

TeleFamilies Times

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SUGGESTED WEBLINKS

FAMILY VOICES[®]
of Minnesota
Keeping families at the center of health care.

www.familyvoicesofminnesota.org

Family Voices connects families of children, youth, and young adults with special health care needs and disabilities with one another. They offer a **Parent-to Parent Program** that matches families with an experienced Volunteer Support Parent who has received specialized training. The volunteer can provide peer support, a caring ear, and ideas to meet all the challenges of caring for a special needs child (and the rest of the family.) Request a match (or volunteer) online for the program.



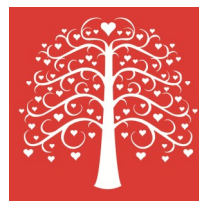
www.parentingspecialneeds.org

The **Special Needs Parenting** magazine has articles to guide parents in many aspects of care for their special needs child as well as themselves. The publication is free. Subscribers receive the magazine every other month via email.

The Research Behind Taking Care of Yourself

The month of February is often associated with relationships and love. In that spirit, we would like to encourage you to take time to reflect on your personal relationships and to make time for yourself. Below we have listed some tips and resources that may help you get started

- Close your eyes and take a deep breath or two. Don't think, just breathe.
- Schedule "dates" with one of your children, your spouse or significant other, your parent, a friend, or a favorite relative. It does not have to cost money, be grand, or take a lot of time.
- Take five minutes to share one good thing that happened each day – it snowed, it didn't snow, my favorite shirt was clean...keep it simple.
- Take 15 minutes to play a game without needing to "learn" anything, sing a song, or be silly.
- Take a hot bath or shower without running through your mental to-do list. "Pause and refresh" as the soda pop commercial says.



Research and parenting literature stresses the need for balance in our lives and for self-care. Self-care is even more important when caring for family members--young or old. Being mindful and having a positive sense of belonging is important for health. Research demonstrates that the practice of

mindfulness quiets the stress response, improves emotional regulation, and contributes to a sense of well-being. These effects have been observed not only in practice but also in scans of the brains of people who practiced mindfulness on a regular basis. Social connection is also essential for healthy minds. A sense of belonging has been shown to promote the growth of new brain cells. Henry Emmons discusses approaches to mindfulness and resiliency in his book "The Chemistry of Joy Workbook" and on the website www.partnersin-resilience.com.

Tell us what you think

Many families are entering their final year of participation in the TeleFamilies study. A final survey is sent to everyone and should take approximately 25 minutes to complete. The final survey includes questions about the study and asks for your ideas about how the study could be improved. *We are interested in your feedback.* We will send a \$20 Target gift card as a small token of our appreciation upon receipt of the completed survey. Families will also continue to receive the TeleFamilies newsletter through July 2013.

"A life without love
is like a year without summer."
— Swedish Proverb



Meet Maggie Erickson, Volunteer



Maggie Erickson

Maggie is 21 years old. She graduated from Highland Park High School and completed transition in the Focus Beyond Transition Services program (<http://focusbeyond.spps.org/>) of the St. Paul Schools.

Maggie loves computers and in her last year of transition in the school she completed an internship at the Ramsey County Courts performing data entry.

Maggie started doing data entry for the TeleFamilies study in the fall of 2012. She loves being part of the study 'team.' In her free time, she can be found participating in many Special Olympics Minnesota athletics such as bowling, track and field, softball and swimming. She is involved in the Highland Friendship Club and the Northern Elite adaptive cheer team. Maggie also has a part time job at the neighborhood Dairy Queen. In the future, Maggie would like to take some online college classes and go to Hollywood to see her favorite stars!

“Plenty of people miss their share of happiness, not because they never found it, but because they didn’t stop to enjoy it.”
— William Feather



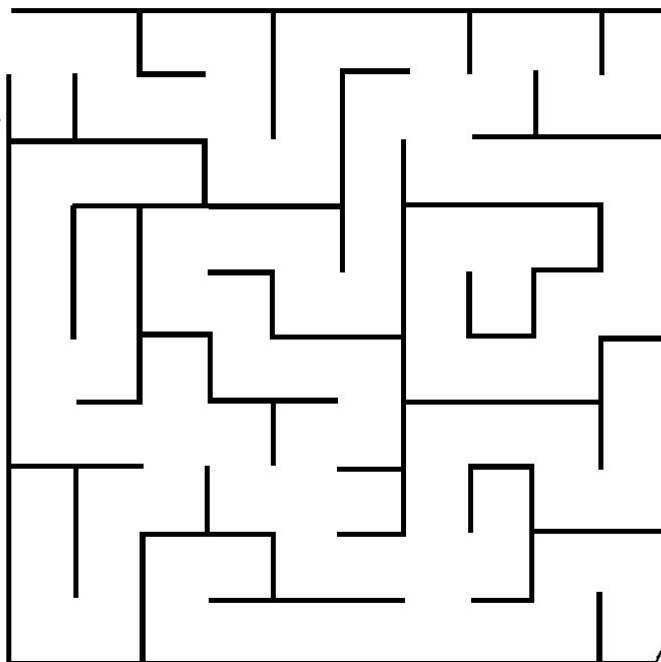
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Kids Corner

Penguin's Home

Help your penguin friend find his home.



Sources: <http://www.familiesonlinemagazine.com/penguinmazejaki.jpg>

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