

Caregiver Headlines

SpeakUp!

National Family Caregivers Month

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Special points of interest:

- National Family Caregivers Month
- Tips for long distance caregivers
- National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month
- National Memory Screening Day

This is a special time of the year to thank, support, educate, and empower family caregivers. "This year people are encouraged to speak up," says Susan Mintz, NFCA president and co-founder. "One of the most important attributes on being an advocate for your loved one is the willingness and ability to speak up and keep an eye on the ultimate goal, protecting not only the health and safety of your loved ones but for yourself as well."

The following tips will help you celebrate your month:

If you have TWO minutes:

- ♦ Take deep breaths and think peaceful thoughts.
- ♦ Remember the last time you had a good laugh and it will bring a smile to your face.
- ♦ Visualize yourself in a peaceful place.
- ♦ Smile at strangers and you will be surprised at the positive response you get back.
- ♦ Hum, whistle or sing one of your favorite songs or melodies.

- ♦ Eat a piece of fine chocolate. In fact, buy yourself an entire box and look forward to having it as a reward after shopping or work.

- ♦ Cuddle and pet your dog/cat. Not only will they love it but you can forget about everything for a bit.

If you have FIVE minutes:

- ♦ Reflect on all the things for which you are grateful.
- ♦ Email a friend who positively reinforces who you are.
- ♦ Listen to a song or relaxation tape that uplifts you.
- ♦ Sketch or doodle—let your creative side out!
- ♦ Express your thoughts and feelings in a journal.
- ♦ Ask yourself what you really feel like doing right now and then do it.

If you have 15 minutes:

- ♦ Soak in a warm tub with aromatherapy bath gel/salts surrounded by candles.
- ♦ Go for a walk in the park or by the lake.
- ♦ Get a massage.
- ♦ Write a poem.
- ♦ Take a nap.

Believe
Protect
Reach Out

- ♦ Drive or walk out of your way to find something beautiful in your everyday routine.
- ♦ Take your dog for a walk around the block.

If you have ONE hour:

- ♦ Volunteer at your favorite charity.
- ♦ Go to the bookstore and check out a new book, listen to music and maybe have a cup of coffee.
- ♦ Have lunch or dinner with a toddler. Re-read parts of your favorite book.
- ♦ "Do" your hair and makeup on a night you're staying in.
- ♦ Go to bed an hour early; put on your favorite pajamas, make some hot tea and crawl into bed.
- ♦ Rent your favorite movie and watch it all by yourself.

—Source

www.networkofstrength.org
www.thefamilycaregiver.org

10 Survival Strategies for Long-Distance Caregivers

If your mother is in one state and you are in another, how do you help take care of her? Angela Heath, director of the Eldercare Locator Hotline of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, has compiled 10 strategies to help you cope. This article is adapted from Heath's book, "Long-Distance Caregiving: A Survival Guide for Far Away Caregivers."

No. 1: Get organized

Keep track of important information in a care log.

No. 2: Identify your informal network

Ask for help from people in the care receiver's community, such as relatives, neighbors, longtime family friends and members of religious, civic, and social organizations. Ask them to call you collect if they spot a problem.

No. 3: Investigate travel alternatives

Be prepared to "care commute." Investigate travel options in advance. Keep your car in good repair, and check on the route and weather before traveling.

If you rent a car, look for the best rates. Don't pay for insurance if you already carry full coverage or your credit card com-

pany offers coverage. You may get a discount when buying bus or train tickets if you disclose that it's an emergency. Purchase airline tickets seven days in advance and stay over a Saturday night.

No. 4: Discuss legal and financial issues

These topics may be difficult to talk about, but they help ensure that the care receiver maintains decision-making authority even when incapacitated. Preplanning will also lessen family disagreements and protect family resources.

Will: the care receiver decides how to dispose of assets after death.

Power of attorney: gives a caregiver the authority to act on behalf of the care receiver.

Trust: estate-planning document allows the care receiver to transfer assets and avoid probate and other legal problems.

Joint ownership: makes it easier to gain access to the care receiver's finances.

Representative payee: a caregiver receives government checks for a care receiver unable to manage money.

Medigap insurance: pays portion of medical

bills not covered by Medicare.

No. 5: Take care of necessary paperwork

Find all legal, financial, and insurance documents, including birth certificates, social security cards, marriage or divorce decrees, wills, and power of attorney. Identify bank accounts, titles, sources of income and obligations, and auto, life, homeowner's, and medical insurance papers. Review these documents for accuracy and update them if necessary. Store documents in a secure place such as a safe-deposit box or fireproof box. Be safe—make duplicate copies.

No. 6: Tap into the aging network

Contact the local department on aging in your relative's community. This agency can help you identify helpful services. Use the National Eldercare Locator Service at 1.800.677.1116 to find local aging agencies.

No. 7: Develop a plan of care

If possible, bring the family together for a meeting. Decide with the care receiver what the primary needs are, who can provide assistance and what community resources would help. Summarize

your agreement in writing. Keep in mind that family difficulties are typical. You may need to bring in a family therapist or social worker to help.

No. 8: Adjust your plan of care when necessary

Be aware that your plan of care may need to be altered. The care receiver's needs may change, and helpers will come and go. Use your care log to deal with changes.

No. 9: Explore relocation issues

Primary questions are when, who, and where.

When: Relocation is appropriate when a health professional recommends a change, the care receiver needs 24-hour care, his/her safety is at risk, or the home does not meet the fire or safety standards. Other reasons may be less obvious. Remember, the care receiver may be willing to bear a little inconvenience to remain in his/her home.

Who: Should you or the care receiver relocate? Examine the financial and emotional costs.

Where: There are many options for senior housing. Contact your local department of aging for assistance.

No. 10: Take care of yourself

Maintain good health, make time for yourself, set limits, and allow others to help.

—Source

www.webmd.com



National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible disorder of the brain caused by the death or permanent dysfunction of neurons or nerve cells. The disease robs individuals of memory and, eventually, overall mental and physical function. It is not a normal part of the aging process.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia—a term that describes loss of intellectual function due to the death of brain cells. Other common types of

dementia include vascular dementia, Huntington's disease, dementia with Lewy bodies, dementia associated with Parkinson disease, and alcohol induced dementia.

The causes of Alzheimer's disease are unknown, and there are no specific treatments that prevent the death of brain cells or cure the disease. But several medications are available that may help slow the progression of symptoms of the disease.

- Alzheimer's disease affects an estimated five million Americans.
- This number is expected to triple, to a projected 16 million by the year 2050.
- Alzheimer's disease affects an estimated one in ten aged 65 and older, and nearly one in two aged 85 and older.
- It is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States.



—Source

www.alzfdn.org

Why are Memory Screenings Important?

- Memory screenings are a first step toward finding out if you have Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia, or another type of condition that is causing memory loss.
- Memory screenings can also let you know that you are okay. The screenings could turn out normal and put your fears to rest.
- A memory screening is not used to diagnose any particular illness and does not replace consultation with a qualified physician or other health care professional. However, it is

very helpful. A screening can test your memory and other intellectual functions.

- It is very important to identify the disease or problem that is causing memory loss. That is why you should follow up with a complete checkup by a qualified healthcare professional.
- Memory can be affected by a number of factors, ranging from stress and lack of sleep, to such illnesses as Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia.
- Some conditions that cause memory loss, such as vitamin deficiency,

depression or thyroid problems, are reversible. In general, the earlier the diagnosis, the easier it is to treat one of these conditions.

- For irreversible illnesses, such as Alzheimer's disease, early diagnosis could improve your future health.
- For persons with a normal screen, memory screenings provide a valuable opportunity to establish a baseline and to learn more about how to keep their brains healthy and age successfully.

National Memory Screening Day this year will be held on November 18th.

Free memory screenings will be available at the following locations:

November 18 in Flora—call 618.662.6621

November 17 in Centralia—call 618.532.1853

November 18 in Mt. Vernon—call 1.888.560.8805 ext. 1062

November 18 in Effingham—call 217.347.7179 ext. 1046

For more information or to find other screening sites, visit

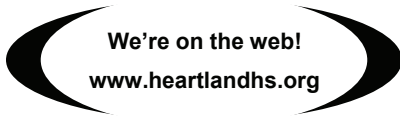
www.nationalmemoryscreening.org



HEARTLAND
Human Services

1200 North Fourth Street
P.O. Box 1047
Effingham, IL 62401

Phone: 1.888.560.8805 x 1062
Fax: 217.342.6716
Email: dbone@heartlandhs.org

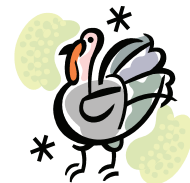


Announcements

November 6 & 13—Free National Telephone and Webinar Class for Family Caregivers
“Communicating Effectively with Healthcare Professionals” (two-part series)
1:00 p.m. — 2:00 p.m. Central Standard Time

⇒ To register or for more information, contact National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA) at teleclass@thefamilycaregiver.org or call 1.800.896.3650.

November 13—Alzheimer Awareness Family Caregiver Conference
8:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.
Crowne Plaza Hotel & Conference Center
300 South Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, IL



⇒ To access a registration form, visit www.siumed.edu/alz or contact the Caregiver Advisor toll-free at 1.888.560.8805 ext. 1062.

November 18—National Memory Screening Day

⇒ Contact Linda Warner or Darcy Bone toll-free 1.888.560.8805 ext. 1046 or 1062 to schedule a free memory screening.

⌘ **Clocks will fall back an hour on November 2, 2008 at 2:00 a.m.**

⌘ **Heartland Human Services will be closed on Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 28 due to the Thanksgiving holiday.**