonishing to realize that she does all she does for us, while managing a job, family, and many other church and volunteer community commitments. We count ourselves lucky that she has chosen to share her many talents with us and with families who have children with significant disabilities."

Thank you Sharron and congratulations for this well deserved award!

WISC-TV Receives Broadcast Award

Reporters and station anchors **Pam Tauscher** and **Eric Franke** were recently honored by the Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities for their outstanding efforts to portray people with disabilities as active and contributing members of our community. The 2005 Broadcast Award was presented at a luncheon on April 20, 2006 to WISC-TV for two feature stories about FSRC's Respite Care Program (now called *In Good Company*) and the Madison School District's school-to-work programs, both aired on the evening news in Fall 2005.

We congratulate WISC-TV on the award and thank the station for its continuing coverage of issues important to families who have children with disabilities.

Thanks, Mike, for six great years!

When **Michael Shultz** was approached to serve on FSRC's Board he was working as an Autism Program Support Teacher for MMSD. The Board was interested in adding a member with knowledge and experience in the area of autism and fortunately Michael accepted and served two full terms with us.

FSRC has benefited greatly from his six years of service! He has worn many different hats with us including Board President, Secretary and Assistant Director of SIBS Camp (weekend camp for siblings of children in our program). He has shared his knowledge and experience during important changes for the agency, such as when the CLTS waiver component was added to the Family Support program, providing training to new case managers regarding autism. And as a regular attendee of Board Meetings he helped with problem solving and strategizing around the many issues and concerns facing the families in our programs. He's also cooked lots of hot dogs over the years at family picnics.

When asked about his relationship with FSRC, Mike says: "I have always admired and respected the agency for the work that staff does on behalf of students and families in Dane County. Before becoming a Board member I worked with many families who were connected with the agency and knew first hand of the benefit they received. As I became more directly involved, my respect for the agency and its work grew immeasurably. Working with Terri and other Board members over the years has been an honor and has reinforced and strengthened the value of collaborative teams for me. Personally, I have learned more about compassion, determination and perseverance because of my experiences with the agency and have become a better teacher and parent in the process.

"I have fond memories of all the picnics and working at SIBS camp. Although the Celebrity Dinners required lots of work, the actual evening of the event was always very special. The opportunities I've had to interact with the kids and their families have been priceless."

Thank you, Mike! We're looking forward to continuing FSRC's association with you for many years to come.

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Website: www.fsrcdane.org

Family Support Families

As of January 1, 2006, all children receiving services or on the waiting list for the Family Support Program need to have their eligibility assessed using the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Functional Screen. The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services is requiring that this review be completed for all children throughout the state. Children receiving MA coverage through the Katie Beckett Program may have already had a CLTS Functional Screen completed by one of their staff. In this case, we will request that families sign a release form to transfer the Katie Beckett results to our program. As of this time, a CLTS Functional Screen will be completed on an annual basis for all children receiving ongoing Family Support services. As explained in a recent letter to families waiting for services, we will be assessing eligibility during the next few months for all children on our waiting list. If you are a family on our waiting list, it is extremely important to sign the release forms sent to you in early April, and return to us immediately. We have a limited amount of time to complete these reviews. Please call Heidi Rossiter at 237-7630 or email at hrossiter@fsrcdane.org. if you have any questions. Thanks so much for your help.

Dates to Remember:

May 20— Allison Smith Foundation Bowling Event & Fundraiser. Bowling is at 11:30, 2:00 & 4:00. Call 608-845-8413 to register.

June 15— DD Network Presents: David Pitonyak on "helping people overwhelmed with anxiety find solid ground." At the Sheraton Hotel in Madison. To register, contact fil@tds.net.

November 13—The 8th Annual FSRC Celebrity Dinner at Nakoma Golf Club. Watch for details!