



Loving a child with Down syndrome is contagious...  
Help us spread the love!!!

Now with two locations!

GiGi's Playhouse  
April 2006

## Spreading Down syndrome awareness

A group of 18 Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists from district 54 came to the Playhouse to learn more about our facility and Down syndrome!! They came with great questions and such a caring interest in our children. We really enjoyed meeting with them and discussing many topics. It was amazing for us to see how many of our kids they work with in school and to see how proud they were to see pictures of their students on our walls. It was a great exchange for both groups!



*"We wanted to thank you and Kathy so much for our wonderful visit to GiGi's Playhouse! Many of the therapists have emailed me to say how much they enjoyed it and how enlightened they were to learn more from the parents perspective. It was all good!"*

We have groups coming in to the Playhouse for tours on a weekly basis! Therapy centers, schools, children's organizations etc...

We also go out into the community to do presentations. This month we presented to the medical board and the therapists at Easter Seals in Dupage County and to the St. Charles Mother's Club in St. Charles. We have more presentations scheduled throughout the year.

We would love to meet with more interested groups at any time. If your group is interested, give the playhouse a call and we'll set up a date. You can not give us a better compliment than to ask to learn more about our children with Down syndrome!

## One...two...three...No...Four new friends!!



Our Thursday open Play group is getting younger!! Actually, besides these 4 new comers, we had 7 other kids with Down syndrome from the ages 1-5!! Not to mention siblings, grandparents, and other extended family that stopped

by!! We had some great networking going on that day!! All of these new babies received "The GiGi's Playhouse Celebration Packet", which has bibs (that they are all wearing), a Down syndrome awareness bracelet, our 2006 calendar, note cards, bookmarks and other Down syndrome resource info.

## HEAR YE! HEAR YE! TOWN HALL MEETING

Sunday, April 30th  
at 4:00 p.m.

Pizza and refreshments will be served. We are looking for anyone wanting to get involved with GiGi's Playhouse!

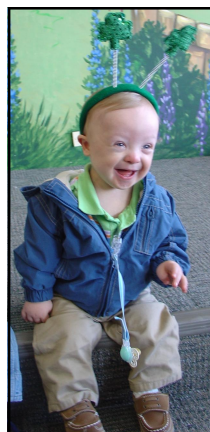
Bring all your friends and family that said they want to help. We are going to have opportunities for everyone:  
from working with the kids  
to decorating the playhouse  
to volunteering for the 5K  
to planning a gala for GiGi's Playhouse and everything in between.

Bring your own ideas as well!

**We want to hear from you and we want to help make GiGi's Playhouse your playhouse too!!**

Come to hear more about it. We would love to see you there.

# Whether it is a new program, or old the Playhouse is always celebrating and spreading Down syndrome awareness!!



Future Friday Friends is a new facilitated playgroup for ages 6-8 year olds. This group promotes interaction and has one hour of facilitated play and one hour of "dinner time" where good manners are encouraged!

The 2 and under group had a great turn out! We even had visitors from New York and Wisconsin! We are adding a 3-5 year old group immediately following this group on the Second Saturday of the month from 11-12:30. (more info on back of newsletter)

The kids from the Polish play group loved the new caterpillar!

A big thank you to The Kotel Family Foundation for donating this AWESOME tunnel! It is not only fun but good physical therapy too!



Heather Andress celebrated her 6th birthday at the Playhouse with all of her friends from school! Great fun and great awareness too!! To book a Down syndrome related event just call the Playhouse and reserve the date!



The Friday Friends (ages 18 & up) partied hard at the February Sock Hop!! One Mom wrote in:

*"Richard really had a great time at the 'sock hop' last week and is still excited about his 'new dance steps' he learned. (Great exercise!) Thank you for everything"*

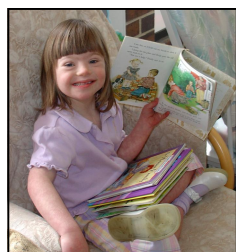
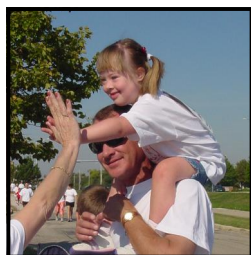
Cool! Fun and fitness too!!

Hippy Hop it's time to Hop on over to GiGi's Playhouse for our 3rd Annual Easter Egg Hunt!!! The Hunt will take place on **Saturday April 8, from 1-3** There will be lots of eggs to be found and a SURPRISE VISIT from a VERY SPECIAL GUEST! RSVP, ASAP to reserve your basket. Friends and family welcome!



## "Be a part of the best finish line in town!"

**The 3rd Annual GiGi's Playhouse Down Syndrome Awareness 5k Fun Run/1 Mile Walk Sunday June 11, 2006 @ 9 AM Busse Woods, Elk Grove Village**



All proceeds benefit the GiGi's Playhouse Free "Learn to Read" Literacy Program.

**Gather your friends and family and show your support by running, walking, volunteering and or sponsoring this awesome event! Food, fun and entertainment!**

Registration begins April 1st at [www.gigisplayhouse.com](http://www.gigisplayhouse.com). Registration forms will also be mailed in the May newsletter

**We need your RSVP's in order to get these programs ready!!**

**Give me a "G"!!!** The Carmel High School Cheerleaders will be hosting a 4 session clinic in April and May at GiGi's Playhouse. They will stretch the girls, teach them some fundamentals & techniques, a couple of side chants, & a dance. At the last session they will perform for the parents. The dates are Sunday April 9, Sunday April 30, Sunday May 7, Sunday May 21. From 1:30-2:30.

**Attention Future Olympians!!** The Special Olympics gymnastics coach is looking for some early recruits!! **Tumbling classes for kids ages 3-8** are coming to GiGi's Playhouse!! A doctor's note and release form will be required for your child to participate in this program. To reserve a spot (only 10 tumblers per session) please call the Playhouse. This class will be held on **Saturdays from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.**

Everyone is welcome at GiGi's Playhouse! Due to the need for scheduling volunteers and acquiring supplies, *reservations are greatly appreciated.* (847) 885-PLAY, or you can e-mail [gianni4567@aol.com](mailto:gianni4567@aol.com) or [sloenneke@gigisplayhouse.com](mailto:sloenneke@gigisplayhouse.com). Feel free to leave a message! Check the website for constant updates and to see pictures of the activities [www.gigisplayhouse.com](http://www.gigisplayhouse.com)!

# APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
GiGi's Playhouse is located 3 miles West of Woodfield Shopping Mall next to Schaumburg Toyota in the Brandess Center. 1069 W. Golf Road. Hoffman Estates, IL 60194 847-885-PLAY <a href="http://www.gigisplayhouse.com">www.gigisplayhouse.com</a>						1 7am 5k training Open B-Day Party! 10:00 -12:00 Reserved 12-6
2	3 Literacy Program 9:00 - 3:00 5k training 6pm	4 Literacy Program 9:00-12:00 & 3:30 -6:30	5 Literacy Program 10:00 - 2:00 5k training 6pm Special Intentions 7:00	6 Open Play 12:30 - 2:00	7 "FUTURE" Friday Friends 4:30 - 6:30 (Ages 6-8)	8 7am 5k training & Under Play Group 10:00 - 11:00 Easter Egg Hunt 1:00-3:00
9 Hispanic Open Play 11:00-1:00 Cheerleading 1:30-2:30 RSVP only	10 Literacy Program 9:00 - 3:00 5k training 6pm	11 Literacy Program 9:00-12:00 3:30 -6:30	12 Literacy Program 10:00 - 2:00 5k training 6pm	13 Open Play 12:30 - 2:00	14	15 7am 5k training Tumbling Class 4:00-5:00 RSVP
16 HAPPY EASTER	17 Literacy Program 9:00 - 3:00 5k training 6pm Scrapbooking 7:00	18 Literacy Program 9:00-12:00 3:30 -6:30	19 Literacy Program 10:00 - 2:00 5k training 6pm	20 Open Play 12:30 - 2:00	21 "FUTURE" Friday Friends 4:30 - 6:30 (Ages 6-8)	22 7am 5k training Ups for Downs Lunch with Kids 11:00 - 1:00 Tumbling Class 4:00-5:00 RSVP
23 Polish Play Group 1:00-3:00	24 Literacy Program 9:00 - 3:00 5k training 6pm	25 Literacy Program 9:00-12:00 3:30 -6:30	26 Literacy Program 10:00 - 2:00 5k training 6pm Reserved 7pm Support group	27 Open Play 12:30 - 2:00	28 Friday Friends 7:00-9:00 (ages 18 & up) Karaoke and pizza party!	29 7am 5k training Tumbling Class 4:00-5:00 RSVP
30 Cheerleading 1:30-2:30 RSVP! <b>GiGi's Town Hall! 4:00</b>	★ RSVP Greatly Appreciated (847)885-PLAY *** Friends & Family are always welcome at the Playhouse and there is No Charge for GiGi's Playhouse events.					

**Open Play**-Everyone is welcome! Stop by for pizza, pop and fun! We have volunteers to assist with the kids so the parents can hang out! It is awesome!!!!

**Open Birthday party**-If you were born in April or just love a good birthday party come on by! The birthday child gets a gift and everyone gets a goodie bag!

**The literacy program**- GiGi's Playhouse provides FREE private tutoring to children with Down syndrome. Customized materials are provided for each individual student. The program also assists teachers and parents on how to tutor their children.

**"Future" Friday Friends**- AGES 6-8 Only. Kids create lasting friendships through facilitated interactive play, while promoting good social skills. Each session ends with a pizza dinner in which social skills and table manners will be encouraged.

**Friday Friends**- Ages 18 and up only. Party with the gang! Equal numbers of peers with Down syndrome as without. Karaoke, dances, laser tag, bowling, prom, movie nights, friends and fun!

**2 and under group**- Families with kids 2 and under get together to play, and have fun while the parents network with each other!

**Hispanic Group**- Spanish speaking families gather for food, fun, friendship and education.

**Polish Play Group**- Polish speaking families gather for an afternoon of fun and friendship.

**5k Training**- 12 week training program for the 5k! Contact [Gaylegio@yahoo.com](mailto:Gaylegio@yahoo.com) or call the Playhouse for information.

The Playhouse can be reserved for any Down syndrome related event. When available it may also be used by other groups with special needs. For GiGi's Playhouse Too (Plainfield location) calendar of events go to [www.gigisplayhousetoo.com](http://www.gigisplayhousetoo.com) or call 630-778-PLAY

GiGi's Playhouse  
 1069 West Golf Road  
 Hoffman Estates, IL 60194  
 Phone: 847-885-PLAY  
 Fax: 847-885-4901

E-mail: [Gianni4567@aol.com](mailto:Gianni4567@aol.com)  
[www.gigisplayhouse.com](http://www.gigisplayhouse.com)

GiGi's Playhouse too  
 Plainfield, IL 630-778-PLAY

**Loving a child with Down syndrome is contagious...Help us spread the love!!**

Our Hoffman Estates location is 3 miles west of Woodfield in the Brandess Center next to Schaumburg Toyota

## Internet babies!



This adorable group were brought together to meet at the Playhouse through their on line chat group!! 3 of them came in from Wisconsin!

# Playhouse News!

## NEW PROGRAM!! The hop, skip and jumpers!! For ages 3-5

Well a bunch of the kids have outgrown the 2 and under group. (but the parents don't want to let go!) So we will be starting a 3-5 year old program directly after the 2 and under group on the **second Saturday of the month from 11:00- 12:30.**

Yes, there will be some overlapping so the parents, (oops I mean the kids) can still see each other!! We all have so much to learn from each other!

**This program will help promote creative play and interactive activities.**



Begins May 13th!!

## Happy Birthday! The GiGi's Playhouse "Learn to Read" literacy program is almost a year old!

The Inverness and St. Annes Women's club helped us get started and the 5k Fun Run/1 mile walk and other amazing sponsors are keeping this program going strong today!!

Thank you to all who have donated to this ground breaking program.

A special thanks to Beth Spenadel and Sara Warman for all there help and dedication.



Also a big thank you goes out to Colleen Crilly for purchasing two partitions!! Colleen is the aunt of Grace Crilly who is in our program. The partitions have allowed us to create a "reading space" at the Playhouse.

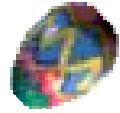
As you know, the more people see our children the less they appear to be different.

We need your help distributing the 2006 Down syndrome awareness calendars to local schools, hospitals, businesses etc.... **Simply pick up the calendars at the Playhouse and give us a list of where you will be distributing them.**

We have already had comments from schools that they use the calendar as an educational tool to teach the kids about Down syndrome! By providing these tools for **free** we can ensure Down syndrome awareness will be going strong!! Help your child and help us spread the word!!

(The calendars are still for sale so if they are being used as a gift we do ask that you pay the \$10.00. The FREE ones will have a donation sticker)

SAVE THE DATE!!! SUNDAY April 30th for our Town Hall Meeting!!!



Please join us Saturday April 8th for our annual Easter Egg Hunt!! Please RSVP so we make sure to have enough eggs!! From 1-3 p.m. Get your picture taken with the sweetest bunny in town!!

Address label

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GiGi's Playhouse  
 1069 West Golf Road  
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[www.gigisplayhouse.com](http://www.gigisplayhouse.com)