

Dialogue

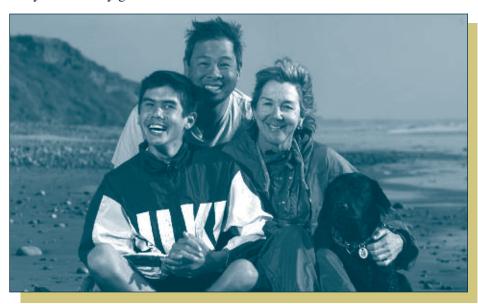
Volume 22 No. 3 Summer 2008

Consumer Spotlight

Nathan Ho

athan Ho and his parents
Julie and Derrick are the
classic Southern California
family. Warm and friendly, active
and athletic, they hit the beach
every chance they get!

found barbequing and singing around the campfire at the beaches of Encinitas and Carlsbad in San Diego County, as well as up the coast. Recently, they took a camping trip to a beach near Santa Barbara with friends to celebrate Nathan's 16th birthday. In the company of family friends, he is happy watching his father and the other windsurfers off-



(I-r) Nathan, Derrick and Julie Ho, and service dog Melody at San Onofre Beach.

"He's a real beach kid," said Julie about Nathan, who has autism and mild cerebral palsy, and has been a Regional Center of Orange County consumer since he was a baby and received Early Start services.

Nathan loves to camp and the family takes frequent windsurfing camping trips throughout the year. Residents of Garden Grove, they can often be shore. He is also a fan of his mother's beach volleyball group: "He's my little cheerleader," said Julie.

They hit the beach every chance they get!

The family's constant companion on these trips and elsewhere is Nathan's service dog Melody, a black Labrador Retriever who joined the family last summer.

Date for Spotlight Awards changed to October 24

RCOC's annual Spotlight
Awards dinner dance, previously scheduled for Sept. 12, is now set to take place on **Friday**, **October 24**. The location for the event has not changed – it will, again, take place at the **Hyatt Regency Irvine**. Be sure to change the date on your calendar, and make plans to attend this special event!
If you have questions, call Jacqui Kerze at (714) 796-5299.

"She's his first dog, and he loves her," said Julie.

Melody's main job is to help keep Nathan close by. However, his mother says that one of the best things about having the dog is that she draws other people closer to her son. Melody wears a vest that identifies her as a service dog, and everywhere they go, people ask Nathan if they can pet her. This helps to encourage social interaction that Nathan enjoys, but has difficulty initiating because his speech is very limited.

As helpful as Melody has been, it is the people in Nathan's life who have

See Natho Ho page 11

Dialogue

Dialogue is published four times per year by the Regional Center of Orange County for people with developmental disabilities, their families and service providers. Dialogue can also be read online at RCOC's Web site: www.rcocdd.com.

Copyright © 2008

Board of Directors 2008

Christian Dubia, Jr., Chairman
Tresa Oliveri, Vice Chairman
Jay Connor, Secretary
Thomasina Parker, Treasurer
Chad Arnett
Clare Bonn
John Correa
Cheryl Day
Joseph DeCarlo
Sylvia Delgado
Lore Flavell
Alan Martin
Kathy McCrystal

Martha Patarroyo

Jud Robert Steve Tanner

2008 - 2009 Board Meetings

September 4, 2008 • November 6, 2008 January 6, 2008 • March 5, 2009 May 7, 2009

The public is invited to attend. Meetings begin at 6 p.m. and are held in the Regional Center Board Room at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana.

RCOC Administration

Bill Bowman, Chief Executive Officer Janis White, Chief Operating Officer Bette Baber, Chief Financial Officer John Abernatha, Human Resources Director

LeeAnn Christian, Director, Organizational Effectiveness

Pat Glancy, Director, *Children and Family Resources*

Peter Himber, M.D., Medical Director

Larry Landauer, Consumer/Community Resources Director

Doug Miller, Outcomes Director

Paula Noden, *Intake Manager* Rosalinda Lopez, *East/Central*

Area Manager

Val. Dadford West Area Mana

Keli Radford, West Area Manager Patrick Ruppe, North Area Manager Amy Williams, South Area Manager

Budget Update

State Again Enters New Fiscal Year Without Enacting a Budget

ince all of the federal and state government dollars that RCOC uses to pay for consumer and family services comes to us through a contract with the State of California, we pay close attention to events in Sacramento during the summer budget season. For regional centers to receive funds, the state must have a budget. It is disappointing to report that, as we go to press, the Legislature and Governor still have not reached agreement on a budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year that began on July 1.

The California State Constitution says that the Legislature must pass a budget by June 15. It also says that the state budget must be balanced. In other words, there has to be enough money coming into the state to pay for all of the programs the state

operates, as
well as those
that it funds
indirectly, such
as the regional
center system of
community care. The need
for the budget to be balance

for the budget to be balanced has been the main obstacle to passing a budget. California faces a budget deficit that is estimated at \$15-17 billion, and there are major disagreements about how to close that budget gap.

As we have in past years when the state budget deadline has not been met, RCOC has arranged for a line of credit with a bank that will enable us to continue paying service providers and staff for some weeks into the new fiscal year. We will, however, have to pay interest on this line of credit. Those are dollars that we believe would be better spent meeting the needs of people with disabilities, but that cost will be unavoidable if we do not receive our regular funding from the State of California. And, of course, RCOC cannot continue to borrow indefinitely.

It is our sincere hope that there will be a state budget in place before you receive this newsletter. In the meantime, RCOC families can be assured that we are doing everything in our power — and urging those in Sacramento to do what is necessary — to ensure that

there is no interruption to
the critical services and
supports that people
with developmental
disabilities and
their families
rely upon.

CEO's Corner

Expanded Child Care Resources Come at a Good Time

By Bill Bowman, Chief Executive Officer

hen RCOC launched its inclusive child care and after-school programs

initiative in 2006, we were responding to emerging trends and family needs voiced through National Core Indicators



(NCI) surveys and a multitude of other sources. In this issue of *Dialogue*, we report on some of the results of this initiative (see *More Orange County After-School Programs Include Children with Disabilities*), with details on many of the new resources available to families, as well as RCOC's goals for continued expansion of both after-school options for adolescents and child care and after-school programs for younger children.

RCOC's initiative for inclusive child care is both a timely and important support to families.

At the same time we launched this initiative, we also expanded our research on the topic. We added child care-related questions to NCI family surveys intended to ensure that

RCOC's efforts in this area are focused and effective in meeting genuine needs.

We have seen an increase in the number of RCOC families reporting that they are using day care during the week.

As we compare 2006 results with preliminary data received from the 2008 NCI surveys that were just completed, we see that RCOC's initiative for inclusive child care is both a timely and important support to families.

Family Trends

NCI surveys show that in the past two years, we have seen an increase in the number of RCOC families reporting that they are using day care during the week. Significantly, more of these families are needing to turn to child care providers – rather than relatives or friends – for this support. And, while less than 45 percent of those surveyed two years ago indicated they would like more assistance in accessing day care for their child, preliminary results from this year's survey show well over half of families today would appreciate this type of help.

> Families surveyed rank after school care as one of their most important service needs.

In fact, these same preliminary data show that families surveyed rank after

school care as one of their most important service needs.

Moving Inclusion Forward

As the story on page 6 makes clear, RCOC's efforts to develop more fully-inclusive child care and after-school programs in Orange County could not happen without our partners: outstanding service providers who understand the unique needs of children with developmental disabilities, and respected community-based organizations that share our commitment to inclusion and equal access for all children.

Most exciting, however, is that the collaborations among these partners have yielded new opportunities for children that demonstrate a shift in thinking about inclusion. They move well beyond the basic level of accommodating children with disabilities into existing programs that were developed for typicallydeveloping children. What we are seeing is a sincere commitment to serving all children, each one as an individual. And we are seeing organizations begin to craft new programs in which it is assumed – by staff, parents and the children themselves – that boys and girls with disabilities can and will participate fully with those who do not have disabilities.

You can access past issues of *Dialogue* on the Regional Center Web site at www.rcocdd.com

Consumer Advisory Team Update

CAT Speaker Shares Tips for Managing Credit

By Jay Connor, CAT Chairman

ccording to Viridiana (Videe) Mendoza, educational specialist with the Consumer Credit Counseling Service, having a

credit card can be a good way to build up credit. Good credit can be important if you are applying to rent an apartment. A credit card can also be a convenient way to pay for more expensive items like furniture or a vacation. But it is easy to get into financial trouble, if you are not careful.

Videe offered many helpful tips about credit cards at our May meeting. Here are a few points I thought were especially important to share:

• Only get a credit card if you need it. It can be difficult to resist the many "pre-approved" credit card applications that we receive

in the mail, but having too many credit cards is a bad idea. If you need one, the bank where you have a checking account or a savings account is a good place to apply for a credit card.

• If you have a credit card, try to pay the bill in full each month. If you do not do this, the credit card company will charge interest on

your purchases and that can add a lot to the cost of an item. A shirt that seemed like a good buy when you bought it on sale may not be such a deal after you add credit card interest to the original price.

• You can dispute charges on your bill if you think someone has used your card without your permission. Consumer Credit Counseling Service can help you to fight this kind of fraud by providing you with a dispute letter that includes the information credit card companies require.

Consumers who are having trouble managing credit card

Upcoming CAT Meeting Dates

September 17

October 15

November 19

December 17 – CAT Holiday Luncheon

CAT meetings are from 10 a.m. to noon at RCOC's Santa Ana office, 801 Civic Center Drive West. Call Betty Bath at (714) 796-5316 ahead of time to let her know you will be there.

bills can make an appointment for free counseling with the Consumer Credit Counseling Service by calling 1-888-678-6888 or 714-547-2227.

The Consumer Advisory
Team (CAT) is a group
of consumers that meets
once a month. The group
discusses issues that are
important to RCOC
consumers, like advocacy
and independence. The
CAT chairman advises the
RCOC board of directors
about the group's concerns.

Safety Stu's Corner

The Buddy System

i Safety Friends! In today's Safety Corner, we are talking about a very

important topic: the

Buddy System. Do you know Bedr

what the

Buddy

place!

System is?

The **Buddy System** is when you take a friend with you wherever you go. I take a buddy with me whenever I go to the movies, the mall, the park, or the beach. You might think this is funny, but I even take a buddy to the restroom with me when I am in a public

I would rather be safe knowing my buddy is with me than to be left alone.

It is important to remember why you should use the Buddy System. The reason is that there is safety in numbers. If someone is

always with you when you go out, it is less likely that

> anyone will bother you.

> > If you are

out and forget how

to get home, your buddy can

help find the way. If you have an accident, then your buddy will

be there to get help.

Of course, if your buddy were to get hurt or someone tried to hurt them, you would be there to get help for him or her, too!

So, even if you are just taking a walk around your neighborhood or heading out to check-out the latest DVDs, take someone with you. It is more fun than going alone, and it is cool to be safe!

> Until we talk again, The Safety Team!

Safety Stu, Stevie, Jessie, Beary Safe and Roy

If you have a question for The Safety Team, write to us at the address below. If we use your question in Safety Stu's Corner, we will send you a safety T-shirt, absolutely free!

Safety Stu c/o Dialogue Editor **RCOC** Executive Office P.O. Box 22010 Santa Ana, CA 92702-2010



More Orange County After-School Programs Include Children with Disabilities

ith summer coming to an end, many working Orange County parents are making decisions about where their school-age children will spend their afternoons. Since launching an inclusive child care initiative two years ago, RCOC has expanded the resources available to these working families.

Outcomes Director Doug Miller, who is in charge of this initiative for RCOC, said the process typically begins when a parent contacts their service coordinator after their child is excluded from child care or an afterschool program.



Photo courtesy of AbilityFirst

"The parent may have been told the program cannot serve their child," he said. "Or, the child's special needs or challenges are such that he or she has been asked to leave a program."

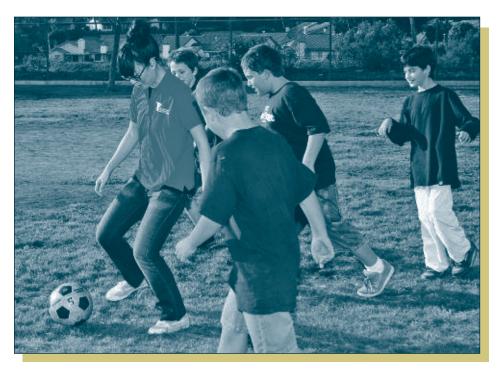


Photo courtesy of YMCA of Orange County

Assessment and Inclusion

When a developmental disability is the barrier to a child being served in

a typical child care setting or afterschool program, **RCOC** may authorize one of two service providers - YMCA of Orange County or United Cerebral Palsy of Orange County (UCP) to conduct an assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to determine what may be needed

for the child to be included in that program.

The assessment process is comprehensive. It includes, for

example, a review of the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and the Individual Program Plan (IPP) with RCOC, as well as interviews with family members and professionals working with the child, and home visits.

In some cases, all that is needed to enable a child to participate in the after-school program from which he or she has been excluded is for YMCA or UCP to do some consultation and training to better acquaint program staff with the child's needs and how they can effectively meet those needs. In other cases, such as when the adultto-child ratio is simply too great for the child to be successful, an inclusion facilitator can be provided to accompany the child while he or she is at the program (see Consumer Spotlight: Nathan Ho on the front cover).

"Most child care providers and afterschool programs say they don't know how to work with special needs kids," said Jack Salseda, Director of Operations for YMCA. "We're breaking down those barriers by providing training and inclusion facilitators."

Both he and Kathleen McFarlin, UCP's Associate Executive Director of Programs, emphasize that the ultimate goal for every child is that they become sufficiently independent that they no longer need an inclusion facilitator.

"We recognize that's not going to happen for everyone, but we have had success in several cases already," said Kathleen. "We're encouraged that so many child care centers are willing to work with us, knowing that extra pair of hands will be there

to help with the [special needs] child."

Fully-Inclusive Settings

In addition to performing assessments and providing inclusion facilitators, YMCA offers inclusive after-school programs at 70 locations, including 50 school sites, making it the largest provider of licensed child care in Orange County. Most YMCA programs are aimed at 5-12 year-olds; however, Jack notes that it also operates inclusive after-school programs for adolescents at four sites in South County.

Boys & Girls Clubs, with 16 main locations in Orange County that serve school-age children, has also been active in including children with different abilities in their programs. According to Gary Oustad, Director of Operations for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Tustin, of the 300 or so children who attend the Club on any given day during the school year, 25-50 are children who have a variety of disabilities.



Photo courtesy of AbilityFirst

He said the Club environment is particularly well suited to high-energy children, citing the example of a seven-year-old boy with autism who had been asked to leave a dozen different child care settings before coming to the Boys & Girls Club: "He's worked out wonderfully here," said Gary, noting that about a year ago, as part of the Club's campaign to provide accommodations for youth from all backgrounds, the Club installed sound-proofing for the gym that cut noise by 80 percent – a major advantage for children with autism who are sensitive to noise.

Pioneering "Reverse Inclusion"

As organizations such as YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs welcome those with developmental disabilities into their programs, AbilityFirst is leading a drive toward including typicallydeveloping children and teens into its long-established programs for those with disabilities. Their approach to this "reverse inclusion" involves including siblings in their programs, as well as partnering with other youth development groups that share their vision of inclusion. By way of example, Kelly Privitt, AbilityFirst's Director of Programs, cited the AbilityFirst in Woodland Hills that is home to a fully-inclusive Boy Scouts troop, and the Pasadena location's fully-integrated cheerleading squad. She said AbilityFirst is taking the same approach to expanding its afterschool enrichment programs in Anaheim and Costa Mesa.

More Resources to Come

With all of these new resources now available to families, the quality and quantity of child care and after-school options has improved. However, RCOC is committed to expanding them even further. Doug Miller said his goal is to build capacity so that parents in each of RCOC's four areas have a choice of at least 2-4 after-school options for adolescents and dozens of child care and after-school programs for younger children.

If you think that your family could benefit from any of these child care or after-school resources, be sure to contact your RCOC service coordinator.



News From Comfort Connection



New Recreation Resource Guide Now Available

Parents looking for the latest information on fun and enriching activities for their children with special needs will want to pick up a copy of the new Recreation Resource Guide from RCOC and the Comfort Connection Family Resource Center. In addition to the resource listings, the guide includes a brief list of suggested questions to help parents determine whether or not a particular program is right for their child.

Updated and expanded for 2008, the guide is divided into several interest areas: recreation, social opportunities, the arts, and camp. It also includes contact information for city parks and recreation programs in Orange County, which sometimes offer

excellent programs at lower cost, as well as selected programs and resources located outside of Orange County.

"It's getting great reviews," said Bonnie Gillman, founder of the Grandparent Autism Network, who has posted the guide on her organization's Web site (www.ganinfo.org). "Our grandparents are forwarding the information to their families and to other organizations that serve children with special needs. Everyone is delighted to have it and they appreciate the effort that went into its production."

The guide is available in either print or CD format. For a free copy, call the Resource Center at (714) 558-5400.

NOTE: If you know of a program that you think ought to be listed in the Recreation Resource Guide, please contact Jacqui Kerze at (714) 796-5299.

Parent Connection Needs You

f you are the parent of a child with a developmental disability, your experiences and insight can provide invaluable help to another mom or dad who may be struggling with some of the same challenges you have faced. Helping with Parent Connection – a parent-to-parent support network – is also a great opportunity to learn more about the diverse resources currently available in Orange County for children and adults with special needs.

If you think you might be interested, you may want to attend an upcoming training session for prospective Parent Connection volunteers. To find out more about how you can help other families, contact Melissa Jones (English) at (714) 200-2618, Maria Pecina (Spanish) at (714) 558-5401, or Minh Nguyen Vietnamese) at (714) 200-2644.

New DVD Explains Eligibility

As their child approaches age three, parents often have a lot of questions about why it is that some children in Early Start continue to qualify for services through the regional center after they turn age three, while others do not. Service coordinators are able to answer most of those questions. However, for parents who are interested in gaining a more thorough understanding of exactly how regional centers determine eligibility for services, RCOC Medical Director Dr. Peter Himber, M.D. has developed a

presentation on DVD that provides a comprehensive overview of the topic.

During the 40-minute presentation, Dr. Himber discusses all of the criteria that the Lanterman Act requires RCOC to use when evaluating whether or not a person can legally receive regional center services after they transition out of Early Start. This includes an indepth discussion of changes to the law that occurred in 2003 that require a person to have "substantial disability" in three or more developmental areas to be eligible for services under the Lanterman Act. It also features an explanation of RCOC's multidisciplinary approach to assessing

eligibility, and the center's commitment to making decisions that are fair, consistent and based on thorough and objective information.

RCOC's Early Start service coordinators and intake staff are providing the free DVD to all interested families. The center is also distributing the DVD to school district special education directors and to Community Advisory Committee (CAC) chairs as part of its ongoing outreach efforts. For a free copy of the DVD, contact your service coordinator.

Behavior Management Workshops for Parents

Behavior Management Workshops are being offered in the coming months by Regional Center of Orange County. These activities are offered at no cost to parents. To gain the most value from the workshops, parents are encouraged to attend all sessions in a series.

The four-session and five-session workshops (Behavior Management Workshop with Toilet Training) cover essential principles of positive behavior management, with a practical focus on helping parents of children with developmental disabilities change their own behavior and that of their children. In the five-session workshops, toilet training is covered in the fifth session only. The seven-session "Social Skills Training" workshop is focused on helping parents nurture social skills among children. This particular session focuses on children 13-18 years old.

In all of the workshops, parents are actively involved, and invited to discuss the specific behavioral challenges they are confronting. Advance reservations are required and group size is typically limited to 40-45 families. Contact your service coordinator or Thelma Day at (714) 796-5223 for additional information regarding dates, times and locations, and to register.

NOTE: Child care is not provided, so please do not bring children to the workshops.

Social Skills Training Workshop – Focus on Ages 13 through 18 years (7 sessions)

Presented in English by the Behavioral Support Partnership

When: Tuesday evenings—Sept. 9, Sept. 16,

Sept. 23, Sept. 30, Oct. 7, Oct. 14 and Nov. 4

Time: 6:30 - 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Orange Office

3111 N. Tustin, Suite 150

Behavior Management Workshop with Toilet Training (5 sessions)

Presented in Vietnamese by Quynh T. Nguyen, M.A., BCBA

When: Thursday evenings – Sept. 4, Sept. 11,

Sept. 18, Sept. 25 and Oct. 2

Time: 6:30 - 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Westminster Office

5555 Garden Grove Blvd., Suite 100

Behavior Management Workshop (4 sessions)

Presented in Spanish by Jose Rios, M.S., BCBA

When: Thursday evenings – Oct. 16, Oct. 23,

Oct. 30 and Nov. 6

Time: 6:30 - 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Santa Ana Office

801 Civic Center Drive West

Behavior Management Workshop with Toilet Training (5 sessions)

Presented in English by Joyce Tu, Ed.D, BCBA

When: Tuesday evenings – Oct. 14, Oct. 21,

Oct. 28, Nov. 4 and Nov. 11

Time: 6:30 - 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Irvine Office

46 Discovery, Suite 200

There will be no workshops offered during December.

News from CalOptima

Open Enrollment Begins Sept. 15

alOptima's annual Open
Enrollment is just around
the corner. You can ask to
change your health network during
this time for any reason. Open
Enrollment is a good time to find
out from your doctor if he or
she is planning to move to
another CalOptima
health
network.
If your doctor is
moving to another

CalOptima health

network, and you

want to stay

with your

doctor,

you will need to change your health network to your doctor's new health network.

To change your health network, call CalOptima at (714) 246-8500, or toll-free at

1-888-587-8088, and ask for a Health Network Selection Form. You will need to fill out and return the form

health network change will begin January 1, 2009.

to CalOptima. Your

CAI

If you want to
keep your
current health
network, you do not
need to do anything. We
will keep you with the

same health network until next year's Open Enrollment Period. You can

> change your primary care physician (PCP) within your

health network every thirty (30) days by calling your health network.

Remember, CalOptima's Open Enrollment is from September 15 to December 15. After December 15, in most cases, you will not be able to change your health network until the next Open Enrollment Period in 2009.

If you have any questions or need help, call CalOptima's Customer Service Department at (714) 246-8500, or toll-free at 1-888-587-8088, Monday through Friday, from 8:00a.m. to 5:30p.m. Members with speech and hearing impairments can call our TDD line at (714) 246-8523.

Youare invited! CELEBRATE DISABILITIES AWARENESS WEEK

Please join us in celebrating Disabilities Awareness Week in October. Four different events hosted by CalOptima will take place from noon to 1 p.m. at the CalOptima office located at 1120 W. La Veta Avenue in Orange. Here is a rundown of what we have planned:

Monday, Oct. 13: Guest Speaker from the Braille Institute

Tuesday, Oct. 14: Performance by Hi-Hopes, a group of talented adults with

developmental disabilities

Wednesday, Oct. 15: Pets Are Wonderful Support (P.A.W.S.), a pet-assisted therapy program

Thursday, Oct. 16: Guest Speaker from the Regional Center of Orange County

Please RSVP by October 8 by calling CalOptima's Customer Service Department at (714) 246-8500, or toll-free at 1-888-587-8088, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Members with speech and hearing impairments can call our TDD line at (714) 246-8523.

Nathan Ho (continued from page 1)

made the biggest difference in helping to expand his social life. His parents are especially grateful to Analilia Cano, an inclusion facilitator who works for United Cerebral Palsy of Orange County (UCP-OC). She provides the support Nathan needs to participate in the after-school program at the Boys & Girls Club in Garden Grove.



Inclusion facilitator Analilia Cano (left) and Nathan Ho

"Ana just worked magic with him," said Julie. "She changed our lives. She brings out the best in him, and gets other children to come over to him."

Julie likens Analilia to
Mary Poppins –
"All of the children
want to be around her"

Julie likens Analilia to Mary Poppins

— "All of the children want to be around her" – and says that because Analilia is with Nathan, she no longer feels the need to rush right over after work to pick him up. She knows that he is happy with Analilia and has nothing but praise for the staff at the Club, which is a fully-inclusive after-school program.

Analilia, who works at the Interagency Assessment Center (IAC) in the mornings and then spends two to three hours in the afternoon with Nathan, is modest about her role in the great strides that he has made socially since she began working with him last December: "He needed someone to give him that little boost," she said.

Nathan follows the same schedule and does the same activities as others at the Club.

With her support, Nathan follows the same schedule and does the same activities as others at the Club. While there were some protests getting there, Nathan – who previously had refused to go outside for free play time – now joins in with the others. Before, he also isolated himself out on the grass at snack time, but now sits on benches and eats his snack with the other children. While he had no interest in watching movies before, he now has a favorite film — High School Musical - that he watches all the way through when the Club has movie time on Friday afternoons.

Many of the younger children who attend the Club think that being friends with Nathan is a privilege: "They think it's cool that he goes to high school," said Analilia, noting that it always starts conversation when he wears his Pacifica High School t-shirt.

There have been many advances since December, but one of their best

times together was when Nathan learned to play kickball.

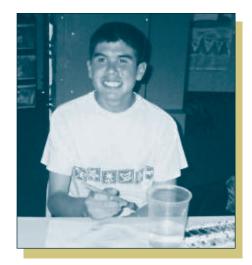
"You fall in love with Nathan when you meet him."

"We needed to dare him to do it," Analilia said. Once they were able to overcome the barrier of trying something new, Nathan decided he liked playing the game.

"I just want him to have fun," she said. "Every other kid is having fun. He should have fun, too."

According to Analilia, working with Nathan is its own reward.

"He's an inspiration," she said. "He's always happy and wants to be there. It's really rewarding because he brings this warmth to the staff. They miss him when he's on vacation!"



Nathan Ho

That sentiment is shared by the Ho's service coordinator Ashley Yap: "They're a wonderful family," she said. "You fall in love with Nathan when you meet him."

Angels Playground Opens in Costa Mesa

Angel Hansen, saw the fulfillment of a dream when Angels Playground opened in TeWinkle Park on June 27. The first universally accessible playground in Costa Mesa, Angels Playground is a barrier-free environment that allows children with disabilities to play side-by-side with their typical peers. Through Angel's Charity (www.angelscharity.org), the nonprofit organization they founded in 2003, the Hansens have helped to raise money to fund the \$1.5 million project by organizing bake sales, car washes, garage sales and other activities. With additional funding and support from the City of Costa Mesa and the Costa Mesa Community Foundation, the project also includes an accessible restroom facility, picnic shelters and improved access from the parking lot.



(I-r) Doug Hansen, Jane Hansen, Angel Hansen and Jennifer Hansen. *Photo courtesy of Mario Velarde*

Regional Center of Orange County Locations

 Santa Ana Office
 Orange Office
 Irvine Office
 Westminster Office

 801 Civic Center Dr. West
 3111 N. Tustin, Suite 150
 46 Discovery, Suite 200
 5555 Garden Grove Blvd., Suite 100

 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-5100
 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-4060
 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-2900

Dialogue Newsletter

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SANTA ANA, CA

PERMIT NO. 1285

Regional Center of Orange County P.O. Box 22010 Santa Ana, CA 92702-2010

