

CenterLines

Center for Disabilities and Development *Useful News for Families*

Special Gifts for Special People

What gift can you purchase for that special person who already has everything?

When that person is an elderly parent or grandparent, or person with a disability, an ideal gift might be an aid for daily living.

Specialists in the Center for Disabilities and Development at University of Iowa Children's Hospital say gifts may range from elastic shoelaces that don't need to be tied to large-print remote controls for televisions. Such devices can help a person live a more comfortable and independent life. For some loved ones, there might be daily living activities that are difficult to perform. A simple device or tool can make a world of difference.

Many aids for daily living devices are available in larger discount department and pharmacy stores. You can also search on line with the phrase "aids for



daily living" and get companies like **Independent Living Aids** at www.independentliving.com/ or Allegro Medical Inc. at www.allegromedical.com/. Be sure to check at local home medical supply companies as well.

Below is a shopping list of a variety of aids for daily living devices.

Bathing

- Long-handled sponge or brush for hard-to-reach places
- Long-handled pad for applying hand lotion

Dressing

- Long-handled shoe horn
- Button hook for shirts and pants
- Zipper pull to grab the zipper tab
- Stocking aid to put on socks and hose

- Elastic shoe strings to make tying shoes unnecessary

Cooking

- Cutting board that holds food in place
- Knives with T-shaped handles for easier holding
- Device to open jars
- Special handle to grip awkward containers
- One-handed or no-handed electric can opener
- Electric vegetable peeler that eliminates painful wrist motion
- Material to build up utensil handles to make gripping easier

Hobbies

- For people with the use of only one hand, a device to hold needlepoint hoops, crochet hooks, knitting needles, small hand tools, playing cards, card shufflers

Balance and endurance

- Long-handled "reacher" for getting items off high shelves or the floor

Continued on p. 2



University of Iowa Health Care



Continued from p.1

- ❑ High stool with wheels makes it easy for a person to work at a kitchen counter with less fatigue

Mobility

- ❑ Walker with a basket for carrying things, and a flip-down seat for a quick rest
- ❑ Special crutch/cane tips to help in snow

Poor vision

- ❑ Large print labels for dials and controls on household appliances, phones, TV remote controls, thermostats, and furnaces
- ❑ Simple magnifier for reading newspapers and magazines
- ❑ Television screen magnifier
- ❑ Large print playing cards and board games
- ❑ "Hands free" magnifier, worn around the neck or on a stand, to make delicate crafts or needle work visible

Poor hearing

- ❑ Flashing light device to alert a person to the ringing of a phone, doorbell, alarm clock
- ❑ Sound amplifier that easily attaches to telephone handset
- ❑ Headset that enhances the TV sound for its user, and allows overall TV sound level to be set at a reasonable pitch

CDD's Spina Bifida Clinic

Spina Bifida is a birth defect which means the spinal column fails to close. It can cause fluid on the brain (hydrocephaly) and the nerves in the spine do not always develop normally (neural tube defect). Some issues that can come with spina bifida are:

- bowel and bladder management
- nutrition
- mobility
- orthopedic deformities
- skin integrity
- learning
- academics
- social development

Sometimes a person who has spina bifida can have problems with breathing or eating. There can also be special issues as a child ages and becomes an adult.

When a neural tube defect is found in a baby before birth the parents are sent for prenatal counseling. The goal is to provide information for the family so they can prepare for the birth of their special baby. When the baby is born it is first cared for by Neonatology and Pediatric Neurosurgery. A Developmental Pediatrician will also see the baby and family before they leave the hospital. We also plan follow-up appointments with the right specialists from the UI Children's Hospital and CDD. Some of the hospital specialists come from different Pediatric departments:

- Neurosurgery
- Orthopedics
- Urology
- Surgery

At the Center for Disabilities and Development there is a team of specialists to address specific problem areas. Our team of experts includes:

- Developmental Pediatricians
- Nurses and Nurse Practitioners
- Physical Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech/Language Pathologists
- Education Specialists
- Psychologists
- Nutritionists
- Social Workers

Spina bifida is a complex issue and it helps to have many specialists as part of your child's health care team. In this way, any problems can be found early and can be reduced by working with you to manage your child's care. It is possible to make the most of how your child develops and their overall health.

CDD will also work with you and help you coordinate with your local care providers. For more information please contact CDD Scheduling at

877-686-0031 (toll-free),
319-353-6900, or
cdd-scheduling@uiowa.edu



New Services at CDD!

The word is out! We have two new clinics with Dr. Andrea Reasoner. They are called the **Neurodevelopmental Evaluation** (NDE) clinic and the **Spasticity** clinic.

The NDE clinic sees children birth to 3 years who show signs of motor delay or neuromotor involvement. A team of specialists will be there to see your child at the clinic visit. These experts are from physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech language pathology. Your child will also see a neurodevelopmental pediatrician, nutritionist, and social worker.

Spasticity can become a major issue as your child grows and develops. It can impact their mobility and overall development. We are now offering a Spasticity clinic. We work with the Neurosurgery and Orthopedics departments at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital. That is where your child may be treated with muscle relaxants (Baclofen) and Botulinum Toxin A muscle injections.

Another group of children with motor concerns are those with neural tube defects or spina bifida. They are seen in the Spina Bifida Clinic (see related article, p. 2).

At CDD, all of our services are tailored to our patients and address all their health care and developmental needs. For more information on these clinics or to schedule an appointment, contact CDD Scheduling at

877-686-0031 (toll-free)
319-353-6900
cdd-scheduling@uiowa.edu



University of Iowa Children's Hospital Autism Center presents
Understanding Autism: Practical Help for Parenting Children with Autism
2012 Workshop Schedule

TOPIC	COST	DATE AND TIME	REGISTER BY
Accessing Coverage for Autism Diagnosis and Treatment	Free	January 14 (10 am to noon)	January 7
Navigating the IEP Process	Free	February 18 (10 am to noon)	February 11
Visual Supports & Systems	Free	March 24 (10 am to noon)	March 17
Promoting Your Child's Functional Communication Skills	Free	April 28 (10 am to noon)	April 21

Registration begins December 15th. To attend a workshop in person register online at www.uihealthcare.org/autismcenterworkshops or call **319-467-5658**. To attend a workshop online via Webinar call **319-467-5658** or email lisa-kemmerer@uiowa.edu

Supervised Play for Children

- Supervised play for children ages 3 to 10 will be provided for a limited number of families for the workshops held in February, March and April. Sorry, we are not able to provide supervised play on January 14th.
- When registering, please let us know the number of children needing supervision and their ages.
- Please let us know if there are any specific behaviors your child displays or accommodations we need to make that may help us provide the best supervision for your child during the workshop.

Workshop Location

University of Iowa Children's Hospital
 Center for Disabilities and Development
 Rembolt Conference Room (first floor)
 100 Hawkins Drive
 Iowa City, IA 52242

Contact Information

Questions or more information?
 Please contact:
 Lisa Kemmerer, Autism Center Coordinator
 UI Children's Hospital Autism Center
 319-467-5658 • lisa-kemmerer@uiowa.edu

Directions and Parking

- Maps and directions available online at: www.uihealthcare.org/yourvisit. The closest available parking is the visitor parking lot in front of the Center for Disabilities and Development. Parking is also available in Ramps 1 or 3.
- There is a fee for parking. Families can use the coined meters in the visitor parking lot or use cash or credit card in Ramps 1 and 3.



Little Houdini Onboard: Help for Parents who have a Carseat Escape Artist

Children need to be buckled up when in a car, that's the law. Iowa's law says:

- Children younger than 1 year and less than 20 pounds must be in a rear facing child seat
- Children 1-5 year must in some type of car seat
- Children who are between 6-17 years old can wear adult seat belts
- The fine for not having your child buckled up is \$25

Sometimes, you do your best to keep your child safe in the car, but they are bound and determined to escape. You need to do what you can to stop them from getting out and maybe getting hurt. You can try changing the behavior or you may need some type of device to keep your child safe.

Start with trying to change their behavior. Make a plan for how they should act the car. Make sure that everyone who drives the child follows the rules.

- Buckle up! Show your child that you wear a seatbelt too!
- Talk to your child about car safety during story time. There are some great books like Byron Barton's **My Car** –

or for older children, Claire Llewellyn's **Watch Out! On the Road**. You can also tell your own story and use pictures as cues.

- Give your child a special toy that travels with them and keeps them busy.
- Set limits and let them know what will happen if there is bad behavior.
- Be sure to praise them when they are being good; ignore the bad behavior as long as it is not a danger.

If your child still has problems and acts out in the car, sit them in the back seat. Be sure that the windows and door are locked. Make sure that your child's car seat is the right size so they are comfortable and want to stay in their seat. The American Academy of Pediatrics **Car Safety Seats Product Listing** will tell you if your child's seat is the right one or right size. This list is updated each year. It also talks about other devices you can use. There is a device called a travel vest for older children. A travel vest hooks up to your car seat belts or to special hooks you have put in. The vest has a back zipper that is hard to take off. You can

get a copy of the list from your doctor or you can find it online at: www.healthychildren.org.

A great place for you to learn more is the National Center for the Safe Transportation of Children with Special Health Care Needs. They are at the Indiana University School of Medicine. The Center has a toll-free hot line at 800-755-0912. The staff can help you with ideas on how to travel with a child who has special needs. You can get specific ideas for your child if they won't stay buckled. You can call them or go online at www.preventinjury.org/literature.asp. They also have a list of people from Iowa who have trained at the Center and can give you more direct help. These people are listed as well at this website at www.preventinjury.org/SNTtrainedPpl.asp.

For more ideas on devices to keep your child safe, contact Iowa Compass at the Center for Disabilities and Development, 800-779-2001. If you are looking for care plans or literature guidance, contact the Disability Resource Library, 800-272-7713.

CenterLines

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Subscription is FREE!

A subscription to **CenterLines for Families** is free. If you would like to subscribe, please send your name and address to:

CenterLines@uiowa.edu

or by regular mail:

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In this issue

Special Gifts for Special People.....	1
CDD's Spina Bifida Clinic.....	2
New Services at CDD.....	3
Understanding Autism 2012 Workshop Schedule.....	4
Little Houdini On Board: Help for Parents who have a Carseat Escape Artist.....	5

CenterLines for Families, the newsletter of the Center for Disabilities and Development at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital, is published four times a year. It provides families with current information on child and adult development, issues affecting people with disabilities, and CDD resources available to them and their families. The newsletter is available in print, in Spanish, and also online at www.uihealthcare.org/cdd. Click on Centerlines for Families.

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The role of the information in this newsletter is not to provide diagnosis or treatment of any illness or condition. We strongly encourage you to discuss the information you find here with your health care and other service providers.