



Special Parents

Welcome!

Welcome to the December newsletter, many apologies for the late delivery but we had a lot of events towards the end of the year which delayed the production of the newsletter.

I hope by now you have all survived Christmas and New Year and have managed to avoid any hospital stays.

The next few months are fairly quiet for Special Parents but as

ever the group meetings will take place each month, look out for reminder emails and notices on facebook of forthcoming meetings.

Group Meetings

Group meetings continue to take place on a monthly basis both at Eastbourne and Peacehaven. The attendance at both groups has grown which is very pleasing to see and shows how much support groups are required by families.

The groups are an opportunity for you to meet other families in the same position as you, to share information, ask for advice or just to relax and enjoy the rest with a hot drink and cake. We stopped having guest speakers some time ago as parents felt they just wanted the opportunity to talk to other parents, however, if you particularly require advice on a subject please let me know and we will see if we can arrange a speaker.

At each group meeting the person running the group should read all group notices and welcome new members, following this informal discussion can take place between the members.

We are very fortunate that both meetings offer a creche facility, these are run by the Children Centre in which the groups are held, the creche must be booked in advance directly with the Children Centre concerned. If you require a creche place please adhere to these rules as we value the support we get from the Children Centre and do not want to lose this facility.

To book the creche please phone and ask to book a place on the creche for the Special Parents group. Phone number of the Children Centre are as follows.

Eastbourne - 01323 464160
Peacehaven - 01273 582511



Fundraiser of the Year 2011

For the first time this year the committee decided to present an award to the Special Parents fundraiser of the year. The award was presented at the parents meal event in September 2011.

The award was presented to Samantha Sprange who has continuously worked hard to raise funds herself for the group or to nominate the group for donations. Special thanks were also mentioned to Samantha's mum, Irene Juler who has also contributed considerably to the fundraising.

Many congratulations to Samantha on her award.

This award will be awarded on a yearly basis, the recipient will be decided by the chairman and the treasurer following the end of year accounts.



Sibling Event

In November we held a sibling event at Pizza Hut in Eastbourne. Following feedback from previous events the siblings had expressed a wish to go for a meal out so we were pleased to be able to offer this event to all our siblings.

The event was run by Dave Moran, group secretary, and he was in attendance on the evening.

Following the event we had lots of comments of appreciation from the parents that had attended with

the siblings which were nice to receive.

We like to hold at least one sibling event each year and have been fortunate to have the funding to provide two this year! Please contact us with any ideas or preferences for our next sibling event, we would rather arrange an event following an idea from a sibling to ensure we are putting on an event that will be well attended and enjoyed.

Family Event - Clambers Play Centre

In October we held our first evening family event at Clambers Play Centre in Hastings.

We chose this venue as we were able to book a private session for our members and we felt this would accommodate many of our families and their children's needs. However, due to the travelling distance and time of event it wasn't as well attended as was thought but this allowed the people that did attend more space to run around freely.

The venue was lovely, we had a huge play area for the children with a separate area for the under 5's, there was also a parent seating area where parents were able to enjoy a hot drink. The venue provided a cold buffet for the children and there was plenty left over for the adults!

On departure each child was given a bag of popcorn and a balloon.

Again, we received really good feedback from this event and from a personal point of view I really enjoyed being able to see the children freely enjoying themselves

without worrying about excessive noise or crowds.

If there is a family event that you would like us to organise please feel free to contact me with your ideas and we will make enquiries.



Special Parents Christmas Party

This year, for the first time, we decided to hold a Christmas party for our members. A lot of thought went into the arrangements for the party to try and cater for as many of our members as possible.

We held a disco provided free of charge by Tony at Sound Entertainment, face painting also provided free of charge by Melissa at Tickles Face Painting, a colouring area and a quieter sensory area outside of the main hall. Food was donated by Tesco, Hampden.

We were fortunate to be visited by Santa who came with a present for all the children and each child had a photograph taken with the special man.

After Santa left Tony played a party game involving the adults and children to end the party.

Special thanks to Lush Eastbourne for the donation of presents for the children and also to Irene Juler and her friend, Beryl Botting for donations that we used to purchase the presents.

Fundraising and Donations

Since the last newsletter we have received the following amounts:

- £675.00 - From the Masons which came through a contact of Sam Sprange.
- £15.00 - From Mr and Mrs Fendall (private donation)
- £6.00 - From Mrs Sprange (private donation)
- £40.00 - From Beryl Botting (private donation)
- £100.00 - From Eastbourne Masonic Lodge
- £67.00 - From Irene Juler (In memory of the late Ron Juler)
- £103.00 - From Rachel Moran from the Beauty by Hand party

£200.00 - From Sussex Volkswagon Owners Club
£20.00 - Private donation received in paypal via our website.

As ever, we are extremely grateful for all the donations received. It costs as little as £15.00 per month to run the support groups so every little bit of fundraising and donations helps us to ensure that we can meet the needs of our members.

If you would like to organise a fundraising event please contact me for a fundraising pack, we will support all members with any fundraising events they wish to hold.

Sensory Garden

I have been approached by the Childrens Centre at Willingdon Trees and asked if Special Parents can help them with a sensory garden project. As a committee we decided this was something we felt would be beneficial to our members and we were keen to get involved.

We are in the process of fundraising seperately to raise money for the equipment required but our members can help in a couple of ways.

Firstly, what would you like to see, or indeed not see, in the garden? What do you feel would benefit your child and interest them? When applying for funding it's essential that we have consulted the target audience to ensure that the garden is what they actually want, not just something the committee have decided they would like!

Secondly, do you know anyone that works for a garden centre that would like to get involved with this project by providing materials and/or designing and maintaining the garden for us?

If you would like your views heard or you know of anyone that could help us please contact either myself at rachel@specialparents.org.uk or Pat or Michelle at the Willingdon Trees Children Centre.

Forthcoming Events

As many members will know we always plan a family event, sibling event and a parent event each year. If you have any ideas of venues where you would like us to hold an event or you know of anyone that can offer us a discount for using their venue please let me know.

Remember this is a group to support you and we want to ensure we're planning events that meet the needs of as many of our members as possible.