

Cerebral Palsy Fact Sheet

Cerebral Palsy is:

- a number of disorders of the developing brain affecting body movement, posture and muscle coordination.
- caused by damage to one or more specific areas of the brain, usually occurring during fetal development; before, during, or shortly after birth; during infancy; or early childhood.
- not a disease, not progressive, nor communicable.

The Statistics (United States)

- The United Cerebral Palsy Research and Educational Foundation estimates between 1.5-2.0 million children and adults have cerebral palsy in the United States.
- 10,000 babies and infants are diagnosed with cerebral palsy annually.
- 1,200 - 1,500 preschool age children are also recognized to have cerebral palsy each year.

Types of Cerebral Palsy

Spastic Cerebral Palsy – characterized by muscle stiffness and permanent contractions

Athetoid or Dyskinetic Cerebral Palsy – characterized by uncontrolled, slow, writhing movements

Ataxic Cerebral Palsy – characterized by poor coordination and balance

The Effects

A person with cerebral palsy may exhibit one or more of the following effects:

- muscle tightness or spasticity
- disturbance in gait or mobility
- involuntary movement
- difficulty in swallowing and problems with speech

An individual with cerebral palsy may also exhibit:

- difficulty in feeding
- impairment of sight, hearing or speech
- abnormal sensation and perception
- seizures
- difficulty with bladder and bowel control
- mental retardation
- learning disabilities
- problems with breathing because of postural difficulties
- skin disorders because of pressure sores

The Risk Factors

- premature birth
- low birth weight
- inability of the placenta to provide the developing fetus with oxygen and nutrients
- bacterial infection of the mother, fetus or infant that directly or indirectly attack the infant's central nervous system
- lack of growth factors during intra-uterine life
- prolonged loss of oxygen during the birthing process
- RH blood type incompatibility between mother and infant
- severe jaundice shortly after birth
- infection of the mother with German measles or other viral diseases in early pregnancy

Is Cerebral Palsy Curable?

At this time, there is no cure for the developmental brain damage that causes cerebral palsy. Training and therapy, however, can help improve muscle function and coordination.

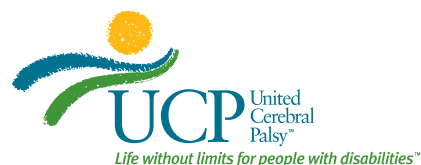
Advances in neuroplasticity, neural regeneration and neuroprotection may lead to a cure in the future.

It is the mission of the United Cerebral Palsy Research and Educational Foundation to support research and to disseminate data that will lead to prevention, evidence-based care and a cure for cerebral palsy.

More Information

Call (800) 872-5827,
visit www.ucp.org or email national@ucp.org

United Cerebral Palsy
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036



United Cerebral Palsy Fact Sheet

Mission

To advance the independence, productivity and full citizenship of people with disabilities through an affiliate network.

Organization

Serving Americans with Disabilities for More Than 55 Years

- United Cerebral Palsy provides services to more than 170,000 children and adults with disabilities every day through a national network of 100 affiliates in 39 states and Australia and soon to be Canada.
- Services include employment training, independent living, housing and homeownership, assistive technology, community outreach, family supports, early intervention, and more.
- More than 65 percent of people served by United Cerebral Palsy have disabilities other than cerebral palsy.
- System-wide, more than 85 percent of all revenue goes directly to programs and services.
- United Cerebral Palsy is among the top ten health charities in the United States.

Disability Policy Collaboration

- Joint venture between United Cerebral Palsy and The Arc of the United States.
- Focuses on legislative and legal supports at the federal level to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families.

United Cerebral Palsy Research & Educational Foundation

- Principal non-governmental agency in the United States sponsoring research to prevent cerebral palsy and to improve the quality of life of individuals with cerebral palsy and related developmental disorders.

History

In 1948, many people with disabilities were separated from their families and often deprived of basic supports needed to live a full life. Wanting a better future for their own children with cerebral palsy, Leonard Goldenson, then President of United Paramount Theaters and ABC Television, and prominent businessman Jack Hausman decided to act. With their wives Isabelle Goldenson and Ethel Hausman, they reached out to other families by placing an ad in the *New York Herald Tribune*.

Hundreds of parents responded to the ad and joined their cause to enrich the lives of people with disabilities. From a humble grassroots foundation, United Cerebral Palsy was born in 1949 in New York. Several United Cerebral Palsy affiliates soon opened across the country and the national organization quickly grew.

Leadership

President and CEO

Stephen Bennett
Washington, DC

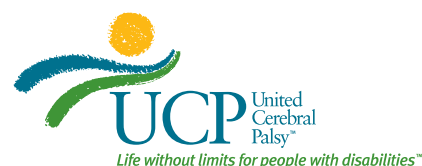
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Thomas O'Donnell
Kansas City, MO

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It's hard to be a kid.

Just ask one.

But for more than 5.2 million children and youth living with disabilities in the United States today, life can be far harder than it has to be.

Often unable to effectively advocate for themselves, children and youth with disabilities may be isolated in their communities, schools and families, severely limiting their opportunities to reach their full potential.

Learning may be many times more difficult for a child with a disability, making school an even more critical component to healthy growth.

Children's physical, social and personal development may also be affected by their disabilities, and they nearly always face profound challenges in transitioning to adult life.

Launched in June 2006, *Isabelle's Kids* is a national initiative of United Cerebral Palsy that empowers children and youth with disabilities to live without limits.

Named in honor of UCP co-founder and mother, Isabelle Goldenson, *Isabelle's Kids* addresses the countless challenges faced by children and youth with disabilities, including school, friends, play and growing up with self-confidence.

Through *Isabelle's Kids*, United Cerebral Palsy and its national network of affiliates, is encouraging, supporting and mentoring a new generation of leaders with disabilities to achieve their dreams and contribute to their communities.

Accomplishments

- In collaboration with Children's Rights, a New York-based nonprofit organization advocating for the rights of children in child welfare systems, *Isabelle's Kids* released "Forgotten Children, A Case for Action for Children and Youth with Disabilities in Foster Care" in June 2006. Reviewed exclusively by National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, this first-of-its-kind report found that at least one-third of all children in foster care are likely to have disabilities.
- An *Isabelle's Kids* summer poster contest, promoted through media and partnerships, inspired the participation of children with disabilities from across the nation. Selected in the fall of 2006, the winning poster will represent the image of *Isabelle's Kids* in a print advertisement published in *ABILITY Magazine*, the nation's leading publication for people with disabilities.

Activities in Development

- In late 2007, *Isabelle's Kids* will release the first-ever state-by-state report card evaluating foster care services for children and youth with disabilities. This far-reaching endeavor aims to improve the lives of hundreds of thousands of children with disabilities, whose transition to adulthood may be compromised by inadequate healthcare, infrequent placements with permanent families, and community experiences defined by isolation and repeated relocation.
- In the next two years, *Isabelle's Kids* will develop a national mentoring program for children and youth with disabilities that utilizes cutting-edge technology to create an inclusive community for children and approved adult mentors.



**A National Initiative of
United Cerebral Palsy**

Isabelle's Kids Contact

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