



## Welcome to Protected Tomorrows TODAY™

### This Week at Protected Tomorrows®

What a cold week we have had here in Illinois. Those of you in warmer climates just don't know what you are missing! As I was forced inside to stay out of the below zero weather, I thought what a perfect time to start a better communication program with my family. There are so many thoughts about my family that I have not shared yet. What better time than the present, so I took out my journal. And thus, Family Communication will be the focus of this newsletter.

*Mary Anne Ehlert*  
*President, Protected Tomorrows, Inc.*

### Family Communication is the topic on WGN Radio with Steve Cochran

Protected Tomorrows was the guest on the Steve Cochran show on WGN Radio on Friday, January 18, for the drive home time. Steve has a brother with some disabilities which he has shared with his listening audience in the past. So the topic of the importance of communication in a family with an individual with a disability is near and dear to his heart. We talked about history and how much those family members know about how to help and support. The sharing of the big things as well as the little tidbits of information is so key to the continued success and quality of the life of the individual with a disability. Steve shared the most recent successes of his brother, and how proud he is that his brother has been able to understand himself and had learned how to cope. And there is the underlying hope that the success continues, along with the worry that those beyond each of us can provide the continued support that is needed. The importance of passing the torch, of responsibility of support, along with the needed instructions, is key to continued progress.

### My Special Life™ Workbook

**Capture all there is to know about your child or loved one with special needs in the My Special Life™ workbook.**

What a beautiful gift to give yourself or someone you know with a loved one with a developmental disability—whether it's a parent who has a child with autism, cerebral palsy or Down syndrome, or a friend who has a parent with Alzheimer's disease or Parkinson's disease. What a comfort to know if anything happens to you, a future caregiver will have all the information he or she needs to help your loved one live a safe and fulfilling life. It will make your loss less traumatic with a continuum of care in place. No searching for a specialist's phone number, figuring out a medical schedule or questioning a certain behavior.

The My Special Life workbook touches on all the key areas of life—home, school, work, play, health, financial security and legal issues. All the information documented is handed to a future caregiver if you become ill, disabled or pass away.

My Special Life helps families note:

- Family history
- Daily Routine
- Community Involvement
- Likes and Dislikes
- Friends
- Intervention Programs & Schools
- Employment & Life Skills
- Medical History & Support
- Emotional Well-being & Behaviors
- Financial & Legal Issues

The My Special Life workbook is similar to a "letter of intent"—a non-binding legal document written by a guardian as part of a future care plan to provide guidance. This workbook not only describes an individual's past and present situation, but also your vision for their future. It's recommended families review and revise the information in the workbook annually—perhaps on the individual's birthday to see all the person has accomplished in the past year and their goals for their next year of life.



For more information on the My Special Life Workbook, see [www.protectedtomorrows.com](http://www.protectedtomorrows.com) or call 1-847-522-8086.