



SPIN NEWS

Special Parents Information Network of Santa Cruz County

...serving families of children with special needs

"Recreation"

Volume 2 Issue 2 April 2002

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SPI N NEWS

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This newsletter was printed and distributed thanks to funding from the **Santa Cruz Children and Families Commission**

Inclusive Summer Recreation

An Alternative to Separate Extended Year Programs

Students maintain friendships over the summer through leisure connections with peers in recreation activities. Kids with disabilities need to have these same experiences.

The IDEA and the ADA both offer strategies and techniques to help us make it happen for our children. Our children with disabilities have the right to participate fully in typical recreation opportunities just like all the other kids in our neighborhoods.

Who is Responsible?

We have the same responsibilities as other parents do to make it happen for our children. We need to sign them up, pay the fee, car pool, take our turn bringing snacks, volunteer for special events, etc., just like all the other parents. The recreation providers have a legal, moral and ethical responsibility to welcome ALL participants and to provide accommodations, adaptations and supports to facilitate participation under the ADA. Under the IDEA, recreation is a related service just like occupational, physical, and speech therapies. Educators have a responsibility to assist students to access leisure and extra-curricular activities to maximize the special education experience. As kids are being fully included in typical classrooms the need for typical social and leisure experiences with classmates outside of the school day is increasing.

Unfortunately many students receiving special education services who are included in typical classrooms and qualify for extended year services only have separate center-based summer program options available to them. Their classmates, who do not have disabilities, are participating in summer recreation activities and programs at their neighborhood parks, playgrounds, pools or recreation centers and at camp. These students maintain friendships over the summer through this leisure connection with their peers in summer recreation activities and programs. A tremendous amount of learning happens in these summer experiences that reinforces and demonstrates the application of academic as well as social skills acquired in the classroom.

At this time, students with disabilities do not have the same summer opportunities. Typically these students are served in summer school programs just for students requiring extended year services. This effectively segregates them from participation with their classmates, and does not afford them typical learning and social opportunities with their friends. Many students have expressed their displeasure with this "only option" and have said they want to do what their friends do, and not be "sent back" as one girl put it, to a segregated classroom for the summer.

What Can I Do?

How do we change this scenario and afford kids with disabilities typical summer opportunities while still meeting our responsibility for providing extended year services? Spread the word! Educators, parents and recreation providers need to learn about the concept and the processes utilized to make it happen. They need to learn how to work together to make inclusive summer recreation opportunities a viable alternative to separate/center-based summer school programs. Each has responsibilities for taking the necessary steps to utilize this integrated option.

Chris Bailey and Buddy



Inclusive Summer Recreation (cont.)

Educators and families can put recreation, as a related service, on the IEP, writing goals and objectives for inclusive summer leisure services, in the community with classmates.

Schools can provide ongoing educational support, to students participating in inclusive summer recreation opportunities, to facilitate successful integrated participation enhancing the maintenance of academic and social skills. Schools can utilize educational program funds typically spent on the student in separate extended year services to purchase inclusive leisure services and support services.

Schools and families can work with recreation programs to provide education and training for the summer recreation program leaders on individual accommodations and support techniques to increase successful inclusion for students with disabilities.

Wonderful stories are emerging as we begin to include recreation as an integral part of the educational experience. Kids are learning to value each others contributions and focus on what each other CAN do in the class room, on the play-ground, in the neighborhood and at the park. Kids are learning to enjoy each others uniqueness and how to cooperate and support one another. They are learning about "doing it differently" and still having fun. Getting our kids involved with recreation opportunities with their class mates is not only the right thing to do, it's a good thing for all kids. Just think of the wonderful relationships there will be in the future for our children if we help them to become more than class mates, to become friends who share common leisure interests and experiences. These kids of today are the grown-ups of tomorrow. These kids of today will break down the barriers of segregation and will build welcoming communities for everyone tomorrow.

Reproduced with thanks to: **Cindy Burkhour**, MA, CTRS, CPRP, CPSI—Inclusive Recreation Consultant—Access Recreation Group- Phone/Fax (616) 669-9109—e-mail: AccessRecreationGroup@juno.com.

For more practical information, visit www.spin.org, and follow the newsletter links – you will find another feature article from Cynthia Burkhour about how to include all kids in youth sports.

Letter from the Chair of the Board

Hello fellow travelers:

This issue is devoted to the topic of "recreation" in our community. Thanks to our intrepid editor and to all of our contributors for this issue; it is no small task to gather and synthesize the information about organizations, agencies and individuals who are providing recreational opportunities for our children in our area.

I am thrilled to make two major announcements on behalf of SPIN::

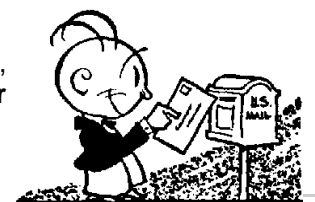
- 1) The Santa Cruz County Children and Families Commission named SPIN as a "Community Hero" at the 2002 Children and Families Heroes Awards ceremony on February 27th. The award is for "empowering parents to help one another and change the lives of children and families". We are very thrilled to be counted among the other community organizations and individuals that were recognized by the Commission, but we also know that there is so much more that we can do to build a stronger community for our families, and that our families are the "real" everyday heroes.
- 1) The CA Dept. of Education has awarded a grant to SPIN to establish a "Family Empowerment Center on Disability" which will provide support and training for parents of children with special needs ages 3-22, who

are receiving special education services in Santa Cruz and San Benito counties. The emphasis will be on helping parents gain access to the information, training and support they need in order to be effectively involved in their children's education. We hope to hire three staff persons and establish a family resource office in the next few months, and conduct a needs assessment with input from families in both counties. You will be hearing a lot more about this as the year progresses; it will be an exciting time for SPIN and our special needs community.

We are proud of our work to date and very excited about the future of SPIN and the services and supports we offer families. Spread the word. If you know anyone who would like to join our mailing list, please have them leave their details at 425-3428.

Wishing you all a summer filled with many opportunities for fun recreation with your families, your children of any age, your friends, and community-members-who-could-be-friends.

Best regards,
Mary Balzer



Local Recreation Options in or near Santa Cruz County

Bear Valley Ski Resort has an adaptive ski program open to all people with special needs. The \$55 package includes a two hour lesson, lift access and equipment call (209) 753-2301 x 181 for more information. "Our son James absolutely LOVED it! We were a bit apprehensive about "making" him do it because we didn't know how he'd respond, but he literally had two hours of non-stop fun. We were so happy we had him do it because he enjoyed it so much (his smile never left his face)" - Amanda

Music Together offers music classes for parents and children up to five years old. The director also has a child with special needs. Call Lizz on 462-5195 for more info. "Several families in the class I attend have children with special needs, and all gain so much from the sessions, I attribute much of Ben's communication development to our Music classes." - Sam

Challenger Baseball Leagues – North County - Sunday Afternoons from 1-2pm in Scotts Valley followed by snacks, Challenger Baseball is open to all kids ages five and up with disabilities. Each Sunday the kids are paired with a buddy, aged 9-12 from the local little league, for an hour of baseball clinic with



skills including throwing, catching, running bases etc. The uniforms for the Angels are great, and there are no fees for participating children. Contact Russ Miller on 438-5127 for more information.

For **South County** Challenger League call Sheri Lynch, 724-5418.

Brandon Miller and his Big Buddy

Shared Adventures – This Santa Cruz organization dedicated to bringing the outdoors into the lives of people with physical challenges and special needs. A list of their activities and information is at www.SharedAdventures.com or call 459-7210. Their events include sailing trips, kayaking, music in the park, self expression through art, climbing gym and hiking events. Their big event is the 10th Annual Day on the Beach, July 20, 12 noon, free. There will be SCUBA, kayaking, surfing or outrigger canoeing with free entertainment - live music, clowns etc. Preregistration is required.



County and City Parks and Recreation programs. Every City and County has its own recreational programs for kids and all are available to kids with disabilities – just make sure you contact them beforehand to ensure any special arrangements or accommodations..

Santa Cruz Roller Palladium is located at 1606 Seabright Ave., 423-0844. They also have sessions for "Tiny Tots". "Allie regularly goes to The Palladium Roller Rink on Seabright Ave. They are very cool about letting wheelchairs on the floor with the other kids." – Mary

A few other ideas to research for yourself!

Camp Harmon is an Easter Seals Camp for kids with special needs. **Therapeutic Vaulting** is also available on Day Valley Road near Aptos. The **Boys and Girls club of Santa Cruz** also welcomes kids with special needs.

Wherever you find a great recreational program, the chance are you can make it work for your child. Think creatively, and make those calls – summer is fast approaching!

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN VAULTING

Individualized Recreational Therapy on horseback to help develop physical strength, coordination, balance and body awareness as well as increased confidence and self-esteem.

Classes are held Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in Soquel. Call Suzanne Carlton on 464-9644 for more info.

JIM BOOTH SWIM SCHOOL

Parent and Baby Swim, Toddler, Children and Adult swim classes for all people in heated pools.

Call Jim Booth on 722-3500 for more info and class times.

A CHARETTE CHILD CARE HOME

Licensed Respite and Child Care for kids and young adults with special needs, SARC vendor for 20 years and employed by Easter Seals for respite care. Located in Felton.

Call Shelby at 335-5956 for more info.

Make A Wish Foundation—A Trip to Maui

I am writing this letter on behalf of my sister about our experience with the Make A Wish Foundation. Claudia is seventeen and has multiple disabilities but mainly it is her cerebral palsy that has made her condition worsen. Thus, she is on 4 liters of oxygen all the time. When this happened a year ago, I realized that I had to pursue the Make a Wish Foundation for Claudia, before her condition got any worse.

Our mother, who is now deceased, had once before tried to get Claudia in with the Make A Wish Foundation, but had been discouraged from their initial denial. It is bittersweet because now that Claudia's condition is more severe she was clearly eligible, but we would have to persevere with out our mother. I thought they would immediately accept Claudia because of her condition, but they did not. The organization is primarily based on the idea that the child makes their own "wish" not any one else. I had to explain to them that even though Claudia cannot talk, she also has wishes, hopes and dreams, just as any other child, but now I had to prove it. She also does not have a distinctive cognitive age (as they require it be at least two years old.) It was after I got the director to speak with Claudia's teacher and a state board advocate that they agreed to meet with us and conduct an interview. We explained how Claudia's wish was for a trip to Hawaii because as a family we had gone there once before, when she was a year old. We had so many great memories and our mother had always talked to Claudia about going back. In Hawaii, Claudia could also have all the things she enjoyed most: outdoors, warm air, warm water, people, sightseeing, and also tropical milkshakes are her favorite.

The foundation went ahead and made all the arrangements. Claudia, our good friend Michelle, and I went to Maui from January 6 to the 13th. Claudia had a great, memorable time. However, there were numerous obstacles and things that did go wrong or not as anticipated. Mainly, we could have used more people with us to help with Claudia; anyone who has a disabled child knows it requires a lot of constant work. In addition, with a disabled person anything you do has to be adjusted for the con-

venience and consideration of the fact that they are disabled, which we discovered repeatedly had not happened. From the air flight, sticking us in difficult seating, to the restaurants without handicapped access, and the biggest disappointment was that the beach wheelchair was an adult size and there was no child sized one on the entire Island. Fortunately, as caregivers, Michelle and I are used to the need to be flexible enough to easily adapt and accommodate to unseen changes. Each night we were exhausted after running around with Claudia's needs and equipment, but it was all worth every struggling moment to see how happy Claudia was in Maui. Every time we went somewhere, we had the wheel chair, several oxygen tanks, and Claudia's food and supplies for the day. The hotel staff kept thinking we were checking out with all our stuff, we could only laugh and insist we were just going to the beach. We explored a lot of the Island with the rental van, went to the beaches, the aquarium, and a Luau.



We could tell Claudia wanted to stay there longer, she enjoyed the sun and beauty of Maui so very much.

Miraculously, Claudia was in a joyous content mood the entire trip. She can randomly go into a more challenging mood or seizure, but had none the whole time because she knew this was something special, and if she had any little bit of control at all I know that she was using it to fulfill her wish of being there and just being happy.

I would highly recommend anyone eligible for the Make A Wish Foundation to pursue it despite all the trouble; it is well worth the experience of a lifetime for the children who deserve that and so much more. In addition, the "wish" can be just about anything within reason that the child wishes for from meeting a celebrity to having a new entertainment system. If anyone would like to contact me for further information on the experience, my email is anjuna02@aol.com.

You can get information about the Make A Wish Foundation on the web at <http://www.makeawish.org> or by calling (415) 982-9474

-Anjuna Malley

CALL FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES AND INFORMATION

If you are starting or have a support or playgroup and would like to get the word out, please send your info to SPIN Newsletter at the address on the front.

MENTOR/MATCHING PARENTS NEEDED

Please contact us at 425-3428 if you are interested in becoming a mentor parent to help other families in need.

We provide ongoing training and support.

GOT KIDS UNDER THREE?

Special Connections is interested in putting parents with children under three in Early Start who want to share babysitting and errand running in touch with each other. Call Leslie on 464-0669 for more info and to register your interest.

Weekend Respite Care

Ocean Children's Center

Attention parents! If you are like many parents raising a child with special needs, having a weekend to yourself may seem like a very distant memory. Ocean Children's Center has been created to offer families an invaluable and sought after break from the demanding, and sometimes stressful, care of your child.

Ocean Children's Center, located in Santa Cruz, CA, is a 48-hour out-of-home weekend respite program serving families that have children with mild/moderate to severe developmental challenges including, but not limited to, autism, Down syndrome and attention disorders. They offer a safe and interactive leisure program two weekends each month for up to six children, ages 7-18 years, from 4pm Friday through 4pm Sunday. Staff members are trained and available in a 2:1 ratio, and devoted to facilitating fun. As a team, OCC supports your child's individual needs while encouraging him/her to join the group in a variety of recreational activities.

Each weekend the activities are selected based on the interests and needs of the children, and events going on

around town. There are many indoor/on-site activities including art, music, puzzles, games, and basketball. The Center also has a van for transportation as the group goes out to explore many of the community activities in the Santa Cruz area. While children spend the weekend at OCC enjoying time with new friends and exploring new activities, parents can relax and benefit from this needed break.

Ocean Children's Center is operated by Skills Center Inc., a not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in Santa Cruz County. The Skills Center is a division of HOPE Rehabilitation Services. The Center receives funding from the San Andreas Regional Center and is licensed by Community Care Licensing. Parents currently receiving services through SARC may be eligible to receive authorized hours for the weekend program. The Center is also now able to accept private payment.

If you would like to know more about the weekend program, including the application and intake process, please contact **Angela Welty** by phone 421-9900 x228, or e-mail awelty@skillscenter.org.

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GOT QUESTIONS?

Want to hook up with another family with similar needs?

Please send us your question and preferred contact information to put in the newsletter, or call SPIN on 425-3428 so we can find you a confidential family match. (this is a free SPIN service).

PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED

Send us a photo of your gorgeous kids to feature in our newsletter:

Please send original photos with a stamped self-addressed envelope to

Attn: Newsletter Editor
PO Box 2367, Santa Cruz, CA
95063-2367.

The Sampson Twins from Watsonville



Our Families

L-R: Willy, JJ, Miranda
and Arielle

Willy and JJ are 4 years old, Miranda and Arielle are 18 months. JJ has Cortical Visual Impairment and is G-tube fed, has cognitive delay, has been seizure free for two years and now WALKS!

What a wonderful handful!

Chasing a Dream

In October, 2000, Cathy Simmons, the mother of a teenage daughter challenged by Down syndrome in San Lorenzo Valley, contacted me to see if I was interested in working with her on trying to spearhead the formation of a day care/recreation program for teenagers with special needs in Santa Cruz County. Cathy had already written a letter to Jeff Almquist, her local County Board of Supervisor, outlining the need for her daughter to have access to after school and summer daytime recreational opportunities in her community. Having a 16 year old son challenged by autism who has lived in Santa Cruz County all his life, I was fully aware of the lack of recreational opportunities for children with special needs. Whatever recreational activities my son had participated in his community, I had to create for him. Otherwise, my son and I were isolated at home with each other, which especially during the summer months was not healthy for either of us.

In December, 2000, I met with Santi Rogers, Executive Director of San Andreas Regional Center, to see if his agency could assist Cathy and me in the formation of a teen-age recreation program. I explained that we saw this as a collaborative effort between his agency, local recreational agencies, schools, private recreational groups, local government officials, and parents. Santi offered to have staff from San Andreas Regional Center to assist in the formation of a series of meetings with all of the local players. Melissa Whately, a staff person from Assemblyman Fred Keeley's office, took the lead in organizing and facilitating the first meeting..

In January, 2001, Cathy and I contacted as many parents as we could to gather together and share ideas about recreational needs for our teen-agers. A group of ten parents formulated a proposal of a recreational program that we as a group would submit at the future meetings with local recreational agencies and the regional center.

In March, April, and May, 2001, three different meetings were held at Simpkins Swim Center. Cathy and I met with representatives from all the five local recreational agencies, a representative from Santa Cruz City School District, a representative from the County Office of Education, staff from San Andreas Regional Center, staff from Area Board VII, a representative from Easter Seals-Central California, representatives from Special Olympics, staff from the Boy's & Girl's Club, a representative from Shared Adventures, staff from the Commission on Disabilities, and staff from the offices of Assemblyman Fred Keeley and County Board of Supervisor Jeff Almquist. At the May, 2001, meeting, Santi Rogers offered \$50,000 from the San Andreas Regional Center to any recreational agency wanting to create a pilot recreational program in the next six weeks before the end of the fiscal year in June. No repre-

sentative from the five different recreational agencies accepted the offer. In the two previous meetings, all of the representatives from the five local recreational agencies had said that their agencies currently lacked the financial resources to create a recreational program for teenagers with special needs. No recreational agency representative appeared willing to create the pilot design of a recreational program within the six week time frame. The group agreed to continue to meet and talk about this need. A suggestion was made to find a facilitator with expertise in the development of recreational programs for children with special needs. The regional center volunteered to locate and fund the facilitator for future meetings. I submitted the name of a highly qualified person from out-of-state who proved to be too expensive. The search for a facilitator was begun in June, 2001, and thus far, no one has been found. Currently, given the current state of our county and state economies and deficits, the financial resources for the development of new local county programs in recreation appears bleak.

It's now March 31, 2002, and the dream of a Santa Cruz County recreation program for teen-agers with special needs continues. Cathy and I have decided to gather more parents together who are willing to begin writing letters to their local County Board of Supervisors, Assemblyman Fred Keeley, and Senator Bruce McPherson, stressing our concerns and frustrations. We both are looking for creative solutions to this on-going pervasive problem in Santa Cruz County. For those of you with children under 13 years of age, remember that your children will grow up faster than you think, and it's never too early to start advocating for future needs. In fact, you may be having similar frustrations finding recreational opportunities for even your younger children. The more letters our local elected officials get, the more they'll become aware that these particular natives are restless and need some loving attention. We need more parents to join with us to advocate for the social recreational and daycare needs of all our children with special needs.

If you are interested in chasing this dream with us, contact either **Lynn Bariteau** on 429-8914 or at dreammaster@cruzio.com or **Cathy Simmons** on 338-1171 or at invisiblesound@cruzers.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Melissa Miller enjoys a turn at bat



When spiderwebs unite, they can tie up a lion
(old Ethiopian quote)

Local Special Olympics Programs Grow in Santa Cruz

Special Olympics programs are sprouting up all over Santa Cruz County. My goal as Sports Manager of Monterey Bay Region is to open up opportunities to all athletes and to diversify the sports we offer in the area. Special Olympics provides year-round sports training and competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for people eight years of age and older with developmental disabilities. Athletes as young as five years old may attend practices to develop their sports talents, but may only compete at the age of eight. Our programs give our athletes continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skill, and friendship with their families, other athletes and the community.

Our sports training programs consist of 8-10 weeks of training in each sport which leads to a qualifying competition, where all athletes have the opportunity to compete, make friends, and shine. Athletes who qualify at the competition have the opportunity to compete and travel to a



Regional Sports Championship. All travel costs, uniforms, housing and food are free of charge for all our athletes and volunteer coaches.

People are always surprised to find that Special Olympics sports are year-round, and that we offer such a wide variety of sports to athletes. The sports we offer in Santa Cruz include roller skating, swimming, track & field, power lifting, basketball, golf, softball, soccer, floor hockey, bowling, downhill skiing, snow shoeing, snow boarding and cross-country skiing. Sports are such a powerful tool in building self-esteem, developing independence, making friends and staying healthy. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like

more information regarding our programs. I'm always happy to meet new athletes and parents/service providers. You can also check out our website at www.sonc.org

Liz Grumet, Special Olympics Northern California, Monterey Bay Region, 429-4258 ext. 201, lizg@sonc.org

Board Member Profile—Debbie Wechsler

I grew up in Indiana and Michigan before going away to college at the University of Colorado where I received a degree in nursing. After working in acute care and then moving to Florida to be near my retired parents, I started working as a public health nurse. From this experience, I decided that I wanted to pursue studying epidemiology and was admitted to the University of California, Berkeley, which is how I came to be in California. Although my career has since taken a back seat to having a child with a disability, my major area of work in public health epidemiology has involved communicable disease control.

I was married in 1984 to my husband, Jeff, and had our son, Zachary, in 1987. Zachary's disability is autism which has been a major determining factor in the course of my life. I am fortunate that my family is able to live on the income of my husband for this has allowed me to not work and therefore focus more fully on Zachary's needs. The early years, after finally receiving a diagnosis for Zak, were quite difficult but as time has gone on I have adjusted and learned how to meet most of the challenges that having my child with autism brings. I also know, however, that the challenges will continue to unfold over time. To me this means that I will continue to be challenged to learn and grow in my capacity as a mother, wife and member of society.

My active involvement with SPIN began in 1999 when three other mothers and I joined to begin charting the way for SPIN to become a viable, long living entity for our community. I feel strongly that it is through my contact with other parents, primarily, that I not only survived but feel I have thrived as a parent of a child with a disability. I am pleased to be able to contribute to the success of SPIN to date and hope that it will continue to grow as a unique resource for parents with children with disabilities.



-Debbie Wechsler

SPIN IS HIRING!

Project Director for Family Empowerment Center on Disability For Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties

Title: Full Time Project Director

Salary: \$50,000 annually

Job Description: The project Director plans and develops the activities in the Empowerment Center grant including but not limited to:

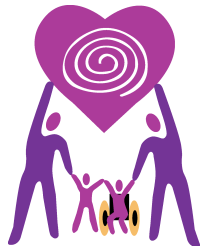
- Providing training and support to families who have children with disabilities.
- Hire, train and supervise the Training Coordinator and the Parent Support Coordinator.
- Coordinate and plan a family needs assessment in English and Spanish in both Counties
- Convene a Community Advisory Group.
- Coordinate an information and referral service for up to 6,000 families
- Oversee total program including budget and finances

Qualifications: College Degree/computer literate and ability to do the following: relate to other agency and organization directors/monitor and evaluate budget and financial statements/supervise other employees/oversee the entire program/maintain a productive team oriented work environment/create and submit grant reports

Preference: Bilingual Spanish, knowledge of persons with special needs

For Application or questions call 425-3425.

Deadline 4/30/2002. We will not discriminate based on race, sex, disability or age



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Calendar of Events

May 10th Friday—Down Syndrome Playgroup for Infants and Toddlers. Come join us at Frederick Street Park in Santa Cruz 10am for a playdate with kids with DS under five years old (siblings welcome). Bring a snack to share. Call Leslie at Special Connections on 464-0669 for more info.

May 11th Saturday—Human Race – Sign up to walk, run or sponsor SPIN at the Human Race – free food and entertainment provided for anyone who raises more than \$25. Stroller and wheelchair friendly, the walk is 10km along West Cliff Drive, ending at Natural Bridges. Call SPIN for more information on 425.3428 or email fundraising@spinsc.org.

May 11th Saturday—Quiz Night – SPIN's fundraiser dinner is sold out, but stay tuned, we'll host another one soon!

May 18th Saturday—Down Syndrome Support Group Family Picnic—Grant Park, 150 Grant Street, Santa Cruz—11-2pm. Bring a dish to share. Contact Sam for more info and to RSVP on 338-1154.

May 20th Monday—Join us for an information night all about **recreation options** for children of all ages with special needs. There will be guest panelists and open discussion. Parents and professionals welcome. Dominican Education Center (back of the hospital). 7-9pm. Call SPIN (Special Parents information Network of Santa Cruz) and leave a message for more info on 425-3428.

May 22nd Wednesday—Autism Support Group. Women's Center at cnr of Walnut and Chestnut Streets 6.30-8.30pm Contact Terri on 464-3393 for more info. No Fee (not a SPIN event)

May 26th Sunday—Tourette Syndrome Support Group check in. Call Nancy on 335 1147 for more info (not a SPIN event)

June – date TBD—Signing Workshop—This series of classes with materials will be offered at no cost to parents and caregivers of children with special needs. Formal and informal learning of SEE (Signing Exact English) will take place in a series of evening workshops. Translation for Spanish speakers, refreshments and childcare will be provided. To register your interest and for more details, please call SPIN on 425-3428 or send email to training@spinsc.org.

June 1st Saturday—DADS ONLY! The Father's Support Network, sponsored by SPIN, will be holding its kickoff event. Details are still being finalized, but we're planning an exciting 1/2 day program that will include speakers, fun and, of course, food! What we need most is fathers of kids with special needs to come and enjoy. We really want to encourage dads with kids five and younger to come and tap the experience of those dads with older kids. Childcare will be provided. For more information, please call Dave Kramer-Urner on 423-9129.

June 8th Saturday—SPIN Volleyball Tournament -- Main Beach, Santa Cruz, California 4-Person Coed and 2-Man Recreational and Competitive Teams. Bring your own team or be placed with a team the day of the tournament. 4-Person teams will consist of 2 women and 2 men. One CBVA rated player is allowed per 4-person team- "Pool play" and playoffs - Every team plays all day ***Pre-Registration is Required*** Check-in at 8:45 a.m. the day of the tournament. Cost is \$25 per person (\$100 for 4-person teams) Registration fees are tax deductible, so please let us know if you'd like a receipt. Make checks payable to "Special Parents Information Network" and mail to: Tom Owens, 125 Victoria Lane, Aptos CA 95003. For more info, contact: Tom or Mandy Owens 688-8345 or email at aowens@sbcglobal.net Also see Phil Kaplan's website at www.cabrillo.cc.ca.us/~pkaplan