

Children's Health



More Organ Donors Key To Saving Children

(NAPSA)—There is hopeful news for the nearly 2,000 children waiting for the “Gift of Life”—a lifesaving organ transplant. To help as many of these children as possible, a national effort is being made to increase the number of available donors—the key to saving more lives.

It Makes A Difference

When she was just 5 months old, Caitlin’s life was saved by organ donation. Caitlin was born with a life-threatening liver condition and needed a transplant. She received her new liver when another family saw through the grief of losing their son and said “yes” to donation. Today, this cheerful little girl loves life and her family, and charms everyone with her sunny smile.

Her story is one of hope for those still waiting. According to www.organdonor.gov, more than 123,000 individuals of all ages are on the national organ transplant waiting list, waiting for a kidney, heart, intestine, pancreas, lung or liver. About 18 people die each day because they do not receive a new organ in time.

More Donors Are Needed

Despite advances in medical technology, the ability to perform a successful organ transplant still rests on finding a matching donor. Having access to such a donor is more difficult than many realize.

While millions of adults have already registered to be donors, very few people die in circumstances that make them eligible to donate. In most cases, the individuals who actually become organ donors have suffered brain death



Caitlin, an organ recipient, is now enjoying a full life with her family.

in a hospital. Their organs can be transplanted because machines have continued to pump oxygen into their bodies, keeping the organs healthy. However, this represents a very small percentage of all deaths and demonstrates why many more registered donors are needed.

One “Yes” Can Save Many

There are no age restrictions on being an organ donor. People from the very young to the very old have donated organs and through their generous acts have given others a second chance at life. One person can save up to eight lives by donating organs and improve the lives of up to 50 more by donating corneas and tissues.

To register, go to www.organdonor.gov and connect to your state’s donor registry. You should also tell your family and friends about your desire to be a donor. Organdonor.gov is the website of the Department of Health and Human Services’ Division of Transplantation.