



WINTER 2011

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'Share the Dream' update

We are pleased to announce a revised format for our 2011 cornerstone event 'Share the Fun'! This will be a cocktail auction taking place on a Friday in November—we will announce the venue shortly. Hopefully we will be celebrating the win of the World Cup and so will be ready to party on...if we didn't win it will be a great chance to celebrate anyway!

After a lot of discussion we have eventually come to the decision that 2011 is not the right year for our traditional 'Share the Dream' event. Due to the Christchurch earthquake that dominates our thoughts and minds still, coupled with the upcoming Rugby World Cup we felt that we would be best to offer a different type of event this year and return to our traditional dinner and auction next year.

Very shortly more information about venue will follow but we just wanted you all to know that 'Share the Dream' as you know it will be back, we are simply taking a hiatus for this year. But we do still need your support—perhaps more than ever—so we hope to see you all at 'Share the Fun' in November.

Save this date!

Friday, November 4

'Share the Fun'
Cocktail Auction
Auckland

A special thanks

On behalf of the entire UpsideDowns Education Trust we would like to extend a huge thank you to Dr Gary Dennis for all of his fundraising efforts and support.

As the father of a daughter with Down syndrome he is a major advocate of both the Trust and Down syndrome and through proceeds of speaking engagements and his book 'The Christening' (which is still available from our website by the way, www.upsidedowns.co.nz) he is helping us in tremendous ways!

Thank you for all you do Gary.

Nikolai heads to school!

Our gorgeous young man Nikolai will turn 5yrs old on the 12th July and will be going to Waterlea School at the beginning of term 3. This is our local school in Mangere Bridge and his older sister Evana who is 7yrs old is already there.



Mangere Bridge Kindergarten and Waterlea School have a buddy system as part of transition to school. The year 4 children usually come to the kindy for an hour once a week to engage with a child who will be beginning school. Nikolai has a fantastic buddy called Andre who has been coming each Thursday morning since the beginning of the year. It has been great as it has allowed Nikolai to build a friendship with an older child who he previously didn't know.

Usually children have 3 school visits prior to commencement but the school have been very proactive and Nikolai started school visits at the beginning of this term. His support worker Marise meets us at school one morning a week and stays with him until 1130am when I pick him up. As we get closer it is hoped that he will go for 2 mornings a week. Nikolai has had great school visits. His teacher Miss Ryan has been very open and positive to have Nikolai in her class. The Junior School Principal together with his teacher and relieving teacher all attended a Makaton course in the April holidays. Nikolai's therapist Sarah has visited the school this week and speaking to the teacher afterwards she was very excited and pleased to have someone with great experience being involved in helping Nikolai adapt to school.

The biggest thing to us for Nikolai is inclusion and also to be a valued member of our community. Nikolai's kindy have been fantastic and have given him a lot of confidence and independence and now as we begin the school journey it is heart-warming to see school embrace Nikolai's vision for inclusion.

Funding Information

UpsideDowns Education Trust received funding recently from Bay Trust, the ANZ Staff Foundation, Blue Waters Community Trust and once again from SkyCity Auckland Community Trust.

We thank these generous sponsors as they assist us in our purpose of funding therapy for children with Down syndrome.

As therapy costs continue to rise we need the support of these amazing trusts more than ever.



Skyla Jewel loves to play

Upsidedowns member Skyla Jewel is now almost two and a half. At home Skyla loves playing with her big sister Lia-Belle, racing around on her trike, jumping on the trampoline, swinging, reading books and playing with her dolls/doll house.



She has been attending Highbury House community crèche for just under two years now (on twice weekly basis) and is well integrated into the crèche community. She actively joins all activities on offer, and the other children at crèche often join in games that Skyla has initiated. The teachers have made a special effort to understand Skyla's use of sign to communicate whilst her speech develops and have enthusiastically incorporated Makaton signing with her; and into the music/mat time for the other children to learn too.



She is a very independent little girl, and well capable of holding her own with her peers, attending a music group every fortnight as well as the children's programme at church. Everyone is always amazed at how she just gets stuck into things and gets on with it. Skyla is well versed in sign language and happily uses two to three phrase signs to communicate with. She is really working hard at her speech and it is very cute to see Skyla practicing her sounds and words.

The trust supports Skyla in fast tracking her communication development and the hard work mum and daughter have committed to the Johansson Programme with Sarah's guidance is proving to be extremely successful.

Thank you to all those who have put in so much effort to assist and support us; without this professional input our beautiful daughter would probably not be flourishing as she is.

Chet, Lizzie-Ann, Lia Belle & Skyla Jewel

Birthday Wishes

July

Laura Blow, Amelia Eades,
Lucy Krinkel, Sam Johnson,
Nikolai Piskulic, Jack Popham-
Rudkin, Oliver Wong

August

Miles Cairncross, Oscar de Groot,
Lucy Cronin

September

Riley Holt, Lily Mae Ivatt-Oakley,
Grace Walker