



Connections

Information & Support
for Families of Children with Special Needs
Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, & Yancey counties

Winter
2009

FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK OF THE HIGH COUNTRY

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An Affiliate of
Family Support Network-
North Carolina

With Support From

Appalachian State University
Children's Developmental Services
Agency—Blue Ridge
High County United Way
Friends of Family Support
Network—High County
Avery Partnership for Children
Mitchell-Yancey Partnership for
Children

A Sister's Love Celebrating Abilities

Any Other Brother

My brother is just like yours
He does not need "special" things
He does not need your pity or your sympathy
He has hopes and dreams and feelings
He has a personality that is unique to him and
him alone
He has likes and dislikes
He has friends and family that love him
He is capable of many things
He can accomplish anything he sets his mind to
He is NOT "retarded" or "special"
Or any other word you choose to label him as
He is a person
He deserves to be seen as a person
Not a disability or a thing
He deserves the same rights and opportunities as
everyone else
He deserves to have a full and happy life
And more than anything he deserves a *chance*



Because he is just like
Any other brother

By: Lacey Robinson

Ben's Story

By Ben's Family

"We'll just have to love him more!" was my five-year-old's response to my explanation of what having Down syndrome would mean for her new baby brother. Lacey has never considered what he couldn't do; only what he could do. If anyone ever mentions a weakness or a lack of a skill, she immediately comes back with "but he can....." She has always been his most dedicated teacher and advocate, helping him learn as much as he can. She even taught him to swim.



When he started school, he was fortunate to have others, who like his sister, saw his strengths and abilities. Ben is considered just one of the gang at Bald Creek Elementary. His classmates include him as they go about their day. He is never without someone to eat with, play with or work with. These classmates often invite Ben to birthday parties and other activities outside of school. Being behind academically doesn't bother Ben. He is constantly encouraged to do his best by his teachers and friends. As he makes progress and learns new things, those around him celebrate with him. It is no wonder he loves school so much.

Ben's Story continued

Church has been another place of support and encouragement for Ben. One day he decided to help take up the offering, a job for boys who are proudly elected to that office. No one told him that it wasn't his job or to sit down. Instead, the boys helped him and showed him the correct procedure. When new officers were elected this year, Ben was added to the list of ushers. Now he collects money each Sunday. He takes this job very seriously. The look of pride on his face as he carries the offering plate is priceless!



Ben has always loved and responded to music and dance. About two years ago I found a real angel by the name of "Angel" who was willing to include Ben in her dance class. Ben has successfully participated in dance at Dimensions Studio with Angel Hilemon. He has taken classes in tap and jazz and is currently taking Hip Hop and acrobatics.

Ben loves dancing and recently won second place dancing in a 4-H talent show. 4-H is just one more group that has welcomed Ben with open arms encouraging him to be his best. Like his sister, Lacey, so many have decided to just love him more by seeing his potential and giving him a chance.

Become a "FRIEND OF FSN-HC"

Help us increase our community connections.
It is simple!

Just spread the word about Parent to Parent
FSN-HC with your network of friends & coworkers.

Want more information?
866-812-3122

What Can YOU Do? Introducing the Campaign for Disability Employment

The Campaign for Disability Employment, a newly-formed collaborative of leading disability organizations, has launched *What Can YOU Do?* – a national effort designed to promote positive employment outcomes and increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Every day, people with disabilities can and do add value to America's workplaces. However, in both good economic times and bad, people with disabilities have far fewer job opportunities than the general population. Inspired to change these realities, the Campaign for Disability Employment's *What Can YOU Do?* effort aims to promote the hiring, retention and advancement of people with disabilities and dispel negative stereotypes about disability and employment

Youth With Disabilities ~ What WILL you do?

Work is an important part of people's lives. It means more than just getting paid. It means being able to make your own choices about how you want to live your life.

At work, it's what people can do that matters. If you are a young person with a disability, only you can decide your limits. You can work in a wide variety of jobs and play an important role in America's economy. In fact, experience with a disability can help in a job or in starting a business. Today more than ever, businesses need people who can think differently about how to solve problems and get the job done. People with disabilities do this in America's workplaces every day – and so can you. So set your sights high! Along the way, remember that resources are available to help you seek employment, succeed on the job, and understand your right to be judged on your ability, not disability.

The Campaign is a collaborative effort between the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD); the National Business and Disability Council (NBDC); Special Olympics (SO); and the U.S. Business Leadership Network (USBLN).

**For more information, visit
Youth With Disabilities: What WILL you do? on
www.whatcanyoudocampaign.org.**

Winter Wonderland Keeping Active During the Cold Months

Fun Winter Activities

www.parents.com

Bundle Up and Get Going

To a kid, cold weather offers plenty of excitement, from twinkling, ice-coated tree branches to frost-covered windows and fresh, crunchy snow. If you dress your child appropriately and follow some basic safety rules (see "Cold Play," below), there's no reason your children can't head outside for a romp, even on snow days.

Try making snow angels or taking gentle saucer rides together, says Rae Pica, a children's movement specialist and the author of *Your Active Child*. When flurries are flying, give your little one a piece of dark-colored construction paper and encourage her to catch and examine a few snowflakes.

Toss snowballs against a wide target, like the side of the house or a large rock formation, or have a contest to see who can throw them the farthest. Break out your favorite beach toys too—the buckets and shovels you used last summer are ideal for scooping and molding the white stuff. Shoveling the walkway? Let your sidekick "help out" by using a whisk broom and dustpan to sweep up the powder you leave in your wake.

Cold Play

Outdoor play is a pleasure year-round—you just have to be a bit more cautious in winter. Start by choosing your outfits very carefully (as they like to say in snowy Scandinavia, "There's no such thing as the wrong weather, just the wrong clothing"). Put your child in a layered outfit so she isn't underdressed if she sheds her bulky coat. Make sure her skin is covered too, including her ears and mouth. And a warm hat or hood is an absolute must on cold days, since so much body heat escapes through the head.

If your child's mittens or clothes get wet, change her quickly or call it quits. Cold-related injuries, including hypothermia, are up to five times more likely to occur when skin is wet. Stay alert to other signs that she needs to head indoors—whitish lips or fingertips and, of course, shivering.

Insider Info

Of course, winter has its share of more challenging days—ones when the wind howls and the thermometer reading doesn't differ all that much from your preschooler's age. Can you stay indoors and still stay physically active? Yes, but only if you're creative about it.

A-maze your child

Set up an obstacle course for your little one to explore. It doesn't have to be fancy—a couple of boxes with blankets draped between them can create a fascinating tunnel. Tonya Hampton, of Lexington, North Carolina, has another suggestion: "We take all the cushions off the couch, throw them in a big pile, and go mountain climbing!" she says.

Snow Days

Paint the Yard

Fill several spray bottles with water, add different shades of food coloring to each, and shake. Then turn your snow-covered lawn into a brilliant canvas.

Build a Snow Family

Even snow people need companionship, so why stop at one? Make a mommy, daddy, and smaller-size snow kids. Add hats, scarves, even eyeglasses so each one resembles a member of your own household.

Blow Bubbles

Chill a container of soapy water in the refrigerator, then try to blow it away on a freezing cold day. Your kids will be surprised to see how long the bubbles take to pop.

Hunt For Animal Tracks

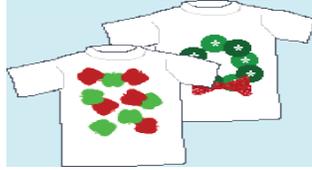
Check out a field guide from the library, and see how many prints you can identify. If you live in an urban area, let your children fashion their own creature tracks, using spoons and other household utensils. The neighbors will think you've had some unusual visitors.

Fun Family Activities

Apple Printing

What You Need:

Apples
Paint
Paper Plates
Something to print on (paper, shirts, bags)
Newspapers to protect the table
Knife to cut the apples



How to make it!

- 1) Apple printing is always fun: there are two very different prints you can get by cutting apples in half through the middle OR from the top to bottom.
- 2) You can cut them in half through the stem, dip them in red and green paint, and make a very nice-looking collage of apple shapes. Cutting them through the middle makes a circle stamp with a star in the middle.
- 3) To paint on a t-shirt or tote, put a thick layer of paper inside the shirt/tote to prevent the paint from bleeding through to the back of the fabric.

You can also make a fun gift for a parent, grandparent or caregiver by brushing the paint onto the children's hands and decorating the shirt or tote with those special handprints

Recipe Corner: Arctic Oranges

Ingredients:

- 4 Oranges
- 4 Cups of Orange Juice
- 4 Cherries



Instructions

- 1) Cut the tops off the oranges in a zigzag pattern. Hollow out the insides, remove the seeds and combine in a blender with the juice.
- 2) Set the rinds in a muffin tin and fill with the mixture. Drop a cherry inside each orange. Freeze for 2 to 3 hours. Soften the treats for 5 minutes, then serve. Makes 4.

familyfun.com

Seasonal Flu, and H1N1 flu.gov

There is two strains of the flu, seasonal flu, and the H1N1 flu, that are currently in the United States. Most healthy people will have a healthy recovery from the flu, though some persons are have a high risk of serious complications. This website, flu.gov, is a great resource for it allows you to keep up with your states information, can help you locate the nearest location for the vaccine for either the seasonal flu, or the H1N1 flu. There are several links to information specialized for individuals and families, professionals, expecting mothers, videos for children, information on the medications that are being used, and prevention methods.

Prevention

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

Stay home if you are sick until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100°F or 37.8°C) or signs of a fever (without the use of a fever-reducing medicine, such as Tylenol®).

Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

flu.gov

Love and Logic: Self-Concept

I'm not held back because of what I can't do. I'm held back because of what I'm afraid I can't do. More often I am held back because of my fear that I might fail, and as a result, I might not like myself. That's called lack of self-esteem.

Our self-concept rules our lives. It sometimes works as a wonderful encourager and sometimes as a tyrannical dictator, controlling almost every move we make, it talks to us constantly, "You can do it. Go for it!" Or, "Not me. I could never do that."

Our self-concept lives at the subconscious level of thinking, over which we have little control. It grew there when we were little children and continues to grow and change with every new experience just like a computer.

However, computers have no ability to decide right from wrong, fact from fiction. Everything stored in the computer later comes out as fact. In computerland this is known as "garbage in, garbage out."

Our subconscious mind does the same thing. It cannot tell the difference between things we vividly imagine and things that really happen. As a result, everything that is stored comes out as fact, even when the original source is imagination or misunderstanding.

A youngster's mind is especially receptive to what is going on in his or her world. The self-concept computer is not firmly set. Therefore, children are easily influenced by the messages they think they hear from their parents and teachers. We can help children store positive or negative messages. We do the best job of this, not through our words, but through our actions.

Parents and teachers who constantly encourage children to decide between two alternatives teach children to think for themselves. They send powerful messages that imply, "You are so smart that I can allow you to think for yourself." This action also implies, "I can trust you to know what is good for you."

Wise parents usually suggest two choices in a manner that allow them to be happy with either choice. An example of this is: "Our car will be leaving for town in 20 minutes. Are you going to wear your coat or carry it? It's your choice."

Love and Logic Cont.

Some parents give orders, such as "You wear your coat or else!" This sends a "you're dumb" message. After a period of time these parents discover using too many orders has caused their child's low self-concept.

A child's self-concept is the sum total of all the "you're smart" messages he or she hears minus all the "you're dumb" messages. Hopefully, our action send more positive messages than negative ones.

Area Support Groups

Ashe County Parent Support Group

Date: Last Tuesday of each month(Subject to change in month of December, Contact Norma)

Time: 6:00pm

Location: Midway Baptist Church Fellowship Hall
Mt. Jefferson Rd., West Jefferson

Contact: Norma Bouchard at 336-246-3222 or
1-866-812-3122 or bouchardnj@appstate.edu
Meal provided with RSVP.

Mitchell County Parent Support Group

Date: First Tuesday of each month

Time: 6:00pm

Location: Spruce Pine United Methodist Church

Contact: Teresa Emory at 828 682-4772 or
emorytd@appstate.edu
RSVP for childcare!

Watauga County Parent Support Group

Date: Second Friday of each month

Time: 6:00—8:00pm

Location: The White House at 381 E. King St.
(beside the Playhouse)

Contact: Kaaren Hayes at 828-262-6089 or
1-866-812-3122 or hayeskl@appstate.edu
RSVP for childcare and supper!

Wilkes County Parent Support Group

Date: Last Thursday of each month (Subject to change in December, Contact Norma)

Time: 6:15pm

Location: "Our House" 203 E. Main St. Wilkesboro

Contact: Norma Bouchard at 336-246-3222 or
1-866-812-3122 or bouchardnj@appstate.edu

Yancey County Parent Support Group

Date: Third Tuesday

Time: 10am—12pm

Location: West Burnsville Baptist Church

Contact: Teresa Emory at 866-448-5781 or
emorytd@appstate.edu



Family Support Network-HC
 2359 Highway 105
 Boone, NC 28607



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