

AOASCC News & Notes



Independence

August 2016

Best of Senior Services

We are thrilled to be voted **Best Senior Services** by New Haven Living. Thank you to all who voted and to all our partners in the community. We love being your advocate for independence!



Our Story

I don't know where to begin to thank you for all the help Janet Perez did to get the SNAP program for my mom. My mom was able to purchase foods she wasn't able to afford in the past. It gave her a great feeling to know she can afford to go grocery shopping and take care of herself.

In 2015 AOASCC was awarded a grant by the National Council on Aging (NCOA) to get the word out about the benefits of healthy eating and to assist older adults in applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). AOASCC exceeded the goals of the grant, and the staff's work was so exemplary that the NCOA used our program as a Best Practices Model to help guide other community organizations as they began their own programs.

However, it was clear to us that there was more work to be done, so AOASCC applied for and was awarded a subsequent grant from the NCOA funding two more years of education and SNAP enrollment assistance.

Dr. Beverly Kidder makes it clear that this grant is more than just helping people access benefits, as important as that is. "Individuals need to be aware of the benefits of healthy eating. ... The word needs to get out that SNAP is there to help you stay healthy."

[Read the full article on our website.](#)

Caregiver Corner

Are you caring for someone with arthritis?

Exercise can help get stiff joints moving, strengthen surrounding muscles, improve flexibility and build stronger bones. This can improve mood and attitude and enable your loved one to participate in daily chores.

Exercise can help people feel more in charge of themselves and that helps build self-confidence. Many patients feel controlled by the disease. They become dependent on other people to help with daily chores and can feel frustrated by the need to ask for help. Add frustration to the daily pain associated with arthritis, and they may feel stress and fatigue. Depression and anger quickly follow and that can place strain on relationships with friends and family. As caregivers, we need to be encouraging and empathetic towards our loved ones. Exercise can be an effective way to help them regain control.

There are many types of



Janet Perez can't wait to get back out in the community!

arthritis so exercise needs to be tailored to each individual so consult with your healthcare provider to develop a plan of care. The focus should be to improve the overall quality of the person's life. It is much easier to be a caregiver when the person you care for feels good about his(her)self and has less pain.

CHOICES Corner

Seniors and people with disabilities can benefit from using an Internet based program to screen themselves for benefit programs. Many people are eligible for benefits, but are unaware that they exist. As a consequence, they pay for things that they could have received at a reduced cost or even for free. BenefitsCheckUp was created to enable people to easily identify programs for which they qualify.

Recently a woman contacted an agency on aging for help with an issue and the information counselor assisting her used BenefitsCheckUp to screen her for benefits. It was revealed that the caller was paying high co-pays for her prescription drugs. She was eligible for the Medicare Savings Program, but did not know about it. After applying she was able to save \$200 per month on prescription drug co-pays.

BenefitsCheckUp is a free service of the National Council on Aging (NCOA), a nonprofit service and advocacy organization in Washington, DC. There are over 2,500 federal, state and private benefits programs available to help individuals receive the services they need. But many people don't know these programs exist or how they can apply.

BenefitsCheckUp asks a series of questions to help identify benefits that could save money and cover the costs of everyday expenses. The information is confidential and no data is saved. The program generates a report created just for the person being screened that describes the programs he or she may get help from. The person can apply for many of the programs online or you can print an application form. Here are the types of expenses you may get help with:

Medications	Employment Training
Utilities	Legal
Healthcare	Food
Housing	In-home Services
Taxes	Transportation

Visit Benefitscheckup.org and screen yourself or visit with one our volunteers at a [community location](#) near you.



Did You Know?

One in three Americans aged 65+ is economically insecure-lacking the resources needed to meet basic food, housing, and medical needs. Millions of financially vulnerable seniors and adults with disabilities qualify for-but are not yet enrolled in-programs that could help them pay for prescription drugs, medical care, food, or heat for their homes.



Here are two examples from the [National Council on Aging](#).

- The value of the Medicare Extra Help prescription drug subsidy is estimated at \$4,000

per year. (SSA) HOWEVER

- Nationally, an estimated 2 million individuals who are eligible for the Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy are not enrolled in the program. (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2015)
- The national average SNAP benefit for an elderly recipient living alone was \$113 per month in 2013. (USDA Food & Nutrition Service, 2015) HOWEVER
- Only 42% of people aged 60+ who were eligible to receive SNAP benefits actually participated in the program in 2012, the last year for which data is available. (USDA Food and Nutrition Service, 2015)

You Can Help Us Spread the Word

Make a difference in people's lives by helping them access the benefits they need. If you are age 55 or older you can join our RSVP volunteers. If you are a professional, consider our Ambassador program.



Where to Begin When Your Parents Need You



Millions of adults in the U.S are falling into a new role: *Caregiver for a Parent*. Sometimes this happens suddenly because of an illness or injury; for others it may have been a slower process where one or both parents gradually become less and less independent. This new role brings added stress and a time commitment, but can also be an opportunity to grow as a person and reciprocate the loving relationship you received as a child.

For most of us, elder care needs are a very new experience and can be a daunting challenge. The best way to get off on the right foot is to start with RESPECT. Try to keep in mind how they are feeling. It isn't easy for your parents to accept that they need help, but respecting their opinions is a vital part of being a good caregiver. Your parents should certainly extend that same courtesy of respect and they should treat you like an adult, but sometimes that can be hard for them if they feel threatened or are experiencing a heavy sense of loss. It is imperative that they have a sense of control of their own future. If dementia is involved it can also hamper patience on both sides and that can make it more challenging to be respectful all the time. Keep this in mind as you negotiate though decisions from something as minor as what to eat for breakfast or as major as relocating to a new home. Having respect means that you are listening to them. Let them express their feelings even if those opinions are not "logical". Talk it out, assure them that you understand them and that you are working with them to make the best decision.

AOASCC has developed a service called Care Network Link designed to help caregivers and older adults quickly find trustworthy services providers. Whether it is for homemaking, companion, personal care assistance or even hair styling, Care Network Link makes it easy to find a solution. We thoroughly credential each provider before putting them on our network. [Find out more.](#)

Social Security Disability Assistance Program

Our goal is to provide the knowledge and dedicated assistance necessary to succeed after you have been denied your claim for disability benefits. By navigating you through the Social Security maze, our goal is to truly be your advocate for independence®. [Find out more.](#)

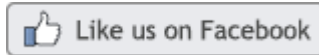
As part of the Agency on Aging's mission to advocate for independence, we are committed to building awareness, breaking down stereotypes and challenging unfair policies to

stop ageism now.

Join the Conversation!



Stay Up to Date!



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