

# Son's disease spurs parents to aid others

By **SUSANA BARCIELA**

Herald Staff Writer

When Coral Gables resident Jeffry Ullman started wondering about what it would be like when his diabetic son began public school, he set in motion a chain of events that will help all of Dade's diabetic children and their teachers.

Ullman, whose 3-year-old son Zachary is diabetic, became concerned after Sharon Lopez told a parents' support group about a massive insulin reaction her 6-year-old son Ryan had at Calusa Elementary School.

"The receptionist was terrified. When you don't know what diabetes is and a child has an insulin reaction, it's very frightening for the adults in charge," said Lopez, the assistant principal at J.R.E. Lee Opportunity School.

Fortunately, Ryan's teacher knew what to do; Fire Rescue was called and Ryan recovered after treatment at a hospital.

But Lopez and Ullman wanted to better educate the educators.

Ullman, an IBM account systems engineer, obtained a \$1,800 grant from IBM to publish a brochure about diabetes to give to area teachers.

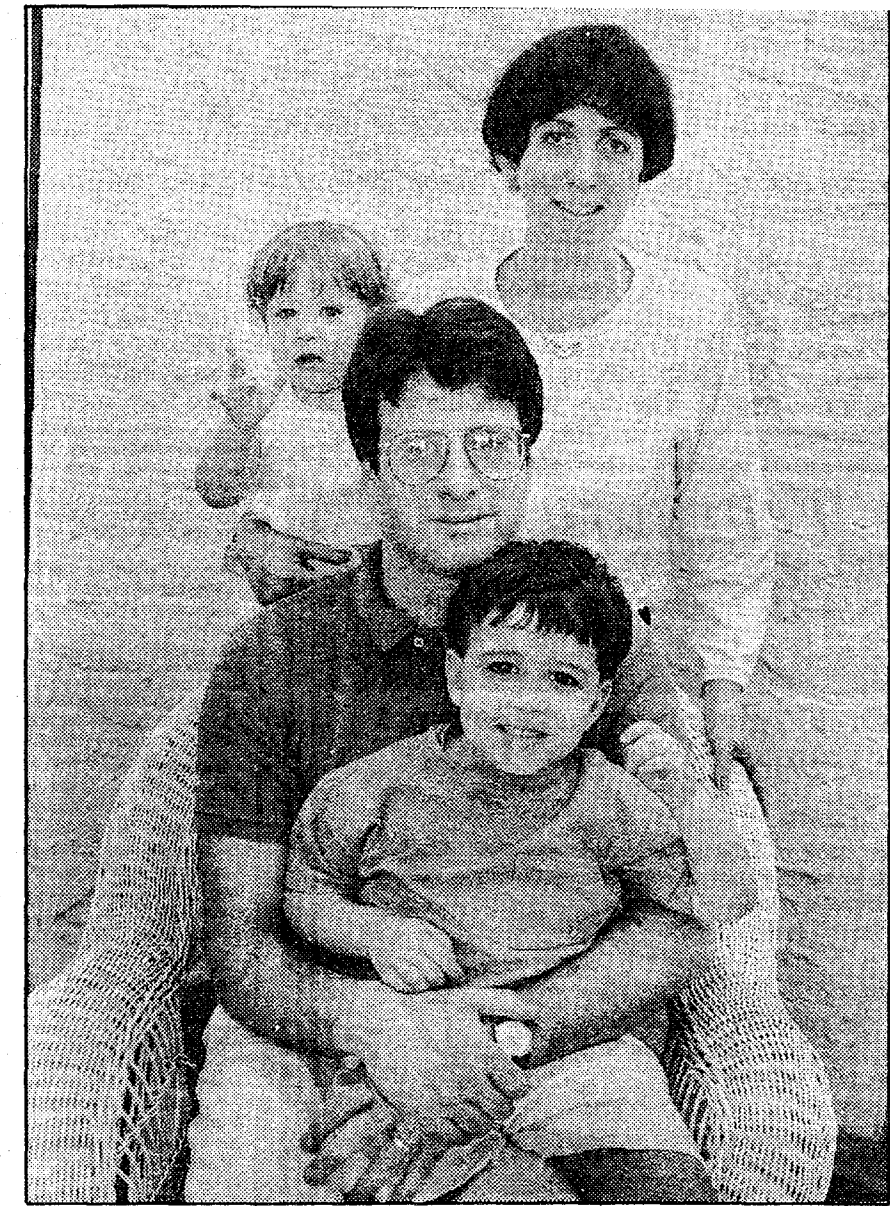
"Thinking about my son starting school soon, we wanted to increase teachers' awareness about the disease," Ullman said.

Ullman applied for the grant to IBM's Fund for Community Service, established to encourage employees and their spouses to participate in community activities.

The pamphlet, *Important Facts For School Personnel About Diabetes*, was produced by the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation and will be distributed next week to Dade, Broward and Palm Beach school boards, said Cindy Diaz, foundation associate director of public relations and marketing.

Diabetes occurs when the pancreas can't manufacture the insulin required to metabolize the glucose in food.

There are more than 1 million people in Florida with diabetes, many of them school-age children. It's the leading cause of blindness, stroke, heart and kidney diseases and the third-leading cause



**RAUL RUBIERA** / Miami Herald Staff

**FAMILY PORTRAIT:** Jeffry Ullman holds son Zachary, 3, who has diabetes. His wife, Ellen, holds daughter Sacha, 1.

of death in the United States, said Barbara Singer, director of annual support for the foundation.

Ullman and his wife, Ellen, have been diabetes foundation volunteers since Zachary was 15 months old and diagnosed as diabetic.

The Ullmans and Lopez attend a support group for families of diabetics that meets in South Miami.

The Ullmans also would like to start a support group in Coral Gables for families with diabetic preschoolers. Anyone interested should call Ellen Ullman at 441-1415 between 10 a.m. and 9 p.m. any day.

## DIABETES HELP

**For information** about diabetes, call the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation at 477-3437 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

**For educators** and parents who want a copy of *Important Facts For School Personnel About Diabetes*, ask for Cindy Diaz.

**For information** on diabetes support groups, or to volunteer, ask for Barbara Singer.