

**PROCLAMATION –  
SPINA BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS AWARENESS MONTH JUNE 2006**

**Recommendation**

The City Clerk recommends:

- 1) That June be proclaimed as “SPINA BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS AWARENESS MONTH”; and
- 2) That the proclamation be posted on the City’s website, published on the City Page, space permitting, and that staff issue a news release.

**Economic Impact**

Not applicable

**Purpose**

To respond to the request received from the Chair, Board of Directors of the Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario, dated April 21, 2006 (Attachment #1).

**Background - Analysis and Options**

A request has been received from the Chair, Board of Directors of the Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario to proclaim June as “Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Awareness Month” (Attachment #1).

The proclamation request meets the requirements of the City’s Proclamation Policy: *“That upon request, the City of Vaughan issue proclamations for events, campaigns or other similar matters: which are promoted by any organization that is a registered charity pursuant to Section 248 of the Income Tax Act”.*

The Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario wishes to build awareness and drive education, research, support, care and advocacy to help find a cure while continuing to improve the quality of life of all individuals with Spina Bifida and/or hydrocephalus. The Corporate Communications Department posts proclamations issued by the City on the City’s website under “Events – Proclamations”. Publishing proclamations on the City Page depends on space availability.

**Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

This report is consistent with the priorities set forth in Vaughan Vision 2007, particularly ‘A-1, “Pursue Excellence in the Delivery of Core Services” and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

**Conclusion**

Staff is recommending the month of June 2006 be proclaimed as “Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Awareness Month” and that the proclamation be posted on the City’s website and published on the City Page, space permitting.

**Attachments**

Attachment #1 - Correspondence from the Chair, Board of Directors of the Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario, dated April 21, 2006

**Report prepared by:**

John D. Leach, City Clerk

Respectfully submitted,

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John D. Leach,  
City Clerk

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Janice Atwood-Petkovski,  
Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services

## *Spirit. Breakthrough & Hope*

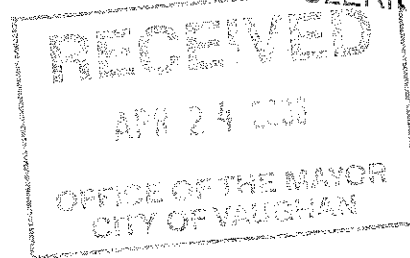
April 21, 2006

Mayor Michael Di Biase  
City of Vaughan  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan, ON L6A 1T1

RECEIVED

APR 21 2006

CLERK'S DEPT.



Dear Mayor Di Biase:

In 2005, the City of Vaughan graciously proclaimed June as Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Awareness Month. We would like to thank you for helping raise awareness of these life long, complex conditions.

The Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario (SB&H), a registered charity, has been making a positive difference in the lives of individuals affected by spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus (sb/h) for over 33 years. SB&H provides support through the many challenges brought on by these serious, disabling conditions.

We are requesting that the City of Vaughan once again declare June as Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Awareness Month. We enclose a sample declaration for your convenience.

Again, thank you for making a difference in through your proclamation and for considering this year's request.

Sincerely,

Derryn V. Gill  
Chair, Board of Directors

## **SAMPLE PROCLAMATION**

- WHEREAS** the Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario serves people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus and their families; and
- WHEREAS** Health Canada has proclaimed June as Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Awareness Month; and
- WHEREAS** the there are many people who are not aware of the Association or that it offers support, information and education programs and funds research to find ways to prevent and treat these conditions; and
- WHEREAS** the Association encourages all Ontarians to learn more about these conditions and to appreciate the challenges faced by individuals affected by them, therefore

### **BE IT RESOLVED**

That the City of Vaughan hereby proclaims the month of June to be

### **SPINA BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS AWARENESS MONTH**

in the City of Vaughan and I urge all citizens to give full consideration and attention to the Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario for their work on behalf of those with spina bifida and hydrocephalus and their families.

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Signature

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Date

# Spirit - Breakthrough & Hope

Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario

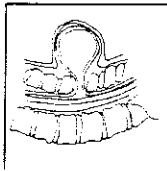
## What is Spina Bifida?

Spina bifida is a neural tube birth defect (NTD) that occurs within the first four weeks of pregnancy. The spinal column fails to develop properly resulting in varying degrees of permanent damage to the spinal cord and nervous system. Infants born with spina bifida may have an open lesion on their spine where significant damage to the nerves and spinal cord occurs. Although the spinal opening is surgically repaired shortly after birth, the nerve damage is permanent - leading to partial or total paralysis of the lower limbs, depending largely on the location and severity of the lesion. Even with no visible lesion, there may be improperly formed or missing vertebrae, and accompanying nerve damage. Eighty per cent of individuals with spina bifida also have hydrocephalus.

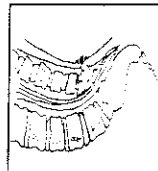
There are three common types of spina bifida.



**Myelomeningocele:** The most severe form in which the spinal cord and its protective covering, the meninges, protrude from the opening in the spine.



**Meningocele:** The spinal cord develops normally but only the meninges protrude from the opening created by damaged or missing vertebrae and may be exposed.



**Occulta:** One or more vertebrae are malformed and covered by a layer of skin. Occulta is the mildest form.

## What Causes Spina Bifida?

There is no single known cause of spina bifida. Researchers are studying the effects of heredity, nutrition, environment and pollution, which may physically damage the fetus.



## How is Spina Bifida Treated?

Treatment often involves surgery and therapy and can also include medication. Many people with spina bifida will need mobility supports such as braces, crutches, or wheelchairs. Almost all will have some form of bladder or bowel dysfunction, conditions which they must learn to control and manage.

## Folic Acid

a critical vitamin in the prevention of spina bifida

Scientific research has proved that folic acid supplements taken by a woman for a period of time **before conception** and throughout her pregnancy can reduce the risk of spina bifida and other NTDs in the fetus by as much as 70 per cent. Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario (SB&H) recommends that all women of childbearing age eat folate-rich foods every day AND take a daily multivitamin which contains at least 0.4 mg of folic acid.

Any woman with a family history of neural tube defects is at increased risk and should consult her physician to determine the amount of folic acid she should be taking.

Contact us or visit [www.folicacid.ca](http://www.folicacid.ca) for more information.

## What is Hydrocephalus?

Hydrocephalus is the excessive accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid within the brain. It may be present at birth or may develop later in life. Changes in fluid pressures within the brain can result in lasting effects. These may include impaired vision, hearing, mobility and coordination along with seizures, headaches, hormonal imbalance and learning disabilities.

## What Causes Hydrocephalus?

Hydrocephalus can be caused by a variety of medical problems. It can be present at birth, as a result of a congenital defect. For example, hydrocephalus may occur along with spina bifida, aqueductal obstruction, arachnoid cysts or Dandy-Walker Syndrome. Acquired hydrocephalus may occur at any time during a person's life as a result of intraventricular hemorrhage, meningitis, head injury, tumours, or an unknown cause. Hydrocephalus can be mistaken for dementia in older adults.

## How is Hydrocephalus Treated?

Treatment for hydrocephalus usually involves surgically implanting a flexible tube (a shunt) into the brain ventricles to drain away excess cerebrospinal fluid.

With treatment, intelligence and lifespan are similar to those of the general population. However, most people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus will have some form of learning disability.



## Latex Allergy Alert!

Studies have shown that up to 73 per cent of individuals with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus are allergic to latex, the sap of the rubber tree. Sensitivity to latex can happen at any time. Visit the SB&H website for information and useful links.

## Spirit - Breakthrough & Hope

**There is no cure for spina bifida or hydrocephalus.** Ongoing therapy, medical care and/or surgical treatments may be necessary to prevent and manage complications throughout an individual's life.

**There is hope!** Forty years ago, only 10 per cent of people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus survived. Today, with research and advances in medical technology, 90 per cent survive and thrive!






# YES, I want to help!

## Please accept my donation of:

- \$50    \$75    \$100    \$150  
 \$200    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque payable to "SB&H"

I would prefer to use my credit card, please charge my:      

Card No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your generosity! A receipt will be issued for income tax purposes.*

## I would like more information about:

- Becoming a member of SB&H  
 Spina bifida & hydrocephalus  
 Monthly Giving Club  
 Volunteering

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Please return this form to:

Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus  
 Association of Ontario  
 555 Richmond St. W., P.O. Box 103  
 Suite 1006, Toronto, ON M5V 3B1

Charitable Registration # 10799 9310 RR0001

## About the Association

The Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario (SB&H) was founded in 1973 as a registered charity; committed to making a positive difference for people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus living in Ontario.

Over the last 32 years, SB&H has grown to become a sophisticated and respected organization. We provide a comprehensive range of essential services for parents, families, professionals, children, youth and adults.

## Reaching Out to Serve

SB&H is building local support in communities across Ontario. Our network of contacts is growing.

### Where you can find us

Burlington	Owen Sound
Durham	Sault Ste. Marie
Hamilton	South Georgian Bay
Kingston	Toronto
London	Waterloo-Wellington
Mississauga	Windsor District
Niagara	York
Ottawa	<b>YOUR COMMUNITY</b>

To reach SB&H in your community, call 1-800-387-1575.

## Opportunities to Participate

- Volunteer
- Become a Member
- Make a Donation

Contact us or visit our website to find out more about how you can get involved with SB&H in your own community.

## Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario

### Our Mission

"To build awareness and drive education, research, support, care and advocacy to help find a cure while always continuing to improve the quality of life of all individuals with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus."

### Programs & Services

- Toll-free telephone line to access support and information
- Support Programs
- Scholarship Programs
- Research Programs
- Local Contacts
- Library and Resource Centre
- Informational Materials
- "Kids on the Block" Awareness Program
- Folic Acid Awareness Program
- Educational Workshops & Conferences
- Special Education Advisory Committee
- Representatives
- Advocacy
- CURRENT – News Magazine
- CURRENT Bulletin – Regional Newsletter
- Public Awareness Programs

### Contact us

Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus  
 Association of Ontario  
 555 Richmond St. West,  
 P.O. Box 103, Suite 1006,  
 Toronto, Ontario M5V 3B1

Phone: 416-214-1056 or  
Toll-Free: 1-800-387-1575

Fax: 416-214-1446

E-mail: [provincial@sbhao.on.ca](mailto:provincial@sbhao.on.ca)  
Website: [www.sbhao.on.ca](http://www.sbhao.on.ca)



*Spirit. Breakthrough & Hope*

Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus  
Association of Ontario



Supporting people  
with spina bifida and/or  
hydrocephalus and  
their families for  
over 30 years.