

The CIDSO News

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9

DECEMBER 15, 2007

"A Brighter Tomorrow"

President:

Jean Bates
452-2555

Vice President:

Rick Bauersfeld
874-2038

Secretary:

Brenda Harms
378-2388

Treasurer:

Steve Newbold
668-0928

Newsletter:

Dawn Mattia
750-9164

CIDSO Open:

Bill Crutcher
452-5556

Buddy Walk:

Jean Bates
Dawn Mattia

Social Chair:

Judy Bates
726-1145

What Am I Good At?

By Carol Mason
Family Circle 8/5/03

My young daughter looks up from a sheet of paper she is filling out and asks, "What am I good at?" She holds her pencil in mid-air, waiting for my reply. It's one of those trick questions and should not be answered lightly

By third grade you can pick out the artists but you can't pick out those who are moved by the beauty of art. By sixth grade you can spot the athletes but not always the competitors. By junior high you can see who has been blessed with natural beauty but not who will still be beautiful well into old age.

By high school you know who has the most friends but not who is a true friend. You know who can wing a test but not who understands the material. You can tell who the serious students are but not those who have a lifelong curiosity about the world. You

can point out the troublemakers but not the troubled. You can identify the class clowns but not those who only pretend that they're laughing.

By early marriage you know who married well but not who is well married. By the time you have young children you can spot the beautifully dressed, well-mannered ones but not those with a generous heart. By your 30s you can recognize those who are using their talent but not always those who are still trying to find them. By age 40, you know who can run a marathon, whip up a gourmet meal, and reorganize the PTA but it's not so easy to spot those who can balance their life, pick up litter and send a kind, heartfelt note.

I tell her that it is not always clear what you will become good at so you have to try a lot of things. And you have to know when to move on

to other activities if you don't like what you are trying. True talent will always trump poor instruction. If you are bogged down in ballet, you might never try kicking a ball. Try everything you can and give it your best shot.

There's something out there that will jazz you. The key to a happy life is to find out what it is and then get good at it. Sometimes what you are good at isn't as obvious as it would be if you were the star of the softball team or a prima ballerina. Some things you may be good at don't get scored or evaluated and only you know what those strengths are. I pause to see if this is sinking in and she changes the subject to ask, "What are you good at?" I try to be as honest as possible and give her my best shot:

I always put the grocery cart in the little cart holders in the parking lot.

Continued Page 2

What Am I Good At? Continued

I always wash my hands in a public rest-room, even if nobody is watching.
I let people cut in line at stores when they are purchasing less than me.
Sometimes.
I will buy cookies from any child who asks politely.
I repeat compliments I hear about other people.
I always have two new books to read at any given moment.
If an article moves me, I email the author and tell him.
I over tip breakfast waitresses.
I write notes on my Christmas cards.
I pay to listen to National Public Radio.
I can keep a secret.
I try new recipes.
I cry at old movies.
I look up words in the dictionary.
I hold hands with my husband at the movies.
I feed the birds in the winter.
I remember my friends' birthdays.
I can laugh at myself.
"But," she says after thinking about my list, "I still don't know what I'm good at!"
I list qualities like her kind heart, her curious mind, her love of animals, until finally she sighs with exasperation and writes: "I am good at math and spelling and not at dance." Like I said, it's all in the knowing.

Inclusion is Not a Place; it is a Feeling

Troy Daniels Senior Speech, May 2002

My name is Troy Daniels, but my friends call me TD. I have Down syndrome. Because my heart is bad, I use a wheel chair. I do not speak very well and sometimes I use Libby [a speech device].
"I am person with disabilities and when I say 'my friends' I mean friends, real friends just like everyone else, I have friends. Most of you think all people have friends, but for people with disabilities friends are not always real. I want you to know why I have friends.
"Not too long ago, people with disabilities could not go to school with other kids. They had to go to 'special schools.' They could not have real friends.

They call people like me 'retard.' That breaks my heart.
"When I came to school, there is law that says all kids go to school in the place they live. I started school right here in Northfield with all the senior class. We were little kids together. The law says that I can come to school, but no law can make me have friends.
"But then some kids started to think that I was okay, first it was just one or two kids who were nice to me. They found out that I cared about them and I loved my school. I told them I want to have real friends. Others started to hang out with me, and they found out we could be friends. We

started to learn together that in some ways we were different but in some ways we were the same. They called me friend and made sure that I was in everything at school. I cared about them and they cared about me.
"I want all people to know and to see that these students I call my friends are the real teachers of life. They are showing you how it should be. They are the teachers for all of you to follow their lead.
"***Yes, I am a person with a disability. The law says that I am included, but it is my friends who say... 'TD, come sit by me.'"***

Mark the Date:

January 14:

CIDSO

Board Meeting

Instead of mapping out your child's path, try joining them on their

Disclaimer Policy

The editor of this newsletter writes as a non-professional. CIDSO does not promote any therapy, treatment, institution or professional system, etc. Please discuss specific concerns with a professional.