



Down Syndrome Awareness Centers  
www.gigisplayhouse.org

# GIGI'S NEWS

Serving 2 locations

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

Hoffman Estates  
1069 W Golf Rd • Hoffman Estates, IL 60169  
847-885-PLAY • www.gigisplayhouse.org

Plainfield  
10052 S. Bode Rd, Unit D • Plainfield, IL 60585  
630-778-PLAY • www.gigisplayhousetoo.com

September 2007

## Annual Golf Outing a Huge Success!

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! The golf outing was a HUGE success! We had many saying "This is a great day!" It definitely was for our winning foursome who scored a 57! It is wonderful to see so many people come together to help support what many of our families view as their home away from home. Not everyone may understand what it is like to raise a child with a disability, but it is always so heart warming to see how much support we get from our friends, family and their friends when it comes to providing for our children.



After golfing, we all moved into the new clubhouse. The air conditioning felt great! The golfers watched a short clip about the playhouse and during that time you could have heard a pin drop. With tearful eyes many watched as the playhouse showed every-



thing it had to offer our children. We all were reminded of the reason we were there. Many items were donated to our raffle from a variety of people who continually help us achieve our goals. The golfers also participated in a silent auction. Thank you to everyone who donated items to sell at the auction! Last but not least, thank you to our volunteers! Your help was greatly appreciated! With the many hands and hard work from these volunteers we had everything we needed to make this a great day! Please know that anything and every-



thing that you have done impacts all of our children. We thank you for recognizing the importance of helping our children achieve goals that some thought were not possible. We have many stars to reach and it begins with your help!

## GiGi's Opens Doors

I was up late one night watching tv. It was probably 2 or 3 in the morning and I saw an ad for GiGi's Playhouse. I thought to myself, "Why is this on so late? Who is going to see this?" And then it struck me, this ad was for ME! I called the next morning to see what GiGi's could offer my 15 year old son. I signed him up for the Literacy program but had my reservations. Throughout the next day, my reservations grew and I decided to cancel. I just felt so overwhelmed and didn't know where to go. On my way to work the next morning, I stopped in to GiGi's with the intention of cancelling my literacy slot. Before I even got through the door, I was greeted by the pictures of smiling faces of kids with Down syndrome. I had never seen so many! I remembering thinking, "Are these kids real?" When I walked in, I was greeted by such a friendly face that I just started crying! I am not the kind of person that cries easily but I have to tell you that I have not stopped crying these tears of joy and relief since I walked into GiGi's and the way



that opened so many other doors. The resources I received were phenomenal, I had no idea there was so much support out there! I was invited to the Ups for Downs Swim party where my son got to hang out with kids his age. I was given phone numbers to medical doctors that specialize in Down syndrome. But most of all I felt loved and accepted. For the first time in a long time I felt hope! No one had ever embraced us the way we were embraced when we walked into GiGi's. I don't have to feel ashamed of the things I don't know or didn't know and that in itself feels like a huge burden has been

lifted from my chest! I am not alone and that has freedom in it! The progress my son has made in the literacy program in just a few weeks has been inspiring! Thank You GiGi's, for opening the door to so many opportunities for my son - we are so grateful!



# HOFFMAN ESTATES LOCATION

## Look Out, Here We Come!

The Crawlers are off and... crawling! Look at the great obstacle course that is set up for these active crawlers. We meet the 2nd Saturday of the month from 9-9:45am. Space is limited, call the Playhouse for more info.



## 2 & Under Have a Blast!

The 2nd Saturday of the month, the 2 & Under group meets for a time of play for the kids and networking for the parents! It's a fun time for all!



*Bye, Phoenix! We'll miss you when you move to Norway! Keep in touch!*

## Baby Signs with Beebo the Bear



Beebo the Bear is a great teacher! With the help of Liz, certified Baby Sign



Instructor, Beebo sings and signs with the babies. Research shows that signing is an asset to language development. Look for fall dates coming soon!

## Pajama Party Coming Soon!

For 6-10 year olds. Look for the coming dates!

## FridayFriends

Thanks to all the parents and siblings who came out to play softball! We had a great showing and a really exciting game. Friday Friends & GiGi's also wants to wish Marc Janovics the best of luck as he competes in gymnastics at the World Games in China this month. "GOOD LUCK MARC!" Friday Friends meets every 4th Friday of the month and is for adults 18 and over. Hollywood Nights is our next Friday Friends nite, September 28th from 7-9pm. Dress as your favorite movie star!



## Welcome New Families!

We have new families coming to Open Play every week! Open Play is for the whole family; siblings, grandparents and all! Join us from 12:30-2pm. We have a great time!



## New Group at Hoffman!!

**Calling all 8-12 year olds! Sat., Sept. 29th at 10-11:30am**

Please join us for a fun-filled 8-12 year old group at GiGi's in Hoffman Estates! We'll play games, do creative movement activities, complete an "All About Me" craft project and have a delicious, healthy snack. Siblings and friends in this age group are welcome. Call **847-885-PLAY** by Sept. 22nd to RSVP, as space is limited. Please indicate any dietary restrictions so we can plan accordingly for the snack. The next date will be October 27th.

## A Hop, Skip and a Jump!

The Hop, Skip and Jumpers class is for 3-5 year olds and they meet the 2nd Saturday from 12noon to 1:30pm. Join them for a fun filled afternoon of music, games, crafts, and socializing.

# HOFFMAN ESTATES CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<h1>SEPTEMBER</h1>						1
2	3	4 Literacy 3-7pm 	5 Literacy 10am-2pm Special Intentions 7pm 	6 Open Play 12:30-2pm Literacy 5-7pm 	7	8 Crawlers 9-9:45am 2&Under 10-11:30am Hop, Skip & Jumpers Noon-1:30pm
9 Nuetro Angeles 11am-1pm 	10 Gala Meeting 6pm	11 Literacy 3-7pm 	12 Literacy 10am-2pm 	13 Open Play 12:30-2pm Literacy 5-7pm 	14	15 Walkers 9-9:45am Leaps & Bounds 10-11:30am
16	17 Awareness Committee Meeting 5pm	18 Literacy 3-7pm Family Connection 7pm 	19 Literacy 10am-2pm 	20 Open Play 12:30-2pm Literacy 5-7pm 	21	22
23 Polish Group 11am-1pm	24	25 Literacy 3-7pm 	26 Literacy 10am-2pm Literacy Nite 6:30-8:30pm 	27 Open Play 12:30-2pm Literacy 5-7pm 	28 Friday Friends 7-9pm	29 8-12 yr. olds 10-11:30am new group 
30						

## Don't Forget:

Literacy Nite on **September 26th**. Come help us make books.

**Open Play:** Every Thursday! 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's awesome!

**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.

**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!

**Hop, Skip and Jumpers:** For 3-5 year olds, this program will help promote friendships, good social skills and interactive play through fun creative activities!

**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.

**Reserved:** Playhouse may be reserved for private play groups, parties or support groups

**GiGi's Crawlers:** This group focuses on crawling skills as well as fine motor skills, social interaction with peers in a semi-structured environment. Children need to be crawling and are accompanied by a parent/adult.

**GiGi's Walkers:** This group focuses on post walking skills with peers to prepare children for school activities (balance beam, kicking, throwing, jumping, etc.) Children need to be walking and must be accompanied by a parent/adult.

The Playhouse can be reserved for any Down syndrome related event.

When it is available it may also be used by other groups with special needs.

## Check Out These Important Dates:

- September 10th • Gala Meeting (*everyone welcome*)
- September 17th • Awareness Meeting (*everyone welcome*)
- September 29th • 8-12 Group

## Everyone's welcome at GiGi's Playhouse

Due to the need for scheduling volunteers and acquiring supplies, reservations are greatly appreciated.

Call **847-885-PLAY**  
or you can e-mail [nancy@gigisplayhouse.org](mailto:nancy@gigisplayhouse.org)  
Feel free to leave a message!

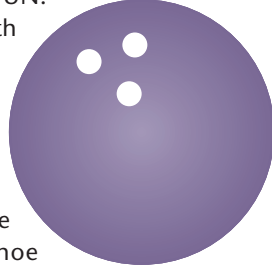
Check the website for constant updates  
and to see pictures of the activities  
[www.gigisplayhouse.org](http://www.gigisplayhouse.org)

GiGi's Playhouse is located 3 miles West of Woodfield Shopping Mall next to Schaumburg Toyota in the Hoffman Center at:  
1069 W. Golf Road • Hoffman Estates, IL 60169  
**847-885-PLAY**

## 5th-8th Graders: Sign Up for Bowling!

Sign up for our bowling event for on Sunday, September 9th from 3-5pm. at Brunswick Zone in Naperville. Call today to reserve your spot for an afternoon of FUN!

GiGi's Playhouse Too has teamed up with the boys and girls at Backyard Outreach to bring you a bowling event geared towards 5th-8th grade children. Come join us for pizza and two hours of unlimited bowling, including a game of crazy bowl complete with laughter and prizes! The cost is \$10 per child. Cost includes shoe rental, two hours of bowling, a slice of cheese pizza and a drink. RSVP by Sept. 5 to Jeannine Allen, Event Co-ordinator, **630-898-6120** or email at **jeannine4@comcast.net**. Call with any questions or to reserve your spot for this fun event! Brunswick Zone is located at 1515 W. Aurora Avenue, Naperville, approximately 1 block east of Ogden on Aurora Ave.



## New Group for 1st to 3rd Graders!!!

Our newest group, Playhouse Pals, will be meeting again on Saturday, Sept. 22 from 1-3pm. We are very excited about this new group. The group is for children with Down syndrome entering 1st-3rd grade. The group is run by Lori Reifsteck and Christina Kubycheck. Lori has a 7 year old son, Benjamin, who has Down syndrome and Chris has an almost 2 year old niece, Teagan, who has Down syndrome. The group will meet once or twice a month on a Saturday afternoon. There will be an organized activity, as well as some time for free play so the kids and adults can get to know each other. If you have any questions feel free to email Lori at **prfstck@sbcglobal.net** or call **630-375-1765**.

## Our Newest 2 & Under Members

We had 2 new families at our 2 & Under Playgroup on July 7. Bob Foster and daughter Halina, and Nancy Harrington with son Mike, enjoyed a morning of play and conversation at the Playhouse.



Don't miss the next 2 & Under Playgroup on Sept. 1!

## Get the Family Out for Ice Cream and Fun!!!

Bring the whole family out on Sunday, Sept. 16 for our

**Annual Ice Cream Social!** The Ice Cream Social will take place at GiGi's Playhouse Too in Plainfield from 3-5pm. We'll have fun, games, and, of course, ice cream and a variety of toppings to make your own creation! *RSVP by Sept. 13 to **630-778-PLAY**.*



## Thank You, Melissa Cleary!

A big Thank You to Melissa Cleary for all of her hard work with the Playhouse. Melissa recently resigned from the Board of Directors and she will be missed. Our Learn to Read program wouldn't be what it is today without all of Melissa's hard work.

## New Group Leaders Wanted

Would you like to see a playgroup at the Playhouse for your child's age? Have you been thinking of hosting a new playgroup? If so, then contact the Playhouse at **630-778-PLAY**, now!

## Golf Outing Sponsors

**Thank you to our Generous Golf Sponsors! We couldn't have done it without you!**

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Alexian Health Systems  
Americo Chemical Products  
Benefax  
Biggers Chevrolet  
Bozin Family  
City Beverage  
Dr. Michael Sullivan, DDS

Fat Boyz Café  
Foster Family  
Goldberg, Weisman & Cairo  
Grubb & Ellis  
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Covington Group  
Hunter Therapy  
Dr. Glenn Nelson

Joe Amodea  
West Suburban Parents Support Group  
James D. Parrilli, State Farm Insurance  
Marcia Marshall  
Jim and Jackie Danielson  
Steve Gramarosa & Chicago Funding  
Chris Lang  
Louis Cairo  
Manny Sanchez  
Steve Bagby

# PLAINFIELD CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<h1>SEPTEMBER</h1>						<b>1</b> <b>2 &amp; Under</b> <b>9:30-11am</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>10-11:30am</b> <b>3-4 yr old Playgroup</b> <b>11am-Noon</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>3-6 pm</b> <i>By appointment</i> 	<b>4</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>3-6pm</b> <i>By appointment</i> 	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>Teen-Tastic</b> <b>7-9pm</b>	<b>8</b> <b>Daddy &amp; Me</b> <b>3-4:30pm</b> <b>Pre-Walkers 9-10am</b> <b>Walkers 10-11am</b> <i>RSVP to 630-423-4035</i>
<b>9</b> <b>Bowling Event</b> <b>3-5pm</b> <i>Brunswick Zone, Naperville</i> <i>RSVP 630-898-6120</i> 	<b>10</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>3-6pm</b> <i>By appointment</i> 	<b>11</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>3-6pm</b> <i>By appointment</i> 	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>10-11:30am</b> 
<b>16</b> <b>Ice Cream Social</b> <b>3-5pm</b> <i>RSVP 630-778-PLAY</i> 	<b>17</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>3-6pm</b> <i>By appointment</i> 	<b>18</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>3-6pm</b> <i>By appointment</i> 	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>Signing Time</b> <b>10-11am</b> 	<b>22</b> <b>Pre-Crawlers</b> <b>9-10am</b> <b>Crawlers 10-11am</b> <i>RSVP to Judy 630-961-2430</i> <b>Playhouse Pals</b> <b>1-3pm</b>
<b>23</b> <b>Nuetro Angeles</b> <b>11am-1pm</b> 	<b>24</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>3-6pm</b> <i>By appointment</i> 	<b>25</b> <b>Literacy Program</b> <b>3-6pm</b> <i>By appointment</i> 	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Open Play</b> <b>10am-Noon</b> 	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>						

All Events are Free unless noted.

\*RSVP to 630-778-PLAY

Bring a friend who doesn't have Down syndrome.

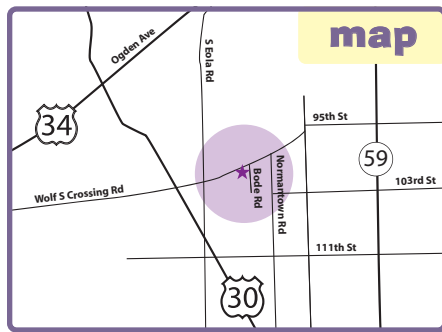
**Open Play is New to Our Plainfield Location**  
 Everyone's welcome to come out to the Playhouse on Friday, **September 28th** for 2 hours of Open Play, starting at 10am!

- 2 & under playgroup:** Families with children 2 and under get together and play while the parents network with each other. Siblings always welcome.
- 3-4 year old playgroup:** Families with children ages 3-4 get together and play while the parents network with each other. Siblings always welcome.
- Pre-crawlers/Crawlers:** This group focuses on crawling skills as well as fine motor skills, social interaction with peers in a semi-structured environment. Pre-crawlers is for children who are just starting to crawl and the Crawlers is for children who are crawling on all fours. Children must be accompanied by a parent/adult.
- Pre-walkers/Walkers:** This group focuses on post walking skills with peers to prepare children for school activities (balance beam, kicking, throwing, jumping, etc.) The pre-walkers is for children who are just starting to walk independently and the Walkers group is for children who are walking independently. Children must be accompanied by a parent/adult.
- Teen-Tastic:** This group meets from 7-9pm. We order pizza for dinner and have lots of fun watching movies and playing games with each other. 6th-12th grades.
- Hispanic Group:** Spanish speaking families gather for food, fun, friendship and education.
- Signing Time Group:** Learn sign language by signing along to the songs from the TV series. All ages are welcome.
- Daddy and Me:** Dads get out with the kids and get together with other dads. All ages.
- Open Play:** Open to everyone.
- Playhouse Pals:** For families with children in 1st-3rd grades.
- Birthday Party:** All ages.

## Time for Signs!



Please join us on **Friday, Sept. 21st** at 10am for some fun with learning sign language through songs. *All ages welcome.*



10052 S. Bode Road  
 Unit D  
 Plainfield, IL 60585  
 630-778-PLAY (7529)  
 fax 630-778-7519  
 gigisplayhousetoo.com

# GiGiFest! 4th Anniversary Bash!

Bring your family and friends to this FREE incredible party! With a DJ, pony rides, food and fun... this is an event you won't want to miss! This is a time to celebrate your child, friend, or neighbor with Down syndrome. As always, we invite the community to celebrate with us!

**WHO:**  
Everyone!

**WHERE:**  
GiGi's Playhouse  
1069 W. Golf Road  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169

**WHEN:**  
**Sunday, October 14th**  
12noon-3pm

Ronald McDonald • Pony Rides! • Moonwalks  
Pumpkin Decorating • Meet our 2008 Calendar Kids!

## Mark your Calendars!

Spread the **Love Gala is February 9th, 2008.** The Gala Committee is meeting Monday, September 10th at 6pm. We are looking for sponsors, auction items, and donations to our raffle. Don't miss out on this opportunity to be part of an amazing event!

If you would be interested in being on the Gala Committee or have other Gala questions/suggestions, please call Roberta Costion at **847-839-8966.**



## We are all on the same team!

The Literacy Program at GiGi's Playhouse is not to be kept a secret! This program that teaches children, teens and adults with Down syndrome how to read the way they learn best, is to be utilized by all disciplines – teachers, aids, and therapists! Listen as one mother shares her experience with her son's teacher:

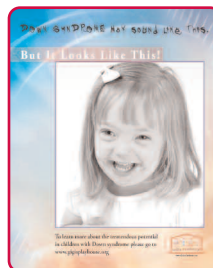


Jack's teacher was so amazed at how well he read that she asked to observe his tutoring session. I was so grateful that she would take time out to learn something that was so important to Jack and that she would make it a point to apply these teachings during his school day. She also was so impressed with the program that she asked if she can volunteer and tutor in the future. I think teachers are amazing people but I feel so lucky to have this teacher teach my son. I know my husband and I are on Jack's team but it is good to know that his teacher is too.

## Join Us in Creating Positive Beginnings

Do you want to make a difference in our medical communities by spreading Down syndrome awareness? We are venturing into the medical communities in which we live and to the hospitals where we deliver our babies to tell our stories-the reality of Down Syndrome, not the statistics. At the September meeting,

we plan on familiarizing ourselves with the current program we will use to educate nurses, doctors, medical students, therapists, etc. and hear from those of you who would like to share your story. If you would like to be a part of this planning or if you would like to share your story with medical professionals, please come! **September 17th 5:30pm at GiGi's Playhouse Hoffman Estates.**



**October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month**

**5th Annual Chicagoland**

**BUDDY WALK**

**Oct 7, 2007**  
1-5 PM

**Ty Warner Park**  
Westmont, IL

Walk for awareness and to raise funds for Down syndrome. For the latest information and to register visit [www.chicagolandbuddywalk.org](http://www.chicagolandbuddywalk.org) or call (815) 439-8693

Registration: Individual \$15 • Family of 4 \$40  
Includes free T-shirt

## save the date

**September 18th**  
at 7pm

Child and Family connections is holding an event at GiGi's Playhouse for those entering the world of Early intervention. Call the playhouse for more info.

# 2008 Down Syndrome Awareness Calendar Pre-Order Form

# Believe...

*Please note these are concept proofs and the final image may vary*



This year's calendar is designed to showcase the tremendous potential in children with Down syndrome and what will happen when you **Believe....**

This inspirational calendar was produced by GiGi's Playhouse, not for profit Down syndrome awareness centers that offer activities and resources for individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and the community.

100% of the profits from this calendar will go right back into Down syndrome awareness!!!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

# of wall calendars _____ @ \$10 each	_____
# of pocket calendars _____ @ \$10 each	_____
<b>Special Offer Package:</b> 1 of each _____ @ \$15 per package <i>Supplies are limited</i>	_____
Shipping	\$4.50
<b>Total:</b>	_____

**Award Winning Calendar!**

Send check (made out to GiGi's Playhouse) or money order to:

GiGi's Playhouse  
1069 West Golf Road, Hoffman Estates IL 60169  
847-885-PLAY • www.gigisplayhouse.org

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Calendars will be mailed out in September. Be sure to check our web site for other products!*



**GiGi's PLAYHOUSE™**  
Down Syndrome Awareness Centers  
www.gigisplayhouse.org

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



1069 W Golf Rd.  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
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**Gambling Ghoul for GiGi's:**  
Costume/Poker Party coming in  
October to benefit Chicago Playhouse.  
We are still looking for individuals to be  
on the Board of Directors. If you would  
like more information please email  
**chicago@gigisplayhouse.org** or call  
Heidi Aldama at **773-616-6381**.



### In Loving Memory...

This September newsletter is dedicated to **Ms. Carrie Olson** and her family. Carrie passed away suddenly last month and our hearts ache for her family and friends. The outpouring of love we have seen by the donations to GiGi's being made in her name is phenomenal. We miss you, Carrie!



*Carrie's niece,  
Hannah*

*Tribute envelopes are available for any occasion.  
Call the Playhouse if you have someone to honor.*

### 2008 Calendars Have Arrived



These award-winning calendars are filled with messages of hope, inspiration and, of course, awareness! Check out our new pocket calendar—limited quantities!! Look inside for your order form on page 7.

*save the date* **September 27th**

### Palatine's Whole Foods Market & GiGi's Team Up

Whole Foods Market in Palatine will give GiGi's Playhouse 5% of their total proceeds for the day! No slip or script needed—just shop on **Thursday, September 27th**, to

show your support. Tell your friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Whole Foods Market in Palatine is located at **1331 North Rand Road**. *Hope to see you there!*

