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January 15, 2009 - Eugene, Ore. Cognitopia Software, LLC, introduces its new life management software application, Picture Planner™, an easy-to-use, icon-based personal organizer for individuals with cognitive disabilities such as autism, intellectual disabilities, traumatic brain injury, elders, and others.

Using a metacognitive approach to augment planning and decision-making ability, Picture Planner™ is a picture-based scheduling system that provides a simplified and intuitive tool for time management and activity planning for individuals with cognitive disabilities. Users create activities by making selections from an image library to select a time, describe what the activity is and add other information such as, who is doing it, where it will happen, things to bring, and so on.

“Picture Planner™ is a tool to help people with cognitive challenges live more independently,” says Lead Developer, Tom Keating, Ph.D. “It enhances self-management and quality of life for individuals who need help to plan activities and stay on track with the help of multimedia prompts and reminders.”

With its use of symbols and pictures along with text-to-speech feedback, and an all single-click interface, Picture Planner is designed for people with a wide range of cognitive abilities. From young students in a classroom needing reminders of re-occurring activities to homes with family members needing assistance, Picture Planner™ provides support for activity scheduling and expression of personal choice.

“The use of customizable icons means that users can make their planners as personalized as they wish. Users can make personalized icons of people they know and the things they do,” says Keating. “The more familiar the program is for someone, the more comfortable it becomes. It’s all about providing opportunities to learn better self-management and creating cognitively accessible software programs toward that end.

Picture Planner™ serves as a full-featured activity organizer while incorporating a number of design features that make it cognitively accessible to users with limited reading ability and a need for a simplified software interface.

Picture Planner™ is compatible with the Macintosh OS X and the Windows XP and Vista operating systems. Schedules created with Picture Planner™ may be printed out and used in a reminder booklet or they can be exported to Windows Mobile devices (PDAs and SmartPhones)

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