Happy Trails...

This issue of our Family SOUP newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Debbie Bryant who passed away on January 9, 2017. When Family SOUP took the reins for the Able Riders Therapeutic Horseback Riding program in 1999, Debbie stepped up to instruct, inspire and share the joy of being “ABLE” in the saddle. We will remember her spirit and love and courage for all her riders and for all time.

As the first therapeutic riding instructor and founding member of Able Riders I want to share with you my feelings for what Debra Bryant contributed as an Able Riders Therapeutic Riding Instructor. Spiritually she will always be present in the program. She was an accomplished western horse show competitor, winning many awards including events at the Cow Palace. But no matter the many awards she earned, they don’t compare to what she accomplished helping children with special needs in the Able Riders program.

Debra took over as instructor for the program in 2000 when it became part of what is now Family SOUP. She took her training at the center in Elk Grove along with what I was able to teach her from my experiences and training. She had a natural ability for working with these special children. She was able to encourage them to attempt activities they were not used to doing. Her talent brought forth courage and abilities beyond expectations in these riders. The program is not about developing showmanship horsemen, but to advance their physical and mental selves. These riders have a wide variety of limitations: physical, mental, and loss of senses such as sight and hearing.

The program can stimulate developments to compensate for these problems.

Debra brought out the spirit of trying to do their best in these riders. They responded beyond what they had been able to do. She had a natural ability to teach in a style that encouraged the riders to try to do more than what they had been generally doing. By their reactions one could tell they were proud of these new abilities and physical changes.

The horse’s walking gait stimulates the rider’s natural movements. They awaken these natural movements in the child’s body in a way that can’t really be explained other than the gait is not unlike the human walk. It rocks the body up and down, in and out, back and forth. This is the true secret of the success of therapeutic riding. Debbie recognized this and working with the Able Riders members she helped many children develop physically and mentally beyond their present skills. It is something hard to believe unless you experience children involved in this type of program. Debbie’s abilities as a teacher contributed so much to the program that her talents and contributions will live on in the program. She taught all who saw her working with the riders what great possibilities therapeutic riding can develop.

— Valerie Wilson, Able Riders Instructor and Volunteer

Debbie was patient, kind, and worked hard to help our boy’s confidence. She helped give him back his voice. When he first started riding in the Able Riders program he was afraid of everything. Horses changed that. She put her arms around him, held him tight and got on that first horse with him. After a while his little non-verbal self turned around and said “You get off!” She howled with laughter and got off the horse, and then led him around on that horse like a champ. Nick has another Angel watching him from heaven.

— Bill and Karen Fuller, Nick’s parents

My daughter Selena has been a part of the Able Riders program since she was very little. Debbie was very special to my daughter Selena. She would always welcome Selena with a warm embrace and smile. Debbie made her feel like she was a princess and could conquer the world on a horse. Her enthusiasm and dedication to the Able Riders Program will never be forgotten!

— Terri Reyes, Selena’s mom

Able Rider Aiden said recently, “She used to make me trot, and I didn’t like that” and “She was nice”. His mother, Erin, said “Debbie always believed in Aidan and pushed him to do his best.”

— Erin Newton, Aiden’s mom

I had not met Debbie until I came to Able Riders as a volunteer, but we had several friends and working with kids and horses in common. At first meeting Debbie, she appeared to be stern, but that was not the case. She was a very warm and friendly person. She could be very firm with Able Rider kids when needed and got a positive response. Many of our riders could WHINE their parents into giving into their wishes, but not Deb; she was not mean but consistent and persistent. I could see the love and respect develop in the kids.

Debbie also developed a great relationship with the volunteers. She had a very hearty and infectious laugh that would draw a person to her. I can still hear it! My wife and I enjoyed Debbie away from Able Riders also, trail riding, looking at horses and doing lunch. We shared an admiration for Roy Rogers, and our parting always ended with “Happy Trails!”

— Bill Branum, Able Riders Volunteer
Spring at Family SOUP Ushers in Bistro in the Buttes and iCan Bike!

Bistro in the Buttes 2016 had to come in out of the rain last year so we have a rainy day plan, but if the sun is out we are celebrating our 25th Anniversary at the Heier Ranch. John Heier has once again offered his berry farm site at the historic Howard House in Live Oak. Don’t miss this chance to visit a working farm with a fabulous view of the Buttes! This year’s theme is Diwali – Festival of lights. The Bistro committee led by Cynthia Struckmeyer is planning live entertainment, dazzling colors and lights not to mention fun and fabulous prizes, more prizes and auction items.

Then in June turn your attention to iCan Bike a very special 5-day camp hosted by Family SOUP where campers learn to ride a two wheel bike without training wheels. Camp Director Brian Berg returns for his 6th season and he encourages children at least 8 years old through adults to join the fun. The camp fills up so register now for one of the 40 slots. Camp dates are June 12-16. For more information call (530) 751-1925.

Legos, Legos, Legos!

Summer will bring the Lego Club back for kids, parents and caregivers. It’s a time to get away from phones, games, devices and build, create and put energy into 3 dimensions. The Lego Club will meet 6 times during the summer school break. Call Family SOUP to register.

Family SOUP families were busy this winter with a wide variety of activities, trainings and special needs navigation leading to supports and services for our children that are differently abled.

Family SOUP and 4 families participated in a new playgroup called PALS for parents and children ages 0-3 with special needs. The group meets at the Head Start program office in Marysville. We are so glad to be a part of the opportunity for parents to meet other parents and experience joy, support and learning through play.

Our Music Program continued during February and March with Leanne Cox leading on your feet music activity for young children age 0-5 at Little Stars Music and Movement in Yuba City. This April we start the Music Making Magic and Me in Yuba County for families with children age 0-5. This popular program is taught by Celeste A. Keith uses music and movement to increase focus, attention, build meaningful responses to sensory experience and promote useful movement in a barrier free environment that promotes social interaction and increases participation in group activities.

The Scrapbooking Support Group, Positive Power for ADHD Support Group and the Fortaleciendo los Lazos Familiares (Strengthening Family Ties) continued to provide a warm and friendly opportunity to learn from each other and share information and friendship.

Support and Information Groups at Family SOUP

Family SOUP is committed to offering parents and caregivers of children with special needs the opportunity to get together to share experiences information, and resources in a supportive and friendly environment. We have three support groups that meet regularly, and we invite parents and caregivers to join. Please check our newsletter calendar section for dates, times and locations.

Scrapbooking Support Group

Scrapbooking Support Group meets once a month (third Wednesday) for the four “S’s”: Scrapbooking, Support, Sharing, and Supper. Scrapbooking supplies are provided free of charge; all you need to bring are your photos! For more information or to reserve a spot, please call Chris at 751-1925 x104.

Fortaleciendo los Lazos Familiares (Strengthening Family Ties)

Strengthening Family Ties meets once a month (third Tuesday) to provide education and support for Spanish-speaking parents and caregivers. Each month features a different topic of interest to the group. Free childcare is available. For more information, call Mary at 751-1925 x107.

Sibling Support Group

Our Sibling Support Group series is for siblings, ages 5-11, of children with special needs. It meets once a week for four weeks and includes fun activities and discussions that are designed to help children process the joys and challenges of having a sibling with special needs. For more information, call Mary at 751-1925 x107.

Help Us Evaluate Family SOUP Services

Input from our families is always important and spring is the season for the annual evaluation survey on our activities. The annual survey will help evaluate the effectiveness of our activities and in identifying areas for improvement. Let us know how we’re doing with supporting access to accurate information, specialized training, system navigation and peer-to-peer support. All of your responses will be kept confidential – even from us!

Take the survey online at:
(Paper surveys are also available)

English https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FEDCFamSur1617Eng
Spanish https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FEDCFamSur1617Span
The Sewing Sisters...

from Faith Lutheran Church generously donated beautiful handmade quilts to Family SOUP to share with our families. Their thoughtfulness and creativity will be treasured by many!

National Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention

Each Year thousands of people from across the globe attend the NDSC Annual Convention. This year the convention is being held in Sacramento July 20-23, 2017.

PARENTS: Learn from the best, as internationally known experts come to Sacramento to share their knowledge across the life span of individuals with DS.

SELF-ADVOCATES: Join 300 friends from across the world to learn, share, become empowered and have an amazing time!

SIBLINGS: Share and learn alongside your peers, from each other, as well as from professionals.

VOLUNTEERS: Have the experience of a lifetime by volunteering your time at our convention.

If you are a parent of a child with DS or a Self-Advocate and have an IPP through Alta California Regional Center and would like help paying the registration fee for the NDSC Convention contact your Service Coordinator for more information.

CONTACT: toll free: 800-232-6372 local: 770-604-9500 email: info@ndsccenter.org www.ndsccenter.org

In our library

Is your child able to identify when he or she is being bullied? Did you know that bullying can be addressed in your child’s IEP? At Yourspecialeducationrights.com you will find a video that will give you tips on how to address bullying at your next IEP meeting as well as information on home and school collaboration, red flags your child is being bullied, and more.

In this website you will also find Crisis corner, a series of videos relating to how to address crises such as children being restrained in school, being arrested, being hospitalized, and routinely being sent home from school.

Find these videos and more at yourspecialeducationrights.com
The California Autism Professional Training and Information Network (CAPTAIN) is a cross agency network developed to support the understanding and use of evidence based practices (EBPs) for individuals affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) across the state of California.

The Leadership Team includes professionals from the California Department of Education, Diagnostic Centers, University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), Regional Centers and Department of Developmental Services, Family Resource Center Network, and SELPAs. CAPTAIN was established to support implementation of EBPs statewide.

Locally team members include Kevin Douglas, Education Behavior Analyst, Colusa County Office of Education; Jessica Burrone, Principal Yuba County Office of Education; Jessica Guth, Director of Program Services; Colleen Davenport, Program Specialist Yuba City Unified School District; and Cindy Chandler, Executive Director Family SOUP.

**Parents and Professionals**

AFIRM Modules are designed to help you learn the step-by-step process of planning for, using, and monitoring an EBP (Evidenced Based Practice) with learners with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorders) from birth to 22 years of age. Each AFIRM module focuses on an EBP for learners with ASD and includes:

- engaging case examples that demonstrate the behavior or practice in use,
- multimedia presentation of content with audio and video clips, and
- interactive assessments that provide you with feedback based on your responses.

Supplemental materials and handouts are available for download. It's free and easy. Learn to select an EBP [http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/selecting-ebp](http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/selecting-ebp)

And check out Ask a Specialist at [http://www.askaspecialist.ca.gov/current/ASD.html](http://www.askaspecialist.ca.gov/current/ASD.html) for autism, ADHD, mental health, behavior, and school-related medical issues. You can choose the expert under these areas of concern and submit your question.

All of these links are available from the CAPTAIN website.
Support/ Information/ Resource Meetings

Fortaleciendo los Lazos Familiares “Strengthening Family Ties”
Monthly Info/Support Meeting
April 18, May 16, & August 15 (Tues) 6:00-8:00AM
Education and support for Spanish speaking parents and caregivers. Free childcare available.
Cooper Avenue Baptist Church, 804 Cooper Avenue, Yuba City
Call 751-1925 to reserve childcare and for more info.

Scrapbooking Support Group
Monthly Support Meeting
April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19, & August 16 (Wed) 6:00-8:00PM
Supportive scrapbooking for parents and caregivers of children with special needs
Family SOUP, 1650 Sierra Ave., Ste. 106, Yuba City
Call 751-1925 to register.

Positive Power for AD/HD
Monthly Support/Info Meeting
April 24, May 22, June 26, & August 28 (Mon) 6:30 – 8:30PM
Support, parenting strategies, resources, and information for parents and caregivers of children with AD/HD. Free childcare available.
Cooper Avenue Baptist Church, 804 Cooper Ave., Yuba City
Call 741-6750 to reserve childcare & for more information.

Sibling Support Group
4 Weekly Support/Activity Sessions for Yuba County Residents
Yuba County Residents: April 19, April 26, May 3, & May 10 (Wed) 4:00 - 5:30PM
Support, discussions and activities for siblings, ages 5-11, of children with special needs.
Call 751-1925 for more information and to register.

Parent / Caregiver Training and Workshops

Online Videos
Please check out the Your Special Education Rights website. This website contains dozens of videos designed to assist parents of children with special needs.

Bullying and Kids with Disabilities - Red Flags:

Therapeutic Activities

Music Program
Yuba County Residents: April 20, May 4, May 11, May 18, May 25, & June 1 (Thurs) 4:00 - 4:30PM
A music based learning series and support group for children ages 0-5 with special needs and their parents.
Call 751-1925 to register or for more information.

Family Activities

PALS Playgroup
April 24, May 22, June 26, & August 28 (Mon) 10:00 - 11:30AM
Once a month playgroup for parents and children, ages 0-3, with special needs; includes brief topic presentations and information about community resources; bus passes available. For Yuba and Sutter county residents.
Call 751-1925 to register or for more information.

Save the Date!
Bistro in the Buttes
Saturday, May 13, 2017
Bistro in the Buttes is Family SOUP’s annual fundraiser, the proceeds from which helps us to keep our doors open through the year and provide programs to our families like iCan Bike and Able Riders.

Sensory Friendly Movie Showing
Coming June, 2017!
Title to be announced later.
Sensory friendly: no previews or advertisements; dim lighting, sound turned down.
Cinemark Movie Theater
1420 Whyler Road, Yuba City
Admission is $6.00; call theater for more information: 751-2850

Lego Club
July 12, July 19, July 26, & August 2
(Wed) 9:30AM – 11:00AM
Parent-child activity for children ages 3-12 with special needs and their siblings
Cooper Avenue Baptist Church
804 Cooper Avenue, Yuba City
Call 751-1925 for more information and to register.

Check:
familySOUP.org
regularly for more events and details
**Meet Board Member**

**Proud to Introduce Amanda Johnson**

I currently work as a Special Education Program Specialist with Galt Joint Union Elementary School District. I have a passion for special education that comes from my family and our journey. Our middle daughter was diagnosed with Autism before the age of two. She has been a sense of inspiration in the work that I do. I have learned so much as a parent, wife, and a professional by having her in my life. I took this inspiration, dedication and passion with me into the classroom as a special education teacher and later as a teacher on special assignment, coaching other special education teachers. I serve as the Regional Leader for the California Autism Professional Training and Information Network (CAPTAIN). We train and provide coaching for implementation through fidelity of autism evidence based practices across California. In all of my spare time I am completing my doctorate in Educational and Organizational Leadership emphasizing on K-12 administration and design thinking. I would love to use this acquired knowledge to better serve our special needs population, parents, and community. I am an adjunct instructor/counselor for Los Rios Community College and serve as the Secretary for the Sacramento Graduate School Association for the University of the Pacific. Thinking back to the journey we have had with our daughter and how far she has come, the work we do as parents, educators, and as a community is so important to the outcomes for our children. I attribute the success of myself and our daughter to the many wonderful professionals, community members, and organizations that dedicate their time and energy to making the lives of our special needs population better. Family SOUP was a support for us when our daughter was diagnosed, and I am honored to serve on the board of Family SOUP!

---

**Board Members**

Matthew Miller .................. President
Kimberly Butcher ............... Vice President
Sukh Purewal .................... Secretary
Erin Newton ..................... Treasurer
Josh Harris
Lora Gonzalez
Cynthia Martinez
Tania Marines
Amanda Johnson
Jamilee Young
Tom Reusser
Sheila Baker

**Staff**

Cindy E. Chandler .......... Executive Director
Mary Pickering ............. Program Director
Chris Hickey ................ Early Start Director
Cynthia Sandoval .......... Parent Liaison
Janis Perrucci ............. Financial Officer
Brenda Leonhardt . Administrative Assistant
Amber Soto ............... Administrative Assistant
Jesana Tran ................. Parent Liaison
Stephanie Kaesekamp Able Riders Instructor

**Our Mission...**

is to empower families of children with special needs through support and education to reach their full potential as members of the community.

We are a 501(c)3 tax exempt non-profit organization.

Your donations make our programs possible.

---

**Thank you Sponsors & Supporters**

---

**Non-Profit Organization**

U.S. Postage

PAID

Yuba City, CA 95991

Permit No. 101