

The CIDSO News

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

MAY 15, 2007

"A Brighter Tomorrow"

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Bike Riding

*By Denise Bockwoldt
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Learning to ride a bike is a childhood rite of passage, and from the time my father, an avid bicyclist, bought my daughter her first tricycle for her 3rd birthday, I've wanted her to master this important skill. Now, 3 years later, with some adaptations and collaboration with our physical therapist Mackenzie is finally on the road to riding independently.

Learning to ride a tricycle was the first long hurdle. After a lot of shopping, we finally found a tricycle at a local bike shop. I Xeroxed the chapter "Riding a Tricycle" from Pat Winders book "Gross Motor Skills in Children with Down Syndrome" for the physical therapist at school. We had a goal for tricycle riding written into her IEP, and her school purchased a large therapeutic tricycle for her to use during

physical therapy. It took 2 years for Mackenzie to get the hang of pedaling and steering simultaneously.

When Mackenzie turned 5, we bought her first bicycle with training wheels. Despite the pink flowers, flashy handle-bar streamers, and a basket for her doll, Mackenzie refused to ride it. She complained that the seat hurt so we bought

a larger gel-seat. Then she complained that the bike was too "wobbly." She could pedal about ten feet then would give up. Despite a lot of encouragement, she would flatly refuse to ride it. Not even watching her brother and the neighborhood kids ride away without her motivated her to get back on. She was afraid. Another summer came without any change in her desire to ride her bike — until I found www.fatwheels.com. Fatwheels are oversized, air-filled training wheels

that make a bicycle more stable. I called the company and was told that many sets of Fatwheels have been successfully used by kids with disabilities, and that I could return the wheels if they did not work out for us. I decided to give them a try.

And what a difference! The first day Mackenzie rode about 100 feet. The second day she rode around the block. But on the third day, Mackenzie rode 172 miles! I don't know what has been more heart warming — her new self-confidence or her delight in being able to ride with the neighborhood children. I am really excited that she will be able to participate in an organized bike ride with her Brownie troop this year.

*See more bike ideas
on page 3.*

Presidential Address

Dear CIDSO Families & Friends,

I would like to begin a regular monthly practice of giving you an update on what the board has been working on. In January we worked to finalize the 2007 budget, sent out grant applications, finalized work on questionnaires for the Jack McCaskill Foundation, expanded the board, updated our new parent packets, and worked on the New Dreams Conference. In February, the board worked on developing an enrichment program, reworked conference applications, assisted with the Barnes & Noble event, participated in a transition planning event at Kingsley Jr.High school, continued work on the conference, updated the contract for CIDSO Library, and scheduled/planned events. In March we sponsored Karen Gaffney as one of the keynote speakers at the Dreams Conference, set up speaking engagements for Karen at two schools and held a family reception for Karen. A highlight for this month was when I was invited to Heartland Community College to be a part of the initial planning stages for an inclusive program at the college for individuals that are developmentally challenged. In April I traveled to Morton to meet with Meri Tucker, President of HOISDA. In our sharing of information I learned more about their New Parent Breakfasts, which is something this board is considering as well. Recently, CIDSO entered into a network of 32 other Down syndrome groups across the country called Affiliates in Action. From that connection we have learned of many wonderful existing programs in other parts of the country. One of which the board is beginning to explore is a literacy program. We also owe a great deal of gratitude to the ISU CEC group for the highly successful events they planned and orchestrated for our group. As always the board welcomes your comments as we continue to work on inclusion, education, awareness, and outreach. I look forward to seeing and talking with many of you at the upcoming bowling event.

26th Annual CIDSO Gala & Open

Pre-Tournament Gala, Friday, June 1
Bone Student Center Ballroom
Illinois State University
Casual Dress
Doors Open 6:00 PM
Social Hour/Cash Bar
Buffet Dinner – 7:30 PM
Silent Auction Throughout the Evening
50/50 Cash Drawing
Free Door Prizes

The CIDSO Open committee hopes that all CIDSO Families will be able to attend—tickets are not required—and will bring their friends and extended family. The more the merrier!

Note: Due to other events scheduled for Braden Auditorium that afternoon and evening, available parking in the Bone Center lot will be at a premium. For easier access by our guests, ISU has reserved the top deck of the Locust/ University Street Parking Garage (access on Locust) for the Gala. Handicap parking is available on the lower level of the garage and across from the Center's circular drive. The parking garage is fully accessible with an elevator. Guests may also be dropped off at the Center's entrance.

Golf – Saturday, June 2
Illinois State University Golf Course
Check-In Opens 6:30 AM
Shotgun Start 8:30 AM
Awards Luncheon/Steak Fry
Immediately Following Play

For additional information, visit the tournament's web page (register online) at www.cidso.golfreg.com

Mark the Date

May 20:

*Bowling at
Pheasant Lanes*

June 1 & 2:

CIDSO Gala & Open

July 16:

*CIDSO Board
Meeting*

August 3-5:

*NDSC Conference in
Kansas City, MO*

August 25:

CIDSO Picnic

September 29:

Buddy Walk

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 your health care professional.

More Biking Alternatives

Not ready for a bike? Consider contacting Kathleen Bautisa at 663-8375 for information on AmTryke. This program, administered through Easter Seals, provides modified tricycles on a “loaner” basis free of charge. They ask you return the AmTryke when you are finished with it. They will meet with you and your child to determine what modifications are needed and arrange for a specific AmTryke.

Bloomington Cycle & Fitness worked with my friend, Mandee, to find the right bike for her needs. They let her try out different bikes before she settled on a three-wheeled bike made for adults. Her special-ordered bike cost about \$400.

Our family’s solution, a “trailer bike” which we purchased on-line for around \$100. It attaches to the back of an adults bike and turns it into a three-wheeled bicycle built for two.



Mandee on her modified bike and Becca riding her “bike trailer”.

Bowling Party

Want to join us May 20th from 1-3 PM for free bowling at Pheasant Lanes? Just call Dawn at 750-9164 to let us know you are coming so we can be sure to have enough lanes reserved.

Thank You CEC

Big thanks to ISU’s CEC (Council for Exceptional Children) for hosting the wonderful day at the park for CIDS0, complete with carnival games for the kids and pizza all around. Everyone there had a great time.

Also, thanks for their efforts with Potbellies for raising over \$400 for our group. We really appreciate their efforts!

Show Me the Possibilities 35th Annual NDSC Convention Kansas City, MO August 3-5, 2007

Workshop topics include:

Health & Medical Concerns

Education

Pre-school, Transition & Post-secondary

Employment

Options for Independent Living

Friendships & Social Relationships

Advocacy & System Change

Communication Needs

Leisure Opportunities

Positive Behavior Support

Person-Centered Planning

Visit www.ndsccenter.org for current conference information.

Application Deadlines

CIDS0 Enrichment/Participation Fund

Applications are due 10 days prior to the next scheduled Board meeting.

Check the “Mark the Date” section of the *CIDS0 News* for details.

Convention Grants

Applications are due 30 days prior to the convention date.