

Childbirth Connection Foundation Newsletter

December, 2006

Annual Trip to the Pumpkin Patch

On October 20, 2006 Childbirth Connection Foundation made its annual trip to Tapia Brothers Farm in Encino. This year twelve families, with children ages 6 months to 12 years, participated in the festivities.

The highlight of the outing was a hayride through the cornfields. The riders sang songs and scouted for scarecrows in the fields. This was the first time many of the families have been on a hayride. The kids loved it!

In addition to the hayride, the kids had a blast climbing on the tractors and playing in the maze the farm sets up every year. The children also took turns petting the goats, ponies and pigs in the petting zoo.

The children enjoyed snacks and drinks as they each picked out a pumpkin to take home to carve.



Childbirth Connection Foundation goes for a hayride!

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As 2006 comes to a close, I would like to thank you for your support during our first year. We will continue to find ways to enrich the lives of the families we serve, part of the nine million parents in the US who have disabilities. We are committed to giving these parents the support and resources they need to raise their children, lead productive lives, and feel connected to the community in which they live. We welcome your interest and input, and again we thank you for caring enough to give. Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season.

Warmest Regards,
Randi Levinson-Kuzmin,
Executive Director

Thank You Supporters and Volunteers!

Childbirth Connection Foundation would like to acknowledge Dermalogica Foundation, Westland School and our team of volunteers for their dedication to our cause.

Dermalogica Foundation's ongoing support has enabled our Foundation to accomplish many of its goals. Among the many accomplishments made possible with their support are: sending children to summer camp, trips to Zuma Beach and a local water park, purchasing beds, medication and clothing for families in need, and sponsoring a

family's participation in therapeutic horseback riding.

In October, Westland School donated the earnings of a bake sale to the Foundation. Their generous support will allow us to purchase holiday presents for the families we serve.

The Westland School has also organized an "adopt a family" program in which families from the school provide Thanksgiving dinners with all of the trimmings to 20 families in need.

This year, the Foundation welcomed six volunteers.

Sisters Irma and Crystal Valencia tutor two days a week. Irma is a junior at CSUN majoring in Chicano Studies. Crystal is a sophomore at CSUN majoring in Spanish Broadcast Journalism. They assist children with homework and school projects, as well as serve as positive role-models.

Curie Oh is volunteering as part of an internship program at CSUN where she is a senior majoring in Social Welfare. She spends two days a week in the field tutoring children and one day a week in the office working on fundraising.

We would also like to ac-

knowledge our returning team of volunteers who assist with our annual holiday party. To ensure that every child we work with receives a gift and has positive holiday memories, Childbirth Connection Foundation holds an annual holiday party and gives gifts to more than fifty families. Dodie Patton has once again volunteered to wrap presents, Cynthia Kuzmin will serve as photographer, and Richard Silverman will play Santa.

Thank you for helping us make our Foundation a success!



Jodine and her daughter Victoria playing in the water.



April and her daughter-Daisy enjoying the sun.

A Day at Zuma Beach

In August, Childbirth Connection Foundation went on our annual trip to Zuma Beach. Every year, the Foundation charters a bus to transport the families we serve to the beach. This year more than 21 parents and their children participated.

Due to transportation, financial, and logistical constraints, most of the families are unable to travel to the beach on their own. The Foundation feels that the families we serve should have the opportunity to experience the beauty and excitement of the beach.

The trip to the beach offers not only a fun filled day of building sandcastles, playing Frisbee, and swimming in the ocean, but it also serves as an excellent opportunity for the families to socialize. Parents with disabilities are able to come together to have fun and develop relationships based on shared experiences. Likewise, their children are able to come together in a comfortable and non-judgmental environment and let loose.

Childbirth Connection Foundation is now seeking volunteers and Board Members. If interested in volunteering or making a tax deductible contribution, please call or email us.

Childbirth Connection Foundation 501(c)(3)

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 11/20—11/23: Thanksgiving Dinner Distribution
- 12/15: Holiday Party



Recently, eighth grader Timothy T. (pictured above with his mom Kelly) was elected president of his school. Timothy is a straight A student at a local middle school. He is in need of a computer so that he can complete homework assignments and school projects at home. The Foundation is currently seeking donors interested in providing Timothy with a computer. Congratulations on your accomplishments Timothy, and keep up the good work!

Horseback Riding Promotes Bonding

Over the summer, Jeff S. and his daughters Angela and Jessica began participating in therapeutic horseback riding at a ranch in Lake View Terrace. The ranch rescues abandoned and abused horses and uses them for therapeutic purposes for people with disabilities.

Jeff and his girls visit the ranch once a week. While there, they learn how to groom and feed horses, as well as how to approach, touch and act around a horse. They have also learned how to ride horses and play games that develop trust. The games focus on getting the family to trust themselves, each other, and the horses.

Attending the ranch has fostered more understanding and trust between the family. It has also provided a new and exciting experience to serve as a basis for developing positive family memories.

Jeff and Jessica have excelled at

riding horses, while Angela loves to groom the horses. Angela states that going to the ranch has “helped me to get my fear away from horses.” About working with the horses Jessica says, “It’s good. I like it a lot.” When asked about her proudest accomplishment at the ranch Jessica says, “I feel comfortable guiding a horse by myself.”

Since the visits at the ranch started, the girls have become kinder and more thoughtful. They are also eager to have their weekly visits with their dad.



Jessica, Jeff, and Angela at the ranch.



Jessica likes everything about the ranch, including, “Riding, grooming and playing games.”



Angela grooms a pony.