Socializing: It's For Kids, Ages 1 To 11

By Michelle Houriet, Executive Director
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M ost people understand the importance of encouraging and teaching young children to socialize, but it’s easy to overlook the importance of socialization for older adults. It should rank right up there with the importance of being physically and financially healthy. Many seniors have spent a considerable portion of their lives in the company of others; either in the workplace or raising children. During the retirement years, with children living their own lives, losing friends or moving away from them, the opportunities for socialization can continually decrease.

The more socially active people are, the less likely they will become depressed. It is well documented that depression, stress and isolation can lead to health issues. Experts say that seniors who enjoy an active social life often extend their lives by years; but there are numerous other benefits. It helps provide a higher self-esteem, a sense of purpose, something to look forward to.

Being social does not mean you have to be the “Bell of the Ball” or “Mr. Outgoing.” It could simply be having someone to share a meal with, being a part of a Bridge Club, a Book Club, or a volunteer, dance or travel group or going to the local Senior Center. Just being with people counts! Reach out to your neighbors, church groups and other organizations – and stay as vibrant, active, and social as you’ve always been.

As children with elderly parents, it is imperative to focus on the need for emotional stimulation, just as much as ensuring their physical needs are being met. On their own, it’s up to the individual to seek out the opportunities and find ways to develop new friendships; which can seem like an insurmountable task. That’s where a community such as Independence Hill Retirement Community can help. At Independence Hill Retirement Community, Assisted Living and Independence Village, our Neighborhood of Garden Homes, we provide residents with activities and opportunities designed to meet their physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs. We invite them to participate in numerous volunteer opportunities, as we know how much valuable knowledge and experience they possess. Joining a group of people with the same interests makes life more fun.

Social interaction helps keep your brain from getting rusty, but it’s most effective when combined with a lifestyle that is nurturing overall. Start to experience the exciting lifestyle that awaits at Independence Hill by joining us for lunch and a personal tour.

Independence Hill Retirement Resort Community is located in Stone Oak at 20450 Huebner Rd., San Antonio, TX 78258. For more information, call (210) 209-8956 or visit www.independencehill.com.

The Walker Belden Foundation

Submitted By Emily Belden

The Walker Belden Foundation is pleased to be hosting its 3rd Annual benefitting Morgan’s Wonderland. This year we will be playing the beautiful Canyon Springs Golf Club of San Antonio at 1:30pm. The Walker Belden Foundation would like to invite each of you to join us in our fundraising efforts to support this amazing special needs facility.

The Walker Belden Foundation is thrilled to help continue the amazing work and play at Morgan’s Wonderland. Last year’s golf tournament raised $75,000 that was donated to Morgan’s Wonderland. Through the generosity of our family, donors, sponsors and golfers, we will be able to have another successful year! www.thewalkerbeldenfoundation.org.web.com.

Our Reason

Our son Walker was born on April 28, 2010. Our beautiful boy was born with a heart defect known as Tetralogy of Fallot. On September 13, 2010 Walker went into surgery to repair his heart. The next day he went in to cardiac arrest and was placed on life support. Walker had suffered an anoxic brain injury because of his cardiac arrest. Due to his brain injury, Walker faces many challenges on a daily basis.

Having a child with special needs, Jason and I have noticed that most local attractions do not have activities designed for cognitive and physically challenged children. The first time our family visited Morgan’s Wonderland we were thrilled to see all the accommodations for children with special needs. Walker can enjoy fun outdoor activities with his friends and family for years to come. As a family, we want every special needs child to have this same wonder-filled experience. Below is a list of ways you can help us achieve our goal.

Morgan’s Wonderland

Morgan’s Wonderland is the only theme park in the world designed with special-needs individuals in mind. The inspiration for Morgan’s Wonderland came from philanthropist Gordon Hartman’s 20-year-old daughter Morgan. Her soaring spirit, despite cognitive and physical challenges sparked within Hartman and wife Maggie a deep desire to create a haven not only for those with special needs but also for their families, caregivers and invited friends. Inclusion is the overarching objective,” he explained. “Everyone can have a good time at Morgan’s Wonderland.”

Morgan’s Wonderland, which is completely wheelchair-accessible, features more than 25 elements and attractions including rides, playgrounds, gardens, an eight-acre catch-and-release fishing lake, 18,000-square-foot special-events center, 575-seat amphitheater, picnic area and rest areas throughout the park. For more information visit www.MorgansWonderland.com.

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Submitted By Emily Belden

The Walker Belden Foundation is pleased to be hosting its 3rd Annual charity golf tournament Friday, October 2nd, 2015 benefitting Morgan’s Wonderland. This year we will be playing the beautiful Canyon Springs Golf Club of San Antonio at 1:30pm. The Walker Belden Foundation would like to invite each of you to join us in our fundraising efforts to support this amazing special needs facility.

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