



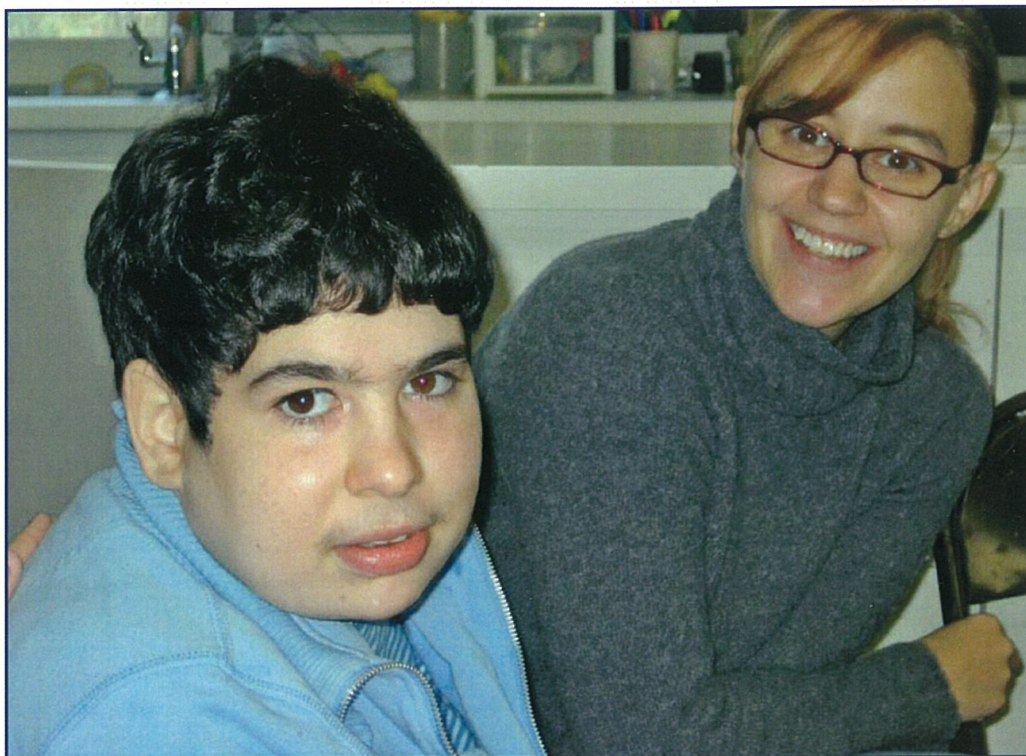
WINTER 2007



The Help A Little One Foundation

H.A.L.O. Reports

Serving children with neurological impairment since 1993



Family Circle's new respite program gives young people with disabilities opportunities to socialize.

Parents Applaud Family Circle's Respite Program

Sundays are more fun for young people with disabilities now that *Family Circle* has extended respite activities for an additional 30 weeks in the Greater Boston area.

Parents enthusiastically embraced the pilot program over the summer. The three-hour sessions offered swimming and arts programs tailored to the abilities of the individual children in attendance.

The non-denominational program is presented under the umbrella of *Family Circle* programs, which are managed by Jewish Family & Children's Service of Boston with financial support from the Help A Little One Foundation.

"Nearly all of the families who participated in the trial have re-

enrolled, and word of mouth is producing a flood of inquiries from other families who are searching for socializing and exercise opportunities for their children," according to Doreen Cummings, Director of Individual Living and Working Supports at JF&CS and one of two *Family Circle* coordinators.

Respite services are hard to come by, so the program draws from as far as 30 miles away, she said. Up to 20 individuals can register for each Sunday.

Continued on page 3)

Inside:

- Dr. Webster is dedicated to kids
- Parents tell us why they like respite

*When you help a little one
you help us all*

Sponsor a H.A.L.O. Holiday

Telephone: 617 423-HALO

www.halofoundation.org

or

info@halofoundation.org

Founder's Message: We are Stronger Together

Dear Friends,

The H.A.L.O. Foundation seems very small in comparison to a Jimmy Fund or Carnegie Foundation, but we have a very large impact on the children and families we serve.

In this issue of H.A.L.O. Reports we share parents' praise for the respite services introduced this year under the umbrella of our Family Circle program. The program received such a positive response to its trial offering, an additional 30 Sundays are scheduled through June.

Since 1999 H.A.L.O. has partnered with Jewish Family & Childrens' Service of Boston to manage programs to address the needs of families who care for children with severe disabilities. The rapid growth of the respite program indicates we are making the connection. Congratulations to our dynamic Family Circle coordinators, Doreen Cummings and Pat Ludwig, for their efforts in launching this service.

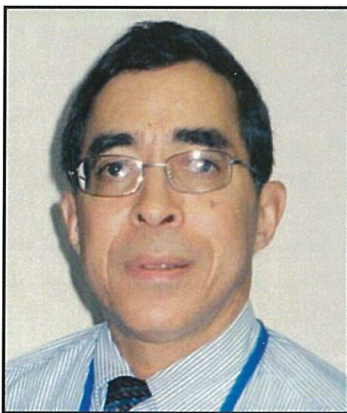
In this newsletter we also share a profile of a dedicated doctor and a story about a boy whose interest in playing basketball has enhanced the quality of life for dozens of kids with neurological impairment.

No single entity can hope to meet all of the needs of neurologically impaired children but when we work together we can do as well as the giant charities, or even better. Your consistent and generous support makes all this is possible. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Alan Pinshaw

Dr. Webster maximizes kids' physical abilities



Dr. Harry C. Webster

Pediatrician Harry Webster works for smiles.

"Although I deal with problems, my focus is on wellness and participation," says the Director of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Tufts-New England Medical Center. He is also medical director at New England Pediatric Care, a pediatric nursing home affiliated with the Boston-based hospital.

"Everything I do is aimed at putting smiles on children's faces, knowing we don't have

cures but are providing the best quality of life possible," he says.

Every Tuesday for the past 20 years, Dr. Webster he has treated patients with neuromuscular dysfunction at NEPC and strategized with parents and staff to maximize their physical abilities.

"If you can help a child to be comfortable sitting, he can take advantage of many experiences, and this enhances the quality of life," says Dr. Webster.

He has developed long term relationships with

many families during 34 years of practice because "when things get complicated, I like to help them problem solve . . . We want to make decisions by choice, not chance."

Sometimes NEPC offers the best solution. The professional team can carry out programs that are impossible to maintain on an out-patient basis, he says, and specialists from T-NEMC's renowned Floating Hospital for Children come to NEPC for on site consultations.

*For more information, visit
www.w.nepediatriccare.org.*

Family Circle: Filling A Need in the Community

(Continued from page 1)

The swim program requires one-on-one support in the pool.

Participants rotate through three different activities over the course of the afternoon, guided by professional staff and volunteers.

"Music therapy was added for the new sessions and we will continue to expand as the program grows," explained co-coordinator Pat Ludwig. Pat is the hands-on manager and also Assistant Director of Individual Living and Work Supports at JF&CS.

In a unique weave, the respite program employs three residents with disabilities from the Community Housing for Adult Independence (CHAI) program to work with program participants – a win-win situation for everyone.

"These services empower families and make their lives more manageable," said Pat. "We are happy to be filling a need in the community."

Respite activities take place at the Sidney Leventhal Jewish Community Center in Newton, MA. from 1 to 4 p.m. Contact *Family Circle* for a list of dates. Reservations are required and accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. There is a nominal fee of \$30 for each session.

Family Circle provides support and resources to families who care for children with disabilities. For more information, please visit www.halofoundation.org, call 781 647 5327 x 4174 or email familycircle@jfcsboston.org



Up to 20 youth can enjoy music therapy, arts and crafts and swimming at Family Circle's weekly program.

Grateful Mothers Share Their Stories

"Maya"

Our daughter "Maya" is 17 and has multiple and severe neuromotor dysfunction and retardation.

Doctors said she might never walk, but she finally accomplished it at age seven. In our view, her participation in an aquatic therapy program contributed to this success. When "Maya" moved into a residential school, that afternoon program was no longer feasible.

The Sunday respite program allows "Maya" to enjoy the recreational aspects of swimming and it also provides very important social interaction with kids who are challenged in similar ways.

The staff is lovely and she especially enjoys the music therapy. For many of the kids it's an important vehicle for communication.

"Maya" looks forward to her Sundays, and although it is quite a distance, I manage to drive back and forth because it is so good for her.

"Sarah"

The Sunday respite program has given my daughter a sense of belonging. "Sarah" is 22 and never had friends. It has changed her life. She has a place to go and is safe and happy.

It has changed my life too. Being her caregiver, I used to spend my whole Sunday going to the movies and taking "Sarah" out. Now she is with other young people.

I think it is wonderful that other young adults who are higher functioning than Sarah are working as aides. It gives them a sense of purpose, too. It's as though everyone has an open hand extended to help the next person.

We have been looking for this kind of program for a long time. I didn't think it existed.

We are very grateful and hope it continues for a very long time.

* Names have been withheld to protect privacy.

A Story about a Boy, a Basketball and a Commitment

When Yoni Sternberg and Leo Rotman first met on a basketball court last season, they didn't realize what an auspicious occasion it was.

Yoni, then 12, had organized the basketball program for children with disabilities as part of a personal commitment to "give back" to his community of Sudbury, MA as he prepared for his bar mitzvah. Leo's son Jake, 6, was one of the participants.

The eight-week session provided a team experience for 25 children with special needs between the ages of 6 and 16, and led to establishment of new Special Olympics teams serving Boston's western suburbs.

Yoni recruited more than 70 volunteers, including high school athletes from Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School, to handle equipment, buddy-up with kids, and help them enjoy a typical childhood activity.

"I love basketball, it's my main sport. I thought it would be fun to share it," said Yoni, who plays forward and shooting guard in the Sudbury In-Town league.

It turned out to be a lot



Yoni Sternberg, center, and his mother started a basketball program for children with disabilities. Leo Rotman grew it into a three-season Special Olympics program.

of work for a seventh grader. Yoni's mother Sara set up the bank account, reserved gym space and networked with sports leagues and Special Education parent groups in ten communities west of Boston. Yoni did all the emailing and wrote announcements for the Park and Rec brochure and school newsletters. Together, they set up the schedule, registered kids, ordered T-shirts, trophies and medals.

It was so rewarding for everyone involved, they extended the original six weeks to eight, Sara said.

When it was over, Leo didn't want the fun to end for his son, so he established a formal relationship with the Massachusetts Special Olympics. In October he finished his first fall soccer program with 47 volunteers and 40 athletes. Basketball will start up again in

January. In the spring Leo hopes to partner with an existing Challenger Baseball team.

The dedicated father is working now to raise an estimated \$3,000 to cover the costs of fields/gyms, uniforms, equipment, trophies and medals for each sport. Corporate and private donations and registration fees will help meet that goal.

Yoni made one of the first donations to Leo's teams with leftover registration fees from his basketball program.

"Yoni started something that was never done before in our town. It was something he will have all of his life. He made a mark on the world, and I'm proud of him," his mother said.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Leo Rotman at lrotman@verizon.net.

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 1
WINTER 2007



A Foundation for Children with Neurological Impairment

OFFICERS

Alan Pinshaw, M.D.
Founder and President

Paul Chervin, M.D.
Vice President

Barrie E. Little-Gill, C.P.A.
Treasurer

Shirley Sachs
Secretary

Robert Snider, Esq.
Clerk

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karin Alper

Michael Alper, M.D.

Rochelle Hotz, M.D.

Julius Levin

Gayle Pinshaw

Julia Anne Pinshaw

Harriet Rosenberg

Stephanie Sheps, Esq.

ADVISORS

The Honorable Elizabeth Butler

Murray Feingold, M.D.

Sy Friedland, Ph.D.

Raymond C. Rosen, Ph.D.

Leslie Rubin, M.D.

Benjamin P. Sachs, M.D.

Rabbi Donald M. Splansky, Ph.D.

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Abrams, Little-Gill, Loberfeld, P.C.

H.A.L.O. Foundation
1330 Boylston Street
Chestnut Hill, MA. 02467
(617) 423-HALO