
United Children & Parents

UCP's Quarterly Family Support Newsletter

United Cerebral Palsy Association of Oregon and SW Washington, Inc.

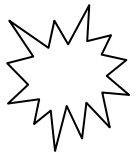
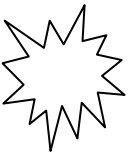
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www.aCommunityforeveryone.org

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How To Ask For Help

Taking a break from caregiving is NOT a luxury – it's a necessity – so that you can continue caregiving with love, patience and energy. Taking care of a child with special needs is stressful – you deserve breaks so that you stay healthy and happy.

Asking family and friends for help can be an awkward and difficult thing to do. In fact, many caregivers avoid asking for help and end up trying to do everything themselves. You may find that once you take the step and ask someone for help, it is much easier than you expected. Many times, family members and friends are willing, but just don't know how to help.

Tips for asking family members or friends for help:

- Sit down with them in person or find a quiet time to speak on the phone.
- Review the list of care recipient needs.
- Specifically discuss areas in which you think they could help.
- Ask them if they would like to participate.
- Inquire about whether they would like to help out in a particular area.
- Clearly explain the tasks and what they could do to help.
- Make sure that they understand exactly what would be helpful for you, as well as the care recipient.

An idea for what you may want to say when asking for help:

“Jane, I am having some trouble finding time to do everything I need to do to take care of mom (my daughter/son). I could really use some help with cooking, watching her when I have to go pick up the kids from school and doing errands. If you would be willing, I think you could help with the errands since you live nearby and pass the shopping center on your way home from work. Do you think you would be able to help out this way?”

Source: http://www.netofcare.org/content/getting_started/asking.asp

SAVE THE DATE: SUMMER FAMILY PICNIC: 8/22/09

UCP believes in advancing the independence, productivity and full citizenship of people with cerebral palsy and related disabilities.

Transition to Kindergarten – Some Helpful Tips

When your child starts attending a new school, it can be a time of excitement and it also can be worrisome, both for children and for parents.

We spent the summer before my daughter entered Kindergarten preparing for her transition. We talked a lot about what to expect at school and the fun times she would have there. We spent time at the school playground throughout the summer so that she would know her way around and feel comfortable when school started.

We made a book about the first day of Kindergarten with a simple story outlining what we would do to get ready for school and what would happen once she got to school. We took pictures at home, on the playground, and in the classroom for the book.

We also practiced touching elbows and hooking our pinkies together to say good-bye. This always made my daughter giggle when we practiced it at home and it helped distract her from her worries when we said good-bye on that first day of school. This tip came from the Let's Explore Blog, which has a great post on Kindergarten prep at lets-explore.net/blog/?p=109.

We read many picture books to prepare for Kindergarten and favorites were [Countdown to Kindergarten](#) by Alison McGhee, [The Kissing Hand](#) by Audrey Penn and [My Kindergarten](#) by Rosemary Wells.

I learned from our harried preschool mornings that it was best to allow plenty of time to get ready in the morning. We prepare some things the night before, like picking out clothes and packing lunch, which makes us feel less rushed in the morning and helps us continue to get off to a good start each day.

-Lisa Harman, MPAC Newsletter Editor



What's "Low Income"??

by Susan Blanchard

Finding funding for everything your child needs is an ongoing battle. Most funding sources require that a family be "low income." I've often wondered exactly what constitutes "low income." The 2009 Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Guidelines are listed below. Many camps or other services require that a family be "200%" above the poverty guidelines. Those figures are included below the table.

There is currently a bill in the Oregon legislature, HB 2116, which addresses the problem of families having to voluntarily impoverish themselves to qualify for Medicaid. Families who are 200%-300% FPL would pay a sliding scale to access health care services not available in the family's existing insurance plan. Talking points and more information about HB 2116 can be found on the DD Coalition website: www.OregonDDCoalition.org.

| The 2009 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Persons in family | Poverty guideline |
| 1 | \$10,830 |
| 2 | 14,570 |
| 3 | 18,310 |
| 4 | 22,050 |
| 5 | 25,790 |
| 6 | 29,530 |
| 7 | 33,270 |
| 8 | 37,010 |

For families with more than 8 persons, add \$3,740 for each additional person.

$\$22,050 \times 200\% = \$44,100.$

$\$22,050 \times 300\% = \$66,150.$



GAO Report Finds Hundreds of Allegations of Abusive and Deadly Uses of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools

Federal action is needed, says Chairman Miller

May 19, 2009 3:07 PM

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A new government report released today found hundreds of allegations that schoolchildren have been abused, and some even died, as a result of inappropriate uses of seclusion and restraint in classrooms. These abusive practices were used disproportionately on children with disabilities.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office, which conducted the first government investigation specifically into schools' use of these practices at the request of **U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-CA)**, the chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, testified about its findings at a committee hearing today. Their report examined ten of these cases in detail; in four of them, these abuses were fatal. Two parents of victims in these cases also testified, including a mother whose foster son died as a result.

“GAO’s report shows that in too many cases, a child’s life wound up being threatened even though that child was not a threat to others,” said Miller. “This behavior, in some instances, looks like torture. The current situation is unacceptable and cannot continue.”

Seclusion, as the term is used in this context, means the act of involuntarily confining a student in an area by himself. Restraint is used to restrict an individual’s freedom of movement. As GAO explained today, restraint can become fatal when it blocks air to the lungs. In some of the cases examined, ropes, duct tape, chairs with straps and bungee cords were used to restrain or isolate young children.

Unlike in hospitals, other health care facilities and most non-medical community-based facilities that receive federal funding, there are currently no federal laws that restrict the use of seclusion and restraint in public or private schools. State regulation and oversight varies greatly. Nineteen states have no laws governing the appropriate use of seclusion and restraint in schools.

“Cedric struggled as he was being held in his chair, so the teacher put him in a face down, or in a prone restraint, and sat on him,” said **Toni Price**, whose son Cedric was killed after a teacher restrained him and laid on top of him for trying to leave his classroom. “He struggled and said repeatedly: ‘I can’t breathe.’ Shortly after that, he stopped speaking and he stopped struggling.”

In half of the cases GAO studied, the teachers or school staff involved with the abuse continued to teach, either in the same school system or a new one.

Although Cedric’s death was ruled a homicide, the teacher involved continues to teach students with disabilities, only now in Virginia, a different state than where Cedric was killed. GAO said today that they have referred the case to the Virginia Department of Education. Today the American Association of School Administrators announced that the school district is investigating the case and the teacher has been placed on leave.

GAO also found that, more often than not, teachers and staff who used seclusion and restraint in abusive ways had not been properly trained. These practices were often being used as a routine disciplinary tactic, rather than in response to an emergency. **Ann Gaydos** was never told that teachers were using restraint tactics on her daughter, Paige, until she came home with bruises:

“Within a week at her new school, she came home bruised and told me, ‘Mommy, my teacher hurt me and I couldn’t breathe.’ We were shocked that we had not been informed by the school of this use of force that had injured our daughter, and that such force could so easily be used for something as small as playing with a loose tooth in time out.”

A school aide who came forward to warn Paige’s parents that this abuse was happening to other students was ostracized by fellow staff. It is impossible to determine the full extent to which seclusion and restraint practices are used in schools because there is no centralized reporting system. The few states that do collect data suggest these methods are used frequently. During the last school year alone, Texas and California documented over 33,000 incidents in which seclusion and restraint were used on students in public and private schools.

“Since these reports are often the result of parent complaints or media reports, we do not know how many times these procedures are inappropriately employed with students,” said **Dr. Reece L. Peterson**, a Professor of Special Education at the University of Nebraska. “Yet there does appear to be a substantial number of these situations, and they appear to be scattered across the United States.”

Yesterday, the Obama administration indicated it plans to meet with stakeholders to address these abuses.

Miller said that today’s hearing makes clear that legislation is needed to keep students safe.

“We plan to look at this closely, with the Obama administration, to determine whether federal guidance is warranted. In light of this report, we encourage leaders of all of our nation’s schools who are working hard every day to educate our kids to immediately review their policies regarding restraint and seclusion.”

Miller requested the GAO investigation in January 2009, after the National Disability Rights Network released a report highlighting these abuses.

This story, as well as transcripts from the May 19th hearing, can be found at:
<http://edlabor.house.gov/newsroom/2009/05/>

More info including all of the testimony and a recording of the hearing:
<http://edlabor.house.gov/hearings/2009/05/examining-the-abusive-and-dead.shtml>

Below is an email from a UCP SW Washington grandmother who read the above story:
Some unbelievably bad things along these lines have happened to my grandson with CP. Fortunately for him, he had a twin sister in the same class who could speak up for him. I urge all parents to know what goes on. Go to school. Get to know your teachers AND AIDES....have home phone numbers and 'pop' into classes whenever possible. Get to know the principal. If your child shows fear or ANY signs that things are not OK at school, be smart enough to check it out. Ask questions.....of your child and other parents of children with disabilities. Never assume, just because it's a public place or that the staff has been background checked that all will be OK. NEVER ASSUME ANYTHING. Be alert and follow your hunches. As parents, your child's safety is your responsibility, even when you are not with them.

Resources

Assistive Technology on Vacation

Every summer OTAP presents "Take Your Technology on Vacation." The Summer Institute offers three days of intensive classes on ways to use assistive technology so that students with disabilities can participate more fully and be more independent in the classroom and beyond. This year it's scheduled for August 10-12, 2009 in Hillsboro. For information on workshops and registering, please visit: www.otap-oregon.org, or contact Karen Daniels at karen.daniels@douglasesd.k12.or.us.

Website on Friendship

The friendship web explains the basics of friendship, making friends, and maintaining true friendships. There is no substitute for a friend!
www.cyberparent.com/friendship/

Wheel to Walk Foundation

The Wheel to Walk Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to making a difference in the lives of children age 21 and younger with special needs.

They help children who experience difficulty obtaining funding from their insurance companies. To date, they have helped over 500 children obtain essential equipment or services that they needed to make their day to day lives just a little easier.

If you need financial assistance with anything from leg braces, wheelchairs to home care, please contact Wheel to Walk at 503-257-1401 or email: info@wheeltowalk.com to request an application.

"How we, as parents, respond to our child and our child's disability has a greater impact on the child's life than any medical diagnosis." Kathie Snow
(www.disabilityisnatural.com)

EMAIL??? To save money on postage, and be more sustainable, we'd like to send you notices and newsletters via email. Please email UCP Family Support at fsd@ucpaorwa.org and get on our email list. We send out notices in between newsletters that you miss if you're not on our email mailing list. Thanks!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July

9 6:30 pm Gimme A Break – NE Portland **Call UCP 503-777-4166**
Monthly Resource & Support for anyone parenting a child with a disability. Topic:
Friendships for Our Kids.

23 6:30 pm Gimme A Break Too – Beaverton **Call UCP 503-777-4166**
Monthly Resource & Support for anyone parenting a child with a disability. Topic:
Friendships for Our Kids.

August

5 6:30pm Mom's Support Group in Bend: This group meets the first Wednesday of every month,
6:30 p.m. Contact Anne for more info: anne.ferrell63@gmail.com.

13 6:30 pm Gimme A Break – NE Portland **Call UCP 503-777-4166**
Monthly Resource & Support for anyone parenting a child with a disability. Topic: Kid's
growth; home modifications.

22 10am-3pm **UCP Family Picnic** at Champoeg State Park. Fun, sun, food, friends. Call UCP to
RSVP: 503-777-4166.

27 6:30 pm Gimme A Break Too - Beaverton **Call UCP 503-777-4166**
Monthly Resource & Support for anyone parenting a child with a disability. Topic: Kid's
growth; home modifications.

September

10 6:30pm Gimme A Break – NE Portland **Call UCP 503-777-4166**
Monthly Resource & Support for anyone parenting a child with a disability. Topic:
Stress Relief Ideas.

12 11:00am **Walk 'n' Roll for UCP!** This is our fifth annual; we're adding an 8k Fun Run this year.
Visit the website to sign up: www.walknroll2009.org. Call Doug at UCP for more info:
503-777-4166.

24 6:30 pm Gimme A Break Too - Beaverton **Call UCP 503-777-4166**
Monthly Resource & Support for anyone parenting a child with a disability. Topic:
Stress Relief Ideas.

26 10am **Family Outing at the Oregon Zoo.** Free tickets available. Let's have lunch together.
Call Family Support to reserve your tickets: 503-777-4166

SAVE THE DATES:

August 22, 2009 – Summer Family Picnic – Champoeg Park

September 12, 2009 – Walk 'n' Roll

The persons, products and services listed in this newsletter are for informational purposes only and as a service for our readers. No endorsement by UCP should be inferred.



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The Fifth Annual Walk 'n' Roll for UCP!

The Fifth Annual Walk 'n' Roll for UCP! will be held at the Eastbank Esplanade in Portland (under the east end of the Hawthorne Bridge) on Saturday, September 12, 2009. Mark your calendars and SAVE THE DATE. Registration starts at 11am and the event starts at 12 noon.

Visit the Walk 'n' Roll website to see how you can get involved. You can create your own team. All you have to do is email everyone you know and send them the link to the Walk 'n' Roll website. They can join your team or be a sponsor. The website address is: www.walknroll2009.org. This year we've added an 8k Fun-Run.

If you don't have time to organize a team, you can join one of the teams already formed, or you can sponsor one of the team members. There's fierce competition between teams – they'd appreciate your support!

Remember, we're not alone raising our children with cerebral palsy. Building the Walk 'n' Roll into a large community event is one more way we can support and encourage each other on this life journey. Coming together and making connections is important to keep us energized.