

Avoidable Childhood Disability

By 365 Club Members

Many children face starting school with speech and language disabilities that seriously limit learning and socialization with other children. Treating speech and language disabilities effectively depends on early detection, diagnosis and clinical intervention; often around three years of age. This childhood disability too often is neglected resulting in adult limitations including a poor education, lack of self confidence, low self-worth and inadequate social skills. This terrible waste of human resource and quality of life is largely avoidable. The most serious barrier to proper clinical treatment is the cost. Clinical treatment for speech and language disorders is typically long term and therefore expensive. Many, if not most, health and accident insurance excludes entirely or severely limits coverage for speech and language disorders. Scottish Rite recognized this as a national problem and instituted its RiteCare charity which is administered by and through the many Scottish Rite valleys across the United States. The result is that many children in need are provided with the assistance needed for early diagnosis and clinical treatment making it possible to learn and develop normally without feeling limited, excluded or experiencing diminished self worth. Early intervention is always far more cost effective than waiting to deal with the problems of disability after the fact. It is also more humane. While RiteCare was created by Scottish Rite nationally, it depends upon the local valleys to fully fund their own programs. To accomplish this, all RiteCare programs reach out to both their memberships and the public for funding.