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The Newspaper In Education Program is working with NJ Sharing Network to present this special series. More than 1.5 million Americans have their health restored each year through tissue donation. This series will examine tissue donation and transplantation from different angles.

## Saving lives through organ & tissue donation

### How does a person's life change after receiving a new heart valve?

Every year, 5 million Americans learn they have heart valve disease, which disrupts the flow of blood through the heart. Heart valve problems can be caused by congestive heart failure, rheumatic fever or infections. There are several ways to treat a diseased heart valve – with medication, repair, or replacement. Heart valves are one of the types of tissue that can be donated after death. Surgical heart valve replacement is a safe and effective way to treat problem valves.

## VIP Corner

### Karen Panka, RN

“My daughter was born with a heart defect. Less than 24 hours after being born, she was transported to NYU Medical Center for treatment by a cardiac specialist. She had her first surgery when she was two years old. As she approached her fifth birthday, her doctor told us she would need a new heart valve. Receiving a new heart valve from a tissue donor gave my daughter the ability to have a normal childhood. That was 25 years ago. My daughter went to college and is now married and living in New York City. I'm a big advocate of organ and tissue donation.



Karen Panka, RN

## Today's Exercise:

Using today's paper, find all the advertisements and articles geared to heart health. What would be an effective message to send to these advertisers, authors and subjects of these articles about the importance of tissue donation?

## What Can I Do?

Talk to your classmates, family and friends about the importance of healthy living and the role that each plays in saving lives through organ and tissue donation.



For more information and age-appropriate educational materials, or to register as an organ and tissue donor, visit:

**[www.NJSharingNetwork.org](http://www.NJSharingNetwork.org) or call 800-742-7365.**