

Respite Newsletter

November National Family Caregivers Month 10 Tips for Effective Caregiving

November is a time to say thanks for the blessings in life, including the nearly 60 million caregivers in this country tending to the needs of ill or special needs loved ones. Today's caregivers juggle careers, personal relationships, housework and more with caring for an in-need relative. In honor of National Family Caregivers Month, here are some valuable tips:

1. Become informed - Know as much as you can about the illness you're facing. Ask the doctors and healthcare professionals questions, use the Internet as a resource and seek out others going through similar situations in your local and online communities.

2. Communicate - You can expect to feel overwhelmed at times. Communicating with you and your loved ones are handling the ups and downs not only will make you feel better but also will give your support community the

heads-up to help you out.

3. Reach out for help - You can't do it all on your own. Create a group of willing helpers - or pay for in-home care - to assist with driving, cooking and the many special needs of your loved one.

4. Journal - Tension and stress are part of the job description, and it's important to acknowledge and communicate these feelings. Begin by journaling regularly, and seek help or support when needed.

5. Build a support network - Form a network of support around your loved one by creating and updating an online support page at CarePages.com.

6. Maintain a positive attitude - There are certainly ups and downs, good days and bad. The best gift you can give is a positive attitude.

7. Get help navigating the maze - Caregiving is more than just driving someone to the doctor and providing them with meals. All of the insurance paperwork, financial planning, legal documentation and pre-

scription orders can be overwhelming. Take advantage of hospital and online resources to find the help you need.

8. Take time off - One of the most important things a caregiver can do for themselves and their loved one is to take time off to do something for you - take a walk, go to the mall, get a manicure. Set up a standing date to thank yourself for your efforts.

9. Trust your instincts - Most of us aren't counselors or therapists and don't know what to do or what to say when a loved one faces a crisis and needs your help. In most situations, however, go with your gut and you'll say - and do - the right thing.

10. Spend quality time together - Your relationship with your loved one changes when you become their caregiver, but that doesn't mean you still can't enjoy the quality time together you once had. Find ways to enjoy each others' company with games and other activities you once enjoyed.

Respite Scholarships Available

This summer the Nebraska Respite Network Southwest Service Area started a scholarship program for caregivers, their families and providers. This funding may be used to attend camps, training or conferences.

The Proclamation Day is an example of this funding. If you or any of your family members would like to attend this event I strongly encourage it. It is a day for you. If you need assistance we can help pay the \$20 charge to attend.

Several families used our funding this summer, sending their children to camps and themselves to trainings. This funding has been a great tool for us and we hope you were able to use it to your advantage.

There are guidelines we must follow for this funding. We only allow \$250 per event or \$500 per year. To apply for these funds we have an application which must be completed and returned to us with the appropriate information about the event

If you are interested in this program let me know and we will get you the information.

The trainings on page 4 may qualify for this funding as well. Check them out.

October and November is:

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness, Domestic Violence, Down Syndrome Awareness and Spina Bifida Awareness. Not only is November National Caregivers Month, but it is also National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness, Lung Cancer Awareness, Homecare, Respite Awareness, Lung and National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. Celebrate your caregivers, providers and family whether with a thank you or a hug.



Stress, depression and the holidays: 10 tips for coping

The holiday season, which begins for most Americans with Thanksgiving and continues through New Year's Day, often brings unwelcome guests, stress and depression. Learn to recognize common holiday triggers, so you can disarm them before they lead to a meltdown:



- **Relationships.** Relationships can cause turmoil, conflict or stress at any time, but tensions are often heightened during the holidays. Family misunderstandings and conflicts can intensify — especially if you're thrust together for several days. On the other hand, facing the holidays without a loved one can be tough and leave you feeling lonely and sad.
- **Finances.** With the added expenses of gifts, travel, food and entertainment, the holidays can put a strain on your budget — and your peace of mind. Not to mention that overspending now can mean financial worries for months to come.
- **Physical demands.** Even die-hard holiday enthusiasts may find that the extra shopping and socializing can leave them wiped out. Being exhausted increases your stress, creating a vicious cycle. Exercise and sleep — good antidotes for stress and fatigue — may take a back seat to chores and errands. To top it off, burning the wick at both ends makes you more susceptible to colds and other unwelcome guests.

Tips to prevent holiday stress and depression

1. **Acknowledge your feelings.** If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. It's OK to take time to cry or express your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.
2. **Reach out.** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship. Volunteering your time to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.
3. **Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to, and be open to creating new ones. For example, if your adult children can't come to your house, find new ways to celebrate together, such as sharing pictures, emails or videotapes.
4. **Set aside differences.** Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion. And be understanding if others get upset or distressed when something goes awry. Chances are they're feeling the effects of holiday stress and depression too.
5. **Stick to a budget.** Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts. Try these alternatives: Donate to a charity in someone's name, give homemade gifts or start a family gift exchange.
6. **Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. That'll help prevent last-minute scrambling to buy forgotten ingredients. And make sure to line up help for party prep and cleanup.
7. **Learn to say no.** Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity. If it's not possible to say no when your boss asks you to work overtime, try to remove something else from your agenda to make up for the lost time.
8. **Don't abandon healthy habits.** Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt. Have a healthy snack before holiday parties so that you don't go overboard on sweets, cheese or drinks. Continue to get plenty of sleep and physical activity.



9. **Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Take a walk at night and stargaze. Listen to soothing music. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.

NOVEMBER IS:

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, National Family Caregivers Month, National Homecare Month, National Respite Awareness Month & National Hospice and Palliative Care

"Celebrating Families and Professionals Providing Care"

Come and show your support for families that care for loved ones of all ages with chronic conditions in Nebraska
Monday, November 8, 2010.

A day to celebrate people who care for others that will include proclamation signings by Governor Heineman recognizing awareness of Alzheimer's Disease; the importance of our Family Caregivers; Hospice and Palliative Care; Home Care; and Respite.

- **10:30 a.m. Proclamation signing by Governor Heineman**
- **Governor Heineman will sign the five proclamations, followed by pictures in the Warner Chamber at the Nebraska State Capitol.**
- **11:00 a.m. Ribbon tying ceremony at the Respite Tree outside the Capitol**
(If weather permits).
- **12:00 p.m. Lunch and tour of the Governor's Mansion**
Recognition of the family caregivers caring for children and adults

Keynote Speakers:

Julie Masters, Assistant Professor of Gerontology at UNO
MaryAnn Schiefen, Parent of a young adult with Down syndrome
and an Early Development Network Coordinator

Family Caregivers and elected officials will attend the luncheon at no cost. If your agency would like to provide a sponsorship for an honored guest, your donation will be recognized during the luncheon.

Space is limited, RSVP and check must be received by **Monday, November 1, 2010**. Call the Respite Resource Center at (402) 996-8444 or e-mail: omaha.respiteresources@yahoo.com

Cost to attend the luncheon is \$20.00 per person. Don't miss out on this event. Call today!
Send check and information to: Respite Resource Center, 4223 Center Street, Omaha, NE 68105

NAME _____

FAMILY CAREGIVER OR ELECTED OFFICIAL'S NAME _____
ATTEND WITHOUT COST

ADDRESS _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Title _____ PHONE _____
Facility/Organization _____

Providing sponsorship(s) for # _____ special guest(s) to attend luncheon and program.

***Please indicate if you have dietary or physical special needs: -----

Please share this invitation with people that care for others. Nebraska Respite Network Southwest Service Area is offering assistance with this event. Call 308-345-4990, if you would like to attend.

Special Events

Always check out www.swhealthdept.com and click on the Respite tab for upcoming events

- ☺ **Oct. 5-26**—Love and Logic 6-8 p.m. Presented by Community Action Partnership. Contact Lisa Follmer at 308-865-1354 Ext. 123 for information.
- ☺ **Oct. 9** — 2010 Learning Series: Partners in Childcare, CCC @ Hastings. Call the ESU 11 (308) 995-6585 for details.
- ☺ **Oct. 9** — CASA training: Working with the court systems @ Holdrege. Call the ESU 11 (308) 995-6585 for more details.
- ☺ **Oct. 12 & 26**—Whine to Roses @ Sunrise Middle School—Cope Room in Kearney. Cost \$5 a session per parent/couple or \$10 both sessions per parent/couple. Registration form available at www.swhealthdept.com.
- ☺ **Oct. 13**—Senior Information and Resource Fair @ McCook Senior Center 10 a.m. -2 p.m.
- ☺ **Oct, 15-17, Nov. 5-7, Dec.3-5, Feb. 4-6, March 4-6 and April 1-3**—Lincoln Area Mini-Camp Respite Weekends with Easter Seals Nebraska. Sign up by calling 888-858-5069 x15 to register. Call one month before camp date.
- ☺ **Oct. 23** — Early childhood provider conference @ North Platte. Call ESU 16 office (308) 289-2088 for more details.
- ☺ **Oct. 26**—McCook Community Stroke Support Group 6-7:30 p.m., @ McCook. Call 308-340-9653 for details.
- ☺ **Oct. 27**—Caregiver Day out in McCook from 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Southwest Nebraska Public Health Dept. 404 West 10th McCook. Free massages, prizes and food. To register call 308-345-4990 or email respite@swhealthdept.com
- ☺ **Nov. 5-6**—PTI Special Education Law Conference in Omaha. Early Registration by Oct, 15, single \$45/couple \$80. After Oct. 15, Single \$55/Couple \$90. Scholarships may be available through PTI Nebraska, Planning Region Teams and Regional DD Councils. For information about scholarships contact Glenda Davis or Kimberly Schafer at 402-346-0525 or 800-284-8520. Also contact for information about CLEs and CEUs. Registration form and hotel information available at www.swhealthdept.com.
- ☺ **Nov. 8** — Proclamation Day @ Lincoln 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. See page 3 for details.
- ☺ **Nov. 18**—Regional Forum for Social Emotional Development. Contact Cindy Hankey @ cahankey@aol.com for more info.
- ☺ **Jan. 11, 2011** — Caregiver Day Out @ Ogallala from 5:30-7:30 (MT). For location and to register call 308-345-4990 or email respite@swhealthdept.com.
- ☺ **April 27-28**—Caregiver Retreat Mahoney State Park. Contact Donna Washburn @ dwashburn@lincoln.ne.gov to attend.



Nebraska Respite Network

Southwest Service Area

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