



# WINTER BIFIDA 2011

On Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup>

11am to 3pm

Balboa Park – Recital Hall

(The Recital Hall is located in the Palisades Building)

Special guest:

**Rob Roddy**

Rehab Specialist



Let's have a **functional day together!**

Join us with your family at our Winter Event. Attendance is free and lunch will be provided.

Need tips and tools to help children with Spina Bifida develop into successful and happy adults?

Visit

[http://  
www.sbpreparations.org/](http://www.sbpreparations.org/)

This site can help!  
You will find interventions and resources from professionals and parents who deal with Spina Bifida every day

*Preparations is sponsored by:*



**Happy Holidays!**

## **ROB RODDY**

Rob Roddy is the Rehab Specialist for 180 Medical. Rob became friends with Todd Brown, CEO and founder of 180 Medical, in 1994 when they were recuperating from spinal cord injuries (SCI), which left them both paralyzed from the waist down. Together, they spent the next several years participating in marathons, 10Ks and other various competitions. They even participated together in the first advertised wheelchair Super Bowl in 2001.

Rob returned to college after his accident to earn a Bachelor's degree in behavioral science. He then went on to complete his Master's degree from the University of Oklahoma. After school, he has successfully worked for major corporations such as Southwest Airlines, The Dallas Morning News, and taught psychology at El Centro Community College and elementary physical education in Dallas, TX. Rob has 17+ years of personal experience living with SCI combined with decades of knowledge he has gained from his friendships with Todd Brown, Muffy Davis, Bob Hall, Marty Ball, Jeff Adams, Mark Wellman, Randy Snow, Trish Downing and Matt Feeney to name a few. Rob is also a certified Christopher and Dana Reeve Peer Mentor. Rob has traveled the world speaking to groups in such places as Bosnia, London, Mexico, Canada, as well as rehabilitation hospitals, spina bifida camps, and many universities around the country.

He is currently writing his first book titled "365 Great Benefits of Being in a Wheelchair: A New, Great Adventure Every Day to Go Explore." He has an online support group for people with disabilities so that people all over the world can connect, share stories and photos and ask/answer questions they have found since being injured. Rob shares very touching and humorous stories of what it was like when he was first injured and the struggles he went through to get where he is today as an accomplished climber, wheelchair racer, snow skier, wake boarder/water skier, and hand cyclist. He has also played wheelchair basketball, tennis, quad rugby and wheelchair softball. Rob, his wife Christine, and their two children (ages 6 and 7) are dedicated to experiencing life together as a family, whether traveling and speaking to people, or spending time at home.

Rob has accomplished all this and more after his accident. He loves to share about how at first, when the doctors told him he would never walk again, he felt that his life was over, but in reality, he had no idea how it was all really just beginning for him.

### **Latex Free Toys**

The holiday season is near and finding the perfect gift for your beloved child can be so rewarding. Anticipating the delight heightens the holiday spirit. However, if you plan to give a gift to someone living with Spina Bifida, you need to know the challenges.

Children and teens with Spina Bifida cannot enjoy many mass marketed toys due to hazardous allergies to latex, a natural product from the sap of rubber trees, which means giving latex free toys. The bright side is that many toy manufacturers produce items containing latex alternatives such as silicone, plastic, and vinyl, but some stores still need to be educated.



### **Tell toy stores about latex**

Since many toy store personnel are not familiar with latex allergies, use this holiday season to educate them. Ask to speak with the store manager and explain what it means to live with latex allergies. Emphasize the fact that latex allergies not only affect children with Spina Bifida but can impact the whole family.

When you visit your retailers, ask the salespeople if the items contain natural rubber latex. If they don't know, you may need to do some extra research for clarification. Just to make sure, contact manufacturers as you make your holiday list. This will ensure your comfort as you deliver those wonderful gifts to your child with Spina Bifida. Look to the resources below for more information about Latex free toys.

### **Change attitudes**

Although toy manufacturers may see the Spina Bifida community as a small niche market that doesn't need special attention, you can work to change that attitude by talking to the personnel at your local toy stores this holiday season. Every child deserves safe toys

Preparing for the gift giving season for these special loved ones may take a little longer, but the joy on their faces will be worth it. Happy Holidays!