



The Moment

• Together, we can perform miracles • Together, we can perform miracles • Together, we can perform miracles •

Kung Fu Madness

One of our highlights this past year was the introduction of Kung Fu to our Sunday Circles. Led by Master Jacob Lunon from the School of the Macabees in Seattle, Washington, Kung Fu aims to improve self-discipline, self-esteem and physical fitness, in a warm and compassionate environment while serving as a strategy for building friendships.

“Many of the children who come to Club Kung Fu have invisible disabilities,” said Esther Bogomilsky, Program Director at the Friendship Circle. “They have mild autism, Aspergers Syndrome, controlled bipolar symptoms, or have had trauma in their lives. The common denominator is that they all need help with social skills.”

The children are upbeat, learning the art of kung fu, having tons of fun doing it. “My son loves participating in Kung Fu,” says Holly Tabor, a mom of a Kung Fu participant. “When I ask him each Sunday what his favorite part is, he almost always mentioned

Kung Fu first! I love how the instructor encourages the kids to be strong in body and mind.” Master Jacob Lunon is not only a great teacher, but a great guy who is attuned to children from all walks of life.



Collin Wilfrid and Master Jacob Lunnon.

The kids are the nucleus of the program and the teenage volunteers are the glue. At Club Kung Fu, volunteers have a chance to serve as role models and friends, and learn Kung Fu themselves.

Making friends is an art, and its easier done through martial arts. Children and teens of all spectrums are able to participate and gain skills, friendships and of course, leave with smiles on their faces.



Zoo Day with Friends

As summer days flew by us, Friendship Circle had the opportunity to test out a new program called Friendship Circle Fun Days where volunteers and children with special needs get the chance to bond by going to different local attractions and participate in both outdoor and indoor activities.

On August 23rd, a handful of volunteers and children trekked through the paths of the Woodland Park Zoo and saw penguins, leopards, elephants... you name it! The event was a big hit and we expect to have more Fun Days this upcoming year. Stay tuned for trip dates and times!



Annual Dinner Memories



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Together, we can all make a difference!



OUR TEAM

Rabbi Elazar Bogomilsky
Executive Director

Esther Bogomilsky
Program Director

Tara Morris
Behavioral Specialist

Wendy Zieve
Musical Therapist

Shauna Stadnik
Program Assistant

WHAT IS THE FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE?

The Friendship Circle is a unique organization with a refreshing approach to helping families of children with special needs. Our innovative programming and creative activities are designed to foster a relationship between community teenagers and the children by drawing on the love, boundless energy and dynamism of our teenage population.

OUR MISSION

The Friendship Circle's mission is to bring friends and smiles to children with special needs and peace of mind to their parents, to foster the values of volunteerism and compassion among our youth, and to ultimately realize the community's responsibility for its members with special needs.



OUR VISION

We envision a world in which people who have special needs and their families experience acceptance, inclusion and friendship as contributing members of society.

SOME OF OUR PROGRAMS...

Sunday Circle

In an intimate setting children have the opportunity to learn songs, values and traditions of our Jewish heritage. This program is designed to teach children many important skills; from gross motor and cognitive to communication and language. The multi faceted activities include music, movement, stories, crafts and interaction with other children.



Holiday

Experience the magic of the Jewish calendar with fun holiday entertainment. Holidays come alive as children enjoy craft making, live entertainment, and refreshments. Together, Friendship Circle families and their volunteers celebrate their Jewish pride through these exciting activities and hands-on fun.



Volunteers

The beauty of the Friendship Circle is the interaction between the volunteer and the special needs child. The love these teenagers feel for their special friends is boundless, and they have a great impact on the children. The volunteers enjoy exciting outings and receive great prizes. Volunteering at the Friendship Circle is a significant form of community service, and you will take pride in being part of this seamless circle of friendship.



Friends at Home

In a home setting, a trained and dedicated volunteer visits a special needs child on a weekly basis. A special bond is created as they engage in enjoyable activities and fun crafts. The child's life is illuminated as they await the visit of their friend. The parents use this opportunity to enjoy a weekly breather as their child basks in the friendship of the volunteers.





Volunteers at our Annual Dinner

Become a Superhero!

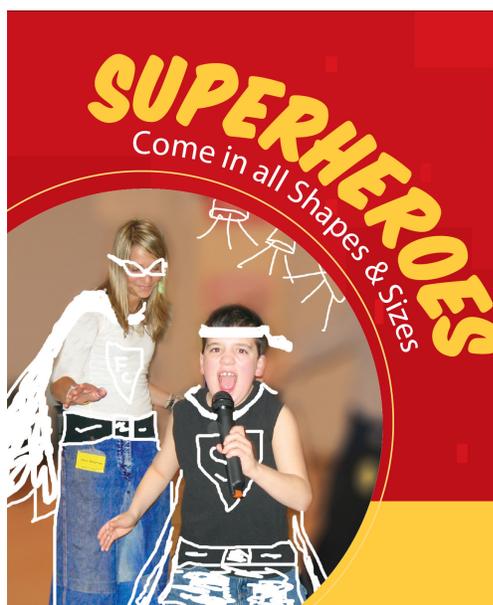
Nothing makes children feel better about themselves than spending time with friends who truly care about them. Through the Volunteer Club, remarkable bonds are forged between the children with special needs and their teenage friends.

The volunteers' commitment and willingness to give of their time gives us hope for the future, reminding us that despite what many people believe, today's young men and women are responsible and caring. And while our volunteers help others with friendship and fun, these programs have a tremendous impact on them as well., building dedicated and caring future leaders.

The Friendship Circle rewards their altruism with a vigorous round-the-year program of exhilarating social outings, rewards and activities for them.

The Friendship Circle began in 2004 with seven teenage volunteers. Today, nearly seventy dedicated individuals ages 12 and up participate in this wonderful enterprise.

To join as a volunteer, be sure to attend our Volunteer Kickoff Party on October 25th, 2009 at the Community Center at Mercer View. The event will go from 3:30pm to 5:30pm and is open to any interested volunteers as well as previous year's volunteers.



A superhero is someone who uses special powers to help others.

As a teen volunteer, you'll visit a child with special needs to play, laugh and have a good time. In the process, you'll find compassion, patience, kindness and a whole host of other powers that you probably never realized you had.

At the same time, you'll help the children feel like superheroes, by giving them the confidence and strength to face their challenges, and to overcome them.

Discover your special powers. Join the Friendship Circle. You'll find that being a superhero is much easier, and much more rewarding, than you think!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY CIRCLES

October 18, 2009
November 1, 2009
November 8, 2009
December 6, 2009

2:00-4:00pm

VOLUNTEER KICKOFF PARTY

October 25, 2009
3:30-5:30pm

VOLUNTEER FELLOWSHIP TRAINING

December 3, 2009
4:30-6:30pm

CHANUKAH FAMILY HOLIDAY PARTY

December 15, 2009
5:00-7:00pm



Above events to take place at the Community Center at Mercer View in Mercer Island.

Mark your calendar!