

DAMI News

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

NOVEMBER 14, 2006

DAMI Board

- Bob Freeman
Chair
- David Moseman
Treasurer
- Mary Jean
Babcock
- Marlys Burseth
- Beth Gendler
- Stephanie
strickland
- Lois swope

Staff

Ron Cottone
Exec. Dir.

WEBSITE

www.disability-awareness.org

This issue of DAMI News is distributed with the generous help of the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Fall Review

DAMI Website

Our website www.disability-awareness.org needed updating, so this fall we made it more useful and informative. It has resources for raising awareness about disabilities in

Activities at DAMI

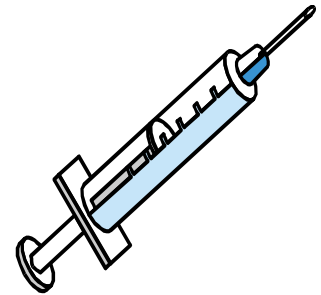
1. Website Update
2. INMH
3. Basilica Program
Info: 612-230-3264

religious education settings. It has liturgical resources for worship. It has links to other helpful sites and a copy of a

Child Inclusion Assessment Survey form for registering children in classes and activities. There's much that's new so check it out!

INMH

The Interfaith Network for Mental Health, of which DAMI is a member, holds free quarterly meetings for information sharing and networking among faith communities. The next meeting is December 7 over the noon hour, 11:30 to 1:30, at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church, 3450 Irving Ave S.,



ENSURE THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN YOUR CONGREGATION RECEIVE INFO ABOUT FLU SHOTS.

Mpls.

Basilica Program (p. 2)

The Basilica of St. Mary is offering free monthly programs on mental health topics. Check the DAMI website for dates, times and top-

Inclusive Registration Seminar

On August 24, the Resource Center for Churches and DAMI partnered to present a seminar for religious education workers. Attending were 14 people from 7

denominations. This workshop teaches attendees how to use a Child Inclusion Assessment Survey form at registration time to gather information about disabili-

ties so that staff can accommodate kids with special needs in education programs. To learn more, visit our web site or call DAMI at 612-230-3264.

Contents

Fall Review; Inclusive Registration Seminar	1
Marfan Syndrome; Basilica Mental Health Program	2
Making Worship Welcoming; Adult Forum at North UMC	3
Appeal for Support; DAMI Yearly Memberships	4

*Marfan Syndrome** (*from www.marfan.org)

Marfan syndrome is a heritable condition that affects the connective tissue, which holds the body together and provides a framework for growth and development. In Marfan syndrome, the connective tissue is defective and does not act as it should. Connective tissue is found throughout the body, so Marfan syndrome can affect many body systems, including skeleton, eyes, heart, blood vessels, nerves, skin and lungs.

Marfan syndrome affects men, women, and children, and is found among people of all races and ethnic backgrounds. At least 1 in 5,000 people in the USA is estimated to have the disorder.

Marfan syndrome is caused by a defect (mutation) in the gene that determines the structure of fibrillin, an important protein of connective tissue. A person with Marfan syndrome is born with the

disorder, even though it may not be diagnosed until later in life. Although everyone with Marfan syndrome has a defect in the same gene, the mutation is specific to each family and not everyone experiences the same characteristics to the same degree. This is called variable expression, meaning that the defective gene expresses itself in different ways in different people. Scientists do not yet understand why variable expression occurs in people with Marfan syndrome.

The defective gene can be inherited. The child of a person who has Marfan syndrome has a 50 percent chance of inheriting the disease. Sometimes a new gene defect occurs during the formation of sperm or egg cells, but two unaffected parents have only a 1 in 10,000 chance of having a child with Marfan syndrome. Possibly 25 percent of cases are due to

a spontaneous mutation at the time of conception.

Discovery of and living with a genetic disorder can cause social, emotional, or financial stress, requiring adjustment in outlook and lifestyle. Adults diagnosed with Marfan syndrome may feel angry or afraid. They may also fear passing it to future generations or fear its physical, emotional and financial effects.

Parents and siblings of a child with Marfan syndrome may feel sadness, anger, and guilt. It is important for parents to know that nothing that they did caused the fibrillin gene to mutate. Some children with Marfan syndrome are advised to restrict their activities. This lifestyle adjustment may be hard for a child to understand or accept. Providing support is key.

Basilica Mental Health Program

Tom Green, Director of Special Projects at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis, invited DAMI to attend a planning meeting in July, 2005. He was seeking help to create a program to raise awareness and draw attention to the need to support families living with mental illness and/or developmental disabilities. DAMI pro-

vided consulting services regarding organizational issues related to initiating the program. The Basilica Mental Health Committee evolved from the planning process and generated two subcommittees: (1) Mental Illness; (2) Developmental Disabilities. Each of these committees held an educational forum for the congregation to learn

about their respective issues. In May, the Mental Health Committee sponsored a resource fair that featured 34 vendors of mental health resources in this region. This year, the Basilica is offering a monthly Wednesday evening seminar from Sep thru May on a variety of mental health topics.

TIPS for Faith Communities to Accommodate Children with Marfan Syndrome

1. Identify children with Marfan syndrome through an inclusive registration process.
2. Meet with parents; learn accommodations used at home.
3. Agree on safety limits and restrictions.
4. Raise awareness of Marfan Syndrome through education.
5. Evaluate activities with Marfan in mind.
6. Create accommodations in events & activities.

DAMI NEWS

Disability Awareness Ministries, Inc.
 MN Church Center
 122 West Franklin Ave.
 Mpls., MN 55404-2435
 612-230-DAMI (3264)
 info@disability-awareness.org
 DAMI News is published by Disability Awareness Ministries, Inc.
 DAMI is an independent 501(c)3 non-profit, founded in 1991, whose mission is to remove barriers in faith-based communities that prevent full participation of people with disabilities in community life.

Religious Disability

Resources

American Baptists

Rev Rosalie Norman-McNaney: Email to: rmcnaney@abc-usa.org

Episcopal

ecdeaf.com
ahealingministry.com

Jewish Community

uscj.org/accessibility/

jfcsmpls.org/Services/services.html#Inclusion

Lutheran

elca.org/disability

Mennonite

adnetonline.org

Presbyterian

pcusa.org/phewa/pdc.htm

Unitarian

uaa.org/programs/justice/accessibility/

United Methodist

new.gbmg-umc.org/umcor/work/health/disc

National Organizations

aamr.org
joniandfriends.org
nami.org
nod.org

Making Worship Welcoming

From an article by Rev. Kimberly Anne Willis

Here are ideas for creating inclusive worship.

Invite people with disabilities to participate.

Many people with disabilities are willing and able to participate as liturgists, preachers, ushers, acolytes and communion servers. A person in a wheelchair can speak or serve communion. A person who is blind can sing or read scripture.

Metaphoric language.

Metaphor is often used to convey a negative attitude about disability. Avoid saying "blind to God's presence" or "deaf to God's voice." For people who are blind or deaf, such phrases judge who they are. Avoid using any form of disability to illustrate our spiritual condition.

Cues in worship.

Encourage the use of multiple cues in worship. Combine simple printed directions in the bulletin

with oral and physical cues. To stand, a simple indication in the bulletin combined with the verbal cue, "Please rise as you are able" and the physical cue of raising one's arms provides multiple cues to the congregation.

Movement in worship.

For some people, certain movements or the amount of time spent standing, kneeling, or sitting may be uncomfortable. Communicate the option not to participate in any action on the basis of comfort or conscience.

Assistance.

People with disabilities may desire assistance during different acts of worship. Express openness to requests for assistance, and work with people with disabilities to find creative solutions.

Sacramental practices.

Ask people with disabilities how they want to participate in sacramental celebrations. Don't presume to know or make

decisions on their behalf.

Preaching on disability.

Avoid interpretations of scripture that equate disability with sin, a lack of faith, or God's judgment.

Disability Awareness.

Special services emphasizing issues related to disability can effectively educate congregations but seek consultation from people with disabilities and invite them to participate. Acknowledge the ways people with disabilities have been excluded.

Speaking.

Speak clearly with enough volume to reach the back of the sanctuary. Provide assisted listening devices. Reserve seating for deaf and hard-of-hearing people to see a sign language interpreter.

Visual Impairments.

Provide large print hymnals and bulletins. Use 16 or 18 point type for printed matter.

Adult Forum at North UMC

October 8, 2006, was the first Inclusion Awareness Sunday in the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. At their Annual Meeting in May, United Methodists of Minnesota passed a resolution designating the second Sunday of October as Inclusion Awareness Sunday.

On that Sunday, the

Adult Sunday School class of North United Methodist Church, Minneapolis, invited DAMI to give a presentation. We showed the video: *Surprising Grace: People, Disabilities, Churches*, which tells several stories of how people with disabilities serve their congregations and share their gifts. After the video, the class learned about

DAMI's Inclusion Team Program, what it is and how it has been implemented at Rosemount UMC. The class ended with a question and answer session.

If you would like an adult forum presentation at your place of worship, contact DAMI to set a date. 612-230-3264

DAMI News

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

Disability Awareness Ministries, Inc.
122 West Franklin Avenue, Room # 7
Minneapolis, MN 55404-2435

DAMI NEWS

DONATIONS

As 2006 draws to a close, the Board and Staff at DAMI are grateful for the gifts we have received from churches & individuals. DAMI has had a good year, and we look forward to 2007. Please consider an end of the year gift to help continue the work of raising awareness about the inclusion of people with disabilities.

DAMI Yearly Memberships

DAMI is a membership non-profit organization. The bylaws grant voting privileges at the Annual Meeting to persons who join DAMI and whose total gifts equal or exceed \$25 or 10 hours of volunteer service in a calendar year. (Gifts of less than \$25 are still welcome!)

Contribution Structure

- \$25 Friend
- \$50 Supporter
- \$100 Advocate
- \$500 Partner
- \$1000 Sustainer
- \$5000 Benefactor

JOIN DAMI TODAY !!!

Yes ! Sign me up for a one-year membership in DAMI !!!

New Member Renewing Upgrade

My check is enclosed for \$_____ payable to DAMI

NAME _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone/Email _____