



SUMMER REFLECTIONS

EXTEND-A-FAMILY

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Treasurer: Bob Slessor
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“Each individual I’ve had the privilege of spending time with has taught me a real zest for life and provided me with endless smiles”. *Michael Jacoby*

A beautiful moment: “The first time Mardig pointed at one of the other campers, smiled at her, sat down beside her, and then gave her a hug (which was enthusiastically returned)”. *Carlene Nembhard*

“Extend-A-Family has taught me to appreciate the beauty of each individual” *Diana Reis*

A wonderful moment: “The enormous smile on Jeremiah’s face whenever he interacted with other teenagers”. *Carlene Nembhard*

“A million thanks and hugs to Extend-A-Family, especially those wonderful faces that have brought out the best in me”. *Michael Jacoby*

A moment to remember: “The amazing smile on Mardig’s face when he snuck up behind me in the swimming pool and helped three other campers completely soak me. Afterwards the four boys were giving each other high fives”. *Carlene Nembhard*



“With the world moving at an impatient pace and full of needless distractions, sometimes we tend to lose sight that we grow together and not alone”. *Michael Jacoby*

“When you seek happiness for yourself it will always elude you. When you seek happiness for others you will find it yourself”.

*Michael Jacoby quoting
Wayne Dyer*

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As everyone starts back to their busy fall routine I hope you'll take a little time to relax and enjoy the latest edition of "Between Friends". It is filled with informative articles, important dates and touching stories of friendship.

Thanks to the talented team at "Ours Creative" Extend-A-Family is sporting a new logo. In its design, the roots symbolizes our roots in the community, the heart stands for the nurturing involved in friendship and the colour green is the colour of life.

On June 6th we held our seventh Annual General meeting as an amalgamated organization. Over eighty people were in attendance to elect the new Board of Directors and partake in a fun-filled afternoon of good food, games, music and friendship. We welcomed new members to the Board of Directors and bid farewell to Bob Glass who served as co-chair of Extend-A-Family for five years and Bill Mosher who was also a dedicated board member for over four years. We thank them for their commitment, leadership and efforts to build inclusive communities.

Anne Bloom, who has been chair of our human resource committee for 3½ years, has taken on the duties of chairperson. Michele Schmidt is continuing in role of secretary and we welcome Bob Slessor as Treasurer. Susan Petko and Christine LeClair were re-elected and Susan Walker Kennedy was welcomed as a new board member. Extend-A-Family is still seeking new board members, please contact our office if you are interested in more information.

With assistance from Human Resources Development Canada, we were once again able to offer summer support to families. Eleven dedicated young adults provided one to one support to more than 60 children and youth involved in integrated camps and community activities. Our sincere thanks to Michael, Stephanie, Carlene, Kristen, Diana, Matthew, Scott, Jessica, Dell, Elisha and Kelly for their unwavering commitment to those they supported.

Extend-A-Family remains committed to fostering awareness of the gifts and contributions that people with disabilities make to the community.

Anne Marie Cole

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We would like to give recognition to those who donated materials and services for the success of our Winter Gathering and Annual General Meeting. They are as follows:

Royal Ontario Museum

100 Queen Park, Toronto ON
M5S 2C6

MasterMind Educational

3350 Yonge Street, Toronto ON
M4N 2M6

Starbucks Coffee Co.

205 College Street, Toronto ON
M5T 1P9

Pizzaville

Bayview/Eglinton Store, Toronto ON

Dominion

Bayview/Eglinton Store, Toronto ON



Congratulations!!!

The grand prize winner of the raffle held at the AGM picnic on June 6th was The Michael Family

They received a one day family pass to the Royal Ontario Museum.



A CIRCLE OF FRIENDS **Pleasant Public School**

The circle of friends is a gathering of children from the grade 2 class at Pleasant Public School. The group meets often to play, share, laugh, learn and most of all to have fun with each other.

This is what the kids from Pleasant Public School had to say about their time together over this past year:

Maria
I make new friends, play games and I like being polite with the others

Julia
I have made friends.

Ryan
I like playing board games and talking

Omar
I like going on trips and playing snakes and ladders

Isaac
I like talking to each other and going on trips

Vivian
I like sharing about myself, playing and having friends

Allen
I like playing games and going on trips

Julianna
I like to play games and be nice to people in the circle; people respect each other in the circle

Kiram
I like playing games with a ball

Tanya
I make very good friends and I like playing games

Cory
I like the activities. You can be funny

Taylor
I like playing tag. I feel excited to come to the circle of friends

Anastasia
I like the games we play

Steven
I like everything about the circle



A CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Hello my dear readers. This is a short and sweet story about the circle of friends with Mirjana and other members of the circle, especially Cameron, who we all share our love and support with every alternative week.

Yes, this is a group of students who share their love, thoughts and time with each other with the dedicated guidance of Mirjana.

Myself, Shantal, being a member of the circle of friends, have experienced many changes in my lifestyle and my ways of thinking. I have learned to appreciate the gift of life, the gift of good health and am thankful to God for creating each and every one of us the way we are. I realized that every child is special.

Thank you for your gift of appreciating my words towards the circle of friends.

*Shantal D'souza
Circle Member*

A CIRCLE OF FRIENDS Cont'd.

My name is Meagan and I am in a wonderful group. I have been in this group for four years. I think that it was important for me to join this fabulous activity, because it shows people how lucky we are to have friends. Friend is a great word! To me it means to laugh, to have fun and to enjoy all of the fun times that you can. After all, a life with no friends is only half a life.

The reason that I joined the circle of

friends so many years ago is because people like Cameron need to have friends. I thought that if I joined, then that would be one more friend that Cameron would have for a lifetime to remember. I would love to go on and on about why circle of friends is so important to me and all of the precious memories that I will remember for a lifetime. However, the truth is that I can't because the page is too short

and my definition of a friend is too long to fit on this page.

THANK YOU to all of the people in EXTEND-A-FAMILY for letting me make a new friend, whom I will never forget!

*Meagan B.
Circle Member*

A CIRCLE OF HOPE

Hello, My name is Sam Rocchese. I want to talk about a young boy named Alec Kennedy. Alec is an active boy, full of energy and always very sociable. I had the privilege of introducing the circle of friends to Alec's school (Maurice Cody). in the 2002/2003 school year. Each month the circle grew and grew and it became a regular activity in the Maurice Cody's hallways.

Alec's circle of friends made an enormous impact in his life. He was invited out to lunch from a bunch of his peers he looked up to and many of his circle participants came to his birthday parties.

This year, Alec's classroom is graduating to middle school and



this marks the last circle in Maurice Cody.

I just want to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the staff at Maurice Cody for always supporting Alec's circle of friends every step of the way. I especially want to give a BIG thank you to all the participants that made Alec's circle very memorable and to all of the participants' parents for allowing their children to be part of this successful circle of friends.

I had the time of my life being part of Alec's circle and wish Alec great success in his new school.

As I remember the smiles and laughter of each participant, it will always place a big smile on my face.

Thank you

*Sam Rocchese
Extend A Family Coordinator*



NORTHERN ROOTS~ NURTURING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Conference sponsored by Community Living Huntsville - April 20 & 21, 2004

The Extend-A-Family staff team, along with two family representatives had the opportunity to attend the Northern Roots conference in Huntsville last spring. The conference featured four renowned speakers who sparked a dialogue on inclusiveness, diversity, and community building. These notes are based on our recollections of the conference.

Jack Pearpoint, together with Marsha Forest, founded Inclusion Press, the Inclusion Network, and what is now called the Marsha Forest Centre, named in her memory. In his opening remarks, Jack, inspired by his world travels and his intention to see all people have full lives, shared a story of the Tuhoe, a Maori people of New Zealand. He described how they cooperate to restore pride in their culture. As a means of ensuring a future rich in cultural connections for their children, they "capture the wisdom and recycle it". Through ceremonies of welcome, and traditional family activities, they enable new generations to know the truth and yet find their own space. How can we give ourselves a future? We have both the opportunity and the responsibility. Jack claims that we learn by doing, and that we all need a place to hold our spirit. We just need to find it, and nurture it. He stressed the importance of a sense of hospitality and occasion- having fun together- it's about all of us!

Judith Snow is a self-advocate,
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who is an internationally recognized author and lecturer on the rights of all people to fully participate as citizens of society.

At the beginning of the conference, Judith asked, "Who gets to say what a life should look like?" Everyone can say- in all sorts of ways. If we are committed to listening, and sometimes new ways of listening are needed, family and friends know best what a life looks like. Real listening takes time. Judith says we know we should do it, and that we all gain value by doing it- in genuine community we know we depend on each others' differences. Someone who has unusual differences requires some special support (now and then). Opportunities are created for those who create opportunities.

In her session *Building Support Circles*, Judith emphasized that a circle demands accountability, and that there is no growth without it. Members of a circle have the mutual benefit of regular commitment- a sense that what they are doing makes a difference. Circle members need to feel they can invite new people. The key is to invite people who are willing to listen to the dreams, and the person whose dream is heard has to be willing to act on the suggestions from the circle. That will keep people coming back. Judith shared the need to sometimes circle the parent(s) first and then help those involved to see two separate dreams.

"Existing in the world in a different way is a powerful gift- it is frustrating if it can't be given to others."

Some key aspects of circles: Plan social occasions- laugh a lot and have fun-membership is not like a job-don't tell people what to do.

Personal connections create opportunities-be open to the creativity

of family and friends; Thinking out loud what would be the greatest possibilities- Remind a person to dream-it's not a matter of fitting in. We need a world where everyone's abilities are valued;

Cooperation with service providers and schools;

Take secure steps- go in a direction that is meaningful.

Judith sees the need to harmonize the focus on the dream/the plan for things to happen in the right places/ the inclusion of people who care and can help make decisions, and assist with an individual's control over resources. She reminded us that if decisions for everything are made by others- the person goes to sleep!

Circle facilitation: Find the person who will be the "genuine" facilitator- someone who is not there to make it work, but there to support someone to get it started.

A facilitator can assist with:

- invitations

- people telling their stories
- the person listening to responses
- the person saying "yes"
- invitations to new members

If you are interested in finding out more, Judith can be contacted at judiths@ica.net.

Extend-A-Family is committed to the development of support networks, in partnership with individuals, their families and friends. For more information, contact an Extend-A-Family coordinator or Christy Barber, Safe and Secure Futures Project Coordinator at 416 487-4564

John McKnight is a Chicago-based professor of communication studies, education and social policy from

Northwestern University who is well-known for his asset-based approach to building communities. John shared his wealth of experience building capacity in both Canadian and American communities. He talked about the importance of discovering natural association in groups made up primarily of local residents who come together to do things on an unpaid basis. He said that inclusion is about getting people out of the service world and into the world of association. John believes that association exists in abundance within every community regardless of the community's apparent resources.

John talked about how critical it is to identify the 'connectors' within communities. Connectors are people who see strengths & gifts, are well known and trusted, have relationships, know of the associations in the community and believe that their communities are welcoming places. He noted that

connectors are not necessarily those we consider leaders in a community and said he does not believe that this gift can be taught. He also said that 10 – 20% of any community is made up of natural connectors. John's research and experience tells him that service providers trying to lead individuals into community will never work and that we have to get connectors to do it.

"Those inside the service world cannot lead others out. Only those outside of it can invite others to join them"

For more information, including inspirational stories and creative ways to discover gifts and capacities, go to <http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/people/mcnight.html>.

Carol Tashie, with the University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability, is an activist, author and teacher around issues related to peace, justice, and inclusion for all. Carol

presented on facilitating friendships in school and challenged us to examine common strategies such as friendship programs, used to overcome barriers. She suggested that often the programs and services are the barriers because they either get in the way or prevent us from asking the real question, "why do certain students have no friends?" Carol believes that not having friends is often seen as the problem when it should be seen as a symptom of something bigger. She said we feel a need to 'solve' the problem so we provide friendship programs without looking at the root of the symptom and compared this approach to continuing to fill a leaking gas tank. With this said, Carol offered alternative strategies to help students get to know each other and form connections.

For more information on Carol's work and facilitating friendships, see <http://iod.unh.edu>.

*Christy Barber and Kathie Brooks
Extend A Family Coordinators*

COMMUNITY INCLUSION : A CONFERENCE IN HUNTSVILLE

On April 20 & 21, a conference organized by Community Living Huntsville took place. As a parent, I had an opportunity to attend. The conference was full and more than 150 people trying to register had to be turned away. The five speakers were leaders on the issues of inclusion: Carol Tashie, Judith Snow, Jack Pearpoint, John McKnight, and John O'Brien (absent due to illness).

The first session I selected was 'Building Communities Inside-Out' by John McKnight. Mr. McKnight is a professor of Communication Studies in the U.S. His analysis of a community, anatomy of an organization (which can either be a system or an association), and the differentiation between a system and an association deepened my insight into how a community works. He explained that a system, with a hierarchy of positions such as a company or an institution, is intended for control and mass production. It is capable of producing goods and services, but never able to provide care. It dawned on me why people who need care seldom find satisfaction in nursing homes, group homes or institutions because of this inherent and fundamental mismatch. In a community, John further pointed out, people who have the strength to mobilize resources and connect people are often found in associations such as those mission groups, interest groups, clubs, support circles, etc. They are called 'connectors' and, in John's opinion, networking with connectors is one of the key ways to enable care and community inclusion for our loved ones.

I was absorbed in many beautiful and memorable remarks of the speakers. For example, Judith's idea about a genuine community, Jack's example of inclusion in the Tuhoe community, and Carol's belief in school inclusion as she sees students can only learn successfully in the context were all thought provoking. It was an enlightening 2-night stay at the Holiday Inn Huntsville, and I know what I absorbed there will improve my planning for my son's future and thus enhance the quality of his life. Thanks to Extend-A-Family for bringing the conference to my attention. *Choi Wong*



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT...

“Friends are people who help you be more yourself.”

Merle Shain

“Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.”

Anais Nin

“What we call disability is a powerful invitation to be more intimate, more cooperative, more inventive, and to make new promises.”

Judith Snow

“Love is not what we become but who we already are.”

Steven Levine

“When one door of happiness closes, another opens - but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us.”

Helen Keller

“We must be the change we wish to see in the world.”

Gandhi

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

“I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past.”

Thomas Jefferson

“If you can dream it, you can do it. Always remember this whole thing was started by a mouse.”

Walt Disney

“We strengthen life any time that we listen generously or encourage someone to find meaning, or wonder about possibility, or dream or hope or escape from self-judgment and inner criticism, or know that they matter. Anytime we share someone’s joy, we bless the life in them.”

*Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D.
from My Grandfather’s Blessings*



SUMMER STUDENTS 2004

Thank-you To All The Students For Another Great Summer!!!

Kelly Barr

Matthew Brennan

Stephanie Durocher

Michael Jacoby

Scott Lewis

Dell Murton

Carlene Nembhard

Kristen Palomera

Diana Reis

Jessica Van Wyk

Elisha Watanabe

We have completed another very successful summer student program. Thanks to the generous support of HRDCS, a federal government summer experience subsidy, 11 students were able to support 60 children and youth in a variety of inclusive day camps, recreational and community activities. Families have appreciated the support of the Extend-A-Family students, whose focus is on making friends. Here are some of the comments families have made about the students, *“intuitive, calm, friendly, followed my child’s lead, gentle young man, never in a hurry to leave, gave independence when needed, always focusing on positive, best thing that happened to our son, respectful, willing to write letters of support or help with resume, good values, very cordial and communicative, we were so lucky to have this person in our life; I would like the student to be my friend again next year.”*



My Experiences with Kelly

I am Nivedita Devinee Ramsakal. I attend the Sir William Osler High School. I thought my summer would be dull and boring, but I had a good two weeks with my friend Kelly. We had fun at the movies and at the beach. We were on television on “Much More Music”. My favorite part was riding the TTC and the train going downtown. It was good exposure for me. I joined the library and also a youth group in my neighborhood. Kelly helped me to do a resume. When I grow up I would like a job like Kelly’s. I am looking forward to next year, hoping to see Kelly again.

Nivedita Ramsakal
Extend A Family Member



MOVING FORWARD...one step at a time

The End of ISA

In July 2004, Education Minister Gerard Kennedy announced an intention to adopt a new funding formula for accommodating students with disabilities. Intensive Support Amount (ISA) funding, which has been the model used since 1998, will be discontinued following the transitional year of 2004-05.

The ISA funding model has been considered problematic for many reasons. It categorizes students in accordance with presumed group characteristics and is inconsistent with requirements of the Ontario Human Rights Code. The current formula also discourages recognition of progress, since only negative descriptions of students are rewarded with funds. One effect of this is that it

creates a disincentive for meaningful accommodation planning and implementation via the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Accessing funds through this model requires an onerous amount of resources that takes away from appropriate IEP development.

The model has also been considered to be at the root of the discriminatory exclusion of students with disabilities, as negative behaviours that generate funds are very similar to those warranting removal under the Safe Schools Act.

The new model proposes an accountability framework to ensure that accommodation funds are “spent helping the students the money was intended for” and

requires the documentation of educational progress. A permanent office to enforce accountability and provide monitoring, named the Effectiveness and Efficiency Office, will be established. An Equity and Effectiveness Fund will also be created to support boards in addressing any unmet needs.

Whether the new accommodation funding model will conform to the requirements set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code remains to be seen.

*Kathie Brooks
Extend A Family Coordinator*



AND THE AWARD OF INCLUSION GOES TO...

This past summer Extend-A-Family recognized 5 schools in the city of Toronto for their leadership and partnership in developing friendship, inclusion and community.

The recipients of the Award of Inclusion were:

**Waterfront School, St. Catherine Catholic School, St. Matthias Catholic School,
St. Barbara Elementary Catholic School, and Pleasant Public School.**

Congratulations to these school communities for their support and excellent effort at inclusion!

Parents Group

Parent Groups are proudly co-sponsored by Extend-A-Family and Community Living Toronto. Our groups are designed for moms to informally share, be together and connect with each other. Everyone is welcome!

Central Mom's Group

Tuesday mornings, September 28th - December 14th from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Location to be announced. For further information, please contact: Linda Ger Walters: 416-651-2477 or lgw@extendafamily.ca.

West-End Mom's Morning Out

Thursday mornings, October 7th - December 9th from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. located at Community Living Toronto - Etobicoke Region Office 295 The West Mall, Suite 204. For further information, please contact: Linda Ger Walters: 416-651-2477 or lgw@extendafamily.ca.

East Mom's Group

Every other Thursday beginning September 23rd from 9:00-11:30 a.m. at **Cliffcrest United Church**, 1 Kingston Rd. (corner of McCowan). For more information, contact Janice Matthews (905) 509-8494 or jm@extendafamily.ca.

Safe and Secure Futures Networks

are monthly forums for families who have a member with a disability. We discuss issues affecting our loved ones and learn strategies for planning with the support of a network or "circle." Topics include: relationships and support circle development; person-centred planning; creating valued roles; ensuring financial security; and planning for the right place to live, with appropriate supports. The emphasis is on mutual support and information sharing. Community partners may be invited to present on occasion, and special presentations and workshops are organized during the year. If you are interested in learning more about self-determination and individualized support, please join a network at a location convenient for you.

Network meetings will be held on Thursdays in three Toronto locations. 7:00- 9:00 p.m.

(Hospitality at 7:00 p.m. and meetings convene at 7:15 p.m.)

West Network

3rd Thursday of the month - except October 28th.

Royal York Rd. United Church- 2 blocks south of Bloor
First meeting Sept 16th.

Central Network

2nd Thursday of the month.

CL Toronto's Foster Clubhouse, 40 Birch Ave. (Summerhill/Yonge).

East Network

Confirmation of dates and location pending.

To register or for more information, please contact Christy Barber, Coordinator, Safe and Secure Futures Project at 416 487-4564 or visit www.extendafamily.ca.

Out of Home Respite Project Evening for current participating Respite Families and Respite Hosts:

Wednesday, September 22nd
7:00 p.m. St. Leonard's Church,
25 Wanless Avenue (Yonge and
Lawrence)

SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS / SEXUALITY WORKSHOP

6 Thursday evening series - Thursday, October 14 to Thursday, November 18, 2004 6:45- 8:30 p.m.

Location to be determined in the Yonge/ Lawrence area.

Extend-A-Family is planning to offer a Socially Acceptable Behaviours/ Sexuality Workshop this Fall 2004. The workshop will be a six Thursday evening series designed for adolescents 11-14 years. The goals for the workshop will be for participants to: develop a positive understanding of sexuality; enhance self-esteem; and develop patterns of socially acceptable behaviours and life skills.

Each young person attending the workshop must be accompanied by a family member who can help reinforce the information at home.

It is important to understand one's own sexuality. Everyone has the right to know the names of body parts and to be aware of their functions. It is also important to know the impact of sexuality on relationships and lifestyle and know how to express our feelings as they relate to sexuality. The workshop is designed to look at and discuss these concepts.

The facilitator for this workshop will be Susan Ludwig. Susan has spent over sixteen years as a member of a Sexual Health Team near Toronto, Ontario. A large portion of her work during that time was to teach people with Developmental Disabilities about sexuality and social skills. Her teaching has been collected in *Sexuality, A Curriculum for Individuals Who Have Difficulty with Traditional Learning Methods*.

Registration Fee: \$50 per family. We do not want this fee to prevent a family's participation. Where this is the case, please let us know and a subsidy can be arranged.

Limited space available. Please contact Extend-A-Family to obtain a Registration form. Completed form and fees to be received at the EAF office soon as possible, no later than September 24th, 2004.

Thank you for your contributions!

Charitable Registration Number 11890-4846-RR0001

Please make cheques payable to **Extend-A-Family** & mail to:

Extend-A-Family
200-3300 Yonge Street
Toronto ON M4N 2L6

For receipt purposes we require the following information:

Name _____ Tel: _____

Address _____