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OMAHA
DOWN
SYNDROME
PARENTS
NETWORK



COMMITTED TO
ENHANCING LIVES



EXTRA EXTRA (21) READ ALL ABOUT IT

A newsletter from the **OMAHA DOWN SYNDROME PARENTS NETWORK**
Committed to enhancing the lives of individuals & families touched by Down syndrome

MEET JOEY'S BIG BROTHER

Kevin Drwal, Joey Drwal's big brother, is very involved in Down syndrome awareness.

Kevin serves on the Special Olympics Youth Advisory Board. This group is involved in Special Olympics PR, meets quarterly, participates in monthly conference calls, and volunteers at the National Games.

Kevin and his friend Rodney Hannon organized the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign at Millard West High School. They hung a banner in the commons for students to sign and presented a news report on how the "r-word" affects people everywhere. The report was broadcast through the video feed that is shown in homerooms.

Kevin and Brent Holst organized a "Kick it up for Down syndrome" project for Delta Epsilon Chi (High School Division). DECA members sold tickets at school and at all home football games for a chance to kick a field goal from the 30-yard line. Tickets sold for \$3 for one and \$5 for two. This project generated \$200, which was donated to the National Down Syndrome Society.

Another fundraiser was a Mr. Goodcents night that Kevin and Brent promoted at Millard West. Mr. Goodcents donated 10% of their total profits from 4pm to 8pm from one night in October. Millard West collected \$80 on this event to donate to NDSS.

Kevin and Brent presented the information for these projects (including the R-word campaign) at the State DECA meeting in Lincoln.

You may recognize the Millard West Football Team from ODSPN Buddy Walks. The Drwal family has organized the team's involvement in the event for the last four years.



April
2010

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Special Olympics National Games July 18-23 Lincoln, NE

When registering as a volunteer, please join the ODSPN team and consider volunteering on Sunday, July 18 & Monday, July 19 so that we have a strong presence at the games.

Millard West
Prom King

TROY KOSTAL



Members News

Welcome

Katie & Pat Sharp
Billy
& Family

Julie & Tregg Lunn
Maggie Rose

Darci & Rocky Tibbs
Bronc Casey
& Family

Vince & Megan Pietro
Tessa
& Family

Patrick & Jean Butler
Daniel
& Family

Tomasita & Jose Arcos
Aaron
& Family

Mary Slagle
Sister of Richard Slagle
& Family

Connie Sage
Jackie
& Family

Florina Garcia
Mariana

Congratulations

The Zephiers welcomed
Baby Apollo in March

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Board News

Andrew Kloeckner joins the ODSPN Board as Legal Advisor



Andy is an associate at Baird Holm LLP where he specializes in health care law, assisting clients with various transactions and compliance issues and compliance with tax exempt laws. Andy is married to his wife Carla, and they have a 2 year old son, Drew. Andy currently serves on the Board of OneWorld Community Health Centers as well as the Board of ODSPN. Andy has previously served as a deacon at Lutheran Church of the Master and has served as the Vice President of The Foundation of the Master.

Membership Survey

The annual membership survey will be coming out soon. Please take a few minutes to fill it out. It's quick and painless and you can even submit it anonymously.

This survey determines in a large part what the board will focus on in their strategic planning meeting in August and what they will strive to implement over the following year. This is your chance to let your voice be heard.

We have successfully incorporated several suggestions from last year's survey, from fresh approaches to welcoming new parents to bringing in the Lose the Training Wheels Camp.

Buddy Walk 2010

Mark your calendars: Buddy Walk 2010 will be held on October 9th at the UNO campus.

Thanks to all the members who suggested businesses and corporations that might be interested in sponsoring the Buddy Walk. New suggestions are always welcome ... the sooner the better.



D.A.D.S. took their kids ice skating and to see the UNO Mavericks beat Ohio State!

ODSPN celebrated World Down Syndrome Day with a PajamaRama party at Oakview Barnes & Noble.



Letter from Mary McHale

Spring has finally come after an extremely long winter for everyone. Like everyone else, I am thankful that we can go outside and play, ride bikes, do some gardening, attend a soccer game—and other outdoor activities.

Read a post on someone's Facebook page last week that was a celebration of her son's birthday. In thinking of the difference that Daniel has made in my life (especially since Mother's Day is coming up), a few things came to my mind. He has made me:

- An advocate for him until he is able to advocate for himself
- Hopeful for the future for him and others with disabilities
- Strong in our determination for him to have a happy and productive life
- Nervous about the next stages in his life, which includes Middle School and puberty
- More aware of the value of all individuals with disabilities
- Realize that everything we do doesn't have to be therapy for him—sometimes he can just be a child and I can just be a parent
- Proud of what he has accomplished. I have always said that if there was credit given for effort, he would always get the highest grade
- Realize, like any other parent, that your child grows up way too fast and I need to take the time to enjoy the stage that he is at—and not think too hard about what is ahead for him
- Let others know that my son is more like a typically developing child than not and that people can parent a child with a disability—and I am not a special person, but just a Mom trying to do the best I can for my child—just like any other Mom

Parenthood changes a person in so many ways, that it is difficult for me to know if I am changed because of becoming a parent or I am changed because I am the parent of a child with a disability. I imagine that it is a combination of both.

I do know that Daniel has taken us on a journey that I didn't know I would be taking when he was born on May 11, 1998. I have met many different people from many walks of life and I know that my life has been enriched because of this.

Happy Mother's Day to all! I hope you have a good one.

Thank You

Dr. Jill Foster & Omaha Chiropractic and Acupuncture are continuing to raise funds for ODSPN by offering monthly promotions. Their latest contribution was nearly \$1000. Contact omahachiropractic@yahoo.com for more information on how you can participate in this ongoing fundraiser.

The Harry A. Koch Company chose ODSPN as the beneficiary of their "Friday Jeans Days," which raised over \$700. A special thanks goes to Lisa Mercier for coordinating this and a breakfast event that generated donations for ODSPN. Lisa and Joe Mercier are the grandparents of Emery Rosenboom. Lisa also serves as co-chair for G.R.A.N.D.S.

Denise Gehringer and the Gross Catholic High School Varsity Dance Team collected donations for ODSPN at their February Light Show. They raised over \$500.

Jeff Gehringer, Julie Kalasky, Vernon Oswald, and Lynne Quintana designated ODSPN as the recipients of their United Way donations.

Members News

Happy Birthday March

Alyse Archer
Adam Bannister
Ben Clark
Kaleb Gass
Cody Gelvin
Marissa Horstman
Jacob Kalasky
Jenessa Kimminau
Mikeal Meinders
Sydney Meyer
Emery Rosenboom
Jenna Rothenbush
Thomas Schroeder
Trenton Smaus
Marissa Thompson
Benjamin Willey

April

Marcus Amua-Sekyi
Nathalie Castro
Ethan Costello
Clayton Dilsaver
Grace Greenwood
Edgar Jacinto
Cassie Lacy
Allen Machamer
Landon Marshall
Taylor Marshall
Connor Meng
Mary Clare O'Malley
Emerson Ostrand
Brandon Pollard
Vollen Schlueter
Kellee Marie Snethen
Will Stoneburner

Healing Wishes

Chloe Seim
Eisley Rich

OMAHA DOWN SYNDROME PARENTS NETWORK

Committed to enhancing the lives of individuals
& families touched by Down syndrome

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Our mission is to enhance the quality of life for all individuals with Down syndrome by providing resources and support to those individuals, their families, professionals and the community. Our Vision includes:

- Providing access for individuals of all ages and their families to a wide range of opportunities and resources that meet their needs.
- Full participation of the membership, the community and professionals working together to build resources that inform and support one another.
- An effective coalition with the educational community providing a choice of opportunities for high quality education for individuals with Down syndrome.
- A professional community providing services and advice based on current and accurate information available and acting as advocates for family and individuals with Down syndrome.

NDSS Webinars

NDSS is pleased to announce the launch of monthly webinars, specifically for affiliates. Each month, NDSS will offer hour long webinars on a range of topics from the healthcare needs of individuals with Down syndrome to national initiatives affiliate groups can join. After each informative presentation, there will be time for affiliates to interact with NDSS leadership and ask questions on a range of topics.

Please continue to check back each month for topics, dates, times, and access information for upcoming calls. Also, information from each webinar will be available to download here after the presentation.

www.ndss.org — Affiliates — Monthly Affiliate News

Previous webinars—access information here:

- Affiliate Webinar March 31, 2010: [Atypical Behavior and Down Syndrome](#) with Dr. Mary Pipan
- Affiliate Webinar February 18, 2010: [Prenatal Diagnosis of Down Syndrome](#) with Dr. Brian Skotko
- Affiliate Webinar January 29, 2010: Leadership Opportunities for Adults with Down Syndrome with Essie Pederson [click here](#) to go to the self-advocate section of this website to view the materials from this presentation
- Affiliate Webinar November 23, 2009: Theory to Therapeutics in Mice and Men with Down Syndrome [click here](#) to view a similar presentation from the NDSS Education Series
- [Affiliate Webinar October 20, 2009: Universal Design for Learning](#)
- [Affiliate Webinar September 22, 2009: My Great Story](#)

New to the ODSPN Lending Library

Dakota's Pride. One father's search for the truth about Down syndrome. 2010. DVD. 45-minute DVD has questions and answers for professionals and families about Down syndrome. Easy to view. Great DVD for anyone to view.

The Down Syndrome Transition Handbook. Charting Your Child's Course to Adulthood. Simons, JoAnn, M.S.W. 2010. Woodbine House. An easy to read and follow handbook in working with your child with Down syndrome down to road to adulthood. It has some easy to follow directions/guidelines so that this journey can begin early. Also has some real stories from families who have been down the road before.