

# Sickle Cell Anemia Association releases three new publications

Three new publications from the National Association for Sickle Cell Disease Inc., or NASCD, address major issues which affect persons with the sickle cell conditions.

They include prenatal diagnosis of sickle cell anemia, advice for parents and teachers of children with sickle cell anemia and the advantages of summer camp programs for those children.

Charles F. Whitten, M.D., of Detroit, NASCD president, said, "We took our position on prenatal diagnosis of sickle cell anemia because one of the recent advances in the sickle cell field is the ability to make this diagnosis early enough in the pregnancy for parents to make a judgment as to whether or not they wish to continue the pregnancy."

"We are convinced that unless our position is communicated and adopted, a vast number of women with sickle cell trait who are carrying a fetus with sickle cell anemia will be advised by their physicians to have a termination without receiving any in-depth counseling."

The NASCD goal for prenatal diagnosis is to have all women who are pregnant with a child with sickle cell anemia to be able to make informed decisions that they believe are in their best interest with respect to continuing or terminating the pregnancy.

The NASCD pamphlet, addressed to individuals with sickle cell trait and to physicians who provide health care to the black population, describes the required services to achieve that goal, the nature of the counseling that should occur and the appropriate service providers.

A second new publication, the Parent Teacher Guide, tells how parents and teachers can work together to achieve school success for children with sickle cell anemia.

Whitten said that the handbook is an attempt to resolve one of the major problems in sickle cell disease -- the fact that the overwhelming majority of adults with the disease are not self-sufficient, and many are unemployed, on public assistance or being supported by their families.

"We need to break that cycle," he said. "Many individuals with

sickle cell disease are capable of handling any occupation other than one which requires heavy manual labor, but there is a marked discrepancy between their innate abilities and their current status.

"Since there are very few jobs in our society which do not require an education, we must begin with the primary school education process, looking at

how children with sickle cell anemia can get the special considerations they might need to have a successful school experience," Whitten said.

The publication suggests that parents meet with the teacher to discuss special considerations needed by their child. It also includes an "advice for teachers" section, a review of 12 school-related issues involving children

with sickle cell anemia that teachers need to understand in order to respond to the children in an appropriate manner.

The third new publication, which was underwritten by Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, established in memory of Ray A. Kroc, is a discussion of summer camp programs for children with sickle cell anemia.

Whitten said this booklet is

designed to address the problem of a parental tendency to overprotect a chronically ill child.

Although this overprotection may arise out of a loving concern, he said, it can also cause the children's development of a sense of independence to be thwarted and create an inability to function as an independent adult.

"Our studies have shown that there are many positive outcomes

for both parents and children when the child with sickle cell anemia attends a summer camp with healthy children," he said. "Our publication outlines these benefits and answers questions parents may have about sending their children to a camp."

Free copies of the new publications are available from the NASCD, 4221 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90010-3503.

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William Gray

**William H. Gray**  
to speak at Winston Lake YMCA banquet

The Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet for the Winston Lake YMCA will be held Thursday, Dec. 18, at 7 p.m.

The keynote speaker will be Rep. William H. Gray III, D-Pa., who serves as chairman of the House Committee on the Budget of the 99th Congress.

Gray, one of the most visible political personalities in the country, is also a senior minister at Bright Hope Baptist Church in North Philadelphia.

During the occasion, the YMCA will recognize many individuals who have contributed to the progress of the Winston Lake YMCA in 1986.

Tickets are available at the YMCA, Community Shoe Store, Contract Office Furnishings Inc. and Gilmore's Funeral Home. Tickets are \$15 per person or \$110 for a table of eight.

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