

# FAMILY

YOUR CONNECTIONS, YOUR STORIES, YOUR CIRCLE



## MODERN LIFE

by *Suzanne Rust*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMY POSTLE

Flexibility is one of the cornerstones of sane parenting, especially when you have a child with special needs. As the parents of 9-year-old Sabrina and 12-year-old Max, who has cerebral palsy, Ellen Seidman and her husband, David, have become flex masters—they don't let challenges dictate how they live their lives. This attitude keeps the family strong and acts as a source of inspiration for Ellen's award-winning blog, *Love That Max*. We talked with Ellen about going with the flow.

SABRINA, 9, ELLEN, 46, CONTENT CONSULTANT AND WRITER, MAX, 12, DAVID, 43, IT DIRECTOR

NEW YORK CITY AREA

“ My blog allows me to help people see how awesome kids with special needs are. I don't want pity for my son—just inclusion and respect. When I hear that I've changed the way people view those with disabilities, I'm damn proud.”



“ My children are as yummy and adorable to me now as they were when they were roly-poly babies. I still can’t stop kissing them. Only now, they’re getting embarrassed.”

**Let It Go**

*Having a son with cerebral palsy has given me a roll-with-it sensibility. He can’t catch a softball? Okay, we’ll just play a batting-only game of T-ball. You have to be ready to change things up when you have a child with special needs, or you will drive yourself up the wall.*

**Parental Guidance**

*It’s best for parents to explain to their kids early on that children with disabilities are more alike than different from them. They should teach them to not be afraid of those who don’t act, talk or move like they do. Please, encourage your child to say hello to children with special needs.*



**Teachable Moments**

*My kids are typical siblings. They squabble, they’re competitive. But because Max has physical challenges, Sabrina has to help him sometimes. I can imagine that this will translate to her having a hearty sense of empathy for others with disabilities. But because she can also see Max’s abilities, she’ll know that even though people like her brother have challenges, they are capable in so many ways.*

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For more on the Seidman family, go to [familycircle.com/modernlife](http://familycircle.com/modernlife).