



Family Support Council Newsletter

A resource for individuals and families working alongside Community Bridges

Volume 2, Issue 1

Fall 2010



Pictured left are Josh Marzelli and Joey Spaulding taking in the fresh air and above is Trudy Brake.

Support Council Update

By Sondra Brake
Family Support Council – Communications Chair

Summer is winding down, and this is the time of year many of us become more involved in our communities. This issue focuses on creating inclusive communities. We applaud the initiatives of each individual contributor who has asked the question, "Why not?" as Betsy McNamara encourages us to do in her article (page 4). Grab a cup of tea and enjoy the encouragement of the enclosed articles and resources. We hope to see you

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Enjoying all the good food are Brendan with his Dad, Pete Eastman, pictured center, and pictured below are Nick Spaulding, Melynda Seaholm and Logan Seaholm.

Support Council Update

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at the 2nd Annual Picnic on Saturday, September 25 and at the dinner event on October 13th with Kathie Snow. She'll encourage us with a presentation about "Living Real Lives and Dreaming Big Dreams in our Inclusive Communities."

During the month of July, the Kearsarge Focal Area sponsored a Community Picnic at Wadleigh State Park in North Sutton. Approximately 40 residents from the area attended the event with good food, terrific weather, and a fantastic time swimming and connecting with one another.

Making connections with your own community requires just a little effort with great reward. Contact Terri Warren, Family Support Council Community Connector. She'll assist you in honing your networking skills to support inclusive activities right where you live!❖



We Need You!

Your area parent groups are completing their calendar of activities and would like your input! Please go to the link below and complete the survey. Your input will help each group fill in their schedule with great activities for the remainder of the year!

<http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07e2ymcxmjg/bb0v2ej/start>

Attention Teens & Young Adults!

Community Bridges is interested in your ideas about networking. Many of us use FaceBook, Twitter, e-mail, text messaging and other electronic ways to stay in touch, meet new people and find things to do. How are YOU using your networking options right now and how can we help you strengthen them? If you are between the ages of 13 and 21, go to the link below and let us know!

<http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07e2yusfp4g/bjkrw1f/a002gd09gjjj/questions>

Focal Area News

The Family Support Council supports local events in five identified focal areas of the region. Each focal area is a group of parents who have an interest in helping design activities or host activities that promote local community inclusion and involvement. These areas are Kearsarge, Pittsfield, Concord, Hillsboro, and Franklin and their surrounding towns. If you are interested in joining your local area focal group, please contact Terri Warren at twarren@communitybridgesnh.org.

Current activities include:

Concord: This group is working with New Hampshire Technical Institute to host a screening of the film, *Lost in Laconia*. This event is scheduled for January and more information will be available in October.

Hillsboro: The Hillsboro group is working with New England College to host a screening of the film, *Lost in Laconia*, on Thursday, October 21, 2010.

Kearsarge: A screening of the film, *Lost in Laconia*, will be held on Saturday, November 13, 2010, by the Kearsarge group (Warner/Bradford/New London). More information regarding this event will be available in late September. All focal areas are welcome to attend.

If you would like to take part in any of these meetings, or you would like to have events in your area sent to you, please contact Terri Warren at twarren@communitybridgesnh.org.❖

~ Of Special Note ~

Don't miss a fantastic upcoming event!

Wednesday, October 13, 2010

at the Capital Center for the Arts

Kathie Snow will be presenting:

Living Real Lives and Dreaming Big Dreams in our
Inclusive Communities

More information will be sent to you soon and an
R.S.V.P. will be required.





2nd Annual Family Picnic

🌻 Sponsored by the Family Support Council 🌻

When: Saturday, September 25 from 11-3 P.M.

Where: Elm Brook Park,
Exit 6 off I-89 in Hopkinton

Who: Everyone! Call and reserve a spot for your family. Please call 603.226.3212 ext 269

What: Partying together with

- Music by Kathy Lowe
- Ongoing lawn games and other activities
- Good food provided

What a season!

When Samuel wanted to play, Little League said yes



Photo by [Dan Habib](#) / [For the Monitor](#)

Samuel Habib, in trike, and his teammates on the Goldman and Lebrun Concord American AAA baseball team wear their rally caps in the dugout at Grappone Field during the recent season. From left are Sierra Pepper, Logan Stevens, Junior Boley, Austin Didsbury, Brian Hill and Fletcher Waterman.

By [Betsy McNamara](#) / [For the Monitor](#)

July 4, 2010

I was raised in a family of sports agnostics, but I married into baseball. When we moved here in 1988, my husband, a Mets fan growing up, transferred his loyalty to the Red Sox. Now we have two sons playing baseball each spring, and I've logged many, many hours at the baseball fields around town. Our older son hopes to play on the Concord High School baseball team next year.

So it was no surprise when our younger son let us know that he wanted to move into Triple A Little League - the level where it moves from coach-pitch to kid-pitch - with his friends. He loves baseball too. He loves the tension, the sudden bursts of action, the possibility of being the hero by hitting a walk-off home run.

But when he told us he wanted to move up in Little League, I felt a pang in the pit of my stomach. Samuel uses a wheelchair. He can't hit a pitch thrown to him. He can't field. And he can't run.

But he sure has heart. And the desire to play. And a lot of friends. Friends who play Little League.

So as parents, we had a decision to make. Do we suggest to Samuel that at age 10 he has reached the end of his baseball playing? Do we gently tell him that baseball at this level is only for those who have the physical ability to play, that it's getting more competitive and wouldn't it be better for him to watch his friends play?

In a word, no.

It's this possibility of disappointing Samuel, devastating him, really, that drives me and my husband Dan to reach beyond what feels comfortable and ask what I recently heard referred to as "those two words that challenge, inspire and engage: Why not?"

Samuel wants to do martial arts. Why not? Samuel wants to go to summer camp. Why not? Samuel wants to be in the school play. Why not? Samuel wants to play Little League with his friends. Why not?

We have found that some people will give us plenty of reasons why not, even with our offer of one-on-one support for Samuel. An employee of a local nonprofit told me they didn't think they could serve "handicapped kids." A karate sensei told me that Samuel's presence would be a distraction to the other kids. (He was 6; all he had wanted to do was wear the white outfit and yell "hi-yaa!") A local themed day camp won't take him because they can't figure out how to get him on the field trips.

But more often than not, when we ask, we eventually find someone who says, "Yes. I don't know how we'll do it, but we will figure it out." We did find a martial arts studio, and Samuel took judo and loved it. He has attended Rocket Ship Camp at the planetarium. He plays basketball through Concord Recreation. He attends Camp Shaker. And of course, he plays baseball. Lots and lots of baseball.

So Dan and I took a deep breath and approached the volunteer directors of Concord American Little League.

"Samuel would like to play Triple A this year," we said.

Their response? "We have a 10-year-old in our community who wants to play baseball. He's going to play."

In other words, "Sure. Why not?"

Now, Samuel is not the first or the only child with a disability to play Triple A Little League. But, to my knowledge, he is the only one to play in Concord who uses a wheelchair. So the league figured out some accommodations that would work for the league and for Samuel. They rewrote their rules to allow each team to have a designated hitter (DH for those in the know). As a DH, Samuel wouldn't play in the field but was in the batting order. Just like David Ortiz, he'll tell you.

While everyone else hit a ball pitched by another player, Samuel hit the ball off a tee (as in T-ball) - and he's a surprisingly good hitter.

And we figured out that it was best for him to play while on his trike (a three-wheeled bike that is easier than his wheelchair to maneuver in the infield).

I was nervous for the first practice. We knew the coach, Bob Waterman, so I felt great about him. But what about the other kids? The other parents? Would they accept Samuel as part of the team? Would people who didn't know Samuel feel awkward about how to approach him? Would they treat him with kid gloves?

Many of the kids on the team were already Samuel's friends from school. Those who weren't took the lead of his friends and treated him as one of the gang. Parents were right there too, cheering him on as they cheered on all of the kids. Two of the parents were assistant coaches, and they were terrific in helping us to figure out how Samuel could play to the best of his ability. Sometimes we even needed help getting Samuel on or off of his trike, and we always found willing volunteers.

And Waterman, the father of one of Samuel's friends, was spectacular about treating Samuel as simply one of the kids on the team. If Samuel had a good hit, the coach recognized him for it. If he was being too noisy, he was asked to shush. Just like everyone else.

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But what can happen when we embrace, internalize, and base our actions on the fact that every person is *born included*, and that *no one has the right to impose segregation and second-class citizenship on another*? No one has the right to deliver the unspoken and soul-crushing message of today's conventional wisdom: "Because you have a disability, you are not-okay the way you are. But we will try to make you 'better' with treatments and interventions and services. And if you work hard enough, you may—one day—*earn* your way out of segregation." Substitute "Because you have been found guilty of a crime..." and it's easy to see that many people with disabilities are treated as if they're convicted criminals.

No parent, therapist, or service provider has the right to replace the joyous freedom of childhood with a regimen of treatments; no teacher has the right to exclude a child with a disability and rob him of the opportunities to learn and grow from ordinary classroom and social experiences; no human services system has the right to incarcerate an adult with a disability in a congregate setting.

Inclusion is the natural state; anything else is an artificial environment. What could happen if our highest guiding principle was to ensure the natural state of inclusion continues throughout a person's life? This would require us to hold inclusion *as a higher value* than services and interventions geared to "help" the person. In many quarters today, inclusion isn't even on the radar screen; we focus on services—and segregation continues.

Yes, many people with disabilities may need more or different assistance, than those without disabilities, but as previously mentioned, our communities are rich with generic (and *inclusive*) services. So why can't a person with a disability be helped to access the "regular" employment services offered in his state? Why can't an adult with a disability be helped to live in the place of her choice, with roommates of her choice, and with the supports she needs (natural and/or system supports)? Why can't a child with a disability be in general ed classrooms? Why can't a child take a ballet or karate class or do other fun activities (with consultation from a therapist, if necessary), instead of receiving therapy for years? Why don't we ensure people with disabilities have the accommodations, supports, and assistive technology they may need to be successful in inclusive environments?

Those who have chosen to *stay* on the path of inclusion have learned that it can be done—this is not pie-in-the-sky thinking! And, yes, it can sometimes take a little more work or time or negotiation, but the effort is worth it, and it's much *less* effort, in total, than the extraordinary amount of work to segregate!

We may think our actions are driven by, and can be justified by, the type or level of disability. But it's never about a person's disability; it's always about our attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs—*our values*. And where does inclusion fit in our hierarchy of values?

Look into the face of a person with a disability and acknowledge that he or she was *born included*, then question how the segregation and second-class citizenship of that person—along with the unmitigated and tragic loss of inclusion, opportunities, and hopes and dreams—can be justified. Keep looking, and imagine the awesome possibilities when inclusion is your highest operating principle.

But what can happen when we embrace, internalize, and base our actions on the fact that every person is *born included*, and that *no one has the right to impose segregation and second-class citizenship on another*?

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SAVE THE DATE:

Wednesday, October 13, 2010
at the Capital Center for the Arts

Living Real Lives and Dreaming Big Dreams in our Inclusive Communities

Parent, author, and trainer Kathie Snow will join us for light refreshments and a presentation. Learn more about Kathie Snow at her website:

<http://www.disabilityisnatural.com/>

Legislative Coffees

**It is almost time to VOTE!
Do you know your candidates?**



**The voting season is upon us and we have a great opportunity for you!
We need your help to make our upcoming Legislative Coffees a success.**

**This is your opportunity to talk about issues, such as,
wait list funding, the budget and more!**

One person, one vote, one story will make a difference!

The purpose of this get together is to give candidates for Legislature and Senate an opportunity to meet families of children with developmental disabilities to hear their stories, and learn how the Area Agency system in New Hampshire provides services to these families in their communities through state and federal funding. We would also like to take this opportunity to discuss with them the issues we currently are facing, primarily the budget as it relates to adult services as well as changes being looked at for eligibility. There will also be a representative from Community Bridges to explain New Hampshire's social service system and how legislation affects local families.

This evening promises to be a learning experience for all, as well as an opportunity to "check out" prospective candidates for the NH House and Senate.

Look for your invitation in the mail and by email soon!

Please Contact Sarah Aiken with any questions

603-226-3212 x/241

saiken@communitybridgesnh.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

UPCOMING TRAINING AT COMMUNITY BRIDGES:

MOAB – MANAGEMENT OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

DATE: NOVEMBER 4 & 5, 2010

TIME: 9:00-5:00PM

PLACE: PEMBROKE ROAD CONFERENCE ROOM

MOAB® is an in-depth training program which teaches individuals how to recognize, reduce, and manage violent and aggressive behavior. This course is offered to Community Bridges employees, however, individuals' family members are welcome but will not receive the certificate. Please register with Roberta at: rdavidson@communitybridgesnh.org.

PROMOTING SKILLS FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD

DATE: NOVEMBER 30, 2010

TIME: 9:00-4:00PM

PLACE: 2 WHITNEY ROAD OFFICE IN CONCORD

Specific skills and strategies will be presented that can help attendees to promote bases for positive family interactions, citizenship and work. Fee is \$135. Contact Robin Knight by phone at (603)206-6816 or via e-mail at rknight@seresc.net.

For a full list of upcoming trainings, please visit www.communitybridgesnh.org and click on our training calendar.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS:

FUNDAMENTALS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

DATES: OCTOBER 22, DECEMBER 7 & 14, 2010

TIME: 9:00-3:00PM

PLACE: UNH INST ON DISABILITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CNTR
56 OLD SUNCOOK RD., CONCORD, NH

WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR: CHERYL M. JORGENSEN, PH.D.
PROJECT DIRECTOR, NATIONAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Inclusive education principles and practices are common across all grade levels, but many of the organizational issues are different. This series offers an opportunity for participants to learn together with other people who work with specific age groups of children and who face many of the same structural and organizational challenges. Sessions will feature presenters from schools that are successfully including students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities, video examples, instructional strategies, and suggestions for dealing with issues like scheduling, inclusive service delivery models, and team member role clarification. Fee is \$85.

WALK BY THE SEA AGAINST BRAIN INJURY

DATE: OCTOBER 3, 2010

TIME: 10:00AM CHECK-IN; 11:00AM START

START/FINISH: HAMPTON BEACH STATE PARK, RTE 1A

Come join the 3.1 mile walk along Hampton Beach and help the Brain Injury Association walk, run, roll and bike their way to success. Please call (603) 225-8400 for your packet today!

What a season!

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Samuel's face was the personification of joy when he was rolling the bases. He was part of the round of high-fives any kid gets when they got a good hit. And he would root, root, root for his home team with his friends, adding the dinging of the bell on his trike to their chorus of cheers.

Samuel was the star of one of the games. He got two hits, a stolen base, and half the team's runs-batted-in. The coach awarded him a game ball. I asked Samuel what his favorite part of the season was, and he replied, "Getting the game ball. I was so excited."

It was all so natural.

I have the feeling that Samuel being on the team was good for the other kids. Several times he experienced episodes of uncontrollable movement (not a seizure, just movement) while up at bat. These pesky episodes can be brought on by excitement or nerves, and I'm sure Samuel was feeling both the first few times up at bat. Several times it took him awhile to get it under control until he could swing. And once he had to give up the at-bat. But the next time he was up in the batting order, he rolled right out there and made a good hit. That kind of perseverance can only be good for other kids to see.

Perhaps Samuel's presence in the league brought home the lesson that all kids are different and that all kids bring something to the team. Every team has diversity - of parents, of economic circumstance, of physical ability - you name it.

Our job as a community is to give all kids the same opportunity to play and be a part of the team.

With all that's going wrong in the world (oil spill, war, forcibly applied tattoos) I find great joy in focusing on the things that are going right. In this community, during this season, on this team and for this boy, everything went right. ❖

~Reprinted with permission~

Each quarter we would like to feature an individual or family from our region that has overcome life's challenges and lives life to its fullest. This quarter we have introduced you to Samuel Habib.

Information and Resource Newsletter
New Hampshire Statewide Independent Living Council
(SILC)
www.silcnh.org

Back to School Issue 2010

(for parents, educators, students, providers, agencies, etc)

Editors-Cindy Perkins, former SILC Member, Denise Sampson, SILC Member, Paula Ninivaggi, SILC Staff

DATE: August 2009, updated July 2010

Going Back to School or Starting at a New School

Preparing your child for Pre School with Spanish link

www.onetoughjob.org/child-care/school/preparing-your-child-for-preschool

Toolkit-Transitioning to Kindergarten www.getreadytoread.org/content/view/260/520/ and www.onetoughjob.org/child-care/school/preparing-your-child-for-kindergarten with Spanish link.

Preparing your child for Elementary School with Spanish link

www.onetoughjob.org/child-care/school/preparing-your-child-for-elementary-school

Transitioning to Middle School for youth with Learning Disabilities (LD)

www.greatschools.net/LD/managing/smoothing-your-childs-transition-to-middle-school.gs?content=980&cpn=20090813ld and www.onetoughjob.org/child-care/school/preparing-your-child-for-middle-school with Spanish link

Preparing you child for High School with Spanish link

www.onetoughjob.org/child-care/school/preparing-your-child-for-high-school

Preparing for College Life www.nhheaf.org/pdfs/enews/July10_Deanslist.pdf

Ten Tips for Transitioning to a New School www.greatschools.net/back-to-school/preparation/adjusting-new-school.gs?content=25&page=all. Not disability-focused, but still helpful.

Ready to go back to school? www.greatschools.net/back-to-school/?cpn=20090813ld

Back-To-School Night www.readingrockets.org/article/25997 Tips for teachers and parents. Mostly general, but some LD or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) focused. Many good links and articles!

Helping Your Child Succeed in School

General Support

Parent Information Center (PIC) of NH www.parentinformationcenter.org. Contact: (800) 947-7005 or (603) 224-7005, V/TDD (800) 947-7005 (N.H. only); email info@parentinformationcenter.org

Parent Information Center on Special Education www.nhspecial.org. Contact: (800) 947-7005 or (603) 224-7005; email info@nhspecial.org

Video- Supporting Your Child's Academic Success www.nhparentsmakethedifference.org/newsresources.htm. Free. Topics covered include: communication, organizational strategies, study strategies, etc. For a free copy, call (800) 947-7005 or write admin@parentinformationcenter.org

Tip Sheet "Working with Schools" <http://brainline.org/content/2009/03/working-with-schools.html>. Focused on understanding and cooperation regarding behavioral issues. Links to more resources.

The GreatSchools Newsletter for kids with learning disabilities and their parents www.greatschools.net

Professional Services -- www.kidsource.com/NICHCY/services.disab.k12.2.1.html#contents Kidsource newsletters are a little hard to read, but have a lot of excellent info about rights under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and related issues.

Rights, Responsibilities and Letter-writing -- www.kidsource.com/NICHCY/letter.dis.k12.4.1.html Rules about special education plus sample letters about various issues. Aimed at parents.

Tip Sheet- Helping your Child do Well in School - www.idonline.org/article/28986.

Helping Your Child Succeed in School www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/succeed/index.html.

Tip Sheet- Strategies to Help Memory and Learning www.idonline.org/article/5602

Tip Sheet- Low Tech Ideas for Helping Students with Math and Writing Organization www.idonline.org/experts/techexpert/current.

Tip Sheet-Memory Ideas for Students www.idonline.org/article/5894

Educational supports and technical assistance for students with Brain Injury in New Hampshire www.bianh.org/educational-support.asp

Helping Your Preschool Child www.ed.gov/parents/earlychild/ready/preschool/part.html. Available in Spanish.

Helping Your Child Through Early Adolescence www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/adolescence/index.html. Available in Spanish.

Helping Your Child Be a Responsible Citizen www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/citizen/index.html. Available in Spanish.

Helpful Hints for parents and teachers on working with children with ADHD www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/adhd/adhd-identifying_pg4.html#hints

Contact Information:
Paula Ninivaggi, Program Liaison
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)
c/o Governor's Commission on Disability
57 Regional Drive
Concord, NH 03301
603-271-0476, paula.ninivaggi@nh.gov

Resources, Resources, Resources



INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION

<http://www.communityinclusion.org/>
<http://www.youtube.com/communityinclusion>



CENTER FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION & DISABILITY STUDIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION & DISABILITY STUDIES

<http://www.ccids.umaine.edu/calendar/default.htm>



Inclusion...

What Are You Waiting For?

NATIONAL INCLUSION PROJECT

INCLUSION... WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

<http://www.inclusionproject.org/>

Community Bridges
2 Whitney Road
Concord, NH 03301

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

RECOMMENDATION:

Temple Grandin, born in Boston, MA with early ties to New Hampshire, is a person with high-functioning autism who is widely known for her work in autism advocacy. She is also a Doctor of Animal Science and a professor at Colorado State University. She is the focus of a semi-biographical film, titled *Temple Grandin*. The HBO film received most of the major awards in their category at the 62nd Emmy Awards on Sunday, August 29, 2010. Please check out her inspiring story.



Family Support Council

c/o Community Bridges
2 Whitney Road
Concord, NH 03301

Phone: (603) 927-4746 – Sondra Brake
e-mail: brakefam@tds.net

VISIT US ON THE WEB!

http://www.communitybridgesnh.org/family_council.cfm

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