



All Special Kids

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2008-2009 Program

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GENEVA / BERN / VAUD

ASK - All Special Kids

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GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

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Dear Parents,

Each new school year brings new inspirations and bright ideas that propel us to new heights.

During this past year, to our delight, we were able to attract a young new talent with great dedication to make a difference in the lives of many special needs children.

Over the summer, I met yet again another passionate and dedicated young woman, who has been teaching nine students with autism at one of the U.S. urban school districts. These two women and the students who volunteered for our four weeks summer camp are a testament, that we as parents, need to harness the passion of what our children believe in and to constantly encourage their efforts to help another person, young or old.

To quote Ralph Waldo Emerson; "It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself".



Annie and Carmela,
summer camp outing, July 2008

In this issue, we are highlighting ASK programs for this coming school year; our popular Monthly Coffee Mornings, C.A.R.E. program for the whole family, Monthly Kid's Social, new Weekly Social Drama Group, ASK camps and the Seminar and Lecture series.

In addition, we will be starting two new parents support groups; one for the parents from Vaud Canton and one for Geneva parents of gifted children. As always, we are grateful for all the parents who volunteered their time to help make each year a success.

Happy reading!!
Joy Tong

"If you raise your children to feel that they can accomplish any goal or task they decide upon, you will have succeeded as a parent and you will have given your children the greatest of all blessings"

Brian Tracy



MONTHLY KID'S SOCIAL

This time last year our little group didn't exist! It was only after the success of the Social skills camps last August that an idea formed in Joy Tong's mind to run a group whereby children could practice these skills within a supportive and friendly environment. From its formation in September with just 2 parents and its hesitant beginnings on a Ten Pin Bowling alley in Meyrin, it has grown to be something children can look forward to each month during the school year (September to June).

The group is open to all children between the ages of 6 and 16 who would like to improve or practice their social skills - whether it be sharing, making friends or talking/listening to others etc. - whilst having fun! They are chaperoned (currently by parents) at a ratio of no more than 8 children to 3 adults. The activities are balanced between artistic and sporting so they can develop their motor skills as well.

In the last 11 months, we have been pony riding, skiing, bowling, making pottery, eating pizza and crêpes, swimming in the lake and sharing a picnic with other ASK members and their families.



This year we are developing further still.

NEW! We will have TWO Social groups - one for Primary aged children and one for Secondary aged children. In addition, we can provide an informal play date for parents and children most months.

NEW! SOCIAL DRAMA GROUP.

Running every Monday during term time from 4.00pm - 4.45pm (younger group) and 5.00pm - 5.45pm (older group) at the Crossroads Church, Ferney Voltaire, France. Under the guidance of Dr Diane Fraser and Mrs. Petal Jaffrey, it will provide a mix of games, team building activities and role plays to cover everyday situations that some children find difficult to deal with. Drinks and a small snack are provided.

If you would like further information on these groups or would like to become more involved (volunteers are always welcome), please contact us using the details below.

Karen Wilkens

Kid's Social Program Coordinator

karen.wilkens@allspecialkids.org

Tel: 079.630.5270

Fees Structure:

Social outings:

CHF150 per term all inclusive of activities * for ASK members.

CHF200 per term all inclusive of activities * for non-members.

(*) The above mentioned activities are not play dates

Social Drama Group:

CHF125 per term for ASK members

CHF175 per term for non-members

Early registration discount CHF50 before 1st Oct 2008. Additional CHF25 discount for signing up for both groups.

2008/09 KID'S SOCIAL CALENDAR

AUTUMM PROGRAMME 2008/9 PRIMARY

September 2008

- **Sat, 13th Sept:** *Forest Land, Divonnes-les-bains, from 14h30 - 16h.*
ASK Kids' Social's 1st Birthday party! Help us celebrate our first anniversary.
- **Sat, 27th Sept:** *ASK Program Orientation Day, Webster Uni, 10h-12h* Note:
A supervised play date will be provided for the children at the park in Genthod while the parents are attending the orientation day.



October 2008

- **Saturday, 11th Oct:** *Pony riding, Sports Equestre, GEX, from 16h-17h.*
Wellingtons and warm jacket needed. Riding hats provided.

Half Term Organized activities:

- **Mon, 27th Oct - Arts & Crafts, Crossroads Church, Ferney Voltaire, 16-17h45**
- **Thursday, 30th Oct - Bowling at La Praille from 11h-12h30**

November 2008

- **Saturday, 15th Nov— Glazydays, Versoix, 15h - 16h30**
Paint a piece of pottery for the perfect Christmas gift.
- **Sat, 29th Nov— Informal kids get together (play date) 10h30 - 11h30**



December 2008

- **Saturday, 13th Dec—Yatouland in Vernier, 14h30 - 16h**
Bounce around in a warehouse full of inflatables at Yatouland.

AUTUMM PROGRAMME 2008/9 SECONDARY

- **SEPTEMBER:** Saturday, 13th : Forestland, Divonne-Les-Bains, 14h30 - 16h
Join the adventure course at Forestland and celebrate our 1st anniversary celebrations.
- **OCTOBER:** Tuesday, 28th: Tour World Radio Switzerland Studio, 12h-13h
Visit WRS studios and see behind the scenes. Learn how they put out a show and News bulletin then watch it happen, live!
- **NOVEMBER:** Saturday, 15th: CERN, Time: TBA
Visit CERN for an interactive exhibition on superconductivity and learn how they use it for the magnets in CERN's new accelerator. Open from 9h-17h, CERN will advise us of our time slot nearer the date.
- **DECEMBER:** Saturday, 13th: Laser 5, Vernier, from 14h30-16h
Spend an afternoon at Laser 5 and see how good a marksman or jewel thief you can be.



C.A.R.E. — Community Assistance Resource Enrichment

The first series of CARE support groups program ran from January 2008 to April 2008.

The CARE series consisted of 3 groups.

- A parents' support group - led by myself and Sally Storr, MA Counselling student, now graduated
- A siblings of children with special needs support group - led by Petal Jaffrey, M.A. and Jeyla Shikhlin-skaya, MA Counselling student, now graduated
- A fun activities group for the children with special needs themselves - led by Charlotte Halkjaer-Lassen and Melissa Hamberger

These 3 groups met simultaneously at the Webster University for 2 hour sessions for a total of 6 sessions.

As facilitators of the parent support group, Sally and I had the objective of providing a safe, collaborative and confidential environment where parents would feel comfortable to disclose, at their own pace, any concerns, questions or issues they may wish to discuss. The sessions were semi-structured in that the parents decided during the first session, as a result of a group discussion and exercise, which topics they wished to be covered during the remaining 5 sessions. Following this, information and exercises on the particular topic were provided and carried out during each of the following sessions, while all the time providing the parents with the space to bring up and openly discuss and brainstorm issues of concern and possible ideas for tackling them. We felt it important to allow the parents to decide what was most important to discuss as they are the experts in this area.

We feel that we met our objective and believe that the parent support group was a success. Our group was small and I believe we developed a bond with each other that resulted in strong group cohesiveness and group support as well as a great exchange and sharing of ideas and experiences.

I very much look forward to the next series in the CARE program.

-Nadia Fakhouri, M.A., coordinator of CARE program & co-leader of the CARE parents support group

As co-leader of the sibling support group, I can say that from an adult's point of view, the series has been a success. We were a small intimate group which helped us form a cohesive group. A lot of fun was had and we played games, made up stories, did some art and even played with balloons and bubbles. All of these activities were chosen to target the specific needs of siblings of children with special needs. All I can say is that the series has gone by so quickly and I look forward to running the program again in the near future.

-Petal Jaffrey, M.A., co-leader of the CARE siblings support group (petal.jaffrey@allspecialkids.org)

A Quote from a parent with two kids.....

« I think the CARE program was brilliant. My son has been receiving a great deal of attention since he started therapy to help him with his problems at school. As a result his sister, who'd been the "boss" before was beginning to feel very left out and upset. CARE has helped her to talk about her worries as a sibling of a special needs child and also taught us how to help her in the future. Such holistic support for the whole family is an excellent idea! »



C.A.R.E.

A family approach

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE RESOURCE ENRICHMENT

Are you searching for family support with an integrative approach?
Are the siblings of your special needs kid feeling neglected?
Are you having a hard time connecting with your teenager?



BI-WEEKLY
Family
Support
Groups

(3 groups: Parents, siblings and special needs kids)
When: October 9th, 23rd, November 6th, 20th,
December 4th, 2008
Time: 4:30 to 6 pm
Location: Webster University, Jura Bldg. A26



WEEKLY
Adolescent
Group

When: Oct—December 2008 (TBA)
Time: 4:30—6pm
Location: Webster University , Jura Bldg. A26

C.A.R.E. contact: nadia.care@allspecialkids.org

ASK SUMMER CAMPS: July—August 2008



ASK 4 weeks summer camps have just ended and once again, in our estimation, they have been a success. In addition to having fun, the children worked hard on their social skills (such as sharing, taking turns, helping others and cooperating) and they didn't even realize they were doing it. This year we added the component of teaching the children life skills by having them help with preparing lunch. As a result we had the most delicious pesto sauce made from fresh ingredients and we even made guacamole one day. The food was delicious and the children didn't mind eating "healthy" foods as they had put so much effort into preparing them. As a treat we had fruit and marshmallow kebabs for dessert one day which was delicious and great for developing fine motor skills. The rule was that in order to eat marshmallows, they also had to eat fruit and by the end of the activity, the children who had initially refused to eat the fruit were asking for more!

We took full advantage of the beautiful weather and conducted our activities in the park across the street as much as possible, challenging ourselves with the human knot and the hoop relay. The children learned to work together and they learnt that even if they, individually, were fast, it didn't matter unless they could help their teammates get faster as well. It was a lot of fun! We also played sardines, an alternative form of hide and seek and no matter how many times we played, the children always wanted to play "just one more time" so this is definitely an activity that we plan to repeat at the next year summer camp.

Our tutoring program was successfully launched this summer which we hope filled a need that was otherwise being unmet. The children were able to benefit from an individualized tutoring program which was also fun based and then join the rest of the camp for snacks, lunch and afternoon activities. The children received the best of both worlds by profiting from a rich academic program in the mornings and the pleasure of the social activities in the afternoon. They also accompanied the rest of the camp one week on our field trip to the science museum and experienced the exhibition on the passing of time. The children were able to explore the exhibits at their own pace and as everything was hands on, they had a lot of fun learning through experimenting. The exhibition is set up to be enjoyed by people of all ages and learning abilities so everyone was able to benefit from our trip.

At the end of the first two sessions, the children took it upon their own initiative to pass around a sheet of paper so that everyone could write down their contact information because they all wanted to stay in touch with one another. One camper even told me, "Its hard to leave because after a week you make good friends and then you have to say good-bye." To me that demonstrates that we have reached our goal of helping children make friends with one another and with the contact information they will still be able to e-mail one another and get together for play dates during the school year.

Petal Jaffrey

ASK Summer Camp Coordinator

E-mail: petal.jaffrey@allspecialkids.org

Tel: 078.800.1249

REFLECTIONS - ASK SUMMER CAMPS: July—August 2008



Photo 1, left:
Photo 2, right:
Drum Session
with Dan Parker
Camp 2, July, 08



Photo 3, left:
Friendship

Photo 4, right:
Bonding



Photo 5, left
Tiger, AJ, Am-
ber and Allegra

Photo 6, right:
Playing human
chain, July 08



Photo 6, left:
Allegra making
funny face

Photo 7, right:
Preparing lunch
July 08



GENEVA VIEW POINT (Spirit of Volunteerism)

As a volunteer at ASK, you have the benefit of helping to provide a safe and secure environment for children with special needs, as well as gaining valuable experience in a casual, yet professional situation. During my three weeks volunteering at ASK summer camps, I once again found my inner - child by participating and helping to facilitate a variety of games, arts and crafts. These activities are specifically designed to help the children with life skills, such as social and motor skills. In turn, being a volunteer taught me many important life skills that will be useful in all situations, such as patience, assertiveness and children connection, to name a few. The best part of volunteering, however, is meeting new people and learning from what they had to offer at ASK. This means learning not only from fellow volunteers, but also from the children themselves. It is no exaggeration to say that many of the children have surprising talents and characteristics that someone, no matter their age, could benefit from.

For myself, I learnt from children that sharing is not only nice, but it is a pleasure, that taking turns is the utilitarian thing to do and caring for one another is both natural and generous. I observed a variety of children and noticed the unique qualities of each one and realized that there was more to any child than I had ever thought.



*Celine Chang
ASK 2008 summer camp
Volunteer*



There are a few things I learnt from ASK camp that will get me far in life.

I learnt to notice that everyone is completely different. Everyone thinks in a different way, we walk differently and talk differently. I enjoyed sharing that message with other kids in camp. By the end of the camp I think that we could all better understand and accept our differences. One of the other things I learnt from the camp is how to approach someone, young and old in different situations. Everyone at the camp was unique but it would definitely not have been the same without the other volunteers, camp counselors Petal and Nadia. I think that volunteering at ASK camp is one of the best things I've done.

*Alexander Saacks
Edlweiss International School*

I found that volunteering for ASK camp was a memorable experience, one that helped me gain insight into the lives of small kids with special needs. In the beginning I was a bit apprehensive, yet as the first day came and went I realized that helping the kids in their day to day activities allowed me to grasp certain things about reality, and help me grow as an individual in my sensitivity to others.

I found the group outing/excursion to be particularly educational. The experience was a challenge, as each child had his or her own curiosity that fuelled his or her every movement, and yet, I thoroughly enjoyed it. I found this experience a great pleasure and one I hope to repeat in the future.

*Sudha Vijay
International School of Geneva*

BERN VIEW POINT

Greetings from Bern! August 2008

Dear members,

Can hardly believe that one year ago we were planning for the kick off of ASK Bern chapter. After getting our website up and a fantastic group of specialists & members added, our chapter is taking shape.

It has been a pleasure to meet so many caring parents, educators and specialists this past year. I look forward to each monthly meeting and lecture series!

Our focus remains on supporting the parents and teachers of children with special needs in our greater Bern area. In keeping this in mind we are planning workshops and information evenings with local specialists more and more. It is our goal to not only find ways to support our children but also how we can reduce our own stress & worries to remain in the balance that is so necessary for our families to function within. We would like to introduce programs for the entire family. One such is the C.A.R.E. program for siblings and parents. We will also be starting the "Kids Social" to encourage social skills and give the kids and us a chance to just have fun together.

Please check the website for more information; we are looking for people to help with these programs. If you or somebody you know would be interested in helping out or leading a program please contact me:

I also encourage as many as possible to participate in one or more of the Geneva events this coming year. One of the benefits in being in both places is the exchange opportunities. It has been very rewarding to meet the teachers and parents that are active in the Special Needs community in Geneva. In addition, we have a chance to learn from the top specialists in the fields from all over Europe and the USA.

So, welcome back and have a good start!

With Kindest regards,

Mary Kay

*Regional Director
ASK-Bern Chapter
marykayZ@allspecialkids.org
Tel: 079.341.4232*



ANNOUNCEMENT!!

ASK will have a display table at the upcoming Expat-Expo on Sunday, 12th Oct, 11h-17h.

Please visit our table for a brochure and information on the programs we offered.

ASK—We are here to help



NEW PROGRAMS IN GENEVA

NEW!!!! ASK SUPPORT GROUP FOR THE PARENTS OF HIGHER PREFORMERS (GIFTED AND TALENTED KIDS)

There is a myth that children with higher performance are better adjusted, more popular, and happier than average children. In reality, kids who are considered higher performers have similar problems with anxieties, self esteem, and most importantly social skills issues, just as the kids with physical, intellectual or learning difficulties. ASK has joined hands with ASEP (Swiss Gifted Parents Association, <http://asep-suisse.org/>) to offer mutual support to our combined group of parents. Please join us at the first support meeting focusing specifically on the parents of children with higher performance.

Place: Webster University, Jura Bldg, A13/15, Friday, 19th Sept, 19h - 21h

Please RSVP to program coordinator: sandra.corliss@allspecialkids.org

NEW!!! ASK PARENT SUPPORT GROUP CANTON VAUD

As request by the parents from VAUD canton, we are offering a support group focusing on the parents who live in that region. Please join us at the first coffee evening and bring a friend or two.

Date: Thursday, 18th September 2008

Place: Chemin de Milavy 10C, 1806 St L gier (just off the vevey autoroute exit).

Time: 10h–12h

RSVP: Program coordinator—gillian.flowers@allspecialkids.org

We are in need of two parent volunteers to actively assist Gillian and share the hosting duties at alternate months.

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give”
Kahlil Gibran

ASK PROGRAM ORIENTATION DAY

INVITATION TO ASK PROGRAM ORIENTATION DAY

Place: Webster University, Jura Bldg, A13/15,
Date: Saturday, 27th September 2008
Time: 10h–12h

Please come and join us for coffee and meet all the program coordinators to hear about the exciting programs we are introducing for this coming school year. Parents can gather information or sign up for the programs and activities to take advantage of early registration discounts. There will be a supervised play date provided at the nearby Genthod Park while the parents are attending the orientation day.

Meeting point for kids drop off is at the Webster parking lot by the administrative building.

RSVP is necessary and much appreciated.

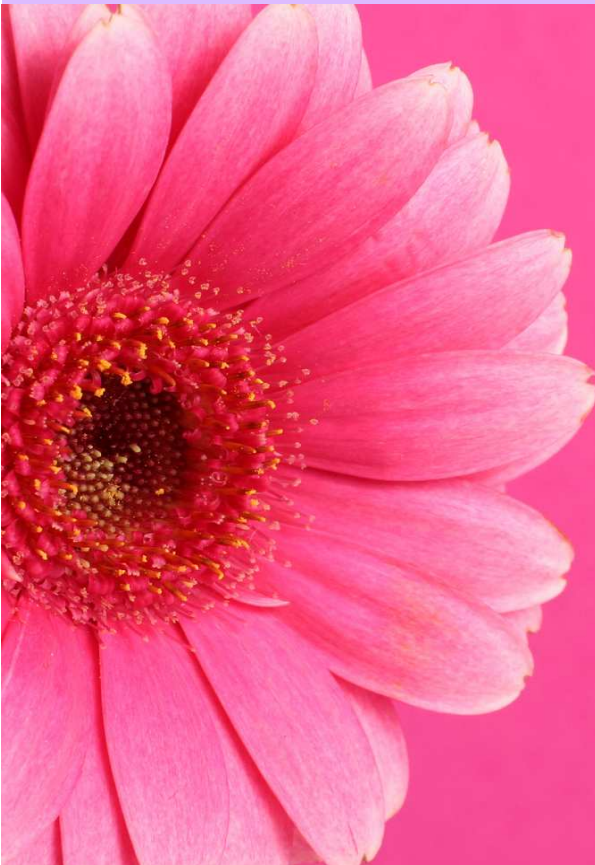
RSVP: info@allspecialkids.org

RSVP for supervised play date: Karen.wilkens@allspecialkids.org

CHILDREN'S COMPETITION **HELP NAME THE GROUPS**

For the last year we have been called the "ASK Kids Social" but now we are getting bigger and the name no longer fit the activities we are organizing for two age groups; primary and secondary kids. What do you think the two groups should be named? There will be a prize, 75CHF Manor card for the best suggestion.

Please reply to
karen.wilkens@allspecialkids.org



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ASK-Geneva Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 2008

MONTHLY PARENTS GET TOGETHER

18th September - 10h–12h (Geneva)

18th September—10h–12h (Vaud)

19th September—19h-21h (Gifted Support)

ASK PROGRAM ORIENTATION DAY

27th September—10h–12h (GENEVA)

OCTOBER 2008

MONTHLY PARENTS GET TOGETHER

2nd October - 10h–12h (Geneva)

9th October—10h–12h (Vaud)

10th October —19h-21h (Gifted Support)

C.A.R.E.

9th and 23rd October - 16h30 -18h

NOVEMBER 2008

MONTHLY PARENTS GET TOGETHER

6th November - 10h–12h (Geneva)

14th November—19h-21h (Gifted Support)

20th November —10h–12h (Vaud)

C.A.R.E.

6th and 20th November—16h30—18h

DECEMBER 2008

MONTHLY PARENTS GET TOGETHER

4th December - 10h–12h (Geneva)

12th December —19h-21h (Gifted Support)

18th December —10h–12h (Vaud)

C.A.R.E. — 4th December—16h30—18h

ASK/Bern-Chapter Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 2008

MONTHLY PARENTS GET TOGETHER

Tuesday, 16th September, 9h-11h

Place: Burgmattweg 7 / 3302 Moosseedorf

RSVP: "Roxi Eicher" <eicher@bluewin.ch>

OCTOBER 2008

NEUROFEEDBACK RESILIENCY

WORKSHOP with John Styffe

Saturday, 25th October, 9h30 - 16h30

Place: Vatter Business Center 6th floor

Bärenplatz 2/ 3011 Bern

Fees: Members:CHF90, Non-Mem: CHF175

RSVP: <info.be@allspecialkids.org>

NOVEMBER 2008

MONTHLY PARENTS GET TOGETHER

Tuesday, 11th November, 9h-11h

Place: Längenlooweg 16 / 3322,

Urtenen-Schönbühl

RSVP: <marykayZ@allspecialkids.org>

DECEMBER 2008

PARENTS GET-TOGETHER

Tuesday, 9th December

Evening Christmas Party TBA.

