

MASSACHUSETTS FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

NEWSLETTER | FALL 2021

NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER MONTH

During Family Caregiver Month we acknowledge the dedication of family caregivers and how vital they are to ensuring older people and individuals living with disabilities have opportunities to live and thrive in the communities of their choosing.

As former First Lady Rosalynn Carter once stated: “There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.” What we do to keep our family members, friends, and neighbors safe, healthy, and fulfilled is vitally important each and every day.

We see you, we hear you, and we appreciate you! Throughout the Commonwealth, there are over one million family caregivers who balance the joys and rewards of providing care with the challenges. I hope you know that you are not alone and you are making a difference.

During the month of November, our hope is that you take a moment to thank yourself, to take pride in your role as a family caregiver, to acknowledge the contributions you are making as a family caregiver, and to seek out supports.

Thank you for all you do.



Special Edition Newsletter for
Family Caregiver Month

TABLE OF CONTENTS

#CaregiverAnd,	2
Resources for Resilience,	3
Specialized Resources,	4
Research Policy,	5
Kate Washington,	5
Opportunities to Engage,	6
Events Webinars,	7

NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

November is NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

#CaregiverAnd

Celebrated every November, National Family Caregivers Month (NFCM) is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. It offers an opportunity to raise awareness of caregiving issues, educate communities, and increase support for caregivers.

The national observance is spearheaded by Caregiver Action Network (CAN), a nonprofit that provides free education, peer support, and resources to family caregivers. CAN announced the 2021 theme, #CaregiverAnd which encourages family caregivers to celebrate the passions and interests that enrich their lives. This is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country.



RECOGNIZE



ASSIST



INCLUDE



SUPPORT



ENGAGE

National Family Caregivers Month

Administration for Community Living

RESOURCES FOR RESILIENCE



THOUGHT PIECES

[Who Will Take Care of America's Caregivers?](#)

New York Times Opinion piece on the importance of paid and unpaid caregivers.

[Unpaid Caregivers Were Already Struggling. It's Only Gotten Worse During The Pandemic](#)

NPR piece on the recent report by the CDC on the impact of the pandemic on parents and unpaid caregivers of adults.

[Around the Clock Caregiving](#)

Tips for caring for a loved one at home from real caregivers.

[Ask Joan: Where Is There Care For The Caregivers?](#)

Monthly Q&A with ESMV CEO, Joan Hatem-Roy.

[Advance Care Planning: A Gift You Give Yourself – and Your Loved Ones](#)

When family members know your care preferences, they can make better decisions on your behalf.

[Being a Family Caregiver is Enormously Hard. Here Are Three Reforms That Would Help](#)

Thought piece by former Massachusetts Governor Jane Swift on National Family Caregiver Month and the concrete improvements needed in the system for family caregivers.



OTHER MEDIA

['It's Not a Burden' – the New Film on Caregiving for Your Parents](#)

"It's Not a Burden: The Humor and Heartache of Raising Elderly Parents" is a documentary that offers glimpses into the caregiving stories of more than a dozen families across the country of all races, genders and backgrounds – some living with, or near, a parent; others providing caregiving at a distance.

[Caregivers Out Loud: A Podcast by Family Caregivers of British Columbia](#)

"Caregivers Out Loud" provides a space for family caregivers to connect, listen and learn with other caregivers. The podcast features insightful, authentic and heart-centered conversations with caregivers that highlight the joys, trials, and self-discoveries that come along with this rewarding and taxing position.

[The Language of Letting Go, Book by Melody Beattie](#)

Melody Beattie integrates her own life experiences and fundamental recovery reflections in this daily meditation book written especially for those who struggle with the issue of codependency.



GUIDES AND LESSONS LEARNED

[Caregiving 101, Christina Irving June 2021](#)

Christina Irving, LCSW, defines the term 'caregiver', discusses the importance of being identified as a caregiver, and talks about the impact a caregiver can have.

[New Senior Care Survey Reveals Lasting Impacts of the Pandemic on Older Adults and Family Caregivers](#)

"According to the survey, 67% of adult children say the type of care they prefer for their aging loved one has shifted as a result of the pandemic, whether they've shifted in favor of aging in place (32%) or shifted in favor of senior living communities (35%)."

DEMENTIA CAREGIVERS

- [Your Guide to the 4 Most Common Types of Dementia](#)
How dementia research and care advances are helping patients live better lives.
- [5 Tips to Get a Person Living with Dementia to Consider Making Major Life Changes](#)
Five strategies for making transitions as respectful and collaborative as possible.
- [7 Early Warning Signs of Dementia You Shouldn't Ignore](#)
How to spot early indicators that your loved one may have Alzheimer's or dementia.

Spousal Caregivers

- [When One Partner Needs to Move for Long-Term Care and the Other Doesn't](#)
He required more long-term care than she could provide. Moving him to an assisted living facility improved both their lives.
- [How to Protect the Marriage Bond When Caring for a Spouse](#)
Tips from AARP on how to protect one's relationship when providing care for a spouse, such as to focus on what still brings both spouses joy.

GRANDPARENT CAREGIVERS

- [How to Help Grandparents That Are Caring for Grandkids](#)
One out of four children under the age of five is cared for by a grandparent while a parent works or goes to school. In collaboration with the NCOA, ZERO TO THREE has developed a seven-workshop series for grandparents caring for grandkids.
- [9 Steps to Respite Care for Grandfamilies](#)
This fact sheet outlines nine simple steps to help them assess their own needs, identify the different types of respite, and provide information on how to find and pay for services.

Long-Distance Caregivers

- [Long-Distance Family Caregiving Reimagined](#)
The pandemic is paving the way for a better remote care experience.
- [Liz Weston: How To Be a Better Long-Distance Caregiver](#)
Many distant caregivers worry they're not doing enough and that a preventable crisis will develop because they weren't on hand to spot the red flags. "As caregivers, guilt is our constant companion," AARP's Amy Goyer says. "When you're a long-distance caregiver, it's even more so."

COVID-19 CAREGIVERS

- [COVID-19 for Older Adults: The Best Way to Protect Yourself Against the Delta Variant](#)
The best way to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community from the coronavirus and its variants is to get vaccinated.
- [How Family Caregivers Can Deal With Stress, Find Help During The Pandemic](#)
Examples of how family caregivers can find help during the pandemic, such as organizational aid or help from friends or family.

Other Caregivers

- [5 Habits of Highly Effective MS Caregivers](#)
While caring for someone with MS can be deeply rewarding, it can also be difficult because the disease is unpredictable. As a result, caregiving needs are continually shifting. Those who most easily adapt have developed habits that keep them grounded even in turbulent times. This article walks through five habits of highly effective MS caregivers, including building support networks and practicing self-care.
- [Unsung Young Heroes](#)
How millions of youth caretakers serve ill or disabled family members.

RESEARCH/POLICY

Care Managers and Families: Providing the Right Support

If the goal of care management is to provide quality of life through care planning that is congruent with the wishes of older adults, then models for care management need to proactively include the family caregiver when they are part of the older adults' caring community. Family-centric care management improves outcomes and social networks that support older adults in the home.

Lessons from the Workplace: Caregiving During COVID-19

This report focuses on the challenges and supports encountered during the pandemic by working caregivers who provide unpaid care to a family member or friend with a chronic, serious, or disabling health condition. Noting that there are 23 million working caregivers in the U.S., writer Peg Rosen investigates the workplace experiences during COVID of some of those unpaid caregivers and explores the gaps between what family caregivers say they need and what employers are providing.

The United States Should Recognize and Support Caregiving Youth

This report summarizes research on how caregiving affects youth's academic, social, and emotional well-being. Next, it presents novel, emerging evidence from the public school-based 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey for the State of Florida, which suggests that as many as 24% of middle school students and 16% of high school students provide at least some care to the family on a regular basis. The report concludes with specific recommendations for a path toward recognizing and supporting caregiving youth via policy and practice in the United States.

Caregiving in Military Families: Military Family Lifestyle Survey Special Report



Caregiving in Military Families 2020 Military Family Lifestyle Survey Special Report

In partnership with:
ROSA LYNN FOR
CAREGIVERS
INSTITUTE

In collaboration with:
S
Supporting Veterans
& Military Families

While the challenges unique to caregivers and to military-affiliated families have been examined independently, the interaction of these two sets of circumstances have not been studied in conjunction. Military families face unique challenges associated with military life, and caregivers shoulder the additional burdens of caring for loved ones. However, to date it has remained unclear what caregiving looks like in military families and how the military lifestyle impacts caregivers. Blue Star Families has tracked caregivers in military families for years through the annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey (MFLS), and other research endeavors, but heretofore has not reported in depth on this unique group.



In response to interview question,

Is there anything you want to say to all the caregivers out there who are doing this important work, largely without reward or recognition?:

"Don't be afraid to ask for and accept help. It's very easy to lose sight of oneself. Remind yourself and others that you're a person outside of caregiving. The crisis in care and the way caregiving functions in the U.S. right now is a really complex, systemic problem. We really need a wholesale rethinking of how we care for each other in this society. I think the pandemic has made extremely clear that we need a rethinking of how we approach care for each other and health care in general.

It's not exceptional or strange to need care or to be a caregiver. Yet most people don't expect it in a really concrete way. None of us think, "I'm going to have to administer IV medications." Caregiving catches so many people off guard, and it's really hard to be thrown into the deep end of this very emotionally fraught process. It's scary and we don't have enough provisions for supporting people who are caring for other people...I think it's a pretty urgent problem to solve."

Kate Washington, Author of the book "Already Toast: Caregiving and Burnout in America"

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE

Respite Retreat: A 2-hour Individual Directed Retreat, For Weary Family Care Partners

Offered year-round, by Mary E. MacDonald, M.A. Community-based Chaplain for Long-term Caregivers, Certified Yoga Teacher, Life Coach & Group Leader.

A reservation is required.

Cost: No charge, contributions gratefully accepted.

Contact Mary at 978-887-4202 to learn more or to schedule a retreat.

We encourage you to book this time for yourself, even if you are unsure about committing to a date because of a loved one's unpredictable care needs. A morning confirmation call the day-of the retreat will give you the option of keeping or rescheduling the retreat time.

Reflecting on Your Caregiving Journey

Recording of Live chat with Expert: Dr. Aaron Blight

Caregivers are often so focused on the daily tasks of caregiving that they rarely have time to reflect on their role as a caregiver and how it changes over time. For many, caregiving is a multi-year journey and one that can start to feel overwhelming. Regular reflection can help caregivers change their mindset and transform their caregiving experience. Join Dr. Lakelyn Hogan as she talks with author and caregiving consultant Dr. Aaron Blight to learn:

- How to check assumptions about caregiving.
- Ways to identify opportunities to improve the situation.
- Methods of reflection that can help individuals learn about themselves and improve their caregiving experience.

Rural Dementia Caregiver Project

The Rural Dementia Caregiver Project is a research study at the University of California, San Francisco. This study is currently recruiting family caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease or other memory problems to participate in a free online workshop.

For more information about the study, please visit <https://caregiverproject.ucsf.edu/>

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission Survey

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) is surveying individuals across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts who require a wheelchair and/or a wheelchair ramp to their home.

Would you please help us identify people of all ages needing a wheelchair and/or a wheelchair ramp? This survey can be completed by a provider, case manager, family member, friend, or the individual in need themselves.

Please take this quick survey and share with us your thoughts and opinions.

UPCOMING EVENTS & WEBINARS

The logo for HFC (Hennepin Foundation for Caregivers) features the letters 'HFC' in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a solid orange rectangular background.

Bringing Light
to Alzheimer's

HFC Alzheimer's Caregiving Tips Workshops
Series

December 2, 7:30 PM

Legal & Financial Planning

December 7, 4:00 PM

Healthy Living for Your Brain & Body: Tips
From the Latest Research

December 7, 6:00 PM



**Caring for the
Caregiver:
A Monthly
Webinar Series**

Caring for the Caregiver Webinar Series:
Navigating Family Dynamics

December 8, 12:00 PM

Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia

December 8, 4:00 PM

Parent Loss Bereavement Group (Weekly)

December 8, 7:00 PM

Keeping Connected Through the Holidays:
Tips for Caregivers

December 9, 10:00 AM

Bereavement Support Group (Weekly)

December 13, 10:30 AM

Support group for Caregivers (2nd Monday
of Every Month)

December 13, 7:00 PM

Advancing the Science: The Latest in
Alzheimer's and Dementia Research

December 14, 4:00 PM

10 Warning Signs

December 14, 6:00 PM

Understanding and Responding to
Dementia-Related Behavior

December 21, 4:00 PM

Parkinson's Adult Child Support Group
(Monthly)

December 21, 7:00 PM

Dementia Conversations

December 30, 12:00 PM

Age your Way- Planning for the Future

January 12, 1:00 PM

Support Group for LGBTQ Caregivers

January 12 - March 2, 3:00 PM

Death, Dying and Grieving

February 2, 1:00 PM