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Financial Strategies for the Friends and Clients of...

Anthony G. Recck

BFG's Center for Special Needs Planning
100 Great Meadow Road, Suite 200
Wethersfield, CT 06109

Tel: 860-258-3863
Fax Number: 860-529-8381
Email: csnp@metlife.com

Kevin P. McAvoy

BFG's Center for Special Needs Planning
6 Corporate Drive, 5th Floor
Shelton, CT 06484

Tel: 203-513-6046
Fax Number: 203-513-6080
Email: csnp@metlife.com

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MetDESK News

MetLife's Division of Estate Planning for Special Kids

Information and Support for the Special Needs Community



MetLife®

Realizing Your Child's Potential

"My Child Without Limits is designed to be an authoritative early intervention resource with a social networking element for families of young children ages 0 to 5 with developmental delays or disabilities, and professionals looking for a single, trusted, aggregate source of information that relates to their needs and interests."

The first realization that your child is going to face the many challenges and obstacles encountered by those who live with a developmental delay or disability can be a lonely, frightening and confusing time. Many parents who have been assisted by United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) have reported that finding the organization and receiving the information and advice our affiliates can provide has been a very significant turning point for them.

Now, UCP is pioneering an initiative called My Child Without Limits that provides these parents with critical information, and connects them to a vital social network of parents of newly diagnosed children ages 0 to 5 with similar concerns.

Evidence shows that early identification, early intervention and targeted education are critical to a child's ability to develop their full potential. To that end, UCP has designed My Child Without Limits to be a premier resource for parents and caregivers of children with developmental delays or disabilities. My Child

Without Limits aims to enhance a child's development, support and assist families and the extended caregiving community, and provide the fundamental tools on disability-related health information.

When presented with an initial diagnosis of a disability, parents, caregivers and professionals immediately begin to seek information that relates to their needs and interests. As numerous studies demonstrate, the Internet is generally the resource of first choice for information. However, there is a lack of a single, authoritative source addressing the needs of this age group, and My Child Without Limits, by providing this reliable, aggregate portal, enables families and caregivers to become active, knowledgeable partners in the lives of their children with disabilities. Specifically, My Child Without Limits bridges the information gap through a comprehensive web-based resource, social networking, and regional trainings.

UCP is well-prepared to be a leader in the area of early childhood intervention. While UCP affiliates serve more than 176,000 children and adults with disabilities and their families every day, 65% of the people served have a disability other than cerebral palsy. My Child Without Limits further the national UCP initiative to create a Life Without Limits for people with disabilities by reaching them as early as possible and helping them and their families create their own vision of the future through self-determination and self-empowerment.

The first offerings of My Child Without Limits include:

Web-based Resource – Building on the UCP goal of a “*Life without Limits for People with Disabilities*,” the My Child Without Limits web site, www.mychildwithoutlimits.org, is a comprehensive early intervention resource combined with a vital social network. The web site provides access to accurate, user-friendly, and relevant disability-related information, resource guides, and experts on early intervention and family support. The site also provides a forum for training UCP staff and industry professionals and is a source of outreach materials for the larger caregiving community.

Social Networking – The combination of an authoritative, information-rich web site and an extensive online community platform will be a powerful asset for users and will act as a key differentiating point from other disability-related web sites. The online community platform provides a social networking element to create a sense of community and support to help families through very difficult emotional and psychological times. The moderated online community hosted on www.mychildwithoutlimits.org will provide explicit connections for caregivers and family members through its open-source platform of integrated newsletters, blogs, and discussion boards. Families and caregivers will have an opportunity to share experiences, information, and practical ideas that will empower them to make informed decisions. Additionally, the My Child Without Limits online community is an ideal forum to cultivate a community of advocates to further unify the disability voice to promote real change.

Both components of My Child Without Limits are designed to work independently or in conjunction with each other to ultimately empower families and caregivers of children with disabilities with the necessary education, resources, and support needed to strengthen them.

My Child Without Limits will fill that void.

“I can’t think of a better way to reach parents of children with disabilities who are so desperately seeking information,” said Stephen Bennett, President & CEO, United Cerebral Palsy, Inc. “My Child Without Limits will be the one-stop shop for parents and professionals, and help children with disabilities start achieving a life without limits at an early age.”

The authoritative portion of the My Child Without Limits Web site will launch in early 2009. Please visit the online community today at <http://www.inspire.com/groups/my-child-without-limits/>.

MetDESK®, MetLife’s Division of Estate Planning for Special Kids has a formal partnership with UCP to help support the mutual goal of helping individuals with special needs. MetDESK® is dedicated to helping families plan for the future of children and other dependents with special needs. Helping you answer those questions, directing you to the right resources and just being there as an expert and advocate for you, as needed, is an important part of what we do. If you would like to find out more information or locate a local MetDESK Specialist please call 1-877-MetDESK or 1-877-638-3375, or visit our web site at www.metlife.com/DESK.



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