

This issue of Parent Time has a special theme – FAMILY FUN.

We are very fortunate that the same three MoSPIN families who introduced us to their families and shared literacy activities with us in the last issue agreed to share their family fun activities with us in this issue. Our thanks go out to the Farris, Eggleston and Wilson families! In addition, a family that was a part of MoSPIN a number of years ago agreed to share their perspective on family activities. Sam Doman, who is now eleven, and his dad, Randy, provide additional perspectives on how families share time together. I think you will see that as families you all have a lot in common. You may even discover a new activity that your family might enjoy!

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## Farris Family Fun

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Hi, again! I'm Sherah. My husband, Wesley, and I have two wonderful children, Lilly and Jonah. Lilly turned two in October, and Jonah is a whopping seven months old now! Lilly was born with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia, which is a part of a disorder called Septo-Optic Dysplasia. This is not uncommon as far as visual impairment goes, and I know there are many other families with this diagnosis. We live in Southwest Missouri in a little town called Cassville. We are so fortunate to have met another family that has a child with the same diagnosis as Lilly! We met at a Christmas party at the Barry-Lawrence County Developmental Center where Lilly has been attending school since October. We are very excited and blessed to be so close to a family going through what we are!

When we first found out Lilly was blind, we thought our lives would be different from most other families. We realized quickly that our lives would be unique, but mostly because every family has its own unique challenges not because our daughter was blind. This included what we would do to have fun and enjoy day to day life. We thought we would have to be very creative to make everyday life interesting to Lilly, but that has not been the case. While we do have very creative ideas at times, Lilly enjoys many things all children enjoy.

An average day does not consist of any elaborate adventures for us. Before the bitter cold of winter set in we would go on family walks. Lilly and Jonah both enjoy walks on the local nature trail and walking around our rural area. Lilly mostly rides in her stroller, but when we see something that she can explore, we stop and let her feel it. For example, we let her feel trees, leaves and flowers. Lilly enjoys the ride, the wind, and all the sounds around us. Now that it is very cold, we do not go on our family walks.

The walks have been replaced with family dancing! Lilly loves to dance and jump all around the house, and Jonah enjoys watching her. Of course we cannot dance unless we have the best music to dance to! Wesley and I have our own preferences, and Lilly has hers; Techno! She'll sway back and forth to The Band Perry and Taylor Swift, but she will really dance her heart out when we turn the Techno on!

We have also recently bought an iPad mini. Lilly plays on her O&M (Orientation and Mobility) specialist's iPad all the time, and now that Jonah is more mobile he has wiggled over and joined in on the fun! There are many apps that are wonderful for visually impaired children. Lilly is learning to recognize different animal and instrument sounds. She also gets to just play with fun noisy apps that seem to be just for fun, but they are really great for fine motor skills. Lilly's favorite apps are: *I Love Fireworks, Talking Tom 2* and *Sound Shaker*.

I have learned Braille and how to use a brailler. I have started brailling Lilly's books. Some friends have asked, "Does she understand what Braille is?" I do believe she understands what Braille is as much as a child her age understands what letters are. As I read her books that are brailled, I have her feel and follow along! This is a fun part of our everyday routine. Lilly enjoys exploring the Braille and listening to the story, and I enjoy watching her learn. Jonah rolls off and finds a toy, but I like to think he is interested in the story as well.

Although indoor activities are fun, as a family, we love outdoor activities the most! Roaring River State Park is about ten minutes from our house, and we spend a lot of time there throughout the year. Wesley will fish while I try to keep Lilly from eating the rocks! We rarely go to Roaring River without stopping at the playground and



This is one of

her all time favorite activities! We also go on hikes on the nature trails and tour the fish hatchery. Lilly loves all of this. We make sure we let her play in the water and feel the nature along the trails! We also like to swim together. Whether it's at a pool or Table Rock Lake, Lilly loves it. We have to be especially careful at the lake because Lilly gets a little thirsty!

putting Lilly on the swing.

Yard work is something Wesley and I both enjoy doing. We enjoy mowing and raking leaves and most of all we enjoy fresh vegetables. It's a challenge to show Lilly how we plant, but we get her hand in the mud and dirt anyway. This is something that has to be reintroduced every year, so far. When we don't need Lilly's helping hands we bring a few toys out into the yard and let her play near us. Lilly really enjoyed doing this last year and I believe she will enjoy playing in the warm sun and fresh air, while we garden even more this summer.

Although all of this is fun, and we all enjoy it, my favorite time is when we are all waking up in the morning. Wesley and I bring Lilly and Jonah into our bedroom. Lilly will jump, laugh, and squeal on our bed. Jonah stares at his sister wishing he could join her! I realized a long time ago that even the simplest things like waking up in the morning were fun for Lilly, too. She enjoys the same activities as I do even if she enjoys it for a different reason. If you are new to visual impairment don't worry yourself with what to do to make life fun for your child. Be lighthearted and enjoy the little moments, and don't rule out activities that you think require vision. I have learned in most things, there is no vision required!



# The Eggleston Family

Hello! My name is Tiffany and my family consists of my husband Jarrad, myself, and our beautiful and amazing four year old daughter Emmalin. Emmalin has multiple disabilities, and as many of you know, having a child with multiple disabilities comes with many different challenges in MANY different ways!! Vision wise, Emmalin has cortical vision impairment (CVI), nystagmus and strabismus. Emmalin also has multiple seizures and multiple seizure types every day. She is non-verbal, eats only by feeding tube, has low tone (she's still working on head and trunk control); she's developmentally delayed in every area, and has hip dysplasia. She does not like to use her hands. She does not hold or play with toys, but she is starting to hit some switches and play with a Kindle Fire (with a lot of assistance but it's a start and we are VERY excited about it). With Emmalin, you can't initiate a laugh or a smile, but sometimes she will smile on her own. As far as going outside, Emmalin's body does not do well in heat, and so most of the summer we end up staying indoors. Also, Emmalin does not do well in crowds; she just shuts down by getting really quiet and goes to sleep. I'm telling you all of this, not for you to feel sorry for us or because I'm trying to have a pity party for our family, but so you can understand us.

If I'm going to be completely honest with you, I should tell you that when I was asked to write an article about

"family fun", my first thoughts about "family fun" were of a family going out for ice cream or having a family game night. But then I quickly realized that neither of these things were things that my family did together. So I kind of had a hard time figuring it out what "family fun" meant for us.

I started to think about, if Emmalin could talk, how she might describe her definition of "family fun". I think she would describe it as doing the things that make her happy. You see, even though you can't make Emmalin smile or laugh, you can tell that she's happy and having fun by the way she moves her body around (kicking her feet) and by the way she makes sounds with her voice. The things that make Emmalin happy are rolling around on the floor, having us sing her songs, reading books together, cuddling, playing with the Kindle Fire, swinging and "going back" (hanging upside down).

As she's rolling around on the floor, you know she's happy because she is making all sorts of sounds and moving around like crazy. She LOVES her floor time!! When we sing her songs, read books together, or just cuddle, Emmalin actually shows us that she likes this in a completely different way. You see, Emmalin is constantly moving in one way or another, so when we do these things, Emmalin typically gets very still and just listens. When we stop singing or reading (or whatever), she starts moving around again. It wasn't until about three months ago that Emmalin started acknowledging these things, and so when she does it, it just gives me Goosebumps! I know, that probably sounds crazy, but it's the little things to us that are SO huge!! Emmalin has also started playing with a Kindle Fire. She definitely has to have a lot of assistance when she plays with it, but she will play it by opening her hand up and touching whatever it is that is on the app. When Emmalin doesn't like something, she typically keeps her hands closed in a fist or pulls her hands away so she doesn't have to touch them. With almost everything we try to get her to play with, this is what happens most of the time. So when Emmalin started playing with the Kindle, it was HUGE!!! As far as the swinging goes, Emmalin loves to kick her feet around while she is



swinging!

I think that I should

probably mention that because Emmalin loves to swing every day, we quickly started to run into a problem with the weather and how often she was able to swing. We had issues with rain, or it being too hot for her to go

outside, or too cold in the winter. One of my friends passed on this great idea that would allow Emmalin to swing inside. She told us to go buy a pull-up bar that goes in our doorway, and then just rig the swing up on the pull-up bar. And Jarrad and I did exactly that! We headed to Wal-Mart and bought a pull-up bar that is removable. We made sure to check the weight limit on it, and the one we purchased had a weight limit of 250 pounds - we figured that would hold our, at the time, two-year old daughter and her swing - lol. We have now been using this pull-up bar for about two years. We started out with a baby swing and have now started using a special needs swing. Of course we still like to take Emmalin outside to swing when we can, but by using the pull-up bar, it allows Emmalin to have the opportunity to get to swing any time and we use it inside a TON !! As crazy as it sounds, Emmalin's ABSOLUTE favorite thing to do is hang upside down!! We call it "going back". We literally sit her on our lap and guide her backwards until the upper half of her is hanging upside down. Emmalin will even bring her arms up over her head, and that's when you know she's REALLY having fun (it's really cute)! She will also make ALL sorts of sounds while she's hanging upside down. That's another way we know she likes it!

As much as we think it is great that Emmalin likes to do those things and that those things make her happy, I would have to say that those things are not exactly what Jarrad and I would consider "family fun". For us, I think our definition of "family fun" would be more along the lines of going out together as a family and doing things outside of the home. We like going to watch our nephew play basketball, going to a restaurant to eat, going to the zoo, or even going to Lowes (one of our favorite stores – lol).

So now you might understand a little better why I was a little confused on what "family fun" meant for *our* family. Emmalin doesn't really like to be out in crowds or loud environments and Jarrad and I like to go places where there are definitely going to be one or both of those. But you know, I was reminded the other day that in *any* family, there are ALWAYS going to be times when someone is going to have to compromise! Whether it's deciding what you are going to eat, what TV show you are going to watch, or whether you stay in the house or go out to do something fun. Compromise is just part of life!

I guess you could say that our family's definition of "family fun" is being together and finding a balance

between staying in and going out. When we do go out places, we definitely take into consideration Emmalin not liking crowds or loud environments. We try to bring a switch toy or something that she might find comforting. But we also know that, in the grand scheme of things, it's not realistic for Emmalin to stay at home all the time. Honestly, we've found that the more we take Emmalin out of the house and into crowds or loud environments, the quicker she is learning to adapt.

So my question to you is this, what is your family's definition of "family fun"? It took me writing this little article to figure out what it meant for my family. I have also realized that there is no right or wrong answer to this question. As long as you are together and having fun, that's all that matters! That's family fun!

"HAPPINESS [is] ONLY REAL WHEN SHARED" — Jon Krakauer, Into the Wild



# From the Wilson Family

Hello again to all the fellow parents of MoSPIN. I hope everyone is enjoying the winter and are ready for a great 2013. My name is Jonie Wilson and my husband John and I live in Dixon, MO with our three wonderful children, Andi, 5, and twin boys Clayton and Cheston who will turn two in March. We are a part of MoSPIN because of our son Cheston who was born with severe bilateral Cheston is visually impaired. Microphthalmia. With three small children my husband and I do not go a lot of places because it is difficult and takes a lot of effort. (We also live 45 minutes from anything, so we have to travel a lot). We often have to force ourselves to get out of the house and go do "FUN" things with the children because staying home is so much easier than to get them dressed and out the door. This month our Parent Time Newsletter is about Family Fun and what we do as families to have fun.

Since my husband and I both work full time, the week is usually nothing but work, dinner, baths and bed time. We try to fit some fun activities in the

evenings and try to get some quality one-on-one time with the kids.

Cheston attends a daycare every day and his day care provider has become just like family. They do daily activities with the kids and yes, our wonderful daycare provider does the most amazing job including Cheston with the activities. He has all kinds of fun things to do. He loves to roam around and play with all the children. He even finger paints with the children all the time. She is a very



brave woman. We are truly blessed to have someone like her involving him in all the different activities. He loves to play outside with the kids. He also likes to steal their toys, and other activities two-year-old boys do. He loves to go to daycare and spend time with his second family.

We are a very outdoorsy family. We have chickens, pigs, dogs and cats and we try to be outside as much as possible. Our house is at a wonderful location where Cheston can roam. I do not have to worry about traffic or him falling off anything or getting into something that will hurt him which is very comforting. Cheston has a Cozy Coupe car which he really enjoys when he is outside. He, of course, goes backwards and loves to honk the horn on it. He also loves to swing on the swing set. Over the summer one of the fun things that we enjoy doing with our children, is taking them to the river. We live near the Gasconade River so we load up the camper and go stay at a local camp ground where we stay for weeks at a time. The children love to swim, go on boat rides and go fishing. I know that sounds crazy that I actually took three



small children in a camper, but, yes we did, and they love it. Cheston enjoys swimming, riding in the kayak and taking boat rides. Of course we have to take the radio! We already have multiple camping trips planned for this upcoming summer and we are all looking forward to it. When we are at home we love to cook and eat as well. Cheston usually eats snacks while we are cooking dinner. He also likes to clean out my cabinets. We have movie night every Friday night with pizza, popcorn and a movie. We try to watch movies that Cheston might be more involved in but if not, he just rolls and annoys his siblings. He is a stinker.

We do also actually get out and try to do different activities with the children. Over Christmas we took the kids to ride the Polar Express train in Branson. He really enjoyed that more than I thought he would because they sang and ate cookies. He wasn't very fond of Santa Claus. We also attended two Christmas parades which he enjoyed. This spring we are planning a trip to Kansas City to an indoor water park so the children can enjoy some swimming.

As I write this down, I realize we actually have a very simple life, but it doesn't seem so on a day-today basis. But we have a very fun filled world and we wouldn't change anything about it. If anyone has any questions for me, please feel free to contact me. My email is <u>ibpw76@gmail.com</u>. Thanks and have a wonderful spring and summer. Until next time.

John, Jonie, Andi, Clayton & Cheston



The following article was taken from an earlier issue of Parent Time in 2007.



As spring approaches you may be anxious to start planning some family outings. I thought I would put together some information on some things my family has done that we enjoyed. Since we have a large family and a child with low vision, not all of our travels have always panned out the way we hoped. The ideas that I am sharing were particularly nice outings that fit our needs nicely. <u>Science City</u> in Kansas City offers a wide variety of sensory experiences for kids. If you go during the week it is not as crowded so it is more enjoyable for a child that needs a little extra time with mobility or to experience the exhibits. It is very 'hands-on' which we loved. Science City is located in Union Station, downtown. They charge a nominal admission fee and they have a dining area within Science City as well as a food court for dining.

Bennett Springs State Park near Lebanon is a beautiful day trip or they rent cabins for overnight stays. They offer fishing but also have hatcheries where kids can feed the fish from vending machines that are filled with appropriate fish food. There is a dining hall but you can pack a picnic lunch and enjoy it while you listen to the flowing spring water. Our kids enjoy watching the waders out in the spring fishing. Bennett Springs also has canoe rental, a swimming pool, and a small store if you need some additional supplies. There are also hiking areas.

<u>Dickerson Park Zoo</u> in Springfield is one of my family's favorite zoos. It is very kid friendly. The zoo is just the right size for little ones and they have nice wide concrete walking paths that are very well maintained which is very nice for wheelchairs or special mobility needs. There is also a petting zoo where kids can feed goats and other small animals. The zoo offers stroller and wagon rentals as well. We also like the fact that when we have gone it is not extremely crowded. There is also an outdoor dining area and gift shop on site. It is located off Highway 44.

<u>Wild Animal Park</u> in Springfield is a neat experience for kids. This is a drive-thru park that has very friendly camels that come right up to the car. They also have deer and other animals that you can feed right from your car. The driving path is easy to maneuver through, you can take your time, and there are areas to pullover if you'd like to spend more time in a particular area. These animals are definitely not shy so the kids get a close-up view. It is located west of 65 on 44.

Don't forget all the parks, Powell Gardens, The Children's Museum, Crown Center, Bass Pro Shop's Museum, and all the other recreational activities that are also great day trips that kids enjoy but also offer a variety of sensory and educational experiences for them.

## MoSPIN "Graduate" Family

I want to introduce you to a MoSPIN "Graduate" family. The Doman Family now includes Katie (mom), Randy (dad), Sam (11) and Ty (8). When they enrolled in MoSPIN 10 years ago, Sam was just a baby. Sam, Randy and Katie's first child, was born prematurely and was diagnosed with Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP). I was their MoSPIN Parent Advisor. I knew from the start that Sam and his parents would be a special family. Though they have moved several times, we have kept in occasional contact through the years. I was thrilled recently to learn that they had moved back to the Mid-Missouri area where I live. I contacted them to see if they would be willing to be interviewed for Parent Time. I was particularly interested to hear what Family Fun meant to them - especially from an 11-year-old's perspective (Sam) and from a dad's perspective (Randy). They agreed and I went for a visit to their new home. Read the next two articles to see what they had to say.

**Ginny Williams** 

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## Family Activities from an 11-Year-Old's Perspective

I asked Sam Doman, an 11-year-old MoSPIN graduate, to respond to these questions during our interview:

- 1. How would you describe yourself?
- 2. Are there certain activities you like to do as a family outdoors? Indoors?
- 3. Do you have any memories of favorite Family Fun activities when you were younger?
- 4. What do you do that you are most proud of?

Sam describes himself as a  $5^{th}$  grader at Blair Oaks Middle School who especially enjoys outdoor activities, reading and music. He plays the violin, string base and the electric piano (a little bit). Sam is an A to A- student. He describes his vision as light perception. He is a Braille reader, uses a Braille Notetaker and a cane. He says that a good thing about being blind is that he can read in bed at night in the dark. His mom quickly added - NOT on a school night!

When asked about Family Fun activities in the outdoors, Sam had a long list. He and his family like hunting (deer, turkey, duck, goose), fishing, camping, traveling to vacation destinations or to see family members, and going to the lake where he can drive the boat. Sam likes hiking to the river behind his house where he can use his "bird call machine" and impress his family with his identification of many species of birds. He also says he is crazy about Cardinal baseball. The Domans have gone to many games and even met some of the players. Sam says he loves hearing the crack of the bat when the Cardinals get a hit. Sam enjoys indoor activities as well, including collecting baseball cards. He enjoys participating in church activities with his family. He likes playing with his younger brother, Ty, especially with legos, but he admits sometimes he can be annoying. (Brothers will be brothers!) He also enjoys reading and going to the library with his family where they can pick up audiobooks, CDs or DVDs for the family to enjoy. The family has a shared enjoyment of music, but his parents admit that Sam has all of the musical talent in the family. When it comes to family activities, Sam claimed to be very adaptable. He says, "I just go with the flow and do whatever the rest are doing".

When Sam was asked to reminisce about some of his earlier favorite family activities, he shared lots of great memories. Here are a few:

- Fishing with Dad
- Making cookies together and then eating them!
- Camping trips at the lake

   (In addition to the boating and fishing, Sam enjoyed hearing all the birds and other "early morning" sounds of nature.)
- Driving the boat
- Sharing Dad's deer hunting success by feeling the antlers and being included in the story written up in a magazine
- Getting a Braille letter from Santa
- Going to the library together
- Going on a family vacation to Gulf Shores, Alabama

(He thought it was neat being in the ocean, feeling the sand, using a boogie board and going in a kayak in a bay with lots of animals including dolphins.)

Finally, when I asked Sam what he does that he is most proud of, I received this answer that is worth quoting: "I am proud of being different, but being able to do the same stuff as anybody else."



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## Family Activities from a Dad's Perspective

I asked Randy Doman, Sam's dad, to respond to these questions during our interview:

- 1. What activities do you enjoy doing with your family?
- 2. Some of the activities that your family enjoys must require some adaptations for Sam to participate. Can you share some of these

### adaptations?

### 3. Do you have any "words of wisdom" for our MoSPIN families?

Randy works for the Missouri Department of Conservation so it probably will be no surprise that he provided a long list of outdoor activities that he and his family enjoy. The list included fishing, hunting (deer, turkey, duck, and goose), camping, running and hiking, cutting firewood, golf and more. A recent family activity was cutting a trail from the Doman's new house down to the river that runs through their property. All family members had specific jobs. It has been hard work, but they are enjoying the experience and are making good headway on clearing the trail. Randy also shared some indoor activities in which the family participates. Church and Sunday school activities were at the top of the list. Their shared enjoyment of music and the recently initiated "Family Game Night" were also on the list. Some favorite games included Monopoly, Trouble, Battleship and Scrabble Slam (Braille edition).

When asked about adaptations for any of these activities, Randy made the modifications sound easy. For example, he described the adaptations that contributed to Sam shooting his first deer during gun season.



How did he do it? Sam used a rifle with a red dot sight that he held against his shoulder. Randy sat behind Sam. Sam needed to tilt his head out of the way so Randy could see through the sight. He would instruct Sam to adjust the gun to the left, right, up or down as needed. When the deer was in the sight, then Sam just needed to hold the rifle steady and squeeze the trigger. Randy made it sound easy and Sam sure has the deer to prove it! Of course, there was a lot of practice that preceded this successful hunt. Randy said that during their target practice Sam would listen for the ping when he hit the target. Also, their practice included a target adapted with "puffy paint" so Sam could feel where his shots hit on the target. For archery, Randy said he would stand behind Sam and help him aim. Randy said, "I am his eyes in this sport." They used balloons as the targets so Sam knew he hit the mark when the balloon popped. You can read more and see a photo of Sam and Randy practicing with a bow in an article in the Missouri Conservation magazine at

http://mdc.mo.gov/conmag/2007/12/communityconservation.

Randy offered these "words of wisdom" for our MoSPIN families:

- Take advantage of your church family.
- Believe that there is nothing your child can't do (other than driving) if you make some adaptations or modifications.
- Remember that your child enjoys the same things as other kids.
- Watch your child let him lead.
- Utilize your child's strengths to the fullest extent.
- Always describe your surroundings to add to what your child is picking up through his other senses of sound, smell and touch.
- It is important to keep active and in good physical shape, so help your child find ways to get exercise.

To sum it up, Randy said "If we want to do something, we just make it happen!"

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#### Websites for Families

 Family Connect is a site which offers lots of great information on a variety of topics for families.
 http://www.familyconnect.org/parentsitehome.asp

**WonderBaby** is a site intended to help parents of young children with visual impairment as well as children with multiple disabilities. http://www.wonderbaby.com

This blog follows little **Thomas Marshall** who is visually impaired. The family started this blog "because Tom will do it all. In his own time". Includes iPad and app information. <u>http://www.thomasmarshalldoesitall.blogspot.com</u>

Little Bear Sees is a site written by a family of a child with cortical visual impairment or CVI and is for other families of children with CVI. http://www.littlebearsees.org/

This is a **Facebook** support page on the topic of **CVI**. <u>http://www.facebook.com/pages/Cortical-Vision-Impairment-CVI-upport/141479875905686</u>

## **Emmalin's Favorite Apps**

There are three different apps that we have found that Emmalin likes on the Kindle Fire and they are all FREE apps. They are the *Little Piano, Fart Sounds*, and *Car Horn Sounds* and they all are very basic cause- and effect apps.

Emmalin's favorite app for the Kindle Fire is called *Little* Piano. This is my favorite app for her also. What I love about this app for Emmalin is the simplicity of it!! It literally looks just like piano keys and so it's mainly white with a little bit of black (in case you forgot what a piano looked like – lol). The other really great thing is that when you touch a key, it lights up in yellow and you immediately get the sound. It's exactly what we needed to help Emmalin get familiar with using a Kindle!! With this app, you have the option of choosing which instrument you want the piano to "sound" like (if you want something besides the piano sound). You can also make it sound like a vibraphone (honestly, I didn't even know what that was, but its Emmalin's favorite sound on there), a choir, a violin, trumpet, percussion,

bells, guitar and so on. The other really neat thing about this app (although we don't use this part with Emmalin) is that you can choose a melody to play. We always keep that option on "none", but when you choose a melody, this app lights up the "keys" in yellow one-by-one so that you can actually play the song. I thought that was great!

The second app, as much as I hate to admit it, is called Fart Sounds. It was suggested to me to try this one and at first I didn't do it. Then when Emmalin started getting the hang of the Little Piano app, I figured I might as well. I'll tell you what, this app actually made Emmalin SMILE when she would touch it to make the sounds. Do you know how rare that is? I couldn't believe it! Now that the "newness" of the app has worn off, Emmalin will sometimes still smile, but even if she doesn't smile Emmalin will always get very still and listen as she makes the different sounds (yes, there is more than one sound). I NEVER would have dreamed that this app would have been something that Emmalin found entertaining, and if Emmalin didn't respond the way she did to this app, I probably wouldn't even have it on the Kindle! It's just that there are SO few things Emmalin responds to right now ESPECIALLY ones that make her smile (which has been nothing else), that we just take what we can get!

The last app that Emmalin will "play" with is the *Car Horn Sound* app. Out of the three apps it is definitely her least favorite, but she will still touch the little area on the screen so she can listen to the different car horn sounds. That's literally all this app does, is play different car horn sounds each time you touch it. It eventually cycles back around to the first sound. As far as Jarrad and I are concerned, this is BY FAR the most annoying app, but like I said earlier, we will do whatever it takes to see her actually playing with something!!

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What could be more fun for family and friends than celebrating a special event with a party? Mary Barnes, the mother of a six-year-old daughter with special needs, wrote a great article on just this topic that was included in Complex Child E-Magazine at <u>www.ComplexChild.com</u>. Here are a few of her party ideas that include accessible activities that could also be used during family, including extended family, or neighborhood get-togethers.

- Arts and Crafts Party
- Movie Party
- Sing-A-Long
- Story Time
- Parks and Playgrounds
- Home Party
- Virtual Party for a child who is sick or hospitalized

### Check out the website for the details:

http://www.articles.complexchild.com/jan2013/00441 .pdf

## Free Braille Books Are Fun



Mary Dingus, Librarian for the Missouri School for the Blind, wanted me to remind our MoSPIN families about these opportunities for free braille books.

The National Braille Press's "ReadBooks!" program provides free books for children ages birth to 7: <u>http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/programs/readbooks/</u> <u>readbooks.html</u>

Seedlings also has a program giving away free braille books to kids called the "Book Angel Program":

http://www.seedlings.org/bkangel2009.php

And then there is Dolly Parton's "Imagination Library", through APH, in which they give free braille books to kids under 6 and have audio books available for free download: http://www.aph.org/dolly-partons-imaginationlibrary/

Enjoy reading with your child!

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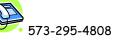
Many of the articles in this issue of <u>Parent Time</u> refer you to websites. If you do not have access to the internet, just ask your MoSPIN Parent Advisor to assist you. I am also available to provide information or hard copies of resources. You can contact me at 573-295-4808.

Ginny Williams Lead Parent Advisor for MoSPIN

# Contact Ginny Williams, Lead Parent Advisor for MoSPIN







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