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**Apraxia Awareness Day Elevates Understanding About Children Who Struggle To Speak**

PITTSBURGH, PA (Date) – On May 14, 2016, the Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America (CASANA) invites communities worldwide to become aware and educated about the needs, challenges, and abilities of children affected by apraxia. Apraxia is among the most severe speech and communication problems in children. Children affected by apraxia of speech have difficulty planning and producing the precise, highly refined and specific series of movements of the tongue, lips, jaw, and palate that are necessary to produce clear, intelligible speech.

“Raising awareness about apraxia is crucial to assuring that affected children and youth throughout the world are provided with the help that they need in order to fully realize their potential. With appropriate speech therapy and the support of family and community, most children with apraxia of speech will become capable verbal communicators. Without appropriate help, that possibility seriously diminishes. This is what is at stake,” says Sharon Gretz, Executive Director of the Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America (CASANA). The organization also advocates for improved services and funding to support the needs of children with apraxia.

Proclamations and resolutions are being issued by state level legislative bodies and CASANA is pursuing the placement of a statement acknowledging Apraxia Awareness Day in the Congressional Record again this year. CASANA will be using social media to mobilize families, friends, and professionals to help educate and raise apraxia awareness. An online Apraxia Awareness Day store will be set up to purchase t-shirts, buttons, and other awareness items. Families in many locations are planning local activities to heighten awareness in their communities.

For more information on Apraxia Awareness Day visit the Facebook page established: http://tinyurl.com/kvk3a3v or this webpage of ideas to commemorate Apraxia Awareness Day: <http://www.apraxia-kids.org/?p=6698>

About The Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America (CASANA)

CASANA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in Pittsburgh, PA dedicated to improving the system of support in the lives of children with apraxia of speech so that each child is afforded their best opportunity to develop speech and full communication. CASANA was founded in 2000 and is the only national nonprofit dedicated to those with childhood apraxia of speech (CAS) and their families. The organization raises awareness; provides support, information and education; and funds and supports CAS research. Learn more about CASANA and apraxia at Apraxia-KIDS.org.