



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**For more information:
Ryan Dumas (407) 852-3305**

Breaking down the barriers: New UCP playground offers play for children with and without disabilities

Lake Mary, Fla. –UCP of Central Florida is breaking down barriers. UCP’s Lake Mary Center has replaced its pre-existing playground with a new boundless playground, one of 50 in Governor Jeb Bush’s initiative “*Play Matters for Children of All Abilities*”. Boundless Playgrounds benefit children with and without disabilities by providing opportunities for all children to play together side-by-side.

The Center’s original playground was damaged by one of the many hurricanes during the devastating 2004 hurricane season. Because play is an important way children learn to navigate the world, several organizations stepped forward to help UCP rebuild and enhance its playground so children with developmental and sensory disabilities can actively, safely and enjoyably participate with their peers without disabilities.

“Who would have thought a hurricane could create such a beautiful playground?” exclaimed Marife Gomez, Center Director. “Children with disabilities are no longer limited in what they can do on the playground. With the help of partners from the community, barriers have been broken and children with and without disabilities are able to enjoy the true playground experience.”

Funding and assistance for the project was provided by the Florida Hurricane Relief Fund, established by Governor Jeb Bush and managed by nonprofit Volunteer Florida Foundation, Seminole County Government, The Home Depot and JP Morgan Chase Foundation.

The Florida Hurricane Relief Fund was established by Governor Bush in 2004 to help with hurricane recovery needs not met by government and insurance and has proven instrumental in the 2005 recovery. The fund is fueled entirely by private-sector donations. Since its inception, the fund has raised more than \$23 million in pledges, donations and in-kind services to aid Florida communities with hurricane recovery.

Founded in 1955, UCP of Central Florida, a non-profit organization, operates six child development centers in the Central Florida area for children with all types of disabilities and developmental delays including cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, spina bifida, autism, and others. For more information, call 407-852-3300 or visit www.ucpcf.org.

###