

Community Links

April 2020



“To provide quality services in a cost-effective manner through innovation, leadership, and the cooperation of dedicated people.”

2020 Census

Participate in the 2020 Census!

By April 2020, all households throughout the United States will be required to participate in the 2020 Census via email, phone, or mail. Over the next ten years, these numbers will be used for the following:

- Funding for programs such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Program (SNAP), Highway Planning and Construction, and Low Income Home Energy Assistance
- Funding for Civil Rights and Advocacy programs
- Funding for education and student loans
- The number of congressional districts in Minnesota

continued on page 2

**Washington
County**
COMMUNITY
SERVICES

**Please double-check that events listed in this newsletter have not been postponed or cancelled before attending.*

COVID-19

The past month has been uncertain and difficult, and we hope you and your loved ones are healthy and safe. Our hearts go out to those who are impacted by COVID-19. With schools and employment programs closing we understand this puts additional hardships on families and care providers. We are working closely with the Department of Human Services to get direction on changes in service delivery that may assist in keeping folks with Intellectual and Developmental disabilities safe. The County Board directed that all public-facing services be suspended starting Wednesday, March 18. This includes the county’s eight libraries, the Government Center, our service centers, license centers, and all other locations where public facing services are provided. The County Board will continue to re-evaluate this suspension at their regular meetings. Due to this suspension, county employees, who are able to, have been asked to work remotely for the safety of themselves and the people we serve.

County government services will continue to function, but in a different way. The Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Unit continues to provide services but for everyone’s safety will not be providing face-to-face contacts or attending face-to-face meetings. All meetings will be postponed or changed to be held via phone conference or utilizing technology. Social workers continue to be available by email and phone. We are hopeful that by implementing these measures we can ensure the health and safety of the people we serve, their families, caregivers, and Washington County staff. We also want to express our sincere appreciation for the healthcare workers and care providers. You are truly the heroes.

For additional information on policy changes, visit:
<https://mn.gov/dhs/waivers-and-modifications>.

COVID-19 Resources

Activities for Children

- [ABC Mouse.com Early Learning Academy](#)
- [At-Home Activities & Resources](#) (UM-NSU-CARD)
- [Fluency & Fitness](#)

continued on page 2

continued from 2020 Census on page 1

Due to the high participation rate in 2010, Minnesota received high amounts of funding in these areas over the past 10 years. To ensure this funding continues, MCD is encouraging full participation for everyone in the 2020 Census.

While the Census no longer tracks which individuals have disabilities, the Census Bureau has identified people with disabilities as a group that is “hard-to-count,” mainly because past versions of the Census were inaccessible. This year the Census will be accessible. Census emails follow Section 508 accessibility laws and paper copies can be requested in Braille or large print. The Census is also translated into 59 different languages, including ASL (in video format).

Participating in the Census does not make your information public. According to Title 13 of U.S. Code, data collected for the Census is secure and safe. Information from the Census is not shared with any other government entity.

For more information, visit www.disability.state.mn.us/census-2020.

SECAC Disability Walk 2020

We are excited to host our first “DisAbility Pride Walk” on Sunday, **May 17, 2020** at Normandale Lake in Bloomington, MN. This opportunity will engage members of the community, children, and adults with special needs and their caregivers, family, and friends to raise awareness and show their support. This event is the first of its kind in Bloomington; it is free and open to the public.

continued on page 3

continued from COVID-19 Resources on page 1

- [How to Survive the Corona Quarantine With Your Kids Home](#)

Artist Supports

- [COVID-19 Freelance Artist Resources](#)
- [Emergency Funding Resources for Artists](#) (Springboard for the Arts)

Childcare

- [Cities Care Collective](#): Facebook group connecting people in need of childcare with providers offering paid or volunteer support.
- [MN COVIDsitters](#): U of M nursing students helping healthcare providers in the Twin Cities/Metro Area manage their households while serving at the frontlines during the coronavirus outbreak.
- [YMCA](#): Check your local chapter.
- [YMCA Update Hub](#): Site cancellations and postponed events.

Clothing

- [Keen Footwear](#)

Delivery Services

- [COVID-19 Delivery Twin Cities Metro, MN](#): A Facebook group of community members volunteering to help each other with delivery and shopping.

Fitness

- [Big River Yoga Minneapolis Schedule](#)
- [Peloton App: Extended Free Trial to 90 Days](#)
- [Planet Fitness to Offer Free At-Home Workout Classes Via Live Stream](#) (*USA Today*)

Food

- [FoodPantries.org](#) (Minnesota Food Pantries)
- [Free Lunches to Students While K-12 Schools are Closed](#)
- [A Growing List of Restaurants Offering Free Meals](#)
- [MealConnect](#)
- [Minnesota Food Helpline](#) (Hunger Solutions)
- [Providing Urgently Needed Meals Around the Clock - Our Response to Coronavirus](#) (Second Harvest Heartland)
- SNAP: Apply over the phone by calling 844-764-5513 or 651-209-7963 or visit www.2harvest.org/SNAP

Internet

- [Charter to Offer Free Access to Spectrum Broadband and Wi-Fi for 60 Days for New K-12 and College Student Households and More](#)
- [Comcast Announces Comprehensive COVID-19 Response to Help Keep Americans Connected to the Internet](#)
- [Wireless Minneapolis: Free Temporary Services in Response to COVID-19](#)

Remote Work

- [Remote Working in the Era of COVID-19](#)

Restricted Shopping for High Risk Groups

- Cub: 6-7 a.m.
- Lund's & Byers's: 7-8 a.m.

School & Special Education

- [Fact Sheet: Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Schools While Protecting the Civil Rights of Students](#) (U.S. Dept. of Education: Office for Civil Rights)

continued on page 3

continued from SECAC Disability Walk 2020 on page 2

T-shirts are available to purchase by clicking the 'tickets' link. **If you would like to pick up your t-shirt prior to the event, please stop by Oak Grove Middle School cafeteria Friday, May 15 between 4-7 p.m.** You are also welcome to pick them up at the walk. We encourage everyone to pre-order their shirts if possible. This will help us get the correct amount of shirts ordered and a tally of participants for the walk. *No refunds or exchanges.*

Noon: Keynote speaker: Andrea Zuber, CEO of The Arc Minnesota followed by participants walking, rolling, and strolling around the lake in unity.

Sunday, May 17 • Noon-3 p.m.
Normandale Lake Bandshell
Bloomington, MN

Event will take place rain or shine! For questions about this event please contact: Andrea Pehrson by calling 952-681-6513 or emailing apehrson@isd271.org.

[Link to event](#)

West Metro Learning Connections Summer Programs

Summer programming at West Metro Learning Connections includes your choice of social skills therapy, therapeutic recreation, including day camp, as well as extended school year services.

• Social Skills Therapy

Our social skills therapy courses provide instruction, demonstrations, modeling, practice, and promotion of transfer and generalization to increase skills and opportunities

continued on page 4

continued from COVID-19 Resources on page 2

- [Latest Guidance from Minnesota Department of Education on Special Education and COVID-19](#)

Unemployment

- [Minnesota Unemployment Insurance](#)

Other

- [AA - Online Meetings During COVID-19](#)
- [AA - Phone Meetings](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources](#) (University of Minnesota Medical School Program in Health Disparities Research)
- [Greater Twin Cities COVID-19 Response & Recovery Fund](#)
- [Minneapolis COVID-19 Resource Guide](#)
- [Plain Language Booklets on COVID-19 for People with Disabilities](#) (Green Mountain Self-Advocates)
- [Twin Cities/MN Mutual Aid Resources for COVID-19](#)
- [Woodbury Coronavirus Resource Guide](#) (*Woodbury Magazine*)

Washington County Adult & Disability Services: Resource List

Programs, services, agencies, and other resources that are not a part of Washington County Community Services or contracted with Washington County Community Services do not constitute endorsement by Washington County. This list is not conclusive of all resources that may be available to support you, your family, or people you are supporting.

Chore Services

- **Community Outreach:** Developed to assist older adults and individuals with disabilities living in the Stillwater Area School District (ISD #834). By engaging volunteers, Chore Services helps fill requests for basic home maintenance assistance, such as window washing, gardening, minor indoor repairs, and cleaning, with the goal of making it a little easier for individuals to remain living at home. *Community Thread cannot guarantee that applicants will be matched with a volunteer to fulfill requests.* Call 651-439-7434 or email ChoreServices@CommunityThreadMN.org.
- **Washington County's Sentence to Serve (STS):** Provides lawn care, snow shoveling, and assistance with moving within Washington County. *Capacity is limited! Must have a referral from a case manager.*

Clothing

- **Stone Soup:** Thrift store located in St. Paul Park that offers clothes and goods at very low prices. With a referral from a variety of agencies, including Washington County Community Services, you are able to receive a voucher for free goods. Call 651-458-9786 or email stonesoupthrift@yahoo.com. Visit www.stonesoupthriftshop.org.
- **Valley Outreach Clothing Closet:** Helps you meet your critical clothing needs. The selection of clothing available for all ages gives you the opportunity to ensure that growing children have clothes that fit, adults can dress confidently for the workplace, all individuals are warm and comfortably dressed in the winter months, and that all have access to the basic clothing needs of socks and underwear. Eligibility: Valley Outreach primarily serves households in the Stillwater school district area (ISD 834) whose income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline or who are in crisis. *Must bring identification and proof of residency each visit.* Contact Information: 1911 Curve Crest Blvd. West, Stillwater, Minnesota 55082. Call 651-430-2739 or email info@valleyoutreachmn.org.

continued on page 4

continued from West Metro Learning Connections Summer Programs on page 3

for positive social interactions.

[Learn more about Social Skills Therapy](#)

• **Therapeutic Recreation**

Therapeutic recreation incorporates recreation activities and social skills therapy into one engaging and effective program. Children with social skills deficits learn and practice the social skills necessary to enjoy outings with family and friends — as well as other typical social activities and situations at school and in the community.

[Learn more about Therapeutic Recreation](#)

• **Extended School Year**

At West Metro Learning Connections we offer the following for ESY:

- Social skills groups with goals and objectives relevant for almost all ASD IEP goals and objectives
- Individualized to address the critical objectives identified by the IEP team as required by ESY services
- Monitor and provide a written program review
- Attendance at IEP meetings

[Learn more about Extended School Year](#)

Updated Minnesota Autism Portal Now Live

The [Minnesota Autism Resource Portal](#) has a new look and new navigation. The redesigned site better equips communities, parents, advocates, self-advocates, and professionals with

continued on page 5

continued from Washington County...Resource List on page 3

Employment Support

- **Goodwill Easter Seals:** Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota Work Incentives Connection provides specialized answers about the impact of work on government benefits. Call 1-800-976-6728 (toll-free) or 651-632-5113 (MN Relay – 711).
- **Metropolitan Center for Independent Living (MCIL):** Able to provide benefits analysis to help you determine how much income you can earn and if/how it would affect your benefits. Call 651-646-8342.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Services:** Can help you prepare for, find and keep a job, and live as independently as possible. Call 1-800-328-9095. Visit <https://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/disabilities>.
- **Washington County CareerForce (formerly known as the Workforce Center):** Washington County CareerForce administers programs targeted to dislocated workers, low-income adults, disadvantaged youth and young adults, welfare-to-work participants, and low-income seniors. The goal is to help you become successful in securing and retaining jobs and to enhance marketable skills for the current labor market. Locations in Woodbury, Cottage Grove, and Forest Lake. Call 651-430-6455.

Financial Support

- **Economic Support at Washington County:** In partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Washington County Community Services Department administers programs that provide support to low income residents of Washington County, such as cash support, medical programs, food support, and child care assistance. For more information call 651-430-6455 or 1-844-711-1907. Visit www.co.washington.mn.us/787/Economic-Support (applications and required forms can be submitted online!).
- **Family Support Grant:** Provides cash grants to families of children, under 25 years of age with a certified disability, residing at home. The goal of the program is to prevent or delay the out-of-home placement of children and promote family health and social well-being by enabling access to family-centered services and supports. Call 651-430-4145 or email comsvsfamilysupportgrant@co.washington.mn.us. Visit www.co.washington.mn.us/2980/Family-Support-Grant-FSG.
- **Microgrants:** Gives grants of around \$1,000 for low-income people of potential to invest in their lives. The grants are designed to help people increase their income either through small business development or getting and retaining stable employment. Investments are usually made in three areas: education, small business, and transportation. *You must be a person receiving support from a partner agency to be eligible for the grant:* <https://microgrants.net/partner-agencies>. For more information, call 612-200-8174 or email info@microgrants.net. Visit <https://microgrants.net>.
- **Minnesota Microgrant Partnership:** Through The Arc, offers modest grants (\$500) to help people with disabilities to reach goals around competitive employment, inclusive housing, and community integration. These goals are important to them and for them.
 - Eligibility:
 - 18 or older and receive waiver or personal care services, or
 - 16 or older with a level 3 or 4 Individual Education Program (IEP)You must [apply online](https://arcminnesota.org/ways-we-can-help/scholarshipmicrogrants/minnesota-microgrant-partnership). For more information visit <https://arcminnesota.org/ways-we-can-help/scholarshipmicrogrants/minnesota-microgrant-partnership>.
- **Valley Outreach Emergency Fund:** The Emergency Fund provides financial assistance to individuals and families who are in crisis or transition. The Emergency Fund considers requests for help with: rent/mortgage, utilities, transportation,

continued on page 5

*continued from Updated
Minnesota Autism Portal Now
Live on page 4*

information and tools about autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or related disorders, and its impact on family life, education, and work in Minnesota. To learn more, view the [full announcement](#).

Roseville in Bloom

Roseville in Bloom is a free public art event featuring 20 - 6 foot tall rose statues throughout Roseville in the summer of 2020. Local and regional artists will transform the rose statues into unique works of art.

Recognizing the success of statue events around the world such as the Cows in Europe and Chicago, the Peanuts characters in Saint Paul, and the many others, we are proud to be creating *20 Roses in 2020* throughout the city of Roseville to bring visitors to the area, showcase local artists, and generate social media buzz around Roseville. It will feature 20 - 6-foot-tall rose statues custom designed by Minnesota artists. The Roseville in Bloom statues will be on display throughout Roseville from **June 2020 through September 2020**.

We need local artists and sponsors to make this promotion a success. This is a unique opportunity to be part of a high visibility project. Click on the Artist Tab for information including how to submit designs, artist stipend, and more. Interested in sponsoring a rose statue click on the Sponsor Tab. Resident or visitor stay tuned for a digital map, events, and social media contests!

www.visitroseville.com/roseville-in-bloom

continued from ...Resource List on page 4

medical and dental emergencies, and other basic needs. Valley Outreach primarily serves households in the Stillwater school district area (ISD 834) whose income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline or who are in crisis. *Must bring identification and proof of residency each visit.* Contact Information: 1911 Curve Crest Blvd. West, Stillwater, Minnesota 55082. Call 651-430-2739 or email info@valleyoutreachmn.org.

General Resources (websites that offer a multitude of resources and support options)

- **Disability Hub MN:** A free statewide resource network that helps you solve problems, navigate the system, and plan for your future. Call 1-866-333-2466. Visit <https://disabilityhubmn.org>.
- **MinnesotaHelp.Info:** A website that offers a variety of resources related to mental health, disabilities, seniors, waiver programs, caregivers, families, and transportation. Call 1-800-333-2433. Visit www.minnesotahelp.info.
- **Senior LinkAge Line®:** A free service from the state of Minnesota that connects older Minnesotans and their families with the help they need. Call 1-800-333-2433. Visit www.seniorlinkageline.com.
- **United Way 211:** Free and confidential service to explore resources and services surrounding employment, child care, heating assistance, etc. Call 2-1-1, 1-800-543-7709 (toll free), or 651-291-0211 (cell phone). Visit www.211unitedway.org.

Housing

- **Bridging:** Is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the greater Twin Cities, that provides donated furniture and household goods to families and individuals transitioning out of homelessness and poverty. Bridging provides a basic home setup to those who need most items necessary to create a comfortable and functioning home. The basic home set-up generally includes gently-used upholstered furniture, a kitchen table and chairs, a mattress and box spring, linens, dishes, artwork, and more. Locations in Roseville and Bloomington. Will deliver for a fee. *Referrals must be done by a human service provider, healthcare agency, or faith community.* If you have a case manager or social worker, ask them to contact Bridging for assistance in setting up an appointment. If you do not have a case manager or social worker, or they cannot refer you, please look at the agency finder list on the Bridging website. This is a list of agencies that may be able to assist you with getting an appointment. Questions, call 952-888-1105. Visit www.bridging.org.

Highland Friendship Club's Online Classes

We are adding online classes - please join us! HFC's Fit with Friends with Nick Boyer is a super hit! So we are continuing them. But wait, there is more... We will continue using an online service called Zoom to hold the classes. Once you are registered, you will receive a follow-up email that contains the Zoom link.

Friday, April 3:

- **Fit With Friends Online: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**
During this class, we will complete a warm-up, stretch, and get moving together! The equipment you will need is: a chair, a pair of light dumbbells/plastic water bottles/soup cans, and boxing gloves (optional).
- **Virtual Dance With St. Thomas Special Olympics: 6:30-8 p.m.**
Come dance the night away with our friends from St. Thomas Special Olympics! They will be hosting a virtual dance party for any HFC members that wish to join.

continued on page 6

Walk and Roll Club

This is a group for parents and caregivers of young adults with special needs who are working on making sure the young adult gets both exercise and an opportunity, however brief, to socialize.

This group initially started out as the Meetup group called, "Connecting Exercise Partners for People With Special Needs," however, we found that the only exercise that we seemed to get interest in was walking and rolling (on a bike or wheelchair). Consequently, we are going to focus on the type of activity that best works with a group.

Walk and roll events will be scheduled by the organizer, but members are welcome and encouraged to schedule their own walking/rolling meetup! The organizer will generally look for meetup locations in the south metro, but members can schedule events for locations elsewhere in the metro area.

<https://www.meetup.com/Walk-and-Roll-Club/>

VFC Online Classes

Valley Friendship Club is now offering online classes and activities.

April's classes/activities include:

- At-home Online Scavenger Hunt
- Bingo Night on Zoom
- Cooking with Angelina
- Crafting with Angelina
- Fit Friends (Zoom Call)
- Mindfulness and Meditation
- Online VFC Hangout

www.valleyfriendshipclub.org/events

continued from Highland Friendship Club's Online Classes on page 5

Saturday, April 4:

- Fit With Friends Online: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
During this class, we will complete a warm-up, stretch, and get moving together! The equipment you will need is: a chair, a pair of light dumbbells/plastic water bottles/soup cans, and boxing gloves (optional).

[View classes and register via Active.](#) \$10 each.

Teen & Young Adults With Autism Improv Class (Ages 14-26)

Improv Social Skills Class - Reinforcing Kids' Spontaneous and Creative Selves

This is a great class for teens and young adults on the spectrum to have fun, make friends, and laugh. Participants love this class and there is a definite change in self-confidence after the 8 weeks!

Practice social skills while learning improv. Work on basic scenes, make declarations, and start conversations. Participants build trust, self-confidence, the ability to compromise, and more easily open themselves to other's ideas.

Participants must be group ready and a PCA or guardian must be present if assistance with personal care is needed or need to have medication administered during the activity.

Saturdays, April 11, 18, 25 and May 2, 16 • 10-11:30 a.m.

Lutheran Church of Peace, Maplewood, MN

Tuition: 8 weeks of class \$170; after February 15 \$190 (prices reflect cash or check discount)

Questions about classes, call 651-274-3278 or visit www.justkiddingimprov.com

Minnesota Orchestra - Sensory-Friendly Concert

Join Minnesota Orchestra for an inclusive experience designed for audiences of all ages and abilities, featuring a musician or small ensemble from the Minnesota Orchestra and talented guest musicians from the audience!

Saturday, May 9 • 10-11:45 a.m.

(Doors open: 10 a.m. • Concert begins: 11 a.m. • Concert ends: 11:45 a.m.)

Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis, MN

Tickets \$6.25 and go on sale to the general public on April 2.

For more information, visit the [website](#).

Upcoming PACER Events

• PACER's 6th Annual Unity Awards

Celebrate those creating a world without bullying! The Unity Awards are presented by The Faces of Change - The Youth Advisory Boards of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center.

Wednesday, May 27

PACER Center, Bloomington, MN

To learn more, visit www.pacer.org/bullying/getinvolved/unity-awards

continued on page 7

The TAP

The TAP brings people of ALL abilities together. We dance, eat, sing, and meet new friends.

The TAP holds monthly parties where we dance, play video games, and connect with each other. Every Monday, we get together to hang out, sing karaoke, express ourselves, TAP Trivia, video games, and more.

<https://yourtap.org>

Adaptive Mini Golf

Miniature Golf is the latest addition to King Park which is home to a custom designed Miracle League baseball field used by the South Metro Miracle League along with an all-inclusive playground which allows kids with all types of abilities to play with one another.

The 9-hole fully accessible course will be open to the public free of charge. Bring your own ball and putter or check out the equipment at no cost when the concession stand is open.

<https://southmetromiracleleague.org>

How to receive additional issues of Community Links:

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the Community Links newsletter, go to www.co.washington.mn.us, click on the "Notify Me" tab, enter your email address, and click on the envelope next to Community Links Newsletter.

Contact for Article Submissions:

Denise Steans

denise.steans@co.washington.mn.us

651-430-4168

continued from Upcoming PACER Events on page 6

• **E.X.I.T.E. Camp for Girls (6th-9th grade in the fall)**

Middle school girls with disabilities can now apply for this 5-day fun math, science, and technology camp at PACER Center.

Thursday, July 23 - Thursday, August 6 • 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

PACER Center, Bloomington, MN

To learn more or apply, visit www.pacer.org/students/exite.asp.

• **The 15th Annual National Symposium About Children & Young Adults with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities**

The symposium is designed to help parents, educators, administrators, and professionals better identify and address mental health and learning disabilities in children and youth.

Wednesday, August 12

Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, MN

Registration opens in mid-May. Details are available at www.pacer.org/help/symposium.

3rd Annual AuSM Connections Jigsaw Puzzle Competition

Join AuSM for this fun day of puzzling and community. Teams of up to four people will compete in the 500-Piece and 1,000-Piece competition divisions. All ages and abilities are welcome to puzzle with us!

NEW in 2020! An amazing **Autism Resource Fair** held in the Mall of America's Northeast Court (9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.). Plan to gather resources and have fun during the puzzle competition! Puzzles for the 2020 competition will be provided by PuzzleTwist.

• **500-Piece Division (1-4 team members, all ages and abilities)**

9 a.m.-Noon

(Beginner and Advanced Categories; those registering for both the 500-Piece and 1,000-Piece divisions should register in the Advanced Category for the 500-Piece Division)

• **1,000-Piece Division (1-4 team members, all ages and abilities)**

12:30-4:30 p.m.

\$50 per team registration fees support programs and services for the local autism community.

Saturday, July 11

Mall of America - TCF Rotunda, Bloomington, MN

Put it together at Mall of America this summer! Become an AuSM Connections Jigsaw Puzzle Competition Sponsor!

- Dollars raised support programs and services for the local autism community.
- 600+ will compete in the all ages and abilities puzzle competition.
- TCF Rotunda jumbotron will promote sponsors and support of those with Autism.
- The 3rd annual competition will include a huge Autism Resource Fair featuring sponsors in the Northeast Court.
- Thousands of Mall of America spectators will cheer on the puzzling teams and visit your resource table.

www.ausm.org/events/ausm-fundraisers/puzzle-competition.html