



Media Contacts:  
Greg Pitkoff  
GRiP Communications LLC  
(718) 404-9277  
[greg@gripcommpr.com](mailto:greg@gripcommpr.com)

or

Daniela Weiss  
YAFA Marketing and Consulting LLC  
(646) 284-6144  
[yafaconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:yafaconsulting@gmail.com)

For Immediate Release

## **NEW “MAGICAL APPAREL<sup>SM</sup>” LINE INSPIRES CHILDREN TO EXPAND THEIR MINDS, IMPROVE KEY SKILLS AND ESCHEW THE “SPECIAL NEEDS” STIGMA**

### **Weighted Costumes Promote Imaginative Play and Inclusion**

Philadelphia, PA, August 25, 2008 – Just in time for Halloween and the start of a new school year, Fun and Function LLC has introduced “Magical Apparel<sup>SM</sup>,” an affordable new line of realistic and fantasy dress-up products suitable for children age 3 to 8, with enhanced features tailored to those with special needs. Magical Apparel promotes inclusion by allowing all children, including those challenged by sensory processing disorders (SPD) and autism, to explore their passions for imaginative role play together, sharing costumes without the stigma or hindrance of looking different.

Retailing for \$19.99 to \$39.99, the Magical Apparel line includes realistic rescue outfits to let children portray firefighters, police officers and EMTs, as well as fantasy outfits to capture the spotlight as fairy princesses and ballerinas. The versatile outfits are constructed of a heavy-duty cotton/poly blend with elastic panels for one-size-fits-all convenience. Incorporated laces, snaps, buttons, zippers and hook-and-loop closures help children develop their fine motor skills. For children who need extra sensory input, interior pockets allow optional weights to be safely inserted.

Magical Apparel costumes are available through Fun and Function’s mail-order catalog and website ([www.funandfunction.com](http://www.funandfunction.com)), and are being distributed by other online stores and catalogs. Additional retail partners are being added as the market for special needs has grown dramatically: Nine million, or 13%, of U.S. children under 18 years have a special health care need, according to Safe Kids USA.

Parents, educators, therapists and retailers who serve schools and early childhood programs already have been responding to the preview of Magical Apparel with overwhelming acclaim, celebrating the line’s ability to provide more seamless integration of children with special needs.

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## Fun and Function Introduces “Magical Apparel”/2

"Our staff is very excited about the Magical Apparel for our dramatic play areas," said Leanne Grace, Associate Director of Curriculum and Program at Dallas, Pa.-based Hildebrandt Learning Centers LLC, which provides high-quality child care programs for progressive employers looking to promote a “family-friendly” atmosphere in the workplace. She described the line as a great fit for Hildebrandt’s inclusive child care centers at universities, corporations and government agencies.

"We serve the general population and we're seeing more and more children with identified behaviors outside of the norm," Grace observed. "These outfits are a great investment since they have multiple uses that engage all children, rather than isolating those who are different. All of our children will enjoy dressing up and pretending to be a firefighter, princess or police officer."

Magical Apparel also will appear in the 2009 Becker’s School Supplies catalog ([www.shopbecker.com](http://www.shopbecker.com)). “We’re impressed with the thoughtful design and high quality of the outfits,” said Leslie Silk Eslinger, Education and Product Development Specialist at Becker’s. “Schools are becoming more inclusive for children with different learning abilities. We look for versatile products like Magical Apparel that serve multiple purposes. The popular themes and quality craftsmanship will hold up well to the repeated use typical of the school and day care environment.”

Weiss was inspired to launch Fun and Function, and more recently to develop Magical Apparel, when she found her own daughter to be experiencing a sensory processing disorder (SPD), a condition marked by hypersensitivity to certain sensory stimuli and motor coordination difficulties. She said she is as excited to be introducing the line for her family’s own needs as well as for other parents concerned about developmental opportunities for their young children.

“As a mother and occupational therapist, I’m committed to helping children reach their full potential,” said Weiss. “Our products are designed with pediatric therapists, and we test them with our toughest customers – children. We’re especially proud of Magical Apparel, which lets them practice dressing and fanciful role play with soothing sensory input for those who need that reassuring ‘hug.’”

### **About Fun and Function LLC**

Launched in 2005 by pediatric occupational therapist Aviva Weiss and her husband, Haskel, Fun and Function LLC ([www.funandfunction.com](http://www.funandfunction.com)) offers engaging, durable and functional play and therapy products at affordable prices, including an exclusive line of scooters and portable writing kits. When she recognized that her own infant daughter had sensory processing difficulties, Aviva Weiss was frustrated by the lack of kid-friendly styling and high prices of existing special-needs products. She set out with a passion for eliciting the potential of all children, and began designing products that help kids feel good and achieve their best. Today, the company offers hundreds of innovative products marked by affordability and durability, scoring increasing points with parents, pediatric therapists and educators. For more information or a free catalog, visit [www.funandfunction.com](http://www.funandfunction.com) or call 1-800-231-6329.