

FACING THE FUTURE

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258 Harvard Street, #367,
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Strength in Numbers

A record-breaking number of FFC supporters turned out, on an unseasonably warm day, for the 15th annual "Paces for Faces" Walk and Family Picnic. More than 400 family members, friends, and Children's Hospital staff took part in the September 25th fund-raising event—nearly doubling the size of previous walks.

"It was a phenomenal event," says Joey Smith, FFC president, "with a great number of volunteer committee members who encouraged families to participate and raised a lot of money themselves."

Thanks to generous sponsors, walkers collected more than \$50,000 for the cause. FFC will use this money to fund its student scholarship awards as well as its educational programming initiatives.

The event also gave participants a chance to socialize and realize that they are not alone in dealing with craniofacial conditions. "It's about connections," says Joey. "We want the families to meet each other, get to know each other, and give each other support."

Kudos to walk co-chairs Melina Fortin (a top fundraiser in previous walks) and Jennie Keniston (who organized events in high school to benefit FFC) for orchestrating the successful event.

And many thanks to all the committee members: Charles and Janice Antone, Diana and Stephanie Cavanaugh, Ursula Costigan, Amy Foley, Colleen Loughlin, Meera Oliva, Allison Parks, Cheryl Silveri, and Shiyi Zan.

"I am immensely proud of what the committee was able to achieve in only four short months," says Mairi Bleakie, FFC director, who oversaw the effort. "Working

alongside these dedicated volunteers has been inspirational. Thanks also to the FFC Board of Directors who worked shoulder to shoulder with the committee members on the day of the event to help make it a success.

"It has been wonderful to see FFC grow and be able to reach out to more families," she adds, "and to have those family members, in turn, volunteer and help us further broaden our circle of influence. It is an incredible community of people."

In addition to the walk and buffet lunch that followed, entertainers were on hand, including magician David Polidi, balloon twister Bill Blodgett, and glitter tattoo artists from Face Paint Fantasy. Committee member Shiyi Zan, along with her volunteers, also helped the children fold origami creations. Plus, every child or teen who participated in the walk received a stuffed ladybug, dolphin, or penguin from Pillow Pets.

Meera Oliva and Ursula Costigan, co-chairs of the walker recruitment and registration committee, presented crystal paperweights with the FFC logo to the top three fundraisers: Amanda MacKinnon (Walking for Will), Nicole Bussiere (For Jake's Sake), and Michael Yorba (Team Michael Yorba). The awards were donated by the Crystal Cave in Wilmette, Illinois.

This year's raffle, coordinated single-handedly by Colleen Loughlin, featured more than 40 prizes and netted over \$1,200. Colleen deserves credit for arranging for the donation of Pillow Pets and, with her husband, John, lining up Papa's Bar and Grille, which served a great lunch at a discounted price.

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Handling Teasing and Making Friends

We all have differences. Our looks or how we speak or act can make other people curious about us and may lead to teasing and bullying. Children and teens with facial differences can sometimes feel left out or put down through no fault of their own. Preparing for attention and questions from classmates, strangers, or others can help build confidence in social situations.

Just Asking...

At times kids may think other kids are being mean when they don't intend to be. "Sometimes a question is asked over and over in such a way that it becomes very difficult for a child," says Elisa Bronfman, PhD, a psychologist in the Medical Coping Clinic at Children's Hospital Boston. "For example, a child who has a port wine stain may often have others ask,

'Were you burned in a fire?' It's a quest for understanding, but the child may feel the intent is to hurt."

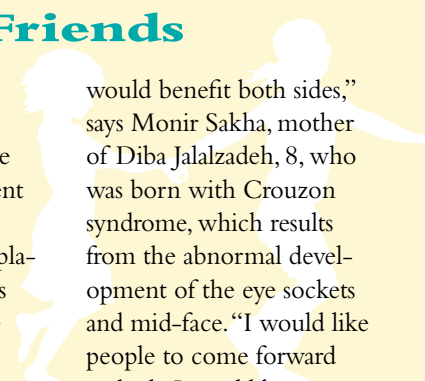
Having a ready explanation can help. In this case, a simple response could be, "No, it's my birthmark."

When onlookers stare, point, or whisper, they may also just be wondering why someone else looks different. "Asking questions

would benefit both sides," says Monir Sakha, mother of Diba Jalalzadeh, 8, who was born with Crouzon syndrome, which results from the abnormal development of the eye sockets and mid-face. "I would like people to come forward and ask. I would be more than happy to explain, even if it's just idle curiosity. It's the best way to eliminate the stigma."

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2011 Walk
Photos!



Handling Teasing *continued from page one*



Elisa Bronfman, PhD

What Is Bullying?

Sometimes curiosity turns to cruelty. Other children who do not understand why, for example, a child with cleft lip and palate looks

or speaks differently may resort to ridicule.

“Sometimes kids, who don’t feel that great about themselves, may find something different about another kid and tease,” says Dr. Bronfman. “If they get a reaction, they may do it again and again.”

Teasing is not always meant to hurt or embarrass—in fact, even friends and family can tease at times. But if teasing occurs over and over as part of a pattern of behavior intended to hurt emotionally or physically, it’s considered bullying.

Bullying comes in many forms, including repeated name-calling, gossiping, punching or shoving, or purposefully leaving someone out.

Despite the popular perception, not all bullies are tough guys. They may be girls or boys, children or adults. Often they’re looking for ways to feel more powerful or superior. Or they may be just going along with others in a group or trying to keep from being bullied themselves.

How to Respond

Contrary to the old saying “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me,” words do hurt. If a child or teen encounters teasing in school, where it can’t be avoided, developing a coping strategy can help.

“If you hear the same thing over and over, you can start to absorb what other

people say about you,” says Dr. Bronfman. “That’s why we’re not big advocates of ignoring it and walking away. If someone says that your ear is little and looks funny, you can say to yourself, ‘That person doesn’t know what he’s talking about.’ It’s an active response—even if you say nothing to that person—as opposed to passive acceptance.

When deciding how to respond, consider the following: Who did the teasing—a friend or the school bully? Did the comment come out of ignorance or a failed attempt at humor? Was the person purposefully being mean?

Depending on who and why as well as personal style, you or your child might choose to:

- ignore the remark
- respond with humor
- disagree (“I don’t think so”)
- talk back (“I don’t like it when you...”)
- try to educate the teaser.

By practicing at home with parents or other family members, children can develop self-confidence and respond with ease. Making light of the ridicule (“What does that even mean?” or “What kind of an insult is that?”) can diminish its power.

No matter what the response, it has to fit family values and rules, says Dr. Bronfman. Some parents might suggest saying, “Whatever” or something mean in return, while others would disapprove of those approaches.

“I encourage Diba to be welcoming, kind, and warm,” says Monir.

And she adds, “I believe parents can play an important role and need to educate themselves about strategies for dealing with bullying and teasing. One effective way is teaching children to include people with differences—the more inclusion, the less teasing.”

If despite all efforts, the bully doesn’t

back down, alert school authorities or ask a health professional for help. Talking to the community liaison police officer at the school is another option, especially if physical threats are involved.

Finding Acceptance

“Very often kids with medical differences don’t get bullied by their peers,” says Dr. Bronfman. “They are fully accepted in their communities, especially if they live in small communities where everyone knows [about their condition].”

Finding a group of friends who are accepting helps kids with facial differences build confidence and self-esteem. Friends can also offer invaluable support if teasing or bullying by others becomes a problem.

Becoming involved in clubs, sports, or other organizations fosters relationships with those with similar interests. Being interested in others and being interesting—by developing an ability, talent, or great sense of humor—are vital to building a network of supportive friends. ■

Resources

Books for parents:

Bullyproof Your Child for Life. Protect from Teasing, Taunting, and Bullying for Good by Joel Haber, PhD, with Jenna Glatzer. (Perigee Trade, 2007)

The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander by Barbara Coloroso. (Collins Living, 2004)

Books for Children and Teens:

Confessions of a Former Bully by Trudy Ludwig. (Tricycle Press, 2010)

Stand Up for Yourself & Your Friends by Patti Kelley Criswell. (American Girl, 2009)

Online:

Operation Respect founded by Peter Yarrow at operationrespect.org

Information for all ages at stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov



FFC is grateful for our many sponsors and donors who made the 2011 Paces for Faces Walk such a success. (Our apologies if we have omitted anyone from this list.)

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2011 Paces for Faces Walk and Family Picnic *continued from page one*

Special thanks to Joe Carroll of the FFC Advisory Board for providing the orange and turquoise T-shirts and beverages, Sean Kane Party Rentals for the canopies, and the Synthes Corporation for covering half the cost of the lunch. Also, many thanks to Erik Lania of Watermark Donuts for the refreshments before the walk. And we are grateful to photographers Sarah Santos and Gregg Skelly and photographer/videographer Paul Hammersley for donating their talents to the cause.

Finally, once again, our sincere thanks to the First Parish Church of Wakefield and the town of Wakefield for hosting this event.

For a link to our online photo album, please e-mail Mairi at mbleakie@facesofchildren.org. And, if you would like to be part of the planning committee for next year, also e-mail Mairi.

Show your support for FFC by purchasing a logo-embazoned ball cap, vest, or fleece blanket. Also available now are FFC holiday cards. Go to www.facesofchildren.org for details on these and other merchandise. ■

Life-long friends Gracie Foley (left) and Mia Zani



Members of the top fund-raising team "Walking for Will" cross the finish line.



FFC scholarship winner Julie O'Neil announcing the start of the walk



"For Jake's Sake" team—30 strong!



Dr. John Mulliken and Dr. Portia Chiou with their daughter Olivia

The Boucher family and friends express their thanks to Dr. Mulliken.



Melina Fortin, walk co-chair, announces raffle-prize winners.



Princess Ella Casey, whose palate was repaired the week before the walk



Brendan Condon with Kara Jackman of the FFC Board of Directors

Meet a Foundation for Faces of Children Board Member

Meera Oliva

The huge success of this year's FFC Walk and Family Picnic was due in part to board member Meera Oliva. A top fundraiser for the walk in the past, Meera co-chaired this year's walker recruitment and registration committee. In this role, she was in charge, with Ursula Costigan, of printed materials, the fundraising website, Facebook notices, and e-mail blasts to potential participants. She also revamped the walker registration process.

Meera and her husband Raul are the parents of Elan, age 2, who was born with a cleft lip and palate. They expect to be celebrating the birth of baby number two this New Year's Eve.

In 2010, Meera joined the FFC Board of Directors. "I feel such a connection to this cause through my own experience," says Meera. "I'm excited to be involved. I'm determined to make something positive come out of this for me and a lot of families."

A graduate of Brown University, Meera earned an MBA from the University of Michigan Ross School of Business. She then worked in New York City in consumer marketing at *Sports Illustrated* and *Martha Stewart Living*. Now a Brookline resident, she works as the Director of Relationship Marketing for Simple Tuition, a start-up company that helps students and families figure out how to pay less for college.

In her spare time, she enjoys cooking and entertaining, and crafts, such as making cards and invitations. 🍷

Meera Oliva (right) and FFC president Joey Smith greet walkers at the 2011 "Paces for Faces" registration table.



Introducing...



A medical school-sponsored mission to Mexico inspired David Kim, MD, this year's craniofacial fellow at Children's Hospital Boston, to choose his future specialty. During the trip, he had the opportunity to assist with cleft lip and palate procedures. "I thought it was the most worthwhile thing I had ever done and decided to make becoming a craniofacial surgeon my goal," says Dr. Kim.

A native of Los Angeles, Dr. Kim completed his undergraduate degree (and had a taste of winter weather) at the University of Chicago. He then returned to California for medical school at the University of California San Diego. He has spent the last six years training in the University of Southern California Integrated Plastic Surgery Program (three years in general surgery and three years in plastic surgery).

While at USC, he won the Resident-Teacher of the Year award, which is given annually to only one of the 900 residents across all disciplines.

During his year as a fellow at Children's, he is dividing his time between clinical work and research. His research interests include studying bilateral cleft lip growth over time and comparing open versus minimally invasive procedures for craniosynostosis (a group of conditions in which a baby's head develops abnormally because the seams between the bones close prematurely).

Each day he is learning something new from Dr. [John] Mulliken, he says. In addition to Dr. Mulliken, he thanks all of his mentors at Children's, including Dotty MacDonald, RN, and Drs. John Meara, Bonnie Padwa, and Arin Greene.

His outside interests include snowboarding, SCUBA diving, and football. 🍷



The Foundation for Faces of Children is dedicated to improving the lives of children with craniofacial differences, including cleft lip, cleft palate, and other head and facial conditions.

Our mission is to:

- Provide patients and families with the most accurate, up-to-date, and accessible information about facial differences.
- Advocate for the best care possible for children with facial differences.

We achieve this by:

- Collaborating with leading specialists.
- Endorsing the team approach to care.
- Partnering with individuals and organizations with similar goals.

We are a not-for-profit organization entirely supported by private donations, grants, and fund-raising initiatives. Please contact us if you would like to participate in or sponsor a fundraising event.

Foundation for Faces of Children

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