

The Kaitlin Marie Bell Foundation Newsletter

Fall 1998

Issue No. 1

Our Mission:

The Kaitlin Marie Bell Foundation is a non-profit organization which supports the needs of medically and physically challenged children in Delaware. We exist to increase lifestyle opportunities and quality of life for recipients by providing equipment and/or services that would not otherwise be affordable.

Board Members

James T. Bell, P.T.A.
- President
Teisha M. Bell
- Vice President
Rebecca Sue M. Sup, M.S.P.T.
- Treasurer
Rebecca J. Bell, R.N., C.B.T.N.
- Secretary
Deborah Kiser, M.S.P.T.
Sharon Swift, C.O.T.A./L.
Chitra Vaidyanathan, M.D.

We are working to become a tax-exempt organization so any donations made can be deducted from your taxes.

Please send donations to:

The
Kaitlin Marie Bell
Foundation
5 Parliament Court
Newark, DE 19711

To Learn...
To Grow...
To Succeed!



Kaitlin's Story By Jim Bell

On June 6, 1994,

in Seaford, DE, Kaitlin Marie Bell began her journey in life. She was precious and beautiful, and holding her for the first time was the best experience I've ever had. In October, she moved with mom and dad to Ohio. She grew and developed as any normal, intelligent child. Her first birthday was celebrated with style. Her family members and all who loved her were there. None of us knew that her life (and ours) was about to be changed forever.

Less than one month later, on July 12, 1995, she was involved in a serious car accident that took the life of her mother. Kaitlin suffered a severe head injury and was flown to Children's Hospital in Columbus, OH. By the time I reached Kaitlin, she was in a coma.

From that day on, I never left her side. She needed her dad and I needed her just as much. As the days went by I could do nothing except think of Kaitlin and what I could do to help her-and I was helpless. All I could do was wait

and hope.

Unfortunately, every discussion with the physicians became increasingly more grim. Her brain was swollen for days before it finally began to diminish. As the swelling subsided, she was able to be taken off the ventilator. Finally she opened her eyes, and I knew that she would never be the same again. She was moved to a regular room soon after that.

Two weeks after her accident I received more bad news. Part of her brain was protruding through one of the many fractures in her skull and she required surgery. The surgery was successful, but there was still a lot of fluid on her brain. With every CAT scan more damage was discovered. Several weeks later it was decided that she needed another surgery. She had severe reflux of her stomach contents and required a G-tube for feeding.

Now Kaitlin was ready for rehab. Her rehab consisted of 6 1/2 months in 5 different facilities. I refused to give up hope and stayed with her every step of the way. She received 2 more surgeries to drain the fluid from her brain along the way. Each time I could see



(continued on page 2)