

29 April 2012

Dear friend,

### ***Suzie's Circle of Friends***



Peter and I are writing to you today as a friend of our daughter Suzie. You have been an important person in Suzie's life so far and have seen her develop over the last few years.

You can probably remember the time when Suzie wasn't yet walking and possibly wondering about her future. Next year Suzie starts Kindergarten – how time has flown!

What is very special to us is that you have always treated Suzie as Suzie – our happy, sociable little girl. You have looked beyond Suzie's disability, and we would like to thank you for your positive attitude towards her.

It's for this reason Peter and I would like you to consider joining **Suzie's Circle of Friends**. Don't worry if you don't understand the term or what is involved. It's not as complicated as it sounds. It involves up to 10 'Friends', each playing an important role in Suzie's life, coming together about once per term to talk about ideas of how to help Suzie with things like making friends, fitting in at school or participating in sports.

We are organising an information session on **Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> May at 4pm** at our place, with a presentation from Emma who is helping us to get Suzie's Circle of Friends started. Afterwards we'll have a BBQ.

If you feel you won't have the time to meet or have too many other things on, please don't feel bad about saying no. Circles of Friends evolve over time and we recognise that people within in it will change as Suzie grows up. This is our first attempt of putting a Circle of Friends together so we're a little nervous ourselves but I'm sure with your help we can make it happen.

With kind regards

*Jane & Peter*

#### ***What is a Circle of Friends?***

Many of us have friends or informal networks that we rely on when we need advice, when we are in crisis and when we want to share our triumphs.

Yet for many people with disability, these ordinary community connections don't necessarily exist automatically – they may require facilitation. Circles can help this to happen.

It has been suggested that Circles of Friends can be thought of as a type of glue. Without people in our life who care about us and who can help us to think through situations, anyone of us could easily become "unstuck".