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1551 Indian Hills Drive, Suite 7  
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**www.gigisplayhouse.org**

# Communication is Key!

Language and communication are the foundation for interaction! That is why GiGi's largest program is our Literacy program – we want to ensure that all individuals with Down syndrome are given the opportunity and training that they need to develop their skills in language and communication. The last few newsletters have featured stories about a 2 year old with Down syndrome who read her first words, or a 35 year old woman who was first taught how to read. The stories are endless and the result is the same — their worlds have



been opened up for them now that they are able to read and have learned literacy skills!

This month, pediatric Speech and Language Pathologist, Lora White, spoke to many GiGi's families regarding communication development in the young school aged child with Down syndrome. She shared information on communication factors that impact the young child and stressed the importance of augmentative/alternative communication (AAC) and assistive technology with the young child. She also emphasized while assistance technology can be

very beneficial, it is important to continue to practice verbal speech skills. Comprehension is always higher than communication in children with Down syndrome – don't assume your child does not understand because he or she cannot yet communicate verbally.

Remember, an important thing that a parent can do to help speech production is to model communication and practice!

*Thank you Lora for sharing your knowledge with us! To enroll your child in the GiGi's Literacy program, call your local Playhouse! The doors that will be opened for you and your child have an endless impact!!*

## Thanks Heineken!

Wow, what a supporter! The renowned Heineken company has shown their true colors once again by completing a volunteer day for GiGi's Playhouse. Over 100 employees got together to create books for our literacy program — over 2,500 books were made!! These books will have a national impact as they will be given to each of our 5 Playhouses. Every paper that these volunteers folded and stapled will have a lasting impression as the child that received that book will be given a tool that will forever further his/her literacy skills.



*Thanks Heineken — and a big thanks to Ken Stout and his family for always remembering their GiGi's family!!*



# What an Event!

An awareness event, that is! The 6th Annual Down Syndrome Awareness 5K Run and Walk was a huge success. Over 2,500 people came out to show their support for GiGi's Playhouse and Down syndrome awareness. Some ran, some walked, some dashed and all



experienced the joy of being part of a mission larger than ourselves. Thanks to State Rep. Fred Crespo, the Hoffman Estates community, all the Playhouses, and all our sponsors and volunteers, we were able to raise funds for our free educational and therapeutic programs. Look inside to see pictures of this



incredible event!

*See page 2 for all the festivities.*

# 6th Annual 5K Awareness Event



# Thank You to Our Sponsors!

 <b>G.M. Sloan</b> Mosaic & Tile Co.	 <b>Dr. Mike's</b> PRAIRIE Orthodontics P.C. (847) 249-8800 www.prairieortho.com	 <b>We Love</b> GIGI's Playhouse! The Game Kids - Julian and Quincy -	 <b>DuBois Paving Co.</b> 847-634-6089 www.dubois-paving.com	 <b>Rusty's Carpet Services</b> NAPERVILLE RUNNING CO.	 <b>Accelerated</b> rehabilitation centers Physical Therapy • Sports Medicine	 <b>SOPO</b>	 <b>CBI &amp;</b> Valley Enterprises, Inc.	
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# SIoux CITY, IOWA

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<b>JULY</b>			<b>1</b> Literacy 9-10:30am Literacy 4:45-7pm Buddies For Life Meeting 6pm	<b>2</b> Open Play 10-11:30am	<b>3</b> Literacy 10-10:45am	<b>4</b>  Independence Day
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Movers & Shakers 3:30-4:30pm	<b>8</b> Literacy 9-10:30am Literacy 4:45-7pm	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Open Play 10-11am Theme: Gross Motor Literacy 10-10:45am	<b>11</b> Literacy 9-11:30am
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Literacy 9-10:30am Literacy 4:45-7pm	<b>16</b> Walkers 9:30-11am	<b>17</b> Literacy 10-10:45am Teen Tastic 6-8pm	<b>18</b> Literacy 9-11:30am
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Open Play 10:30am-Noon Movers & Shakers 3:30-4:30pm	<b>22</b> Literacy 9-10:30am Literacy 4:45-7pm Open Play 6-7:30pm	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Literacy 10-10:45am Kids Club 6:30-7:30pm Theme: Ice Cream Social	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Signing Times 9:30am Theme: Americana Open Play 10-11am	<b>29</b> Literacy 9-10:30am Literacy 4:45-7pm	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> Literacy 10-10:45am	

## Teen Tastics!!

Our Teen Group (12 yrs & up) hosted Kicking' Off Summer Party in May and a Pajama Party in June. Playing Wii, karaoke and board games are some of the favorite items for all ages.

"Casey had a GREAT time at Teen Tastic!



This was his 1st Wii experience and he really liked it, but then what's not to like!"

## Literacy is Up & Running!

We began our Literacy Program with 10 students and 8 Tutors for the Summer Session. We are accepting Students for the Fall Session and are always looking for Tutors!!

"Thanks to all who are responsible for making this happen, you all need to be commended! Just opening the Playhouse here in Siouxland and the fact that you are doing great things... it will only get better! Casey and I are so HAPPY to be a part of GiGi's Playhouse!"

—Diane, Mother of Casey (18 yrs old)

## Signing Times

was once again a lot of fun with interaction for everyone. Miss Linda brought games and visual materials for new signs. Join us **Tuesday, July 28th** at 9:30am!

**Saturday, September 19th**, Buddies For Life will be hosting the Walk for Down Syndrome Awareness! Come to the meeting on **Wednesday, July 1st** at 6pm to learn how you can help spread awareness!

## Movers and Shakers

This class has been a hit so far! We combine music and movement and the kids (ages 2-5) will be dancing and having fun while strengthening their gross motor skills through a playful event! See you on **July 7th & 21st!**

## Volunteer Night...

...brought in 160+ books for our Literacy Program. Over a dozen Volunteers helped put the books and cards together. 8 Tutors were trained for our students and many parents came to learn more about the program!

## Ice Cream Social Kids Club!

Miss Jessica will host our first Kids Club (ages 6-11) on **Friday, July 27th** from 6:30-7:30pm! Bring your favorite topping to share, we will play games and have lots of fun! Bring your family!



## Open Play with PT!

Mrs. Karen Mohring, PT, will join us on **July 10th** from 10-11am for Open Play! She will bring her expertise about Physical Therapy as the kids practice fine and gross motor skills such as crawling, creeping, climbing, tumbling, etc. You won't want to miss it!

# HOFFMAN ESTATES

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<b>JULY</b>			Literacy 3-5:15pm <b>1</b>	Open Play 12:30-2pm Meeting 2-3pm Literacy 5:30-7pm Meeting 7-8:30pm <b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	4th of July Parade in Hoffman Estates Join us <b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	Literacy 2:30-4:45pm <b>6</b>	Literacy 10am-3pm <b>7</b>	Literacy 3-5:15pm <b>8</b>	Open Play 12:30-2pm Literacy 5:30-7pm Wendy's Night 4-8pm Golf & Roselle Road <b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	Crawlers 9-9:45am 2 & Under 10-11:30am Hop, Skip & Jumpers Noon-1:30pm Playhouse Pals 2-3:30pm Teen-Tastic 5-6:30pm <b>11</b>
Nuestros Angeles Hispanic Playgroup 11am-1pm <b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	Literacy 10am-2pm <b>14</b>	Literacy 3-5:15pm <b>15</b>	Open Play 12:30-2pm Literacy 5:30-7pm <b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>	Literacy 2:30-4:45pm Meeting 7pm <b>20</b>	Literacy 10am-3pm <b>21</b>	Literacy 3-5:15pm <b>22</b>	Open Play 12:30-2pm Literacy 5:30-7pm Wendy's Night 4-8pm Golf & Roselle Road <b>23</b>	Friday Friends 7pm <b>24</b>	Kids Club 10-11:30am <b>25</b>
Polish Group 11am-1pm <b>26</b>	Meeting 7pm <b>27</b>	Literacy 10am-2pm <b>28</b>	Literacy 3-5:15pm Literacy 6:30-8:30pm Bookmaking all are invited! <b>29</b>	Open Play 12:30-2pm Literacy 5:30-7pm <b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	

## GiGi's Playhouse Hoffman Estates Is Expanding!

### Help us "Grow GiGi's Brick by Brick"

Did you know that GiGi's is expanding to offer even more room for our awesome programs! You can help us fund our expansion! Would you like to honor your child with Down syndrome or create a lasting memorial to an important person in your life? We have just the way to do it! Purchase a brick on our playhouse wall for all to see! The bricks cost \$100.00 each and can be personalized with a message of your choosing. Simply send a check to the Hoffman Playhouse marked "Brick" and be sure to include the message you would like to have on it. We will unveil the new brick "playhouse" at the grand opening of the new space sometime this summer! Don't miss out, only a limited number are available and will be sold on a first come, first serve basis.

## Literacy Bookmaking!

**July 29th** is the next Hoffman Literacy Bookmaking night — if you can help us, email [info@gigisplayhouse.com](mailto:info@gigisplayhouse.com) so we have materials ready for you! We will train you!

## 1st Phonics Group!

The phonics program at Hoffman has been growing strong for nearly a year! Calvin and Ian are the first to be in a group for this program! They have mastered the matching and site words aspect of literacy and are now focusing on phonics and comprehension! And boy are they doing great! Both of them practice at home with the CD provided and come to the Playhouse each week to show off their new skills!



## Friday Friends

We will have a dance party lead by a dance instructor! Come ready to learn some new moves and have fun, she knows we love Grease! See you on **July 24th!!!**



## What a Party!

Samuel and 56 of his friends celebrated his birthday at GiGi's! Most had never been here before and they loved being able to experience the love and fun of our Playhouse and learn a little more about Down syndrome.

## Fourth of July Parade

GiGi's is walking in the Hoffman Estates 4th of July Parade!!! Come show your support and show our community the potential of individuals with Down syndrome! Please RSVP to the Playhouse for more details.

# FOX VALLEY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT					
<h1>JULY</h1>			Tutoring 9:30-10am 4-4:30pm	Tutoring 3-3:30pm	Teen-Tastic 7-9pm RSVP 630.778.PLAY	Tutoring 9-10:30am 3-4 yr old Playgroup 11am-Noon					
			5	Tot Class 9:30-11am RSVP 630.778.PLAY Open Play 11am-1pm Tutoring 1-2:30pm	6	Tutoring 1-3:30pm	7	Tutoring 9:30-10am 4-4:30pm Special Olympics 4:15-5pm; 5-5:45pm	8	Tutoring 3-3:30pm Wendy's Fundraiser 5-8pm	9
12	Tot Class 9:30-11am RSVP 630.778.PLAY Open Play 11am-1pm Tutoring 1-2:30pm	13	Tutoring 1-3:30pm	14	Tutoring 9:30-10am 4-4:30pm	15	Tutoring 3-3:30pm	16	17	Tutoring 9-10:30am Hop, Skip & Jumpers 10:30am-Noon RSVP 630.335.4824 Playhouse Pals 2-4pm	18
19	Tot Class 9:30-11am RSVP 630.778.PLAY Open Play 11am-1pm Tutoring 1-2:30pm	20	Tutoring 1-3:30pm	21	Tutoring 9:30-10am 4-4:30pm	22	Tutoring 3-3:30pm Karate Kickers Ages 8-12: 5:15-5:45pm 13 and up: 6-6:30pm	23	24	Tutoring 9-10:30am Crawlers Group 9:30-10:30am RSVP 630.423.4035	25
Nuestros Angeles Hispanic Playgroup 11am-1pm	26	Tot Class 9:30-11am RSVP 630.778.PLAY Open Play 11am-1pm Tutoring 1-2:30pm	27	Tutoring 1-3:30pm	28	Tutoring 9:30-10am 4-4:30pm	29	Golf Outing 12:30pm lunch/registration 1:30pm tee time Tutoring 3-3:30pm	30	GiGi's Family Night 6-8pm RSVP 630.844.1720	31



## Young Athletes Program

This program is designed for ages 2-7 to learn the necessary skills to begin competing in the Special Olympics at age 8. It will meet on the second Wednesday of the month, 4:15-5pm and 5-5:45pm. We have already enrolled 30 children in this program. We are looking to add additional class dates. If you are interested in participating with your child or volunteering to help, please call **630.778.PLAY**.

## NEW Open Play Group

Open to children of ALL ages! It will meet on Mondays 11am-1pm.

We'll have some lunch and play with all of our GiGi friends! Please RSVP to **630.778.PLAY** with the number of children and adults attending. Come join the fun!

## Family Fun Night

Family Fun Night was a lot of fun in May! We created a special gift for our dads that told them how important they are to us. Some of our siblings put on a performance for the group. It is nice to see how many great friendships have been made here! We also welcomed a new friend, Davis Ade, who visited the playhouse for the first time. Come join the fun at our next Family Night, Friday July 31st!













## Super Sib Sunday

Our Super Sib Sunday on May 31st was a special time just for siblings (no parents) of individuals with Down syndrome to enjoy a spirited mix of games, activities and discussion about the good and not-so-good moments of having a sibling with Down syndrome.

Our facilitator, Catherine Witcher, M.Ed is a highly respected Nationwide Special Needs Consultant and speaker, and also happens to be a 'super sibling' of an individual with Down syndrome. You may learn more about Catherine at

**www.precisioneducation.com**

Stay tuned for future Super Sib Sunday news .....

McHENRY							
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	
JULY			1	GiGi's Cheer 4pm at Layton Athletics	2	3 Signing til' Dawn 5:30-6:30pm 	4 Independence Day 
			5 Nuestros Angeles Hispanic Play Group 10am-Noon Skill Builders 6:45pm 	6	7 Open Play 10am-Noon 	8	9 GiGi's Cheer 4pm at Layton Athletics Options & Advocacy 10am
12	13	14 Open Play 10am-Noon Wendy's Night 5-8pm 	15	16 GiGi's Cheer 4pm at Layton Athletics	17 Signing til' Dawn 5:30-6:30pm FFF & Kids Club 6:30pm 	18	
19	20 Skill Builders 10am	21 Open Play 10am-Noon 	22	23 GiGi's Cheer 4pm at Layton Athletics	24 Signing til' Dawn 5:30-6:30pm Friday Friends 7-9pm 	25 Open Play 10am	
26 Daddy & Me 9-11am	27	28 Open Play 10am-Noon 	29 Book Making Nite 6:30pm	30 GiGi's Cheer 4pm at Layton Athletics	31 Signing til' Dawn 5:30-6:30pm		

## Team Ava Angels!

Our daughter Ava is ten months and has been coming to GiGi's Playhouse since February.

We decided to participate in the 5K Fun Run to help raise money. We initially had no intentions of starting our own team but we have made so many friends at

GiGi's, we could not decide what team to join. That's how Ava's Angels came about. Donations have poured in from as far as England, Spain, Brazil and even Singapore! My sister Sharon and family will be joining us from Delaware to participate. I would like to take this



opportunity to personally thank everyone who donated to

Team Ava Angels. GiGi's Playhouse is and will continue to be a very important resource for Ava and it also provides family support. Ava has excelled in so many ways since coming to GiGi's and participating in the Walk is a natural way to give back!!! Thanks GiGi's!

## Pizza Party!

Please join us for Open Play every Tuesday from 10am - Noon for fun, friends & of course PIZZA. Our first summer open play was PACKED as the kids played together and the parents learned from each other!



## Our 3rd Volunteer Orientation Night

We would love to have you join us in August for our 3rd volunteer orientation night. Please check next months calendar for exact date. Come and see how YOU can make difference.

## Fiesta Days Celebration!!

The McHenry GiGi's Playhouse will be "FLOATING" through our first parade on **Sunday, July 19th** at **1:30pm**.

Anyone wishing to join us for this

fun and outstanding opportunity to spread awareness for GiGi's into the community can contact: Scott Bradfield at [scottbradfield@yahoo.com](mailto:scottbradfield@yahoo.com)

# CHICAGO

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<b>JULY</b>			1	2	3	4
				Open Play 11:30am-1pm	Literacy 9-11am	Closed for the Holiday
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Closed for the Holiday	Literacy 9-11am	Literacy 4-6:15pm			Literacy 9-11am	Playhouse Pals 11:15am-12:45pm
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Literacy 9-11am <b>Motivational Monday</b> Kelly Arnoldy, Pediatric PT 7pm	Literacy 4-6:15pm		Open Play 11:30am-1pm	Literacy 9-11am	Open Play 11:15am-12:30pm Kids Club 4-5:30pm
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Literacy 9-11am	Literacy 4-6:15pm			Literacy 9-11am	Crawlers 10-10:45am 2 & Under 11am-12:15pm Hop Skip & Jumpers 12:30-2pm
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Literacy 9-11am	Literacy 4-6:15pm			Literacy 9-11am	

## Motivational Mondays

**Monday, July 13th, 7pm**  
**Featuring:**  
**Pediatric Physical Therapist**  
**Kelly Arnoldy**

Kelly, a therapist for several Chicago

Playhouse children, will give an informational seminar on topics ranging from transitioning your child from crawling to walking, to continued PT practices into the teenage years. She will share her experiences as a PT and will end the seminar with an open forum to answer your questions.



## Sidewalk Sale

On May 16th the Chicago Playhouse held its' 1st annual "Sidewalk Sale". It was a great event not only for fundraising, but for raising awareness in our community. Many individuals from the surrounding neighborhood attended the sale and learned about the Playhouse and our mission. We even recruited five new volunteers!!!

Special thanks to Melisa and John Gibel who coordinated, ran and sponsored the event.



## Our New Intern

The Chicago Playhouse welcomes our new site coordinator intern, Katie Metzger. Katie is a student at Loyola University where she is majoring in Advertising and



Public Relations and minor in Sociology. While searching for an internship that would allow her to give back to the community, Katie found GiGi's Playhouse. She did some

research and discovered that same thing we all have — that GiGi's is a beautiful organization with an inspirational mission.

*Welcome Katie! We are happy to have you as part of our "family".*



**Hoffman Estates**  
1069 W. Golf Road  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169

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**SAVE THESE DATES**

**June 28th ■ MCHENRY**  
**Hawgs and Hot Rods**

**July 4th ■ HOFFMAN ESTATES**  
**Fourth of July Parade**

**July 30th ■ FOX VALLEY**  
**Annual Golf Outing**

**Sept. 19th ■ FOX VALLEY**  
**Charity Bike Ride**

**Oct. 4th ■ HOFFMAN ESTATES**  
**GiGiFest**

**Oct. 24th ■ CHICAGO**  
**Taste of GiGi's Playhouse**

**Thank You Assurance!**

The team completed 150 books to be split between Chicago and Westmont Literacy offices for our kids! They also donated book bags for the kids in our Literacy Program!



**Computer Donation!!**

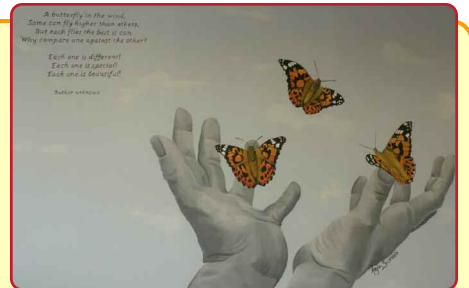
Thank you to the Orland Park Hearing Office of the Social Security Administration! After they updated computers in their offices, their original computers were donated to the four Chicagoland GiGi's Playhouse locations!! Computers are utilized in our Literacy program by hundreds of students and tutors, by our Literacy Coordinators, Literacy Director and Site Coordinators. What a wonderful contribution! Thanks Ron and Jesse and everyone who helped make this possible!



**Thanks Angie!**

Angie Scordato has donated two murals to the Fox Valley and Chicago Playhouses. Just look at these pictures! They provide the perfect backdrop for the educational programs that take place at all GiGi's.

*I am a mother of 5 boys, my 4th child has Down syndrome and is full*



*of sunshine! It is nice to know that there is a place we can go to be connected to others who have also been blessed with having a child with Down syndrome! Thank you for letting me 'touch' your life with my gift. — Angie Scordato*

If you are interested in having a mural done by Angie, call the Fox Valley or Chicago Playhouse!

**Be Sure to Check Out:**

**Super Sib Sunday**  
**@ Fox Valley (page 5)**

**Phonics Program**  
**@ Hoffman Estates (page 4)**

**July 30th**  
**Golf Outing**  
**in Naperville!**



**Noon ■**  
**Check-in/Lunch**  
**1:30pm ■**  
**Tee time**

**Register at [www.gigisplayhouse.org](http://www.gigisplayhouse.org)**