



Salinas Circle for Children

Celebrating 45 Years of Giving

March—April 2012

President's Message

“There is no happiness except in the realization that we have accomplished something.” This quote by Henry Ford made me think about the role of Salinas Circle for Children. As an organization, what have we accomplished to create happiness? Our main accomplishment is the hard work and dedication that we put into everything we do. If we did not apply ourselves, how would we accomplish anything? Each year when we hold the annual event, I see members pulling together and giving 110% to make each event a success. In return, we are accomplishing the mission of giving to many deserving programs, educators and families in Monterey County to help children with special needs thrive in their living and learning environments. I look ahead to May 19th, our 1st Annual A Chalk in the Park, Chalk Art Festival. This is an opportunity for the members of Salinas Circle for Children to again give 110% and give the community a successful family event that will be around for years to come. This accomplishment will bring happiness.

Smiles,

Kelli



Williams Syndrome



What causes Williams syndrome?

Individuals with Williams syndrome usually are missing a small piece of chromosome 7. This rare genetic disorder occurs spontaneously in 1 out of every 7,500 births. It is not a result of an inherited characteristic from the parents. First recognized in 1961, Williams syndrome affects males and females at equal rates and has been diagnosed in all ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds.

What are the effects of Williams syndrome?

While every individual is unique in how they look and act, people with Williams syndrome have some traits in common. They may have some or all of these characteristics, which include:

- Small, delicate bones and features—small teeth spaced far apart
- A white star shape in the iris of the eye
- High sensitivity to loud noises
- Trouble nursing as a child, slow weight gain, and colicky behavior as a baby
- Anxious or nervous behavior—including “picking” behavior
- Heart, blood vessel, and stomach problems
- High levels of calcium in the blood
- Learning or cognitive disabilities

- Preferring to spend time with adults instead of peers
- Musical talents and/or intense connection with music—ability to learn through music
- Large vocabulary, well spoken
- Extremely friendly, caring behavior—cannot identify bad intentions in other people

Can Williams syndrome be treated?

Individuals with Williams syndrome benefit from early intervention and lifelong physical and psychological therapies. Any medical problems that develop should be monitored closely by doctors experienced in working with individuals with Williams syndrome. To help alleviate maladaptive and social-emotional challenges, try to:

- Keep distractions to a minimum—manage auditory and visual distracters.
- Manage sensitivity to sound—provide comfort and explain loud noises.
- Encourage positive thinking—teach skills for reframing negative thoughts.
- Alleviate anxieties—reassure and aid transition into other activities or topics.
- Monitor sadness—be aware that depression can hide under a cheerful exterior.
- Provide social skills training—practice interaction with others, taking turns, and how to be appropriately cautious of strangers.

Children with Williams syndrome probably will have special needs in their education. The best education programs will be collaborative team approaches, and those that build on and encourage a child’s strengths. Children with Williams syndrome generally respond well—both cognitively and emotionally—to educational programs that use music as a tool. When writing is involved, allow extra time and support and recognize that using computers, calculators, and audiotape recorders may be beneficial.

From the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for excellence in disabilities.

April General Meeting

Mark your calendar the next general meeting is Tuesday, April 3, 2012. Bring a friend or colleague who is interested in learning more about Salinas Circle for Children. The monthly meeting will be held at Lincoln Elementary School, located at 705 California Street, Salinas California. Meeting begins promptly at 6:30 PM. Dessert and beverages will be served immediately following the business meeting.



Assistive Technology For Special Needs

Assistive technology can provide a better quality of life for a person with special needs. By allowing a person to become more independent than their body will allow, she will increase her ability to participate in the home and community. Assistive technology for people with special needs can range from adapting a tool already used to creating something new.

By Lisa Pulsifer

Life skills are the necessary activities that are required to live. They include personal hygiene tasks, laundry and cooking. Assistive technology is available in order to help with all of those tasks. Hygiene tasks can be made simpler by making materials easier to use. One example would be to make the handle on a toothbrush thicker in order to make it possible for a person with a disability to grasp onto it. Laundry can be made simpler by having laundry baskets on wheels that can be pushed to the correct location. Feeding can be made more independent by placing a mat under a bowl in order to keep it from sliding around.

Assistive technology can be anything that helps a person complete something that they ordinarily would not be able to do independently. This can occur in any part of his life, whether it is at home or in the community. It can be divided into two categories: high tech and low tech. Low-tech materials often can be homemade and, therefore, are cheaper. High-tech materials usually require being purchased and are more complicated. Training on both types of technology must be provided to the person using the equipment and anyone assisting him.

Many adults feel that working and earning money is part of being independent. This is also true for people

that have disabilities. Assistive technology can allow a person to participate in their community in the same way as other adults. A touch screen on a computer can allow a person to complete a job that they might not be able too by typing on a keyboard. Also, using a switch such as the one made by Able-net to activate machinery can give a person freedom to complete a variety of activities.

“Life is not about how fast you run, or high you climb, but how well you bounce.”
Unknown

Shouting Out Birthday Wishes To March & April Babies

Stacey Ashton
Carolyn Sanders
Ginny Lott
Karen Morgan



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2012 Meeting Schedule

January 3, 2012
February 7, 2012
March 6, 2012
April 3, 2012
May 1, 2012
June 5, 2012
July & August TBD
September 4, 2012
October 2, 2012
November 6, 2012
December 1, 2012
Meeting starts promptly at
6:30 PM.

Over the past 41 years Salinas Circle for Children has raised and given more than \$510,000 to programs that are essential to the development of children with special needs in Monterey County.

The purpose of the Salinas Circle for Children is to raise and provide funds, and to perform needed services, to assist children with physical, mental, or emotional needs in Monterey County.

Our mission is to provide the tools and support needed so that they may thrive in their living and learning environments.



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Salinas Circle for Children.
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is LIKE the facebook page.**



Congratulations!

Julie Ann Lozano

*Recipient of the Volunteer of the Year
Award by the Monterey Peninsula*