

## February 2012 Newsletter

Issue No 9

### **HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY**

#### **PLEASE JOIN US ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>, FOR OUR VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY**

Come celebrate Valentine's Day with F.R.I.E.N.D.S. beginning at 6:30pm at MUMC in Middletown, Maryland. Please RSVP online at <http://new.evite.com/services/links/A3DLFNSOLD>, and bring a dish to share. We will also be having a Valentine's day card exchange for the kids, be sure to sign them up for this fun activity. Please RSVP by February 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

F.R.I.E.N.D.S., is actively looking for sincere and responsible individual's ages 18 to 80 to help throughout the year in various meetings and activities. Volunteer responsibilities would range from child activities, coordinator at our monthly meetings to helping with fundraising events and mailings, and/or providing various professional expertise that would benefit our families. For more information on being a volunteer, please contact Denny Weikert at 703-928-2494 or email [dweikert@friendsoffredco.org](mailto:dweikert@friendsoffredco.org)

#### **NEW FAMILIES, NEW F.R.I.E.N.D.S.:**

One of F.R.I.E.N.D.S. objectives in 2012 is to reach out further into our community to new families of those with Down syndrome with new handouts for expectant parents, informative brochures for doctor's offices, along with a continuing effort within our community with our out-reach projects. Please get involved this year to help F.R.I.E.N.D.S. have the largest impact possible for improving the lives of person's with Down syndrome.



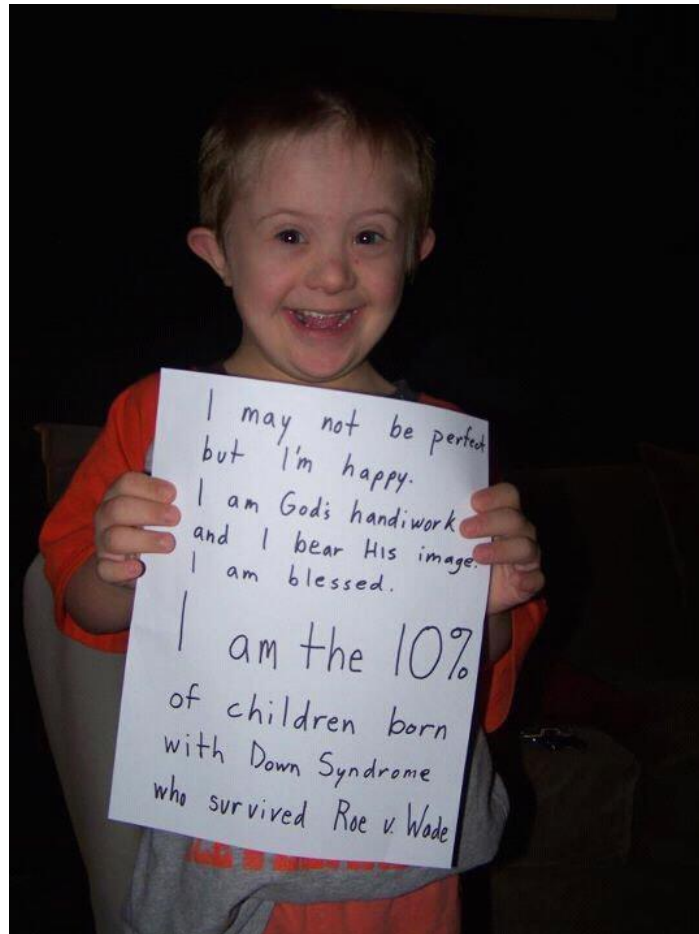
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### MOMMIES OF MIRACLES- A POEM BY AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR

#### The Down Syndrome Creed

My face may be different But my feelings the same  
I laugh and I cry And I take pride in my gains  
I was sent here among you To teach you to love  
As God in the heavens Looks down from above  
To Him I'm no different His love knows no bounds  
It's those here among you In cities and towns  
That judge me by standards That man has imparted  
But this family I've chosen Will help me get started  
For I'm one of the children So special and few  
That came here to learn The same lessons as you  
That love is acceptance It must come from the heart  
We all have the same purpose Though not the same start  
The Lord gave me life To live and embrace  
And I'll do it as you do But at my own pace.



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### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

#### **WATCHING TOO MUCH TV MAY IMPACT YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT**

A study compared mother-child communication while watching TV to reading books and the impact of each on child development. Watching TV led to less interaction between parent and child, with a detrimental impact on literacy and language skills. The team found that when reading a book with their children, parents used a more active communication style, bringing the child into contact with words they may not hear in every day speech, thereby improving their vocabulary and knowledge of grammar.

Children with Down syndrome are usually already at a disadvantage then children without a disability in terms of their mental and social development, and too much TV watching could negatively impact their already up-hill struggle to communicate, learn to read, write and interact with their peers. As parents of children with Down syndrome, we must strive even harder to replace most of what would be TV time with personal interaction such as reading, play activities and social stimulus. Even just going for a walk and talking with your child can help dramatically improve their skills, and will also have a positive impact on your relationship with your child.

#### **HARD TO SWALLOW: OVERDOSE OF OTC MEDICATIONS**

70,000 emergency visits each year are due to unintentional overdoses by children under the age of 18. Alarmed by this statistic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) set up the PROTECT Initiative, a collaboration of public health agencies, private sector companies, professional organizations, consumer/patient advocates and academic experts to stop unintended medication overdose in children. The study found that of the cases of accidental poisoning in young children in the United States, exposure to prescription medications accounts for 55% of emergency visits, 76% of admissions and 71% of significant harm. *Journal of Pediatrics, Dec 2011*

#### **CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND DOWN SYNDROME**

“Some parents choose to include chiropractic care in the spectrum of interventions for their children with Down syndrome. The scope of the chiropractic services offered to children includes musculoskeletal manipulations, recommendations for supplemental vitamins, and agents purported to improve immunologic function. The range of conditions claimed to be amenable to chiropractic treatment is broad and includes constipation, gastroesophageal reflux, and ear infections. Individuals with Down syndrome have ligamentous laxity and therefore may be at increased risk of injury from cervical-spinal manipulation. Parents should be very cautious when considering such treatment, especially if it is promoted in lieu of immunizations, antibiotics for infections or hormone replacement for endocrine deficiency.” Retrieved from <http://www.downsyn.com/guidelines/alternative.php> on January 2012.

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### **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL AWARENESS**

#### **DOWN SYNDROME AND MARRIAGE?**

Is marriage or pregnancy ever an option for a person with Down syndrome? Adults without a disability usually dream of a successful marriage, children, a successful career; are these un-attainable goals for a person born with Down syndrome?

“What are the advantages of partnership and marriage? First of all, [they] would have a close friend and companion with whom they could share a wide range of experiences and social learning and adaptation can take place. Marriage relates to interests and language stimulation and its further development, the sharing of physical chores, stimulation between a couple which gives rise to opportunities for greater activity in social and physical events, therefore more motivation, and therefore growing physical reserves. It also opens the way to greater exploration of the environment. It is well known in the non-disabled population that partnership and marriage leads to greater longevity. This is probably not due to chance but due to some of the advantages and developments that have [been] listed above. The more disabled you are, the more you need support and guidance and support over a wide range of areas. It is through partnership that much of this becomes not only possible, but acceptable to the people concerned. There is little doubt, in talking to teenagers and adults with Down syndrome, that many would like to marry. Of those interviewed, not many wish to have families, but the concept of being with someone and sharing with someone is extremely important. Why, because someone has Down syndrome, should they be condemned to a life of being single, when that is not what they wish?

<http://www.down-syndrome.org/perspectives/67> retrieved January 2012.

#### **REPRODUCTIVE ISSUES FOR DOWN SYNDROME PERSONS**

It is recommended that all females with Down syndrome have a baseline pelvic examination and pap smear between 17 and 20 years of age, this recommendation is too often infrequently followed. Men with Down syndrome need to learn testicular self-examination as their cognitive level permits; likewise, women need to learn breast self-examination and the necessity for regular gynecological care.

Contraception is often a major concern of parents of individuals with Down syndrome.. Parents may be uncomfortable discussing sexual and reproductive issues with a physician and professionals need to initiate structured, nonjudgmental discussion of contraception and to provide clear information tailored to patient developmental levels.

<http://www.ds-health.com/issues.htm> retrieved January 2012.



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### UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

#### MONTHLY GROUP MEETING: VALENTINES DAY PARTY, TUESDAY FEBRUARY 7TH

Please RSVP by February 4<sup>th</sup> to Tracy or online via E-vite link below:

<http://new.evite.com/services/links/A3DLFNSOLD>,

#### SPECS4US- SUPERIOR PRECISION EYEWEAR FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SPECIAL

SPECS4US, introduces a new concept in eyewear for children with Down syndrome that eliminates the problems commonly associated with traditional eyeglasses. The mission of SPECS4US is to improve the vision and quality of life for individuals with Down syndrome by providing affordable custom frames designed especially for them.

The Erin's World line of frames is engineered to fit the unique facial features of children with Down syndrome while offering stylish options handcrafted for an active lifestyle. Each pair of frames offers special design features not found anywhere else. Adult sizes and sunglass clips are also available.

Created by the mother of a child with Down syndrome and 25 years of experience as an optician, the Erin's World eyewear from SPECS4US will help children and adults explore their world with enhanced vision combined with an exciting level of style.

For more information visit [www.SPECS4US.com](http://www.SPECS4US.com) or call 1.800.586.1885.

#### BABYSITTERS NEEDED FOR KAI

A local F.R.I.E.N.D.S. family is in need of a babysitter from time to time so that mom can have a night out or help out during big sister's basketball season. If interested in helping out, please contact Yvonne Zagadou ([yondcarlo@yahoo.com](mailto:yondcarlo@yahoo.com)) or contact Denny for more information.

#### FUTURE AND ESTATE PLANNING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

It's not too late to get your estate planning completed or a special needs trust set up for your child. Please contact Mary Anne Williams at the ARC of Frederick County for more information.

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### *OUR KIDS CORNER- VINCENT PERELLA*



Vincent was born May 13, 2009 and is 2 years old; parents are Charlie and Chris Perella. He adores his big brother Charlie and sister Lillie, and his older sister Maria, who also has Down syndrome. Vincent receives services through the Frederick County Infants and Toddlers Program. He loves to read, play games, and listen to music, dance, and anything that involves the outdoors.



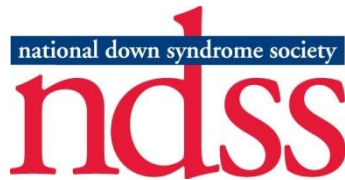
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### *AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS*



Newsletter Committee:

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