

AASCC's Monthly News and Notes



Independence

November 2014 Issue



Would you be interested in buying lunch for a caregiver?

This is a great way to show support for those in our community who are caring for their loved ones. For just \$25 you can provide lunch for a caregiver during the Fearless Caregiver Conference to be held on November 6. [Learn more.](#)

For more information about registration [click here.](#)

In the Community

AASCC provides grants to community organizations through Federal Older Americans Act funding to provide services for individuals 60 years of age or older.

The Kennedy Center receives Older Americans Act funding for its Caring for the Caregiver program.

Caregiver Corner

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is a condition brought on by experiencing or witnessing severe trauma or a life threatening event. The symptoms of PTSD include nightmares, sleeplessness, anger, irritability, and depression. Some people attempt to ease the pain of their symptoms by drinking, using drugs or isolating themselves. If you are a caregiver for someone with PTSD it can be a very difficult

Just imagine being an aging senior caring for an adult child with a disability. Your concerns may include who is going to cook and keep the household clean, or do the shopping now that your health has begun to fail? Or how is your child going to survive when you are longer here? More fortunate families have the financial resources to help them navigate this phase of life. Unfortunately, if you are poor or nearly poor, there is nowhere to turn for help, essentially leaving you alone to fend for yourself. The Kennedy Center's Caring for the Caregiver program ensures these seniors sustain their independence and the family remains intact within the home. It also provides families with peace of mind when they consider the future of their loved ones.

Caring for the Caregiver is currently recognized as a senior service best practice. Families in the program receive case management and educational services designed to support the family's overall well-being. Service supports are designed for the senior parent through individualized case management planning. The adult child with a disability receives training in household chores, self-sufficiency tasks and safety awareness, while the senior parent receives information/education trainings including linkages to local resources and important long-term family planning options. Based on funding availability, low-income seniors may also be provided respite services.

Since its inception in 2003, and as the first program of its kind in the U.S., this unique innovation has received national recognition and has proven to be a wonderful alternative for an increasing number of seniors. The program received the Christine M. Lewis Award for Excellence in Aging Programs in November 2005, and was highlighted in the March-April 2006 edition of *Aging Today*. It was recognized by the Institute on Community Integration & Research and Training Center on Community Living, which published the program's article in the *Impact* periodical, Winter 2010, feature issue on *Aging and People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*. In 2010 the Caring for the Caregiver program won the National Family Caregiving Awards for innovation, effectiveness and response to caregiver needs in the community.

experience. Here are a few things you can do to help you cope with caring for someone with PTSD.

- Learn about the disease. If you can recognize the symptoms and understand why they are behaving in a particular way, you may feel less frustrated by the behavior.
- Learn what makes the symptoms worse and try to help the person you care for avoid those triggers. Some common triggers include loud noises, crowds, and traumatic anniversary dates.
- Get your loved one into treatment. PTSD doesn't go away by itself. Early counseling is the best. Don't wait until symptoms escalate to unmanageable proportions. Seek out a counselor with experience treating PTSD. Help them find support groups with other people who suffer from the same condition.
- Combat the tendency toward isolation by keeping the rest of the family involved.
- Learn how to help manage anger with techniques such as journaling, exercise, time-outs. If anger turns to violence call 911. After the episode, talk with the person you care for about how the anger affects you.
- Be aware of suicide talk and alcohol and drug use. Take it seriously.
- Find support for yourself and take care of your health. Caregiving for a person with PTSD can be especially difficult both physically and emotionally. It's important for you to eat right, exercise, find relaxation, schedule regular doctor visits and seek out a caregiver support group.

The Kennedy Center is an internationally accredited, non-profit, community-based rehabilitation organization that currently serves over 2,400 individuals annually. The agency actively responds to the needs of the community by offering innovative, comprehensive service options to persons with disabilities and special needs, from birth to senior years.

Focusing on Excellence

Needing Homemaker Companion Services in Your Home?

Some Things You, the Consumer of Services, Should Consider

In the State of Connecticut Homemaker-Companion Agencies must be registered with the Department of Consumer Protection. Some of the requirements of the Department are [From Department of Consumer Protection C.G.S. §§20-670 through 20-680]:

- * The Agency must conduct a criminal background check of all employees;
- * The consumer must receive a written service plan signed by the agency and the consumer; among other items this plan includes the term and cost of services;
- * The service plan must also include a process for filing a complaint.

Other questions to ask before initiating services in your home:

- * What letters of reference can they provide?
- * What kind of orientation and supervision does the agency provide to the employee that will be assigned to you?
- * What is the name of the employee's supervisor and how do I reach him/her?
- * What is the process for reviewing what tasks the homemaker-companion will be responsible for? If any teaching is needed to complete the tasks, who will do this?
- * What kind of insurance/bonding does the agency hold in the event and employee is hurt on your premises or something of value is broken or stolen?
- * How do you assess satisfaction with services or lack thereof?

CHOICES Corner

The state of CT Department of Social Services (DSS) provides financial assistance to help people pay for food. These benefits, formerly known as food stamps and now SNAP, can help make the difference in ensuring an individual has enough money to pay for a nutritious diet. In recent years there have been many changes to the program that have made it easier for older adults to apply and easier to qualify. In addition, changes to the benefit has resulted in increased values for many older people. The average benefit for seniors is \$119. In CT an older person is eligible for benefits if his/her monthly income is \$1,723 per month or less (couples = \$2,333). There is no limit on the amount of assets an individual can have if their income is below the \$1,723 limit. The benefit received can be as much as \$189 per month (couple \$347).

To apply for SNAP benefits contact your local DSS office or [download an application](#) and mail it in.

An interview is a required part of the application process but it can be done over the telephone. It isn't necessary to go to a DSS office. Once your eligibility for benefits is confirmed you'll receive an EBT card preloaded with your monthly benefit. Use the card like a credit card at any location that accepts EBT cards. Using the card ensures that your privacy is protected and no one in the check-out line knows you are on the SNAP program.

Be safe: We always hope that everyone in your home is trustworthy. However, it is wise to lock up valuables and secure personal information, bank statements, check books, credit cards, passwords and your personal identifying information (e.g. social security number etc.).

The more you know about what to expect as a consumer of services, the more likely you will receive the quality of services you deserve.

Upcoming Events
[View Our Full Calendar](#)

[Fearless Caregiver Conference](#)
November 6

[Multidisciplinary Team \(M-Team\)](#)
November 20

Did You Know: Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

"Unfortunately, we simply do not know for certain how many people are suffering from elder abuse and neglect."

Consider these facts from the National Center on Elder Abuse:

- The most recent major studies on incidence reported that 7.6%–10% of study participants experienced abuse in the prior year. However, an overwhelming number of cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation go undetected and untreated each year.
- Major financial exploitation was self-reported at a rate of 41 per 1,000 surveyed, which was higher than self-reported rates of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse or neglect.
- In approximately 90% of cases, family are the abusers.
- Elders who experienced abuse, even modest abuse, had a 300% higher risk of death when compared to those who had not been abused.
- One study estimated that only 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse ever comes to the attention of authorities.
- Available data from state Adult Protective Services agencies show an increasing trend in the reporting of elder abuse.

<http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Library/Data/index.aspx>

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