



CDSA News

Winter 2008

Issue 2

Canterbury Down Syndrome Ass

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Martin Nichols	382 4362
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Football



Jamie Ellis

On Sunday the 22nd of June from 1.00 pm onwards we played football at the Halswell Domain. It was a lovely warm afternoon for a winter's day and twenty-two families came along. After being welcomed by Michael Jamieson, the Vice—President of the Halswell United AFC all players were put into teams that were organised beforehand. There were eight teams with a coach for each team, who gave a little training followed by lots of positive encouragement for the players as they played two games.. Afterwards we went back to the clubrooms for afternoon tea, speeches and each child was given a certificate. The highlight of the afternoon was the inflatable McDonalds soccer pitch , which the teams got to play in. This is much smaller than a junior soccer pitch and with less running around the children had a better chance to kick the ball and score a goal.

Committee News

The sub committee of Brendon Dowling, John Pearson and Kaye Young have drafted up a constitution with the assistance of Susan Wallace from Community Law Canterbury. When this has been finalized we will become incorporated and then register with the Charities Commission. By becoming incorporated it gives us greater ability to obtain funding, we can become a donee organisation, get an exemption from income tax and the society becomes a separate legal entity from its members. Therefore members have no personal liability for the debts of the CDSA and we can lease, rent and enter into contracts in the CDSA name. As we will be able to receive larger grants we can look at bringing Vicki Brown of the Down Syndrome Society of South Australia to Christchurch to run a two or three day educational seminar for us.

On page 3 is the report "Discrimination in Canterbury Schools". This summarizes the responses to the email Discriminatory Practices in Your Local School sent out earlier in the year to all members. It will now be sent out to GSE, Principals and Members of Parliament in Canterbury asking for their responses. If you have any comments to make we would welcome your feedback to Kaye Young or Coen Lammers.

The IHC Advocacy Toolkit is a wealth of information. Kaye has a toolkit so if anyone wants to borrow it feel free to contact Kaye.

The committee will be sending four people to the NZDSA forum for the weekend. However we encourage other members living in Christchurch to go on Saturday for the session "Life through the Stages" The cost is \$150.

The AGM will be held at the next committee meeting on Monday August 25, at 7.30pm at the Upper Riccarton Library on 71 Main South Road. We need a new Chairperson and Secretary so if you are interested please fill out the form on page 6. We also welcome new committee members and if you would like to join please contact Kaye. Everyone is welcome.

Coming Events

Monday, 11 August

7.30pm—Coffee evening at Coffee Culture, 235 Papanui Road, Merivale.

Everybody is welcome! Come and join Rachel Lonsdale, phone 329 8358, for cake and coffee.

Tuesday, 19 August

7.30pm—Dessert evening at Strawberry Fare Restaurant, 114 Peterborough St, Christchurch City.

All mothers of preschoolers with Down syndrome are welcome. Contact Andree Pearson on 382 4192 if you are able to come so she knows how many to book for.

Monday, 25 August

AGM at 7.30pm at the Upper Riccarton Library on 71 Main South Road. Everybody is welcome. If you want to become a committee member or know of someone who wants to be a member please complete the form on page 6 and send to Kaye. After the AGM will be the monthly committee meeting.

Monday, 8 September

7.30pm—Coffee evening at Coffee Culture, 235 Papanui Road, Merivale.

Everybody is welcome! Come and join Rachel Lonsdale, phone 329 8358, for cake and coffee.

Saturday, 13th September

NZDSA forum. See page 6 for details.

Sunday, 21st September

Tenpin bowling at Garden City Bowls on 15 Iversen Terrace. Bowling starts at 2.00pm but be there at 1.40pm to sign in and get your shoes. Afterwards we will have afternoon tea in the party room from 3.00pm onwards. Twelve lanes have been booked. Please contact Kaye by Thursday 18 September if you wish to play otherwise there is no guarantee we will have a place for you. All children with Down syndrome and their siblings are welcome to play and if we have space some of the adults can play. Cost is \$6 per person. **Note that we can not hold your place in a lane if you are late!**

Saturday, 13 December

11.30am—Christmas party at the Landsdowne Community Centre. Further details will be advised.

Donation Rebate Changes Effective 1st April 2008

Changes to the tax rules on charitable giving have been enacted and apply from the 2008 and 2009 income year.

THE CHANGES.

- Removal of the \$1,890 rebate threshold on donations made by individuals.
- Removal of the 5% deduction limit on donations made by companies and Maori authorities.
- Company deduction for the donations will be extended to include unlisted companies with five or fewer shareholders.

The purpose of the change is to recognize the difference made by the non-profit and charitable sectors to the well-being of our communities and encourage charitable giving in New Zealand.

APPLYING THE CHANGES.

1. Individuals.

- The \$1,890 threshold for which individuals can claim a tax rebate for cash donations to donee organisations will be removed.
- Individuals will be able to claim a 33 ½ % tax rebate for donations up to their annual taxable income.

2. Companies.

- From 1 April 2008, the 5% limit on deductions that companies can claim for donations to donee organisations will be removed.
- Companies will be entitled to a deduction for monetary donations made to donee organisations, limited only by the company's net income.
- The donation deduction is also being extended to unlisted close companies (companies with five or fewer shareholders).

3. Maori authorities.

- The 5% deduction limit for monetary donations to donee organisations and Maori associations will be removed.
- Maori authorities will be entitled to a deduction for donations made to donee organisations, limited only by the amount of their net income.

The change is applied just the same way as the change to the company deduction and the donation deduction will be included in the Maori authority's income tax return (IR 8).

For more information visit www.ird.govt.nz

Discrimination in Canterbury Schools

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS FOR PARENTS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME

Mainstream schooling is a legal entitlement for every school-aged child in New Zealand. Individual ORRS funding and special education funding should supply schools with the financial tools to support children with special needs to attend the school of their choice without any barriers or discrimination.

This is the theory and the spirit in which the New Zealand Government and its education officials embraced the concept of inclusive mainstream schooling. However, the reality is quite different.

A brief questionnaire among a number of members of the Canterbury Down Syndrome Association has produced a picture of regular incidents of discrimination, disinterest and hardship which is impossible to ignore and should be addressed.

This survey is not a scientific study, but the repetitiveness of the anecdotal evidence provides a valid, qualitative list of what is happening in Canterbury schools.

Judging by the feedback from the questionnaire, the majority of parents regard the schooling of their child with Down syndrome overall as a positive experience, but even most of them recognise one or more incidents as described below.

Others have not been so lucky and continue to put up with blatant or more subtle, insidious discrimination by principals, teachers and ministry staff.

The incidents can roughly be divided in to two categories, before entering the school and inside the schools.

Finding a school

Parents have been stunned by schools flatly denying access to the school or turning down a request for just an exploratory chat with the principal. Some parents have been turned down (or actively discouraged) to enrol by several schools before finding a school that will take them.

The excuses are numerous: funding issues, zoning issues, teacher numbers, pupil numbers, set-up of school, lack of gates or even academic goals of the schools. The reasons widely vary but the message is the same.

Bizarrely, those schools receive the same bulk special needs funding as other more welcoming schools, with one school using this funding for their 'special, gifted children', the high achievers.

The few schools with a reputation of welcoming children with DS with open arms are outnumbered by the schools that discourage those children from attending.

Ironically, the open-minded schools become victims of their own success. Word of mouth quickly has other parents queuing at their gates.

Inside the school

Once enrolled, the parents face more battles because the High Needs ORRS funding rarely covers a full-time teacher aide.

As a result, the school, the teacher and the parents face the difficult task of looking after the child's safety and educational needs when ORRS funding for the teacher aide runs out.

As mentioned earlier, a number of schools, teachers and principals around Canterbury are wonderful role models of 'can-do' attitude and find innovative ways to keep the child with Down syndrome safe and in the class room when the ORRS funding does not cover all the expenses.

Sadly though, the majority of schools and teachers refuse to spend any additional time, money or energy to deal with funding challenges. The questionnaire shows that most schools do not want a child with Down syndrome on their premises without a teacher aide by his/her side. Also, alternative solutions are often instantly dismissed.

Case studies

To understand the full scope of discriminatory scenarios faced by parents with a child with Down syndrome, below is a sample of incidents listed by parents:

Examples of discrimination against children at school (most of which are from multiple sources):

- 1. A child is denied or discouraged access to (several) school(s)
- 2. Front office staff denies parents access to talk to a principal or visit a school to get enrolment information
- 3. A principal actively discourages parents from enrolling their child
- 4. A principal refuses to have two children with Down syndrome at his school
- 5. A school refuses to hire a teacher aide regardless of ORRS funding
- 6. A school does not reply to requests for information once it hears the child has Down syndrome.
- 7. Some teachers refuse to have a child with Down syndrome in their class without a teacher aide. Most of the time, the parent is forced to pick him/her up before 3pm.
- 8. Parents are asked to keep their child away from school trips because the school assumes their child would be unsafe.
- 9. Parents are asked to keep their child away from school sport (school assumes the child would be bored)
- 10. A Ministry of Education representative encourages a parent to send their child to a special school.
- 11. A child is held in the staff room for extended periods when the teacher aide is not available (school board and ministry unwilling to fix the situation despite complaints)
- 12. A parent is told twice by a principal to look for another school (MoE reprimands school after complaint)
- 13. A parent is told by a school that her child's teacher aide was taking general school funding away from other children for other activities and asked to pay for the teacher aide.
- 14. Many teacher aides are isolated in their school with no support for their work by other school staff and management.

As a result parents are forced to make several contributions to keep their child at school:

- 1. Several parents are asked by schools to pay for the teacher aide
- 2. Some parents pay for educational resources used in the class room.
- 3. Some parents are asked to fill in for the teacher aide when their hours run out.
- 4. Some parents have to be present at sports or school trips for their child to be included.

Conclusion

The list is comprehensive, but there can be little doubt that a professionally funded, scientific survey into the subject would only add to these examples.

Even without that scientific confirmation, it is clear that after 15 years mainstream schooling for special needs children it is far from where it should be. Parents in the mid-1990s have been patient for the sake of progress, but after 15 years, the attitudes as described earlier should have become relics of the past.

It is high time for the Government and education officials to address this issue and supply children with Down syndrome with their legal entitlement of full-time schooling.

Canterbury Down Syndrome Association
July 2008

IHC Advocacy Toolkit

The IHC Advocacy Toolkit has been developed to help people in local communities advocate for people with an intellectual disability. Families, staff members, volunteers and IHC members regularly request a variety of information from the advocacy team based in Wellington. This toolkit is designed to be a community advocacy resource which is easily accessed by a range of people.

IHC Advocacy believes that everyone who cares for, supports or advocates for someone with an intellectual disability should have easy access to vital advocacy information. The IHC Advocacy toolkit has been developed in the knowledge that access to accurate information is a critical factor in successful advocacy.

The toolkit has been developed so that people in all communities are able to access information which has the potential to create new possibilities for individuals with intellectual disability or assist in resolving difficulties, issues or concerns.

Advocacy can be about finding the right information or it can be about using the information to advocate on someone's behalf. This toolkit will help with both activities.

It contains a series of information sheets on topics and issues which are of common concern and interest in the lives of people with intellectual disability. These information sheets have been developed by the IHC Advocacy team. The team will develop further information sheets over time on new topics (*on request or as needed) and will update information on existing sheets when required.

It also contains a selection of resources from other organisations on a variety of topics. These resources are known to be extremely helpful and reliable sources of information on a range of topics relevant to people with intellectual disability of all ages and stages. It has been designed so that there is ample space for adding local or personal information or resources.

The "Advocacy Toolkit – How to be an advocate in your community", presently consists of 9 chapters:

1. Introduction to the IHC Advocacy Toolkit.
2. Advocacy.
3. Quick Guide to writing submissions and letters to the editor.
4. Navigating the education system.
5. Supporting Decision making.
6. Transition from school and home.
7. Working, income and the invalid's benefit
8. Policy and legislation
9. Useful websites.

It contains information sheets produced by the Fair Centre from Barnardos regarding a whole range of issues. Information from Carers.net.nz, fact sheets from the Ministry of Health and the Department of Labour.

And in the front of the folder you will find 4 pocket guides:

- A Pocket Sized Guide to Inclusive Education.
- A Pocket Sized Guide to Individual Education.
- A Pocket Sized Guide to Needs Assessment & Service Coordination.
- A Pocket Sized Guide to Meeting.

Also included:

Booklet "IHC's Philosophy".

DVD "The Transition Process from the NZDSA.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy.

The United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child.

The Code for New Zealand Schools.

Leaflet "A Consumer's Guide to the Health and Disability Commissioner".

If you are interested in applying for The Toolkit, please contact 0800 442 442 or if you just want to look at and borrow one, please contact Kaye on 329 6187.

NZDSA National Forum

WORKSHOPS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS ON SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2008

In response to members' requests the NZDSA are pleased to announce that this year families are welcome to register to attend sessions and workshops on Saturday 13th September 2008 at the NZDSA National Forum 2008.

The theme for the Forum is "Life through the Stages".

The NZDSA will host streams exploring topics relevant to early intervention, school years and adult years.

Cost for the session

\$150.00 includes (registration fee, morning and afternoon teas, and lunch).

Optional: Saturday night meal - \$45.00 (excluding drinks)

Venue

Sudima Hotel, Cnr Corner Memorial Avenue & Orchard Road, Christchurch.

Registration

Please contact Linda or Zandra if you require a registration form:

Linda te Kaat
National Administrator
0800 693 724 press 2

Zandra Vaccarino
National Executive Officer
0800 693 724 press 1

Football

Special Olympics Canterbury has organised football for anyone with special needs.

What?: Football skills and games

When?: Thursday 4.15pm to 5.15pm. **Starting on July 31**

Where?: Catholic Cathedral College in Ferry Road

Who?: Everyone

Coffee Mornings

Kaye, Lauri and Maryanne have been meeting for coffee each month. We are flexible as to time and location and are able to meet either on a Wednesday or Friday between the hours of 9.00am to 2.00pm. If you are interested in joining us please call **Maryanne on 322 1226**.

We last met on Wednesday July 30 and will send out an email before we meet again.

For more information phone Graeme Bain on 382-0769 Or Jordan on 343 2545

Meanwhile, Kaye has been in touch with Michael Jamieson of Halswell United AFC and he is working on getting an inflatable soccer pitch for the special needs players and will be back in touch.

The rain does not help as all Christchurch City Council grounds are currently closed. Where we played at Halswell Domain on the 22nd of June is a bog and is not being used for practices or games. We will have to wait for the grounds to dry out before we can organise another afternoon of games of football.

Nominations for the CDSA committee

We invite nominations for the positions of Chairperson and Secretary on the CDSA committee. Each of the positions is a two-year term and starts at the AGM on Monday August 25.

I

Of

Give full name and address of the person nominating a candidate

Signed Date

The nominator must sign and date.

I

Of

Give full name and address of the candidate

Signed Date

The candidate must sign and date.

Please return to Kaye Young, Old Tai Tapu Road, RD 2, Christchurch 7672 or email to rbkmyoung@xtra.co.nz