

Extend-A-Family

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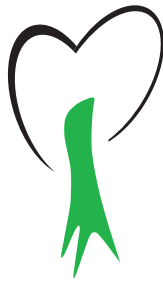
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Kim Southern-Paulsen
Jessica Van Wyk

Safe and Secure Futures Network Coordinators

Sharon Power
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Call for Submissions

If you would like to submit an article to upcoming Extend-A-Family newsletters, please send it to your coordinator or the office, specifying that it is for the newsletter. All submission to the newsletter must have a signed release form. If you would like to submit a photograph, you can send it to the same person; please recognize that we must have signed release forms from all people appearing in the photograph. All submissions will be subject to editing at the discretion of the Newsletter Committee. Additionally we cannot guarantee that your contribution will be used. Given all that...We would love to hear from you!



extend a family

Better Together
Winter 2010



Friendship Reigns at Mother Cabrini Catholic School

Friendship circle at Mother Cabrini C.S. has been going strong for about three years. The school is very welcoming and friendly. A favourite game of the members is Twister, a traditional game where children get entangled, and collapse in fits of laughter. A big thank you to Principal Del Giuduce, the staff and children at the school for their hospitality.



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FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Several months ago my daughter and I spent a wonderful vacation together on a Caribbean cruise. We met a young lady on board the ship who loved to dance, sing and truly enjoyed the company of others; she also happened to have a developmental disability. As I watched "Sandra" engage with the cruise director staff it became apparent that they recognized that she had a gift for encouraging other passengers to let loose and have fun. She invited people to participate in games, dances and singing contests, praised their performances and acknowledged their talents.

As the week went on, I noticed that whatever venue Sandra attended, the crowd always seemed to be having a great time and was truly enjoying being part of the festivities. It was then that I realized that this young lady was a "connector." She instinctively knew how to make people feel welcome and how to include everyone. She knew who would be first to join in, but more importantly she noticed who needed to be "invited" in order to participate.

On the last night of the cruise, the crew acknowledged passengers who were celebrating special occasions and individual passengers who contributed to the success of the cruise. With genuine appreciation and in a respectful, dignified manner the cruise director invited Sandra to become an "honorary cruise staff member" in recognition of her "amazing ability to bring people together."

Later in the evening, I was talking with the cruise staff director, telling him about Extend-A-Family and our belief that all people have gifts and given the opportunity can make valuable contributions to society. He acknowledged that Sandra was able to bring people together in a way that the staff had been unable to. He said it was like she gave people permission to have fun and supported them to do so. He also said that in his eight year career aboard the ship, he had never seen passengers so eager to participate in the many onboard activities. Sandra is a teacher and a role model, she taught us that we need to make the effort to include everyone, we just have to be creative and believe that everyone wants to belong.

As we begin a new year, I hope we all resolve to include and embrace everyone, because we truly are stronger together.

Best Wishes for 2010, may you enjoy good health and be blessed with the love of supportive family and friends.

Anne Marie Cole

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As the board chair of Extend-A-Family, I would like to extend on behalf of the board our best wishes for 2010. Extend-A-Family is governed by a board of directors. Our board members are comprised of volunteer parents who are members of Extend-A-Family, self advocates and community members. We currently have six active board members; four members are parents and siblings and two are community members. Ideally we strive for eight members.

Our board members support the mandate and work of Extend-A-Family. While at board meetings we review the financial activity of Extend-A-Family and receive program updates from the Executive Director.

As a board, we meet eight to ten times a year and host an annual general meeting open to all Extend-A-Family members every June.

Please come out to our Annual General Meeting to become informed of our activities for the past year. The Annual General Meeting will be held on June 6, 2010 at St. Leonard's Church, with a family picnic to follow! There are activities for the kids and an opportunity to connect with the many individuals involved and connected to Extend-A-Family.

If you have an interest in the work of the board of directors or may have an interest in becoming a board member, please inquire with Cate Houghton, 416-484-1317 or by email ch@extendafamily.ca

Susan Walker-Kennedy

EXTEND-A-FAMILY

Building an inclusive community

Our Mission

To ensure that people with disabilities develop meaningful relationships and participate fully in the community

Where it all began?

In the 70's, a group of parents, all of whom had a child with a disability, got to know each other through a Public Health Nurse and a North Toronto nursery school for children with developmental disabilities

Over time, they began to express the common need for their children to experience friendships and socialization in the community while, at the same time, providing some short-term respite for the family

Who we are?

We are a non-profit, charitable organization that is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors which is comprised of parents of children with disabilities, self advocates and interested community members

We work in the community to support individuals who have disabilities

We bring people together by encouraging and facilitating friendships

We believe that all people belong and have the right to participate in community

We foster public awareness of the gifts and contributions of people with disabilities

What we do?

Host/Host Family
Community/Group Connections
Friendship circles
Support Circles/Support Networks
Safe & Secure Futures Networks
Sexuality & Relationship Workshops
Parent/Caregiver Support Groups

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS - DANNY'S FAVOURITE SHIRT

My brother Danny has a lot of energy and loves nature, camping, hiking and motorbikes. He also enjoys visiting our local pub for the occasional beer. Danny and I usually frequent the local pub once every few weeks. Danny is a favourite with the locals and bar tenders; they always come up and greet Danny with a smile and ask "how are you?" and Danny quickly replies "Heineken!"

One summer evening while Danny and I were sitting in our favourite booth, just chatting and enjoying ourselves, a man at the next table stood up wearing a NASCAR shirt. Dan loves NASCAR and noticed right away. Dan started shouting "NASCAR shirt! NASCAR shirt!"

Well to cut a long story short we introduced ourselves to the man and his wife and I explained that my brother was complimenting the man on his shirt. We chatted for awhile and the man and his wife said they might have another NASCAR shirt at home. Danny was so thrilled and the thought of having his own NASCAR shirt he laughed all the way home.

A couple weeks went by and we headed back to the pub and sat in our favourite spot. We weren't sure if the couple would remember their promise but after we ordered our drinks the bartender brought a gift bag for Danny.

Danny could hardly contain himself. He opened the gift bag and there



was the NASCAR Shirt! Danny was laughing so hard he was squealing! He had the biggest smile on his face, saying "Oh My Goodness! Love It! NASCAR Shirt!" Everyone around Danny couldn't help but smile! He changed into it right there in the middle of the pub... and it is now his favourite shirt.

Danny wanted to thank the couple for the NASCAR shirt, so he made them a card with a NASCAR on it, and dropped off a cardboard GO bus at the bar for them.

What a glorious exchange ... once upon a time we were all strangers, now we are acquaintances, taking time to chat and say hi to one another. It's so true that small gestures of kindness can mean so much to everyone. :)

Jessica Van Wyk (Co-ordinator)





RING BEARER

This summer I was asked to be the ring bearer for a friend that got married on July 25. Melanie married Ryan who I've known since they were dating. Melanie, her Mom and Dad became my host family in 1989 through Extend-A-Family; I was just 5 years old.

I was honoured to be asked to carry their rings at the wedding. I was a bit nervous to walk down the aisle in front of so many people and everyone was looking at us and taking pictures.

A few weeks before the wedding Melanie and I went shopping to look for my dress. I must have tried 30 different ones until we found the right one. It had to have lots of blue in it to blend in well with the bride's maid's dresses that were all blue.

The morning of the wedding I went to my friend Jessica to have my hair and makeup done. She is a professional make-up artist. I was there 3 hours and everyone said I looked beautiful.

At the church I sat at the front with the bride's maid and I got to see Melanie and Ryan say "I do" and it was so cool when they kissed. They looked beautiful and so happy that I wish to get married one day too. After the ceremony I went in a limo with the newlyweds and the wedding party to have pictures taken, and then we went to the reception where we ate, danced and had lots of fun with my family.

It was a great day for me to be part of something so important like marriage and I will always remember this day thanks to Melanie and Ryan.



Julia Ambelez

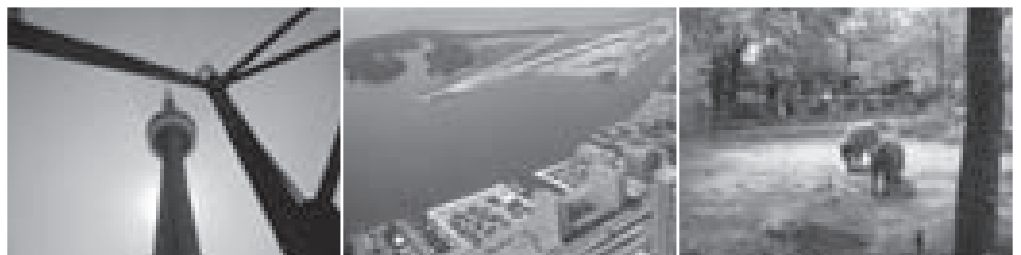
SUMMER FUN - EXTEND-A-FAMILY SUMMER STUDENT PROGRAM 2009

Each year E-A-F offers the opportunity to university age students to support our young people in community or camps over the summer months. This year we re-hired six students from previous years and five new students. The city strike and consequently camp closures, over the early part of the summer, did not deter our young people from having a fun summer. They put on their creative hats and had a glorious time.

As in previous years, the summer student program is dependent on HRDC funding. We are funded to support young people up to the age of 21 years who are attending school. If your son or daughter fits this category, and you are working in partnership to build relationships throughout the year, then they are welcome to participate in this summer opportunity. Feel free to contact your Coordinator for further information. Information is mailed out to families in February of 2010.

WENDY'S SUMMER 2009

I have always wanted a younger sister and Wendy and I became like sisters this summer, as we explored the city by TTC. We conquered the CN tower, explored the Renaissance Festival at Casa Loma, visited the Woodbine Centre, investigated the Zoo, saw neat artefacts at the ROM, and tried out the many different inventions at the Science Centre.



I remember the first time we visited the CN Tower and looked through the glass floor; Wendy was in awe and had the biggest smile on her face. We enjoyed it so much we visited it twice. Wendy loves to take pictures. She's an excellent photographer. Here's a small sample of some of her work. Numerous times, on our way back home via the subway, we looked though the pictures of our day and giggled, just like sisters.





Being creative @ Holy Angels C.S. friendship circle



Monopoly banker is a favourite role @ Holy Angels CS.



World Monopoly is great game @ Mother Cabrini CS?



Laughter is a big part of friendship circle @ Mother Cabrini CS



All tangled up @ Mother Cabrini CS

Friends
 A friend is someone we turn to
 when our spirits need a lift.
 A friend is someone we treasure
 for our friendship is a gift.
 A friend is someone who fills our lives
 with beauty, joy, and grace.
 And makes the whole world we live in
 a better and happier place.

Jean Kyler McManus

OUR RECREATION CLUB

The Recreation Club at Fisherville J.H.S is a continuation from the circle of friends group at Pleasant Elementary School. I have been a part of this group since grade 3 and really enjoyed it. We meet as a group every Tuesday over the lunch period where we eat together and then get involved in different activities.



It is important to care and show kindness towards each other and also respect our different ideas. I have learnt that I wouldn't have been friends with some of the people in this group if I did not participate in the Recreation Club.

As the year goes by, I hope that more kids will join the group where we can develop our talents and make new friends.

Thank you.

Julianna K - Grade 8
Recreation Club - Fisherville Junior High School

SUMMER CAMPS



Denzel enjoying his first Canoe Ride @ Humber Arboretum Camp



Dustin flying high @ Caves Spring Camp





FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE UPDATES



A Friendship Circle at Cumber Valley Middle School

The bell rings. It's lunch time and some students from the grade 6 classes are getting ready to meet. There's a feeling of excitement among them. A friendship circle is underway at Cumber Valley Middle School. These were some of the comments that the children made about their time together as a group.

"We share at the friendship circle."

"I enjoyed playing Bingo."

"I enjoy the games we play."

"I have met new friends."

"I really like being part of the friendship circle."

"What I like is the way we meet together and talk about our day."

The friendship circle is a gathering of people who come together, much like any group of friends. The idea is to enjoy each other, laugh, take turns, and learn something new, share a talent and the list goes on... There's no price or limit to the possibilities in friendship.

The people at Cumber Valley MS are a welcoming presence to the idea of an inclusive community. Friendship circles happen in several schools and neighbourhoods; each one as unique as the people that make them up.

The students at Cumber Valley MS that are part of this exciting venture are Jeehyun, Yvonne, Janice, Tara, Viktoria, Teyah, Arian, Khash, Hannah and Jingwen.

A BOND THAT CONTINUES TO GROW...

A friend is always there as a mentor, a support, a guide,

A friend is a source of motivation, comfort, and pride.

A friend is someone who always stands by your side,

And will never leave you alone to battle the rough tide.

The bond you share with a friend is one that continues to grow,

Care, respect, love, and patience is what it will always show.

It is truly a special relationship between two hearts that know,

They can always count on one another, and the light will always glow.

Sarah and I, too, are very fortunate to share this unique bond that is bright,

It has helped us rediscover our strengths and weaknesses in an entirely new light,

Through a lens that converts every difficulty,

Into a definite and absolute possibility.

Communication and understanding,

Along with optimism and time commitment,

Have indeed facilitated the blossoming of our friendship flower...

Written by: Azba Hathiyani.

A CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, PLEASANT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Students from the grade 6 class at Pleasant Public School have come together once again to celebrate friendship! Some of these children have met since grade 1. They are truly eager to meet as a group, learn new games and are excited just being together.

Students in the picture are, from left, Shahrbonu, Ksenia, Maryam and sitting, Spencer, Neal and Tom. Felicia, a Staff person from Pleasant PS, who is not in the photo, has been a vital person in keeping the spirit of the group alive and sustaining relationships among the students. It is a pleasure to work in partnership with Pleasant PS!



A FRIENDSHIP JOURNEY

My name is Sadiya Khan and I am a final year student at the University of Toronto. I took an interest in participating in a friendship opportunity through Extend-A-Family because I believe engaging and interacting in the community is an important part of any person's experience. It is a different kind of practical experience rather than the theoretical experience that we are used to at university. The friendships that one gains through this experience are wonderful and nurturing.

My friendship with my buddy Sean began in September 2008. When I first met Sean, he was a bit hesitant towards me. It took us some time to get used to each other since we had never met before. However we have been great friends ever since. We go for walks together, read books, go bowling, and play all sorts of fun and educational games.

I encourage anyone who likes to make a difference in a person's life to join Extend-A-Family; it will be a fun and memorable experience!

Sadiya Khan

FELICIA AND I



Felicia and I have been friends for more than 2 years. Every time Felicia sees me, she gives me a warm hug; I am always touched when she does that.

We have a wonderful time when we are together. Usually I ask her what she would like to do and then we plan our time accordingly. Felicia likes watching movies, going to the mall, browsing in the stores, going bowling but most of all, she loves animals. Because of that, we visit the animal shelter a lot. There, she loves cradling the kittens and talking to them. I can see that she loves them from her heart.

We have some good times at the cinema too. We have seen a lot of animated movies and musicals. We have a really good time eating popcorn and laughing aloud.

Felicia is a warm-hearted and honest person and I have learned much from her. We will continue to enjoy our time together and hope that more people will join in extending their friendship; not just to help others but also to help ourselves. We all need friends and can always learn from each other.

Eva Wei

THIS PAST SUMMER

This past summer Jamie & I were matched through the Extend-A-Family host program. From the onset both Jamie and I realised how much we had in common, which allowed us to build a meaningful and warm relationship.

We spent time together over the summer enjoying movies, visiting the CNE and family gatherings.

As Jamie and I got to know each other better, we introduced our respective families. Both our families enjoy classical music and Jamie was able to perform a few peices on his violin for my father.

Both Jamie and I are extremely appreciative of the E-A-F host program and the mutual benefits for all the people involved.

Dominique & Jamie

ART CORNER

Anthony Melillo a student of Waterfront Trail Artists Summer Camp, shows some of his art work.



BOOK REVIEWS

A Book Review by Laura Van Wyk

The Boy in the Moon: A Father's Search for his Disabled Son, by Ian Brown

© 2009, printed by Random House Canada

This book is an excellent read. Ian Brown the author is a feature writer for the Globe and Mail and anchor of TVO's Human Edge and The View From Here. He is also the author of two books, Freewheeling and Man Overboard and editor of the anthology What I Mean to Say: The Private Lives of Men.

I first got to know Ian Brown through a series of articles published in the Globe and Mail starting back in December 2007, where they reproduced excerpts from The Boy in the Moon. I kept those articles because I instantly related to his intimate description of a parent who is often frustrated and confused as they try to help their child to develop to the best of their ability. So often we hear from a mom's point of view about challenges regarding her child's special needs but Ian gave us a unique, painfully honest, often humorous glimpse into a father's perspective of having a child with special needs. As Brown wrote "Walker cannot speak but he has much to tell us."

This book is Ian Brown's testament to the pain and joy of being Walker's father and how it has changed his view of life.



A Book Review by Sharon Power

Inside Out Girl by Tish Cohen

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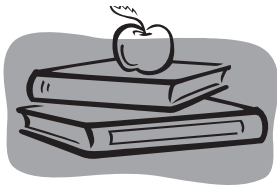
The first time I picked up Inside Out Girl, I read the overview and returned it to the shelf, the second time I picked it up....I said "not my cup of tea." The third time I went to the library, this book crossed my path again and I knew this book wanted me to read it. And so, I borrowed the book from my local library and settled down to read "Inside Out Girl," not realizing it was about a little girl with a disability.

In the "Inside Out Girl" two families collide. Both families are dealing with life challenges and complexities that many families face, in their day to day lives. But it is little Olivia Bean with her non verbal learning disability, that manages to bind both the Bean and Berman family together.

This poignant, sometimes humorous and tragic story, helps us see the beauty in life, the gifts we share, that uniqueness matters, and that at our fundamental core we are all human, all need each other in some capacity and that life is sometimes messy and unpredictable....sometimes we just need to accept those things that we cannot change and see the joy within.



EDUCATION CORNER - SCHOOL MYTHS AND TIPS FOR PARENTS



Eventually all of our children will be in school. They will attend kindergarten and then go on to full school days from grade

one forward. Our children spend the majority of their time within the school, in classrooms and on the school grounds. For this reason we feel it is important to dispel a few myths that cause parents a great deal of worry and confusion. We hope you find this helpful.

Myth #1

You should delay enrolling your child in kindergarten until next year because they are not ready.

Fact:

If your school board has junior kindergarten classes then it is 100% the parent's decision to enrol the child in kindergarten. It is not the school's decision.

Fact:

According to the Auditor General the only criteria needed to attend kindergarten are the students-to-be needs to be the correct age and have the appropriate address to register at that school.

Myth #2

Schools do not accept children who need toileting.

Fact:

Children do not need to be toilet trained to attend school.

Previously it was in the Education Act that students had to be toilet-trained. This has been removed from the Education Act.

Fact:

Teachers in accordance to their collective agreements do not change diapers or assist in the toileting of children. There is no such collective agreement preventing support staff such as educational assistants or special needs assistants or even Principals from performing these duties as needed.

Myth #3

Kindergarten is not mandatory; your child's energy level and behaviour is too much to manage and we do not have adequate staff. Try next year; I am sure he will settle down by then.

Fact:

As mentioned above the decision to enrol a child in kindergarten is 100% the parent's decision. The right to attend school is determined by the child's age and their residence. No student can be denied attendance because of the school's own purposes such as shortage of staff or lack of trained staff.

Myth #4

The parent must accompany their child to go on the class trip; or the assistant can't go, so your child cannot go either.

Fact:

Many classes go on school trips. It is the responsibility of the school/teacher to recruit enough volunteers combined with staff to properly supervise the students on the trip. A student cannot be denied if their parent does not accompany them. All students have the right to participate in all aspects of school life, including trips. This often means schools need to be creative in the organizing of a trip.

Myth #5

Education Quality and Accountability Office testing; the school says the child cannot write it but the parent wants the student to experience it.

Fact:

If the student regularly receives accommodation for all forms of assessment then the student may have accommodations for the EQAO testing. Those accommodations are: setting (place, adaptive equipment and prompting); format (technology, scribing); response format.

Modification of the test is not permitted.

Fact:

If parents want their child to write the tests, the student must be allowed to write the tests.

Myth #6

Your child should have a gradual entry to school as they are not ready for their full school day.

Fact:

As per the Ontario Ombudsman, "No child has to earn the right to attend the same amount of time in school as their typical peers."

Fact:

To have gradual entry there must be a documented plan that is short term in nature that is to the benefit of the student.

Myth #7

We have to shorten his school day because we do not have adequate staff to support him

Fact:

Shortened day can only be instituted if the school has done everything to accommodate the student. Only then can they shorten the school day. Staffing cannot be a factor. Early dismissal because of bussing should not be a factor either and should be brought to the attention of the school board.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Ontario Association of Children's Rehabilitation Services www.oacrs.com
Lindsay Moir's column "Ask Lindsay"; the monthly columns are archived for three years.

Ministry of Education of Ontario
www.gov.on.ca

Search for these documents:

- Special Education, Guide for Educators
- Individual Education Plans A Resource Guide
- Planning Entry to School
- Shared Solutions

Inclusive Education resource

www.Paulakluth.com

Excellent articles on inclusive practices;

Watch for Community Living Ontario's www.communitylivingontario.ca
Conference on Inclusive Education: in 2010;

"From Rhetoric To Reality"
Feb 25, Feb 26 and Feb 27th, 2010

GAMES PAGE



FRIENDSHIP WORD SEARCH

friend • laugh • companion • games • trust
play • share • fun

g	l	d	i	g	t	r	s	s
r	a	i	l	n	a	d	m	u
c	o	m	p	a	n	i	o	n
n	s	n	e	e	u	l	a	a
p	t	n	i	s	f	g	h	e
a	l	r	h	g	l	d	h	l
h	f	a	u	o	u	i	a	e
h	r	g	y	s	t	d	n	a
e	g	a	p	f	t	a	s	e

A HOLIDAY THEMED WORD SCRAMBLE

SEE BOX BELOW FOR ANSWERS.

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1. rabeelcet | 5. aulgh |
| 2. yifalm | 6. deroetac |
| 3. idnref | 7. tgif |
| 4. owsn | |

1.celebrate 2. family 3. friend 4. snow
5. laugh 6. decorate 7. gift

JOKES AND RIDDLES

- What has a head and a tail but no body? A COIN!
- What vehicle is spelled the same backwards and forwards? RACECAR
- Why is six afraid of seven? Because seven EIGHT nine!
- What is yours but your friends use more than you do? Your name!

DID YOU KNOW.....?



As many of you are aware, Special Services at Home funding has been “frozen” for over eighteen months. In Ontario, SSAH is used by over 29,000 families and there are now at least another 3000 families on the provincial wait list, including over 800 in Toronto. As members of The SSAH Provincial Coalition, we believe that families must receive the financial support to enable their family member to participate fully in community life.

We urge you to contact your local MPP and also write to Minister M. Meilleur to let them know the importance of the SSAH program and the profound impact it has on families supporting loved ones with disabilities.

Minister M. Meilleur, MCSS
80 Grosvenor St. 6th Floor,
Hepburn Block
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1E9
Tel: 416 325 5225 Fax: 416 325 5191
Email: mmeilleur.mpp@liberal.ola.org



SERVICES AND SUPPORTS TO PROMOTE THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ACT, 2008

In 2008 the Ontario Government passed the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008; this Act will replace the Developmental Services Act which is 35 years old. According to the Ministry of Community & Social Services, this Act will give adults with developmental disabilities more choice and control over the way they individually choose to live their lives. The most exciting aspect of the new Act is that individuals will be able to choose if they want to receive “direct funding” (money that is issued directly to the individual and/or family member/person/agency of choice); direct funding enables a person to have control over and manage what supports/services he/she requires to live his/her life in a way that is meaningful to that individual. The other funding options under the Act will be to receive a combination of direct funding and services from agencies; or, the traditional option of choosing to receive all services and supports from agencies.

- Services and supports that will be funded under this Act include:
- Residential Services and Supports
- Activities of Daily Living
- Community Participation Services and Supports
- Caregiver Respite Services and Supports
- Professional and Specialized Services
- Person-directed Planning Services and Supports

This Act is not yet law as before it becomes law the MCSS must develop policy directives and regulations; these are the instructions and rules that must be adhered to under the Act. The public is invited to provide input and feedback during this process; please see the website www.ontario.ca/community and bulletin “Spotlight on Transformation”- this is where the Ministry will post updates. The information for this article is from the Ministry’s brochure on Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008 that can be downloaded from <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/developmental>.

NEW STAFF MEMBERS:

WELCOME

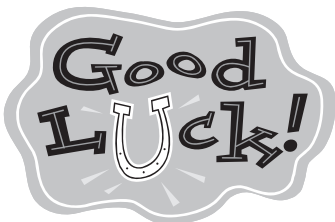


Hello. My name is Jessica Van Wyk and I am a proud new coordinator at Extend-A-Family! You may be thinking “that name rings a bell”...I am a familiar face around here; I have been a summer student for Extend-A-Family for a number of years. I am looking forward to working with an amazing team of people year round. I’ve come to know a number of individuals and families throughout my years with E-A-F, many whom are still in my life. I am excited to work with my new families, discovering their gifts and interests, exploring with them exciting opportunities for inclusion and friendship. I have a lifetime of experience from teaching and learning with people of all abilities, especially close to home with my brother Danny. I have experience in augmentative communication, art and physiotherapy. I am a graduate from Humber College with a diploma

in social work and dedicated my work and life to bringing people together and encouraging us all to live lovingly. I love to dance, laugh, cook and have a passion for living life to the fullest! I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to learn and grow in such an inspiring and supportive environment!

GOOD LUCK TO THE FOLLOWING STAFF MEMBER

A fond farewell to Jocelyne Tranquilla, who has decided to pursue further education in the Maritimes. Jocelyne, we wish you luck in your studies and career.



EXCITING HAPPENINGS & UPDATES!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



**EXTEND-A-FAMILY
WINTER FRIENDSHIP CELEBRATION**
@ North Toronto Memorial Community
Centre (Yonge/Eglinton)

An opportunity for families and friends to
gather and spend time together.

February 21, 2010 1:00 PM 4:30 PM

See flyer for further information



SEXUALITY WORKSHOP

Extend-A-Family will be hosting a workshop on sexuality and relationships in the spring of 2010. The workshop will run once each week, for 6 weeks. The age group that will participate will be determined by the need expressed. Sexuality and a focus on healthy relationships are an integral part of each person's life, regardless of our ability, talent or orientation. We encourage families to find out more about this opportunity of learning.

For further information feel free to contact Ruth at 416-493-0323 or at rf@extendafamily.ca

YOUTH CONFERENCE MARCH 06 - 08 TEACHING YOUTH ABOUT INCLUSION: ONTARIO'S COMMUNITY INCLUSION PROJECT

For the next three years, Ontario's Community Inclusion Project will be funding a youth leadership series to continue encouraging young people to be active in achieving inclusion within their schools and communities across the province. Check out the Association for Community Living Ontario site for further information.

www.communitylivingontario.ca

SYMPOSIUM ON "PARENTING WITH A DISABILITY & THE LEGAL SYSTEM."

February 3rd, 2010

The Law Society of Upper Canada, 130 Queen Street West, Toronto

This event will increase cross-sectoral understanding of the disadvantages parents with disabilities face with the legal system when their disability is linked with race, culture, faith, financial status and/or family structure.

www.communitylivingontario.ca

FROM RHETORIC TO REALITY: A FORUM ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION.

Toronto February 25th-27th

Cosponsored with the Canadian and Ontario Associations for Community Living and Ryerson, along with other community partners this event will draw - educators, families and students, service providers and policy makers, to come together and examine the current climate of education in Ontario. What works, what doesn't and what we should do to ensure that students are able to take their rightful place in school with the support they need for success. Don't miss this one, your voice and experience will be powerful in shaping the three days and what's to come

www.communitylivingontario.ca

EXTEND-A-FAMILY & COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS

For support group start dates for 2010 check with the designated coordinator.

**"West Parents Support Group" @
Long Branch Baptist Church**
Day: Every 2nd week on Wednesday
morning
Time: 9:30^{AM} - 11:30^{AM}
Contact: Sharon Power
Phone: 416-354-2521
Email sp@extendafamily.ca

**"Caawimaada Qoysaska ee Kooxda" NEW
"North Parent Support Group" @
Kingsview Village JMS**
Day: Every first Thursday of each month
Time: 5:30^{PM} - 7:30^{PM}
Contact: Shanika Burnett
Email shanika_burnett@yahoo.ca

Adult Sibling Support Group
Day: Tuesday 19 January 2010
Time: 7:00^{PM} - 9:00^{PM}
Contact: Cate Houghton
Phone: 416-484-1317
Email: ch@extendafamily.ca



**"Mom's Morning Out" East Support
Group @ Cedarbrook Community Centre**
Day: Every other Thursday
Time: 9.30^{AM} - 11.30^{AM}
Contact: Tamara Bailey
Phone: 416-286-7338
Email: tb@extendafamily.ca

**"Safe & Secure Futures Network"
(West Region) @ Royal York Road
United Church**
Day: Tuesday Evenings Once a Month
Time: 7:00^{PM} - 9:00^{PM}
For further information and to register
contact: Sharon Power
Phone: 416-354-2521
Email sp@extendafamily.ca

**"Safe & Secure Futures Network"
(Central & East Region) @ St.
Simon the Apostle Anglican Church**
Day: Tuesday Evenings Once a Month
Time: 7:00^{PM} - 9:00^{PM}
For further information and to register
contact: Anne Murray
Phone: 416-930-2080
Email abm@extendafamily.ca

**"Dads' Group" @ Extend-A-Family
Main Office**
Day: Tuesday Evenings Once a Month
TBD
Time: 7:00^{PM} - 9:00^{PM}
For further information and to register
contact Sam Rocchese
Phone: 416-530-0272
Email: sr@extendafamily.ca

IN LOVING MEMORY - REMEMBERING CZARINA



Czarina Stacey Mae L. Tabada was born on December 6, 2003. She was the youngest in her family with 2 sisters and 3 brothers. She was a friendly, loving, sweet, adorable and multi talented child. She expressed herself cleverly in so many ways. She was an artist, was fond of music and loved to dance. Czarina was full of life, an inspiration, our advocate and our strength. She loved reading books, being with people and looking at family photos. Her favourite spot to play in was the kitchen. She offered her guests a cup of tea and a pizza. "Dora" was her all time birthday cake request.

Czarina's ability to persevere through difficult moments was exceptional; she was a true fighter. She did her last painting with beautiful colours. One wouldn't expect that a tiny 'bundle of energy' could do such marvellous and extraordinary things. Czarina's bed time prayer went like this, 'Thank you Jesus. Help me get well. Amen'. Czarina our little girl passed away on October 3, 2009 at Sick Kids Hospital with her family around her.

'Czarina, you will always be in our hearts. We love you.'

Irma Agan, Czarina's Mum

ACKNOWLEDGMENT & APPRECIATION

A BIG THANK YOU for the wonderful articles and art contributions received from Extend-A-Family members. Your contributions to the newsletter are greatly appreciated.

Thank you to Reach for the Rainbow, Humber Arboretum and Just Bounce Trampoline Club for working inclusively with our membership.

A heart felt thanks to Susan Beayni for facilitating the Extend-A-Family staff retreat.

On behalf of Extend-A-Family and Safe & Secure Futures Networks, We are grateful for the use of the following venues: Long Branch Baptists Church, Royal York Road United Church, St. Simon the Apostle, St. Leonard Church, Kingsview Village JS, North Memorial CC, OWN Co-op, Cedarbrook CC for allowing us to facilitate our support groups, gatherings, AGM and workshops at their locations.

Thank you to both the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board for working in partnership with Extend-A-Family to ensure that friendship circles thrive across schools in Toronto.

Thank you for your contributions!

Charitable Registration Number 11890-4846-RR0001

Please make cheques payable to **Extend-A-Family** & mail to:



Extend-A-Family
200-3300 Yonge Street
Toronto ON M4N 2L6

For receipt purposes we require the following information:

Name _____ Tel: _____

Address _____