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November is National Epilepsy Awareness Month: It's Time to Get Seizure Smart!
The Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey Joins Nationwide Effort to Raise Awareness about Epilepsy

TRENTON – This November, in recognition of National Epilepsy Awareness Month, the Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey (EFNJ) joins a national movement to help America Get Seizure Smart! The goal is to educate New Jersey residents about epilepsy, seizure recognition and seizure first aid.

“One in 100 Americans has epilepsy, yet many people have serious misperceptions about how to recognize seizure symptoms and provide the right kind of aid,” said Eric Joice, Executive Director. “This month, we are joining organizations around the country to raise awareness about the importance of epilepsy education.”

The theme for the month—Get Seizure Smart—challenges everyone to learn how to identify a seizure and know how to respond when someone is having a seizure. The campaign website, GetSeizureSmart.org, delivers tools to help people spread the word about National Epilepsy Awareness Month. It features an interactive Get Seizure Smart quiz, seizure first aid fact sheets, a calendar of awareness month events, and other resources. Throughout the month, the Epilepsy Foundation's national office and the Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey will motivate users on Facebook, Twitter and the Epilepsy Foundation's eCommunities site to take action with the “30 Days, 30 Ways” list of daily calls to action to raise awareness.

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During November, the Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey will continue their statewide fifth-grade workshop series, “Thinking About Epilepsy”, which aims to change perceptions of epilepsy at an early age by teaching tolerance and compassion for their peers with epilepsy. Staff will educate students on how the brain works, what causes seizures, simple tips to detect seizures and how to provide simple first aid to their peers to empower the class to be active, compassionate participants. Last year, EFNJ trained 8,870 students in 129 schools across New Jersey.

When a person has two or more unprovoked seizures, they are considered to have epilepsy. A seizure is an abnormal electrical discharge in the brain. Seizures can be caused by head injuries, lack of oxygen at birth, brain tumors and other health conditions. This year, another 200,000 people in our country will be diagnosed with epilepsy. Almost 25% of all epilepsy diagnoses each year in the United States involve children under the age of 15. To date, there is no known cure.

For more information about epilepsy or National Epilepsy Awareness Month activities, please contact Andrea Racioppi at (732) 528-8080 or via email at aracioppi@efnj.com

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The Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey (EFNJ), an affiliate of the National Epilepsy Foundation and the Family Resource Network, provides programs for families living with epilepsy, such as a residential summer camp, support groups, scholarships, referral programs and respite care. EFNJ also institutes free educational presentations about seizure first aid and police training. To learn more, please visit www.efnj.com.