

The Detroit News

Tuesday, October 28, 2008

detnews.com

Metro Edition



Photos by Robin Buckson / The Detroit News

Noah Newport, 9, plays with his brother, Evan, 6, at their Royal Oak home. Chris Reynaert is with Pediatric Special Care.

Rx: Comforts of home

Nursing service keeps children out of hospitals

BY DELORES FLYNN
The Detroit News

SOUTHFIELD — Doctors said Evan Newport wouldn't live past the age of 2. The Royal Oak child was born in 2002 with terminal heart disease and other complications because of a genetic condition called Noonan's syndrome. A ventilator and feeding tube quickly became a way of life.

Six years later, Evan is still alive, and his parents, Penni and Scott Newport, say it's because they took him home to a more nurturing environment after a 10-month stay in two hospitals. The family, which includes son Noah, 9, built a 12-by-12-foot intensive care unit in their with the help of Pediatric Special Care, an in-home nursing and medical equipment agency.

"I was driving almost 100 miles round-trip daily to Ann Arbor to see him, and my wife was living in the hospital," said Scott Newport. "He is terminal, but we wanted to give Evan as much of a normal life as we could. And it has made such a significant impact."



Evan kisses Reynaert, a nurse with the in-home nursing and medical equipment agency that will soon celebrate 20 years in Metro Detroit.

"But we couldn't do it without assistance because he needs 24-hour care. The pediatric nurses help our family function and survive."

In November, Pediatric Special

Pediatric Special Care

For information, visit pediatricsspecialcare.com or call (800) 282-7337.

Care will celebrate 20 years of helping parents throughout Metro Detroit take their special needs children home on ventilators. It's the only pediatric nursing agency in the state, said Karen McKinney, who co-owns it with her husband, Harry.

The Southfield-based agency cares for about 100 patients annually. Most have suffered complications from premature births and have respiratory, neurological and nutritional problems as well as spinal cord injuries. Ages range from 6 months to 21 years.

"Before we started, these children would live the rest of their lives on breathing machines in hospitals until they either came off the ventilators or passed away," said McKinney, a registered nurse. "When you bring them home in that loving environment, they have a better opportunity to blossom, which can lead to more optimal health for the child."