



MASSACHUSETTS FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

NEWSLETTER | OCTOBER 2020



"If you want to be a true professional, you will do something outside yourself, something to **repair tears** in your community, something to make life a little better for people less fortunate than you. That's what I think a meaningful life is - living not for oneself, but **for one's community.**"

"Real change, enduring change, happens **one step at a time.**"

-RBG

MFCSP OCTOBER 2020
NEWSLETTER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Upcoming Webinars • P.2

Research/Policy • P.3

Recommended Reading • P. 4

RMV Senior Days • P. 5

COVID-19 Crisis Survey • P. 5

Ways to Stay Engaged • P. 5

UPCOMING WEBINARS

Setting Boundaries with Loved Ones Virtual Workshop
October 5, 7:30 PM

Money Smart for Older Adults & COVID Scams: Building Collaboration and finding Free Resources to Prevent Isolation and Financial Exploitation
October 7, 4:00 PM

How to Create and Sustain a Successful Support Group for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
October 8, 11:00 AM

The Innovation Ecosystem: Solutions For Family Caregivers October 8, 1:00 PM

Join the MassTech Collaborative and the Massachusetts Caregiver Coalition as we start a conversation about Innovation in Family Caregiving. The series will highlight the breadth of opportunity for innovation, bring lessons learned and examples to the Commonwealth, and highlight and promote Massachusetts-based innovations for caregivers. The inaugural October webinar will start this important conversation on the state of innovation in caregiving, highlight critical areas of need, and encourage people to join the movement.

COVID Caring Conversations: Tips for Families with a Loved One at Home
October 9, 12:00 PM

Effective Communication Strategies
October 13, 6:30 PM

Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness: 2020 Action Forum
October 14, 11:00 AM

Addressing the Personal Determinants of Health of Older Adults
October 14, 1:00 PM

National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging Webinar Series: Older Adult Peer Support in a Time of COVID-19
October 14, 2:00 PM

Reducing Family Conflict - How to Work Together as Parents Age
October 16, 2:00 PM

Providing in-person services and supports to people living with dementia during COVID-19
October 19, 2:00 PM

Using technology to provide services to people living with dementia and their caregivers during COVID-19
November 2, 2:00 PM

Slides and Recordings from Past Webinars

- Alone Together: Understanding Social Isolation in Caregiving in the U.S. 2020 (July 20, 2020)
- Navigating the World of Assistive Technology for People Living with Dementia (August 27, 2020)
- Town Hall: Family Caregiving and COVID-19 (August 27, 2020)
- Understanding and Addressing Sources of Caregiver Anxiety (September 11, 2020)
- Caregiving Conversations: Reflecting on Race, Older Adults, and Implications for Behavioral Health (September 15, 2020)
- engAGED Social Isolation Virtual Summit (September 24, 2020) - See Slide Below

STAYING SOCIALLY CONNECTED WHILE PHYSICALLY DISTANT



If you live with others, spend quality time together



Offer support to others



Express Gratitude



Spend time outside in nature/neighborhood

RESEARCH/POLICY

- Family Caregiving Advisory Council Refines Goals to Guide National Strategy (+ slides)
- Supporting Family and Older Relative Caregivers: The Family Caregiving Advisory Council Marks One Year of Progress
- Stress and pressure of caregiving takes a health toll, says Blue Cross Blue Shield Association survey
- Some Nursing Homes Expand Visits for 'Essential Caregivers' in Lockdown
- Unpaid Family Caregivers Have Heightened Thoughts of Suicide: New CDC report finds stress and isolation of coronavirus takes a toll on mental health
- Strengthening Family Caregiving Programs and Policies through Collaboration: Lessons from Six States
- Women's Retirement Outlook Is Becoming Even Riskier Amid COVID-19: New study outlines women's financial vulnerabilities before and during the pandemic
- Cancer Caregivers and Treatment Decision Making: A Qualitative Research Assessment

Advancing Action: A State Scorecard on Long-Term Services and Supports for Older Adults, People with Physical Disabilities, and Family Caregivers (2020 Edition)

AARP has released its fourth iteration of the Long-term Services and Supports Scorecard. This scorecard ranks states and DC in order from 1 to 51 on a wide range of issues pertaining to older adults and people with disabilities.

The LTSS scorecard has five domains that states are ranked within. The domains include:

- Affordability and Access
- Choice of Setting and Provider
- Quality of Life and Quality of Care
- Support for Family Caregivers
- Effective Transitions

Each of those domains has multiple indicators that are then used to derive the overall score for every individual state.



IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS:

A Community Resource for Strengthening Social Connections



UMASS BOSTON CENTER FOR SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH ON AGING

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS: A Community Resource for Strengthening Social Connections

The purpose of this document is to provide communities and residents with practical resources and ideas for building connections in their communities. We include both new ideas for building connections among neighbors, families, and friends, and also offer insights to strengthen existing opportunities for ALL residents to participate and be engaged.

USING THIS REPORT

- Select a topic of interest.
- Review the ideas for action.
- Connect with those who have tried it already.
- Adapt the idea for your community.
- Try it out.
- Demonstrate the impact it had on your community!

IDEAS FOR REACHING OUT

- Transportation-Focused Initiatives
- Information Sharing and Resource Connection
- Multicultural Approaches to Building Social Connections
- Connection-First Volunteer Opportunities
- Health- and Wellness-Oriented Opportunities to Connect with Others
- Intergenerational Approaches
- Building Community Cohesion
- Reaching the Hard(er) to Reach
- Internet-Based Innovations

NATIONAL

WORK

&

FAMILY

month

In Honor of National Work & Family Month (October)

- Caring for a parent while working—Elder Q&A with Joan Hatem-Roy
- This Is The Moment For Working Caregivers To Get the Work-Life Balance They've Always Wanted and Needed
- Let's Honor Ruth Bader Ginsburg By Recognizing Men As Caregivers
- Three Easy Ways to Support Working Caregivers
- Keeping Your Job While Caregiving During COVID-19

RECOMMENDED READING

TOOLKITS & TIPS

- Why Do People with Dementia Wander? Tips to Manage Wandering and Keep Your Loved One Safe
- Helping Your Care Recipient Apply for Disability Benefits
- Financial Planning Guide for Caregivers of Seniors Suffering Memory Loss - helps caregivers prepare for the expenses associated with caring for someone with memory loss and offers caregiver resources that can help make the journey easier.
- Teepa Snow: Offering Comfort when Quarantined using the Positive Physical Approach
- "Not Thriving at Home" - Suggestions for family members and caregivers on what to look for and where to turn if they have concerns that their loved one/s may not be thriving
- What to Look for in a Nursing Home During the Pandemic
- 6 Questions to Ask if a Loved One Is in a Nursing Home
- How Caregivers Can Build Trust With Their Loved Ones' Doctors
- How To Care For Older People In The Pandemic (And A Printable Guide!)
- Conversation Starter Kit
- Conversation Starter Kit—For Families and Loved Ones of People with Alzheimer's Disease or Other Forms of Dementia

GETTING BY

- Participating in a Caregiver Support Group May Make You Happier
- In Isolating Times, Can Robo-Pets Provide Comfort?
- Caregiver Self-Care: Tips To Help Address Emotional Health
- Increased Access to Mental Health Care for Older Adults: Getting Support during COVID-19

THE MORE YOU KNOW

- Isolation, Disruption & Confusion: Coping with Dementia During a Pandemic
- Guest Column on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- Is Telemedicine the Future of Palliative Care? Proponents say it will increase access and foster rapport, but sustained uptake hinges on reimbursement
- Depression Worsens Over Time in Caregivers of Partners With Dementia
- Increased Isolation Makes It Difficult to Identify Neglected Older Americans
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and COVID-19: Overlaying Risks, Uncertain Outcomes
- Cafe Des Aidants Online: Alternative Ways to Support Caregivers During COVID-19
- 9 Rewards of Caregiving: How Caring for Someone Else Can Bring You Comfort and a Sense of Accomplishment
- Reducing Loneliness and Social Isolation among Older Adults
- Promoting Psychological Health & Suicide Prevention among Older Adults during COVID
- You can get a robot to keep your lonely grandparents company. Should you? The ethical costs and benefits of a companion robot — during the pandemic and beyond

INSPIRING STORIES

- Program uses poetry to help people with dementia connect
- Virtual grief support helps 'foster dad to hundreds' find hope after loss
- 'I Want to Be With Her.' When Covid Closed Nursing Homes, One Husband Moved In
- Fighting Back against the Loneliness Epidemic: Throughout the country, socially distanced young adults and older adults have been forming connections

MENTAL WELLNESS & STAYING CONNECTED

As always, it's important to continue to cultivate mental wellness for yourself and those you care for. Here is a list of suggestions from AARP around mental wellness and staying connected:

- Develop a plan to connect with family, friends or loved ones: This is especially important for people living alone.
- Limit news consumption: Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Care for living things: Caring for pets or plants provides a sense of purpose and improved health.
- Listen to music, find activities that bring joy
- Keep your mind active: Completing puzzles, reading, and engaging in art projects helps to keep the mind occupied and can improve cognitive functioning.
- Use calming techniques: Such as deep breathing, stretching, meditation prayer, taking a warm bath or shower, or sitting with a pet.
- Find ways to laugh: Watch a TV show, or chat with a friend or family member who brings joy.
- Create short personal videos that can be shared between family and loved ones.

The **MassSupport Network** provides free community outreach and support services across the state in response to the unprecedented public health crisis, COVID-19. This network includes a Crisis Counseling Program set up to assist Massachusetts residents impacted by the pandemic. Since their group formed they have been providing emotional support services both by direct phone contact and online groups.



REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Senior Days in October for customers age 75+ whose licenses expire in October!

Massachusetts law requires drivers who are 74 years of age or older to renew in person. The RMV has dedicated Wednesdays in October at the RMVs to anyone 74 years of age or older to renew with an appointment.

The designated RMV service centers for customers 75+ are:

- Brockton
- Danvers
- Fall River
- Greenfield
- Lawrence
- Leominster
- Martha's Vineyard
- Nantucket
- New Bedford
- North Adams
- Pittsfield
- Plymouth
- Revere
- South Yarmouth
- Watertown
- Worcester

COVID-19 CRISIS SURVEY

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA-DPH) is trying to hear from communities so that it can better help people through the COVID-19 crisis. By taking this survey, you can help find new solutions to community problems, and give MA-DPH the information they need to take action and support the communities that need it most. MA-DPH is committed to sharing information back in ways that will help us all take collective action

This effort should help us better understand the impact of COVID-19 on our communities. Anyone who is 14 years old or older may participate using this link:

www.mass.gov/COVIDsurvey

WAYS TO STAY ENGAGED

- 6 Classic Board Games You Can Play on your iOS or Android Device
- Virtual Resources for Older Adults during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- **WindowSwap**– A place on the internet where those who are travel hungry can share their 'window views' to help each other feel a little bit better till they can (responsibly) explore our beautiful planet again
- **Stuck at Home (Together)** provides resources and tools to encourage creative expression and enable social connection
 - Provides lots of ways to creatively connect, including:
 - **Story Share:** post your Stuck at Home Story in words or images
 - **Creativity Challenges:** Creative activities that encourage connections with friends and family
 - **Go-to Playlists:** Music improves moods, so help us create the playlists that elevate you!
- **Let's Get Away Together Fall Series: "Music, Travel, and Art"**
 - This series is comprised of interactive travel activity sessions with each week focusing on a new part of the country or cultural activity, while incorporating storytelling, music, poetry writing, and/or a simple craft. Each session will include a follow-up message filled with tips, activities, and recipes for families to continue to enjoy after the virtual trip. The focus of each group is to explore a new world, experience a variety of engaging opportunities, and enjoy a sense of camaraderie and community
 - Let's Get Away Together is intended to be an enjoyable activity for family caregivers and the person they care for. Those receiving care who are able to participate in the discussion and activities are encouraged to attend with their family caregiver
 - **October 6— Inspired by a Rainbow**
This breathtaking art-inspired trip will brighten your day and warm your soul
 - **October 13— Let's explore Music and Sound**
Board? Tired? Uninspired? Join us for something NEW to boost your spirits and explore with your friends!
 - **October 20— Let's Go to Alaska!**
Learn something new about our 49th state through breathtaking views, fun facts, and inspiring music
 - **October 27— Harvest and Holiday Party**
Let's celebrate the season of fall, costumes welcomed!!! Think big and have fun preparing!