

January 2012 Newsletter

Issue No 8

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

F.R.I.E.N.D.S. welcomes you into the 2012 year- wishing you and your family much happiness and blessings in this coming New Year.

PLEASE JOIN US TOMORROW FOR OUR MONTHLY GROUP MEETING

Start the New Year right by spending some time with family and friends tomorrow evening at 6:30pm at MUMC in Middletown, Maryland.

CHRISTMAS PARTY 2011 RECAP

Our annual Christmas party was a HUGE success- the kids got a special visit from Santa Clause and his special friends; the cookie exchange was a delicious addition to the year's festivities (Thanks to Tracy for the great idea); and we collected a large amount of food and supplies for our local Food Bank. If you have any suggestions on how to improve or contribute to next year's party, please contact Denny or Tracy.

PICTURES FROM OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY

A BIG thanks to Rich McDonald and many others who took and sent pictures to contribute to our collage in this month's newsletter (a separate attachment to follow).

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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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

DID YOU KNOW????? BASIC FACTS ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME

10 facts about Down syndrome....

1. There are more than 400,000 individuals with [Down syndrome](#) living in the US
2. One out of approximately 700 babies is born with Down syndrome
3. Down syndrome is not a disease, or illness, it is a chromosomal condition
4. People with Down syndrome have an extra 21st chromosome (which is why sometimes the condition is called Trisomy 21)
5. Down syndrome happens in people of all races or economic levels
6. Chances of having a baby with Down syndrome increase with maternal age
7. Life expectancy for an individual with Down syndrome is age 60
8. People with Down syndrome go to school, work, and are contributing members to society
9. Although most individuals with Down syndrome have an intellectual disability, they have many gifts and talents
10. People with Down syndrome may have an increased risk for certain medical conditions, therefore, it is important to seek help of medical professionals if complications arise

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/blogs/diagnosis-down-syndrome/10-facts-on-down-syndrome> retrieved January , 2012.

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL AWARENESS

A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE OR EUGENICS?

This article has been read by some in the group, it has been deemed offensive in both language of the author as well as his opinion on genetics testing for Down syndrome in early pregnancies. This article is one reason why it so very important that F.R.I.E.N.D.S. continues it's out-reach to expectant mothers and that the group represents the other side of this issue.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/blogs/an-auckland-minute/6100243/A-womans-right-to-choose> retrieved January 2012.

HIDDEN ANGELS: AMERICAN FAMILIES SAVING CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME

In stark contrast to the article above, this ABC news article highlights the compassion and love of some families that have opened their hearts and homes to orphans with Down syndrome. You may need a tissue to get through this read.

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/hidden-angels-american-families-saving-children-syndrome/story?id=15234109> retrieved January 2012.

BIOLOGISTS USE FLIES AND MICE TO GET TO THE HEART OF DOWN SYNDROME

“A novel study involving fruit flies and mice has allowed biologists to identify two critical genes responsible for congenital heart defects in individuals with Down syndrome, a major cause of infant mortality and death in people born with this genetic disorder”.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/11/111104091654.htm> retrieved January 2012.

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

MONTHLY GROUP MEETING FOR JANUARY- TUESDAY, JANUARY 2ND AT 6:30PM

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 or call 1.800.586.1885.

SAVE THE DATE: POLAR BEAR PLUNGE- JANUARY 28, 2012

Plunge participants make a quick dip in Chesapeake Bay in January 2012, and benefits of the plunge go towards the Special Olympics of Maryland. Please visit www.plungemd.org for more details, and look for 'Lily's Chilly Willies' to help support our local participants.



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- MARIA PERELLA



Maria was born July 3, 2007 and is 4 years old; parents are Charlie and Chris Perella. She adores her big brother Charlie and sister Lillie, and her younger brother Vincent, who also has Down syndrome. Maria is in the Pre-K special education classroom at Thurmont Primary School. She loves to read, play games, and listen to music, dance, and anything that involves the outdoors.



Family Resource, Information & Education Network
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AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS



Newsletter Committee:

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