



Gigi's Playhouse™
Down Syndrome Awareness Centers

www.gigisplayhouse.org

GIGI'S NEWS

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

Hoffman Estates

Plainfield

McHenry

Chicago

Now Serving **4** Locations

JULY 2008

What a Party!!



On June 8th, over 2,000 came out to walk, run and dash for Down Syndrome! Our 5th annual 5K Run and Walk was yet another amazing time as the whole community came together to celebrate the blessing that is Down syndrome. Bally's warmed us up, Ronald McDonald dazzled us with magic tricks, cheerleaders encouraged



this amazing event! All proceeds go to the educational programs and activities at our 4 locations!

the crowd and everyone there helped spread awareness about Down syndrome!

Look inside to see pictures of

Read All About It!

When Kelvin first came to the Literacy Program, I did not know what to expect. I had brought him for Open Play and other playgroups and was excited to get him enrolled in the literacy program. At the time, he was speaking a few words and he could sign over 100 words. At his first session, he barely spoke — we used a variety of ways to engage him including puppets and other creative play tools. After that session, the difference was amazing! Kelvin could not get enough of these books! He started putting words together and reading at home everyday. Now, 6 months later, Kelvin is speaking in full sentences! His teachers at school are amazed at his progress and even stopped using P.E.C.S. (Picture Exchange

Communication System — visual cues used for each word). Kelvin is only 3 years old! He masters over 2 books a week, each of which introduce new words. We are so thankful for the Literacy Program and for tutors such as Beth who take a personal interest in each child and their success!



July 31st



Annual Golf Outing!!

The 2008 Golf Outing is Thursday, July 31st at the Tamarack Club in Naperville. Registration forms are at www.gigisplayhouse.org or at your local Playhouse. Any questions about registration or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Tom Benco at **630.778.7529**. We still need raffle donations and sponsorships for the golf outing! Suggested raffle donations include weekend stays, power tools, game tickets and autographed sports memorabilia.



GiGi's 5th Annual 5K Fun Run AND Walk



Thank You to our Sponsors



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Giancola Family

Thank you to all the amazing sponsors! We could not do what we do without you and our amazing volunteers from GE, The Chapel, Kohls, the Bike Marshalls and everyone in the community! A special thank you to Mayor McLeod and Senator Murphy for showing their support.



KOHL'S
expect great things



Programs & Activities!!

Look at all of our free educational programs and activities!
Check your local Playhouse calendar to see times and dates.

2 & under playgroup ● Families with children 2 and under get together and play while the parents network with each other. Siblings always welcome.

Crawlers ● This group focuses on crawling skills as well as fine motor skills, social interaction with peers in a semi-structured environment.

Walkers ● This group focuses on post walking skills with peers to prepare children for school activities (balance beam, kicking, throwing, jumping, etc.)

Hop, Skip and Jumpers ● This program helps promote friendships, social skills, and interactive play through fun creative activities! For preschool and kindergartners (3-5yr olds).

Playhouse Pals ● This structured playgroup focuses on developing friendships and confidence all while having a great time! 1st -3rd grades (6-8yr olds)

Kids Club ● This fast paced group incorporates social, communication and confidence-building skills and activities! 4th-8th grades.(9-12 yr olds)

Teen Tastic ● What a party! We order pizza for dinner and have lots of fun watching movies and playing games with each other. 9th-12th grades (13-17 year olds)

Friday Friends ● Karaoke, dances, softball games – the fun never ends!
Adults 18 and over.

Nuestros Angeles ● Spanish speaking families gather for food, fun, friendship and education!

Polish Group ● What a party! Many Polish speaking families attend this group each month to meet other families and have a great time together!

Open Play ● Come on over for pizza, pop and fun! Everyone is welcome to this weekly gathering of networking and friendship building.

Literacy ● Our free Literacy program teaches kids with Downs syndrome how to read the way that they learn best!! This is by appointment only – call your local Playhouse for more info.

Daddy and Me ● Dads, bring your kids and meet other fathers in your area! What a great time to hang out with your kids while meeting new people.

Reserve it! ● The Playhouse can be reserved for any Down syndrome function or other special needs group. Call your local Playhouse for more info.

*Children must always be accompanied by a parent/adult

Party with the Firemen

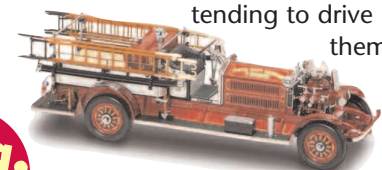
The Oswego Fire Department dropped by the Playhouse Pals meeting in May to show off their trucks and talk to the children about Fire Safety. Everyone really



enjoyed talking to the fireman about their jobs, but most of all, they enjoyed getting into the fire trucks and pre-



tending to drive them!



Aug. 21st

SAVE THE DATE

Please join us for an important 2-hour seminar on successful teaching methods for children with Down Syndrome. Sharon Tate, Assistant Superintendent,

will be moderating the seminar on **Thursday, August 21st, 7-9pm.**

For more info. please contact GiGi's Plainfield Playhouse at **630.778.7529**

HOFFMAN ESTATES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
July		Literacy 3-6pm 1	Literacy 6-8pm 2 Special Intentions 7pm	Open Play 12:30-2pm 3 Literacy 5-7pm	4 Independence Day	5	
	6	Literacy 3-7pm 7	Literacy 3-6pm 8	Literacy 6-8pm 9	Open Play 12:30-2pm 10 Literacy 5-7pm	Literacy 10am-2pm 11 Crawlers 9-9:45am 12 2 and Under 10-11:30am Hop, Skip + Jumpers Noon-1:30pm	
	Nuestros Angeles 11am-1pm <i>Hispanic Playgroup</i> 13	Literacy 3-7pm 14	Literacy 3-6pm 15	Literacy 6-8pm 16	Open Play 12:30-2pm 17 Literacy 5-7pm	Literacy 10am-2pm 18	19
	20	Literacy 3-7pm 21	Literacy 3-6pm 22	Literacy 6-8pm 23	Open Play 12:30-2pm 24 Literacy 5-7pm	Literacy 10am-2pm 25 Friday Friends Cook Out <i>RSVP</i>	Kids Club 10-11:30am 26
	Polish Group 11am-1pm 27	Literacy 3-7pm 28	Literacy 3-6pm 29	Literacy 6-8pm 30 Literacy Nite 6:30-8:30pm	Open Play 12:30-2pm 31 Literacy 5-7pm Golf Outing 1:30pm	Are You a Therapist? Do you want to help running a program? We are looking for a therapist to run our Hop, Skip and Jumpers and Walkers programs. Call 847.885.7529 if interested!	



Look at the Hop, Skip & Jumpers!!

This month we had two new friends join the group! We made mugs for Fathers Day and of course played freeze dance and sang songs among other things! Come join the fun the 2nd Saturday of the month!



This page is dedicated to **Robert Stanley,**

Jack's beloved grandfather who passed away. Thank you to the

Friday Friends Cook Out!

This month we will be having our annual cook-out at Roberta's house! Call **847.839.8966** to RSVP!



Costion and Stanley family for the outpouring of love and generosity that GiGi's has seen in honor of Jack's grandpa, Roberta's dad and a friend to the Playhouse.



Camp GiGi Coming in August!!!

Calling all 6-8 year olds — Camp GiGi will be August 4th through the 8th. Our camp counselor this year is Kathleen Hepburn who comes to us from the Oak Park Park District where she leads kids through many adventures as an experienced staff member.

Everyday will be fun filled with different craft, games, and activities. Play will happen both outdoors and in - with a snack at the end of each day. Campers meet at the Hoffman Playhouse everyday from 10am-12pm. Please RSVP to the playhouse to guarantee a spot, space is limited to 8 kids. **847.885.7529**

PLAINFIELD

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
		Literacy Program 3-6pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-5pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-6:30pm <i>By appointment</i> 	 Independence Day	2 & Under 9:30-11am Literacy 9:30-10am Literacy 11:15-11:45am <i>By appointment</i> 3-4 Year Old Playgroup 11am-Noon	
	6	7	Literacy Program 3-6pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-5pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-6:30pm <i>By appointment</i> 	11 Pre-Walkers 9-10am Literacy 9:30-10am Literacy 11:15-11:45am <i>By appointment</i> Daddy & Me 3-4:30pm 	
	13	14	Literacy Program 3-6pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-5pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-6:30pm <i>By appointment</i> 	18 Literacy Program 9:30-10am Literacy Program 11:15-11:45am <i>By appointment</i> 	
	20	21	Literacy Program 3-6pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-5pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-6:30pm <i>By appointment</i> 	25 Evening Open Play 6-8pm 	26 Pre-Crawlers 9-10am Crawlers 10-11am RSVP 630.423.4035 Literacy 9:30-10am Literacy 11:15-11:45am <i>By appointment</i> 
	Nuestros Angeles Hispanic Playgroup 11am-1pm 	28	Literacy Program 3-6pm <i>By appointment</i> 	Literacy Program 4-5pm <i>By appointment</i> 	3rd Annual GiGi's Golf Outing Tee Off Time 1:30pm Tamarack Golf Club, Naperville Literacy 4-6:30pm <i>By appointment</i> 		

Steps Dance Center - Aurora

The owner of the studio is very interested in setting up a class specifically for children with special needs. They have had experience in teaching children with special needs and would like to give more opportunities for our children to learn dance and other skills, such as number and colors, through dance. If you would like more information or are interested in the class please contact Valerie at vn mush@sbcglobal.net.

Bag Toss Tournament

Did you miss the registration for the Bag Toss Tournament? We are going to try it again in the fall. Please come join us at Waubonsie Valley High School's Gold Campus for a day of bag tossing, fun, food and family. There will be cash prizes for first, second, and third place winners!! We will raffle off a set of boards and bags. Each raffle ticket is \$1 or buy 6 tickets for \$5. Please look in next month's newsletter for further details.

Playhouse Pals

Just a reminder that the Playhouse Pals are taking a break for the summer, but hope to start back up the third Saturday in September. If you have a 1st-3rd grader and don't receive Playhouse Pals email updates than contact Lori at prfstck@sbcglobal.net.

GiGi's is Looking to Move!

Know any property owners in the vicinity who would be willing to work with GiGi's Playhouse Plainfield to find a new home? We are a growing community, and as such, would like to find a more spacious venue to entertain, assist and educate our wonderful population. We have over 100 families visiting the playhouse every month. These families are consumers too and they will buy coffee and sandwiches, get haircuts for their families, etc. In addition, we have events that draw attention to the retail area for the day and actually provide free advertising for the local businesses. If you know of any possible locations, please call **630.778.PLAY**.



Evening Open Play

Last month we honored our Dad by making him a Father's Day apron. The kids put their own personal touch on the apron they made. We had lots of fun! This month we will celebrate summer by creating bugs!! Come join us on Friday July 25th from 6-8pm for pizza, fun and a craft! RSVP to Genia at glatka@gigisplayhouse.org. Hope to see you there!



McHENRY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
<h1>july</h1>		Literacy 3-5pm 1 Open Play 10am-12:30pm <i>Summer Fun Hours—</i> Join us for PIZZA & FUN	Literacy 1-5pm 2 	Literacy 4-4:30pm 3 	4 Independence Day	5	
	Literacy 1-3pm 6 	Literacy Noon-1pm 7 Literacy 3-6:30pm 	Literacy 3-5pm 8 Open Play 10am-12:30pm <i>Summer Fun Hours—</i> Join us for PIZZA & FUN	Signing 10-11am 9 Literacy 1-5pm 	Literacy 4-4:30pm 10 	Teen Tastics 7-9pm 11 NDSC Conference in Boston 	Hop, Skip & Jumpers 10-11:30am 12 NDSC Conference in Boston
	Nuestros Angeles 11am-1pm 13 <i>Hispanic Playgroup</i> Literacy 1-3pm NDSC Conference in Boston 	Literacy Noon-1pm 14 Literacy 3-6:30pm 	Literacy 3-5pm 15 Open Play 10am-12:30pm <i>Summer Fun Hours—</i> Join us for PIZZA & FUN	Literacy 1-5pm 16 	Literacy 4-4:30pm 17 	Kids Club 6-8pm 18 	Walkers 10-11:30am 19
	Literacy 1-3pm 20 	Literacy Noon-1pm 21 Literacy 3-6:30pm 	Literacy 3-5pm 22 Open Play 10am-12:30pm <i>Summer Fun Hours—</i> Join us for PIZZA & FUN	2 & Under 10-11:30am 23 Literacy 1-5pm 	Literacy 4-4:30pm 24 	Friday Friends 7pm 25 <i>Join us for Pizza, Soda & a Movie</i> 	Open Play 10-11:30am 26 <i>Summer Fun Hours—</i> Join us for PIZZA & FUN
	Daddy & Me 9-11am 27 <i>(new hours by the dads request)</i> Literacy 1-3pm 	Literacy Noon-1pm 28 Literacy 3-6:30pm 	Literacy 3-5pm 29 Open Play 10am-12:30pm <i>Summer Fun Hours—</i> Join us for PIZZA & FUN	Literacy 1-5pm 30 	Literacy 4-4:30pm 31 		

McHenry Spot Light

Each month we would like to feature someone who is contributing in a special way to our Playhouse.

**INTRODUCING...
OUR HOSTESS WITH
THE MOSTEST**

Brenna Lindquist

A very special volunteer came to us during our organizational meeting back in February. She is a vibrant and very



active young lady, Miss Brenna Lindquist. Brenna is a 22-year old lady who has Down syndrome. She has graciously stepped up to help us by serving as our Hostess for Open Play! What a dynamic woman. She is diligent to serve her community and is currently the President of the Self Advocacy Council of IL. The council's purpose is dedicated to providing people with disabilities the support and knowledge they need to become

better self advocates, which will allow people to be more independent in today's society. Brenna is a shining example for her efforts to make this a reality for all of us. She is so happy to be a part of the GiGi's Playhouse vision and to help our children.



GRAND OPENING!

GIGI'S PLAYHOUSE — CHICAGO!!

Sunday, July 20th, Noon-3pm

Join us at the newest Playhouse • 3660 W. Irving Park Rd.

Chicago's Grand Opening!!!

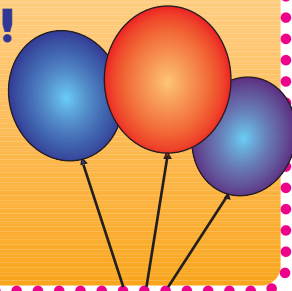
We're Coming to Chicago! Come to our Grand Opening Celebration!

Join us at:

**3660 W. Irving Park Road
Chicago, IL 60618**

Want to help, donate, or learn more?

Email: [Chicago@gigisplayhouse.org!](mailto:Chicago@gigisplayhouse.org)



Thank You Assurance Agency!

They sent a group of volunteers to make books for our Literacy Program! We couldn't do it without you!!



Taste of GiGi's Playhouse

Help us celebrate the opening of our new Chicago Playhouse!! Enjoy a sampling of specialty foods from Chicago's culinary experts, participate with the Live Karaoke band, and support the Playhouse all at the same time!

Register online at:

www.gigisplayhouse.org

When:

August 16 @ 5pm

Where:

Historic Logan Square Auditorium

2539 N. Kedzie

Chicago, IL

Aug. 16th

5pm



Part of the Family

When Brett was born, I found out that he has Down syndrome. Though the fear and anxiety was there, what most frustrated me was that it was so difficult to find the information that I was seeking as well as other families to meet. I remember coming to the Playhouse for the 1st time when Brett was 1 year old. I felt so welcomed and supported! I knew I wanted to be

part of welcoming other new families as well and made it my mission to help new parents



when they receive the diagnosis of Down syndrome. I have recently become the host of Open Play where many of our new parents come for the 1st time. I love to congratulate them and be part of helping a new mom (or dad) see the diagnosis in a positive light.

Though I don't consider myself outgoing, I feel that being a host of Open Play has allowed me to meet new parents and develop friendships with people that I may have only seen once a month at a program or event. Brett is young, only 2, and though he gets excited about coming to the Playhouse, it is my older daughter Leah who is 6 that benefits the most right now. She has developed friendships with other siblings

her age and looks forward to coming to Open Play each week to see them! I don't know where I would be if not for GiGi's and I am giving back because it has given me so much!! I have recently joined the Hoffman Board of Directors too.

Thanks Diane, we are thrilled to have your family be part of the GiGi's family!

Would you like to get involved? Call your local playhouse!!!





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Hoffman Estates
1069 W. Golf Rd.
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169

Save the Date
Chicago Opening
July 20th!!!
Look inside for details...

What a Team Effort

Thank you to the many teams that rallied their friends and families in support of **GiGi's Fifth Annual 5K!**

Our top Teams:

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| Team Cael | Team GiGi |
| Team Caleb | Team Emma |
| Team Deuce | |

A BIG thank you to every Playhouse, the 5K committee, our 5K chair **Roseann Rustia** and EVERYONE who helped make this the best finish line in town!



SAVE THE DATE
GiGi's 2008 Golf Outing
Tee off time is 1:30pm
at Naperville's
Tamarack Club.
Register online at:
www.gigisplayhouse.org
Contact Tom Benco at:
630.778.7529

July 31st

Hoffman Estates **Locations**
1069 West Golf Road
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169
847.885.PLAY

Plainfield
10052 South Bode Road, Unit D
Plainfield, IL 60585
630.778.PLAY

McHenry
1720 North Richmond Road
McHenry, IL 60050
815.385.PLAY

Chicago
3660 West Irving Park Road
Chicago, IL 60618
773.583.PLAY

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