

Down Syndrome *Information Network* of the Twin Tiers

Volume 8, Issue 3

April 2008



Chris Burke (also known as Corky from the TV Series, "Life Goes On") helps the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) kick off the celebration of World Down Syndrome Day on March 21st and presides over the closing bell.

Senator Dodd Introduces Bill

dodd.senate.gov/index.php?q=node/4317

March 11, 2008

Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT), senior member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and Chairman of its Subcommittee on Children and Families, announced the introduction of the [Disabilities Savings Act of 2008](#) at an event with Autism Speaks Co-Founders Bob and Suzanne Wright, Stuart Spielman, the father of a teenage son with Autism, Kathy Neas of Easter Seals, and families of children with autism and other disabilities.

"This important legislation is designed to help individuals with disabilities live full and productive lives for all their years," said Dodd. "It provides families with an important tool to save the money they need for their unique needs and provide for their children long after they are gone."



"Senator Dodd was an original co-sponsor of the Combating Autism Act and has long been a champion for individuals with disabilities and their families," said Bob Wright. "We commend him for launching the legislative process to create these



Parent and Caregiver Support Group

Support
Education and
Accessing
Disability
Services

Meets the last Wednesday of each month from 6-8pm at Economic Opportunity Program (E.O.P.).
605 Baldwin Street, Elmira NY

Everyone is WELCOME!!!

This is a parent run group that offers support, speakers, trainings, resources and contacts. They also do some outside activities with their family members who have special needs (e.g. Dinners, outings).

muscles4kids.wetpaint.com

Next Monthly Meeting:

April 16, 2008 6pm Chemung ARC

Sponsored by:



Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. The April through September meetings will be Buddy Walk planning meetings.

The next meeting dates are:

May 21st from 6 to 8 p.m.
June 18th from 6 to 8 p.m.

Meetings are held at Chemung ARC located at 711 Sullivan Street in Elmira, and pizza/wings and child care are provided.

vitaly important savings accounts, which will reduce an unreasonable financial burden for millions of families and end discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the federal tax code. Parents can save, tax-free, to send their child to Harvard. They should be able to save in the same way to help every child meet his or her full potential.”

“The disability savings accounts that Senator Dodd is proposing today gives people with disabilities a real chance for financial security,” said Stuart Spielman. “By providing tax incentives for savings and by eliminating the risk of inadvertent disqualification for means-tested federal programs, these accounts will make planning for the future easier. As the parent of a child with autism, that’s very important to me.”



The Disability Savings Act of 2008 encourages individuals and families to save personal funds for individuals with disabilities, specifically for their unique disability-related needs, in Disability Savings Accounts (DSAs). The establishment of DSAs will promote the investment of private funds in the long-term well-being of individuals with disabilities through tax-advantaged savings tools, including a refundable tax credit for low-income savers, while still protecting the beneficiary’s access to critical public supports. ☞



To apply visit: www.uhccf.org

The UnitedHealthcare Children’s Foundation is offering support to meet the needs of children across the United States with assistance grants for medical services not fully covered by health insurance.

Parents and caretakers across the country will be eligible to apply for grants of up to \$5,000 for healthcare services that will help improve their children’s health and quality of life.

Examples of the types of medical services covered by UHCCF grants include speech therapy, physical therapy, and psychotherapy sessions; medical equipment such as wheelchairs, braces, hearing aids, and eyeglasses; and orthodontia and dental treatments

Any child 16 years old or younger living in any UnitedHealthcare region of the United States (all 50 states) and in need of financial assistance for healthcare services will be considered eligible for a grant. Families must meet economic guidelines, reside in the U.S., and be covered by a commercial health insurance plan.

Highlighted criteria for applying: The income max is based on “per individual” in the household, family Adjusted Gross can’t exceed \$80,000. Visit their website to learn more about it. They also have a great Frequently Asked Questions Section.

Criteria (modified from the website)

Any child, 16 years old or younger. The applicant must be covered by a commercial health insurance policy and limits for the requested service are either exceeded, or no coverage is available and/or the copayments are a serious financial burden on the family. Consideration will be given, but not be limited to, criteria such as the potential of the intervention to significantly enhance either the clinical condition or the quality of life for the child, the financial status of the family and the severity of the child’s illness.

Financial need of the child’s family should be documented through information provided on the application and by submission of a copy of the most recently filed tax return. Generally, awards will be granted to individuals in families whose adjusted gross income per individual does not exceed \$20,000. If you have 4 people in your family AGI cap would be \$80,000. Other financial resources to meet the health care need are not available. The amount awarded to an individual within a 12-month period is limited to either \$5,000 or 85% of the fund balance, whichever amount is less. Awards to any one individual are limited to a lifetime maximum of \$7,500. An application must be submitted prior to the child’s 17th birthday. ☞



Buddy Walk Update

Planning for this year’s Buddy Walk is underway! We have contracted with a firm to provide professional webpages for people to sign up

and register as individuals or to be on teams and to donate money. The website will launch May 15th. We’re planning a similar event like last year. Entertainment, education, the mayor will give a speech, raffle items, followed by the walk and the Fall Fest. Do you have any suggestions? Please come to a meeting or email our new account at DSINTT@gmail.com. ☞