



Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program (MFCSP)

May 2020

MAY IS DESIGNATED "[OLDER AMERICANS MONTH](#)," AND THIS YEAR'S THEME IS "MAKE YOUR MARK."

IN THE NEWS

[Keeping Older People Safe During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)

Muriel Gillick, MD writes about how family caregivers can use technology to help those they care for to remain safe at home during the pandemic.

[When Dementia Meets the Coronavirus Crisis](#)

Julie Halpert discusses unique challenges for people with dementia and their caregivers, including changes in routine and need for hands-on care.

[Life at the Intersection: Older Adults Need a Response to COVID-19 Grounded in Equity](#)

Denny Chan explores community stories to highlight the importance of intersectionality in understanding how inequity affects communities.

[Protecting Healthcare's Family Caregivers Amidst The COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

The Health Affairs Blog highlights five steps that can be quickly taken by public, private, and community leaders to protect caregivers.

CAREGIVER GUIDANCE

AARP compiles a [list of advice in how to fight the social isolation](#) of COVID-19.

Caregiver Trish Laub describes [7 ways to cope with the pandemic as a caregiver](#).

HELPFUL RESOURCES

[Comprehensive list of tools](#) from the Caregiver Action Network for new caregivers, including topics like asking for help and managing the costs of care.

[Respite and caregiving resources](#) compiled by the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center, specific to the time of COVID-19.

[The Alzheimer's Foundation of America's Helpline](#), staffed by licensed social workers trained in dementia care, is open seven days a week to help answer caregivers' questions.

[Caregiver Tech Tool Finder](#) explores apps, tech tools, and websites that may be helpful during COVID-19, specific to topics like self-care, healthy aging, medication management, and care coordination.

[The COVID Communications Toolbox](#) synthesizes information, tools, and resources related to COVID-19, conversations about serious illness care, advance directives, and POLST.

ART-INSPIRED SELF-CARE

Artist Wendy Kieffer Shragg created an **online collage project** to help people reignite their creativity. You can follow along step-by-step in [this video](#).

Every night, a different encore presentation from the **Metropolitan Opera** is made available on the [Met website](#) for free streaming.

Creating art can be uplifting and healing! Time Slips is offering a [free weekly email](#) for caregivers seeking simple ways to help older adults engage in creative activities.

Scrapbooking can provide a respite for caregivers or a shared activity with others. Register for this [virtual workshop](#) designed for family caregivers!

Access to **audiobooks** through these sources:

[Audible](#)

[LibriVox](#)

RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATES

[Inventory of Key Family Caregiver Recommendations](#)

In partnership with the **Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act** Advisory Council, Wendy Fox-Grage of the **National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP)** synthesized 800 recommendations to identify key actions governments, communities and providers can take to **recognize and support family caregivers**. NASHP categorized these recommendations into the Advisory Council's five goals:

- Expand **awareness, outreach, education, and access** to programs, services, and products to optimize the well-being of family members.
- Recognize, include, and support **family caregivers as key partners** in the provision of health care and long-term services and supports.
- Protect, promote, and enhance **financial workplace security** of family caregivers.
- **Promote research**, identification, and adoption of **evidence-based practices**.
- Strengthen program **administration, governance, and collaboration**.

MAY MANTRA

"We could never learn to be brave and patient, if there were only joy in the world."

Helen Keller

[Coronavirus Puts a Spotlight on Paid Leave Policies](#)

The Kaiser Family Foundation highlights the lack of national policy regarding paid family or sick leave and the country's current political landscape and congressional efforts.

 Need a music break? Listen to Oscar-winning composer Randy Newman's COVID-inspired, "[Stay Away](#)" 

SUPPORT GROUPS

HopeHealth offers [several virtual support groups](#) for caregivers:

- **General Caregiver Support**
Group meeting Tuesdays 3-4 PM
- **Dementia Caregiver Support**
Group Fridays 10-11:30AM

HopeHealth also has a [variety of virtual support groups](#) providing grief support:

- **Losing a loved one** to COVID-19
- Mindfulness **meditation for grief** and healing

The Alzheimer's Association has [many options for virtual support groups](#), including for caregivers:

- For those **living at home** with their loved one with a diagnosis
- For those with a loved one in a **facility** whom they cannot visit due to COVID-19

WEBINARS

[Conversations with Caregivers:](#)

[Education and Support for Patients, Caregivers, Clinicians](#)

Tuesday, May 19, 2020 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Presented by the Dementia Care Collaborative
Flutist and author Eugenia Zukerman will share her experience coping with Alzheimer's and give a special flute performance!
nmozzone@mgh.harvard.edu or (617) 724-0406 to RSVP

[Social Isolation and Well-Being for Caregivers: A COVID-19 Webinar Series for Caregivers, Consumers, and Families](#)

Recording and slides available online

Co-sponsored by the Family Caregiver Alliance and San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services

[Caregiving During COVID-19 – Facebook Live Series](#)

Recordings from previous sessions available online

Presented by Home Instead Senior Care
Hosted by Senior Care Gerontologist & Advocate Lakelyn Hogan
Topics include: [How to do a Home Safety Check](#) & [Fun Ways to Stay Busy When Isolated](#)