

Disease Advocacy Program Relaunches to Form Community of FighterMoms

By Steve Mullen / Fight SMA

Dated: May 10, 2007

The FighterMom program, which assists, supports, and educates parents who have become disease advocates fighting a disorder affecting their children, is relaunching this Mother's Day Weekend.

Richmond, Virginia (May 10, 2007) – A “fighter mom” is a mother with a purpose. She is organized to fight a disease or disorder that’s affecting her child, by raising money for research, raising awareness, and making sure everyone knows there’s a horrible disease that needs our attention. The FighterMom (<http://www.fightsma.org/fightermom>) program salutes these special moms this Mother’s Day Weekend, and is now providing them a place where they can easily find one another. The program, developed by international nonprofit organization Fight SMA, is relaunching this Mother’s Day weekend as part of an expansion from an informational resource to a community.

FighterMom is the brainchild of Joe and Martha Slay, who founded Fight SMA in 1991 after their son, Andrew, was diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). While theirs is a specific fight against the leading genetic killer of children under two, they believe that the lessons they’ve learned are lessons that can be taught to people fighting other diseases.

As part of the relaunch, the FighterMom website has been redesigned, not only to better present information but also to include the FighterMom Community. The new community includes message boards, the FighterMom Blog, the ability for visitors to easily create their own blogs, and the Fighting Back Podcast, which features inspirational stories about people and families fighting serious or incurable diseases.

“Isolation is one of the biggest problems facing FighterMoms, partly because in many cases you really are one of very few people dealing with your disease,” said Mrs. Slay, who is president of Fight SMA. “With this relaunch, we want to create a place with so many like-minded people that visitors can’t help but realize there are others out there just like them.”

The new site is also more organized, and provides a place for visitors to learn about companies like Children’s Wear Digest that support the FighterMom program.

One thing that hasn’t changed is the FighterMom Manual. Written by Joe and Martha Slay, it costs individuals only the price of shipping. The manual includes everything they can teach about how they built Fight SMA. New or veteran FighterMoms can use it to educate themselves on topics such as how to organize and strategies to get attention for your disease.

“People who are organizing to fight a disease run into many of the same problems, even though their situations may be vastly different,” said Mr. Slay. “We believe we can provide a great deal of help to them, and by creating the FighterMom Community we can also provide a place where parents of sick children can learn from and support each other.”

About Fight SMA

Headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, Fight SMA (also known as Andrew's Buddies) is an international nonprofit group dedicated to accelerating research for a treatment or a cure for spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), a neuromuscular disorder that kills more babies than any other genetic disease. For more information on spinal muscular atrophy and Fight SMA, please visit <http://www.fightsma.org>.

About FighterMom

Developed by the founders of Fight SMA, the FighterMom program provides information and support for parents who have become advocates fighting a disease affecting their child. The FighterMom Community includes message boards, a news blog, the ability for visitors to create their own blogs, and the Fighting Back Podcast, which features inspirational stories of people and families fighting serious or incurable diseases. The community provides a place for FighterMoms to gather and trade information and support. For more information, please visit <http://www.fightsma.org/fightermom> .

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