

“I would not have been able to keep my folks together in their home had it not been possible for Dad to attend adult day services.”



“One cannot put a price on a mother or father’s self-esteem and life experience.”



“In the end I feel remarkably privileged to have been given the gift of caregiving.”



If you find yourself spending more and more time...

- balancing your mother’s checkbook
- leaving work to take your dad to the doctor
- worrying whether your wife will be all right if you go away for the weekend
- wondering how you can balance the needs of your parents, your job and your family

...then you’re a caregiver -- and the information in this brochure can help.

“I was surprised to find that I was a much stronger person than I had thought I was.”



“There are times when I feel overwhelmed, yet I wouldn’t have it any other way, because I know that my efforts allow my mother to remain at home where she wants to be.”



caring

How to get the help you need when you’re helping a loved one

An introduction to resources for Rhode Island caregivers



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People become caregivers in many different ways.

Some find themselves doing a little more each year for an aging parent or spouse. Others are faced with a crisis when a loved one has a serious accident or illness or when a grandparent must suddenly take over caring for a child.

No matter how it happens, most people feel unprepared for the challenges caregiving brings. You may wonder how you'll cope with your loved one's problems, the demands of your job and the needs of your family.

You're not alone

People who have faced the challenges you are facing say it's important to remember you're not alone. There are many kind people and useful services that can help you take the best possible care of both your loved one and yourself.

This brochure is a guide to some of those services. As you read through it, you may be surprised to learn how many of these services are available in your community. And how many are offered free or at costs that reflect your income.

The Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs (DEA) can help you find information about all the programs and services for seniors available in our state. Just call the DEA Customer Information Unit at 222-2880, or a Community Elder Information Specialist at one of the following locations:

Central Falls YMCA Center: 728-7300

Cranston Senior Services: 461-1000, X6255

Coventry Senior Center: 822-6229

E. Providence Senior Center: 435-7800

Lincoln Senior Center: 724-2000

No. Prov. Salvatore Mancini Center: 231-0742

Pawtucket: Leon Mathieu Center: 728-7582

Portsmouth Senior Center: 683-7943

Providence:

DaVinci Center: 272-7474

Diocese of Prov./Respite Services:
421-7886

Jewish Seniors Agency: 621-5374

St. Martin dePorres: 274-6783

SEDC: 941-8422

Urban League: 351-5000, X146

Westminster Senior Center: 274-6900

South Kingstown: The Center: 789-0268

Warwick: Pilgrim Senior Center: 468-4500

Westerly Senior Citizens Center: 596-2404

West Warwick Senior Center: 828-2274

Woonsocket Senior Center: 766-3734

For Help When You Need to Take a Break

Respite care lets people who are caring for seniors in their homes take some well-deserved time off. Available services include having a qualified respite worker visit your home, using an adult day center (see below) and overnight accommodations at assisted living facilities. To learn more, please call 421-7886 or 1-800-445-2033, 8:30 am - 7:30 pm Mon-Fri., 10 am - 2 pm Sat.

If you're not sure what kind of care your loved one needs

Rhode Island's Eldercare program will send a trained care manager to your home to conduct a careful assessment of present and anticipated future needs and help you plan to meet them. The care manager can also help arrange for needed services and provide training and support for caregivers. To learn more, please call the Department of Elderly Affairs at 222-2880 and ask for the regional care management agency in your area.

For Help Finding Adult Day Centers

Adult day centers provide a planned program of health, social and support services in a protective setting during daytime hours. Services are designed to meet the individual needs of the elderly and strongly focus on ways to relieve the stress

care giver resources

of the caregiver. To find an adult day center in your area, please call 222-2880 or one of the Community Elder Information Specialists listed above.

For Help Caring for Someone With Alzheimer's

The Alzheimer's Association - Rhode Island Chapter offers a full range of free services for people caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's Disease. These services include educational programs and materials, support groups, a helpline and consultations with nurses and social workers. To learn more, please call 421-0008 or 1-800-244-1428.

For a Nearby Caregiver Support Group

At a caregiver support group you'll find people who truly understand your feelings. Just as important, they can offer you practical information about problems you may be having, solutions that have worked for them and real emotional support. To find a caregiver support group that's convenient for you, please call 421-7886 or 1-800-445-2033.

For a Friendly Visit

Senior Companions are older people who volunteer to help other elders and their caregivers by providing companionship on a regular weekly basis. These caring men and women offer up to four hours a day

of one-on-one support services. To learn more, please call 222-2880 and ask about Senior Companions.

For a Break for Grandparents and Kids

The KidKamp Connection provides scholarships to camp for children being raised by grandparents or other relatives over 60. Camp sessions are held during school vacations and over the summer. You can find out more by calling 222-2858, ext. 306.

For Help Finding Services Outside Rhode island

If you're caring for an older loved one in another state and need information about the services available there, the Eldercare Locator can put you in touch with the right resources. This nationwide information and referral program provides a link to a wide range of transportation, meal, day care, housing and other services. Call 1-800-677-1116 Monday - Friday from 9:00 am - 8:00 pm or visit their Web site at www.eldercare.gov.

For Caregiver Information on the Web

The National Family Caregivers Association is a grass roots organization dedicated to informing and supporting caregivers and speaking out about their needs. It maintains a helpful and informative Web site at www.nfcares.org.

Strategies that work

Successful caregivers have also discovered some strategies that can make life better for you and your loved one:

- Learn all you can about your loved one's condition and his or her needs.
- When someone offers to help, give them something to do. You'll both feel better.
- Take care of yourself. Respect your own needs and be willing to take a break from time to time.
- Set realistic goals. No one can do everything.
- Find someone you can talk to. Whether it's a professional counselor, a member of the clergy, a support group or a friend, having someone you can talk to about your feelings can help relieve pressure and make you a better, healthier caregiver.
- Avoid burnout by taking advantage of services like those in this brochure. They are your community's way of caring for YOU and helping you do the best job possible.