AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER OF RACINE COUNTY

# ADRC Connections

#### Newsletter Date Fall 2023

## **Connecting You to Your Community's Resources**

As Fall and Winter holidays are approaching, this is a time when many of us reconnect with our loved ones. Holidays are an opportunity to catch up with one another. This is also a time we look at changes our families are experiencing and how they are coping. You may find that your frequent phone calls do not give you a complete picture of your loved one's daily life.

When looking at the best options to meet your loved one's needs, call the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to streamline access to the right and appropriate services and support.

The ADRC provides older adults, adults with physical or developmental/ intellectual disabilities and their caregivers resources. They help people understand and evaluate the various options available to them. By enabling people to find resources in their communities and make informed decisions. ADRCs help people conserve their personal resources, maintain self-sufficiency and delay or prevent the need for potentially expensive long-term care.

ADRCs also serve as the single access point for publicly funded long-term care. The ADRC provides free, accurate, unbiased confidential information to people regardless of their income or asset levels. Information and assistance can be provided over the phone or in person. For more information, please contact us at 262-833-8777, Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.



Picture of Fall foliage.

## **Caregivers Speak Out**

We asked two caregivers to share their experience with Caregiver Support through the ADRC. Here are their responses. Look for resources and tools available<sup>\*\*</sup> when mentioned. (Article will be continuing on the next page)

## How did you get started with Caregiver Support?

"(I attended) The "Powerful tools for caregivers' program."

"I learned about the Racine ADRC and its caregiver support a few years back when I helped a neighbor with dementia. I took the "Powerful Tools for Caregivers"

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workshop because I had no experience with dementia. Now my husband has vascular dementia and I'm extremely dependent on ADRC programs to assist and guide us both."

\*\*Are you interested in learning more about focusing on your physical and emotional well-being while caring for your loved one? Join us for a virtual Powerful Tools for Caregivers class Tuesdays January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024- February I 3<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 2:00-3:30 PM.

## What was your experience with Caregiver Support?

"Very positive - Supportive - Provided direction. Felt rewarded and refreshed."

"My experience has always been positive and fulfilling working with the ADRC programs and my needs are often taken care of in more ways than I ever imagined. I wouldn't be able to care for my husband so profoundly or appreciate our journeys together without it."

## How did you feel attending your first support group?

"Hesitant – Safe place to express feelings, find answers. Was able to talk with other caregivers about what is normal to expect with the Dementia experience ex: behaviors."

"I immediately felt supported when going to my first support group and learned of the many resources available to me."

\*\*See page 10 for Support Groups

### What was the most valuable takeaway that you received from working with our team? (I felt) "Reassured, not alone."

"Working with Racine's ADRC gave me peace of mind. I learned I wasn't alone and had many anchors to stay my course as a caregiver. I'm able to care for my husband at home knowing I'll have what I need."

## How were you able to apply what you learned to your caregiving experience?

"I valued the information from Teepa Snow, MS, OTR– Understanding Dementia."

"My caregiving experience has taught me love beyond measure, compassion, patience, trust in myself and others and most of all to live in the present moment."

\*\*For more resources on understanding Dementia or learning from Teepa Snow, call for more information or check out TRUALTA, an online learning tool for caregivers at <u>https://</u>

wisconsincaregiver.trualta.com/login.

## Do you have any words of wisdom for other caregivers?

"Ask for help- take care of yourself."

"Don't look at the mountain, live one day at a time and let the ADRC help."

## What kept you going?

"Our Harmony club- Respite time for yourself." (care partner attended this)

\*\*Want to learn more about what respite is and what your options may be? Call for respite resources!

## Another thought:

"Before you have finished caregiving, you need to prepare yourself for a series of losses that can occur as you go along prepare yourself with tools to help in this journey."

## How do you find meaning in life after caregiving?

"The satisfaction that comes from caring, sharing, and loving others."

"Thinking about how my life will look after caregiving seems overwhelming at this time because my husband is living. I encircle myself with widowed caregivers to learn how they cope and I do see there is life and light filled with healing."

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## **Never Forget:**

- •You Are Strong
- •You Are Special
- •You Are Tough
- •You Are Loved
- •You Are Not Alone
- •You Are Supported
- •You Are Resilient
- •You Are Amazing
- •You Are Brave
- •You Are Loving
- •You Are Enough
- •You Make A Difference
- •Thank You For All You Do

From Your Caregiver Support Specialist Team: Felicia Elias, Lucy Ortiz, Taylor Scherer, Ruth Stauersbol

## **Transition to Adulthood**

At age 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, the ADRC can provide individuals with Options Counseling for decision support to help plan for potential future needs. The ADRC can also begin the eligibility process for Long Term Care Medicaid programs. The transition from a children's waiver program like Katie Beckett takes some careful planning. It is better to contact the ADRC sooner (at 17 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>) than later.

The ADRC provides information such as:

• Services that may be available through Long Term Supports.

• Exploring the need for Supportive Decision Making, Powers of Attorney (Healthcare and/ or Finance) or Guardianships.

- Housing
- Employment
- Benefit Specialist Assistance
- Assistive Technology
- Transportation
- Daily Living Skills
- Respite
- Information on Special Needs trusts





by Chris Penny "Watching the snow fall" Flickr Picture: Boy with goggles looking up.

## **Community Resources**

## Make a Happiness L.I.S.T.

Excerpts from The Conscious Caregiver by Linda Abbit

Take a few minutes right now to create a personal, unique Happiness L.I.S.T. (L.I.S.T. stands for Likes, Interests, and Satisfying Things that bring you fulfillment.) Simply jot down five to 10 things that make you happy. They can be things that give you joy currently or those you loved previously that you may not indulge in any longer. Think of activities you do or did when time "disappeared" because you lost track of time while doing them. For example: Dancing, A walk on the beach, Reading, Playing an instrument, Planting a garden, Going to the park. These passions are yours to continue doing or re-discover again. No matter how far-fetched they

may seem, write them all down. This list-making is the beginning of making time for yourself. Now, select one thing from your list that will make you feel like you're spoiling yourself, think of a way you can incorporate this into you day, even if in an abbreviated or slightly altered way. Begin by doing things that take a short amount of time, and then you will likely increase the time you spend doing them, because you will see the positive effects selfcare has in your life.

If you would like to read more of The Conscious Caregiver, call the ADRC and request a book. A limited supply is available. And do Inquire about our book club!

ADRC Connections is published Quarterly. If you have questions you would like to see addressed in the ADRC News please call us at 262-833-8777 or email: adrc@racine county.com

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"All of us, at some time or other, need help. Whether we're giving or receiving help. each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world. That's one of the things that connects us as neighbors-in our own way, each one of us is a giver and a receiver."

Fred Rogers The World According to Mister Rogers

Picture below: bright fall leaves on tree near the ground

## **Healthy Aging**

Many factors influence healthy aging. Some of these, such as genetics, are out of our control. However, there are steps you can take to help manage your health, live as independently as possible, and maintain your quality of life as you age. Important factors that support healthy aging include:

• Taking care of your physical health. Staying active, making healthy food choices, getting enough sleep, limiting your alcohol intake, and proactively managing your health care can go a long way in supporting healthy aging.

## • **Caring for your mental health.** Mental health, or mental wellness, is essential to your overall health and quality of life. Managing social isolation, loneliness, stress, depression, and mood through medical care and selfcare is key to healthy aging.

Looking after your cognitive health. Cognition — the ability to clearly think, learn, and remember often changes as we age. Research shows that healthy eating, staying active, and learning new skills may help keep older adults cognitively healthy as they age.

From the National Institute on Aging at NIH

## Affordable Internet Program

The Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband internet they need for work, school, healthcare and more.

The benefit provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible



households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one -time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price. The Affordable Connectivity Program is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

#### Who qualifies:

- •You, or your child or dependent are enrolled in government programs like Medicaid, SNAP, WIC, or others, or,
- •Based on your household income and other considerations.

#### More Information at:

https://getinternet.gov/apply? In=RW5nbGlzaA%3D%3D

## **Resist the Lure of Celebrities Selling Insurance!**

#### Adapted from article by Ingrid Kundinger, SMP Project Manager

We're entering that time of year when the airwaves will be full of Medicare commercials touting that the insurance coverage you have right now isn't good enough, and that you're missing out on all sorts of benefits that you are entitled to. You're probably familiar with these advertisements: they often feature a celebrity, a well-known figure that you can "trust." Television commercials will try to entice you with additional benefits or make you feel like you are missing out. These ads can be confusing and can use potentially misleading marketing tactics.

To address these concerns, "CMS (the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) is prohibiting ads that do not mention a specific plan name, as well as ads that use words and imagery that may confuse beneficiaries or use language or Medicare logos in a way that is misleading, confusing, or misrepresents the plan.

CMS is also finalizing requirements to further protect Medicare beneficiaries by ensuring they receive accurate information about Medicare coverage and are aware of how to access accurate information from other available sources."

Before you change plans, or sign up for Medicare when you're eligible, it's important to do some fact-finding to make sure that you understand what benefits and plans are available to you where you live. You want to have accurate and necessary information to make coverage choices that best meet your needs,

Here are a few important things to know before you make the decision to call the number on the TV screen:

• While the commercials may imply a connection with Medicare, the telephone numbers that are displayed on these commercials are NOT Medicare but rather a licensed insurance agent or broker. The fine print on the bottom of the TV screen, which is almost impossible to read, states that these plans are not affiliated with any government program or agency.

 The benefits that are mentioned (eyeglasses, hearing aids, rides to appointments, etc.) are benefits that MAY be offered with certain Medicare Advantage plans. Medicare Advantage plans vary greatly from state to state, and even county to county, so it is important to do your homework. In some cases, there are additional costs associated with these benefits or eligibility guidelines that must be met to qualify. It is not a "one size fits all" type of option. Some commercials mention that you may qualify for up to \$164.90 added back to your Social Security check every month. Be careful, as there are conditions that apply to this statement. This rebate is something that you may be eligible for IF you purchase a Medicare Advantage plan AND live in a certain area of the country. continued on page 7



Picture "January Snowfall at Night by BG—Flickr

Regardless of what challenge you are facing right now, know that it has not come to stay...

Les Brown

#### ADRC

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## Your Benefits—Important Numbers

**Social Security** Local: 866-270-8629 National: 800-772-1313 Web: https://www.ssa.gov/

Medicare I-800-Medicare (800-633-4227) Web: <u>https://www.medicare.gov/</u>

### Wisconsin Medicaid Member services: 800-362-3002 Web: https://access.wisconsin.gov/ access/

Wisconsin Kenosha Racine Partners Consortium (WKRP) 888-794-5820

## **Does This Matter?**

## Medicare Annual Open **Enrollment Period of Part D** and Medicare Advantage Plans

This is actually an important time of year for those on Medicare to review current coverage and see if any changes are needed for the coming year. Here are 4 basic reasons why it does matter:

- · Your plan may cost more next year
- · Your plan may no longer cover all of your medications
- · Your plan may have put
- restrictions on some of your medications

· You may be taking different medications now compared to this last year.

There are several ways to get help with this. You can simply go online to medicare.gov and compare plans yourself, or you can call 1-800-Medicare for assistance. You can also contact the ADRC and request the assistance of a benefit specialist, or contact:

Medigap Helpline: 800-242-1060 Medigap Part D & Prescription Drug Helpline: 855-677-2783 (over age 60) Or 800-926-4862 (under age 60)

## "Re-Connect Your Talent"



"Re-Connect Your Talent" is Racine workforce initiative which is focused on seniors/retirees looking to re-enter the workforce.

If you're a senior/retiree looking to return to work for a supplemental income to support your retirement hobbies, or

you're bored and looking to socialize with people of similar interests, or just want to return to work on a part-time basis

contact Dee for further information at Re-ConnectTalent@racinecounty.com or go directly to the Racine County website at www.racinecounty.com/reconnect

> "Let's Re-Connect Your Talent Racine County"

## Need assistance with your benefits?

You can call and speak with ADRC information and assistance and if your issue is more complicated a referral to a Benefit Specialist can be made. 262-833-8777.

## Continued from page 5 ... Resist the Lure!

It is important that you understand if you live in an eligible area of the country or zip code.

 The commercials may also state that you may qualify for a zerodollar premium or mention available benefits at no additional cost. Again, there is fine print for these types of situations that you need to be aware of. Zero-dollar premium plans may also have copayments and coinsurance that can apply. And again, these types of plans may not be available where you live. What's the bottom line? By responding to the TV commercials, you may end up with a Medicare Advantage plan that is not available in your area, does not include your preferred health care provider, or has costs that you were not anticipating. And since the new plan doesn't go into effect until January I, 2024, you may not find out these things until it's too late.

So, what can you do to make sure that you understand all your options?

• Do your homework and become an informed consumer. Make sure that you understand the differences between Medicare Part A, B, C, and D and other plans available such as Medigap. Yes, it can be complicated, but there are available resources across the state of Wisconsin that provide unbiased information, at no cost to you.

#### Changes to Unused FoodShare Benefits

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team (for reprint) Starting September 17, 2023, unused FoodShare benefits may expire if a person has not used their QUEST or EBT card in the past 274 days (about nine months). The previous rule allowed 365 days (one year) before benefits expired.

You do not have to spend down all FoodShare benefits within nine months, nor is there a minimum transaction amount you must make for your card to remain active. You can still use your QUEST card if there are benefits on it, even if you are no longer eligible for FoodShare. A person will get notice before their unused benefits will be removed from their account (expungement). DHS has also added information about why benefits expire and how to prevent it from happening to the letters sent to households after 60 days of EBT card inactivity and about two months before they are scheduled to lose benefits.

If you have a change of address to report, or would like to be removed from the ADRC Connections Newsletter mailing list, please contact the ADRC. Phone: 262-833-8777 Email: adrc@racine county.com Mail: 14200 Washington Ave, Sturtevant, WI 53177



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#### ADRC

Menus: You can find the menus for coming months in your local newspaper, or online at: https:// adrc.racinecounty. com Or call 262-833-8766 .....

## **Senior Nutrition Program**

Racine County offers a nutrition program to anyone 60 years or older, and their spouse (any age).

Nutritious meals create an opportunity to build a relationship and strengthen bonds with each individual. Regular meals, whether in the comfort of the home or at a community dining site, provides tailored nutrition, social connection, safety and more.

## Call us at: 262-833-8766 toll free at: 1-866-219-1043, or email <u>RCNutrition@racinecounty.com</u>.

#### **Dining Center Locations:**

- ◊ Mount Pleasant Place
- Salvation Army
- O Burlington Senior Center

Contact the program for specifics about these sites.

**CALL FOR** VOLUNTEERSI



### We need help with:

- Delivering meals to homebound seniors
- Apply here!
- Help at local senior dining sites Approximately 2 hours/day Flexible days
- Teams welcome!

#### Deliver more than a meal to those who need it most! **Racine County Senior Nutrition Program**

Contact Ryanne Jackson at the Senior Nutrition Program 262-638-6337 ryanne.jackson@racinecounty.com

#### Yummy Fall Recipe

## Slow-Cooked Beef 'n' Veggies

I boneless Beef Top Round Steak (1/2 lbs) cut into 2 pieces Dash Seasoned Salt Dash Pepper Dash Garlic Powder I Cup Italian Salad Dressing <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Cup Water I Tbsps. browning sauce 2 Medium Carrots, Cut into 2inch pieces 2 Medium Red Potatoes, Cubed I Small Onion Sliced  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a small green pepper cut into small chunks

Sprinkle one side of each piece of steak with seasoned salt and pepper, sprinkle the other side with the garlic powder. Cover and refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours. Place all ingredients in crock pot and mix well to coat evenly. Cover and cook on low or until meat is tender. 8 to 9 hours.

#### ADRC

## **Caregiver Tips for Mealtimes**

These tips were written from the perspective of caring for someone with a dementia like Alzheimer's, but still work well across a variety of situations.

#### Timing

• Keeping a routine as to time and place.

• Offer lighter meals more frequently.

• Allow a generous amount of time for a meal.

#### Setting

• Remove distractions such as TV, radio, the view outside of the window or decorations and extra items on the table.

• Use solid-colored plates, glasses, placemats, and tablecloths.\*

• Minimize the silverware to only the pieces needed for the food served.

#### Preparation

• Have the food ready to eat before serving. Cut food into small bite-sized pieces. Soft finger foods may be easier to eat.

• Only serve 1-2 food choices at a time. Too many choices can make it overwhelming.

• Fill glasses only half full of liquids. Colored glasses are often more appealing.

• Prepare foods that the individual likes. If they did not eat it before, they most likely won't eat it now.

• Check the temperature of food and liquids.

#### Assisting

• Eat with the person to provide an

example of eating to the individual. Avoid sitting next to them watching their plate, waiting for them to eat. If additional assistance is needed, provide hand-over-hand assist. In the later stages of this disease, one's peripheral vision weakens so significantly that it gets to where their sight is binocular or telescopic. With that in mind, put your hands up to your eyes, form them as if you were looking through binoculars and consider what you see: Nothing but what is directly in front of you. Now, with that in mind, think again about this when you are assisting with mealtime.

#### Other Thoughts

• As Alzheimer's disease progresses to the later stages, the person may not be able to chew or swallow easily. There are additional tips during this difficult time. Please talk with the healthcare provider to address adequate calories and protein for the individual, as well as, the need to use a thickener for liquids.

• Always consult your healthcare provider to determine if the person's pills can be crushed or substituted with liquid form, and/or ask for a referral to a registered dietician.

\*Boston University's researchers found that Alzheimer's patients eating from red plates consumed 25% more food than those eating from white plates. -"If you can't see your mashed potatoes, you probably won't eat them."

## Quick Tips on Eating Healthy During Holidays

Do not skip a meal to save up for a big meal. You will be too hungry and will tend to overeat.

Eat slowly and enjoy the company.

Start out with the vegetables for a healthy fullness.

Use a smaller plate for foods you love and are likely to overeat, like dessert!

Make sure you have gotten enough sleep, be active, and avoid or limit alcohol.

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## Support Groups for Family Caregivers

Support groups are for caregivers who are over 60, or are caring for someone over 60 and/or caregivers (of any age) for those who have dementia.

#### Second Wednesday 1:00 - 2:30 pm In Person

#### in Person

Christ Church United Methodist 5109 Washington Ave Racine

### First Thursday 6:30 - 7:30 pm Zoom/Call in Call 833-8764 for call-in Information

#### Third Thursday 6:00 – 7:30 PM In Person

Christ Church United Methodist 5109 Washington Ave Racine

For in person registration, call in or virtual group information contact Ruth at 262-833-8764 or email ruth.stauersbol @ racinecounty. com

## **Dementia and Driving Safety**

As a caregiver for a loved one living with dementia, one of the hardest things to consider is when to take away the keys to the car. For someone living with dementia, it can feel like they are losing their independence and freedom. But for others, they may realize that it is time to give up the keys. It is important to begin having conversations early when symptoms of dementia are beginning.

Some signs to look for deciding when someone should stop driving include new dents or scratches on the vehicle, making poor decisions while driving, unable to maintain proper speed, hitting the gas pedal instead of the brake, requesting directions to a familiar place, an inability to navigate a new route home due to construction, or neighbors and friends voicing their concern.

When driving becomes unsafe, try having a conversation about your concerns. Do this at home and not while driving to limit any anxiety or arguments. Assure them that they are a good driver and focus on the fact that you're concerned about their safety. You can also ask the doctor to write a prescription to "stop driving", complete a driving assessment with the Department of Motor Vehicles, disconnect the battery or remove the car from the home.

When a loved one living with dementia can no longer drive,

there are other transportation options that are available. These services include taxi services, church groups or volunteer centers and free or low-cost buses. Or arrange for other family members and friends to help. You can also reduce the need to travel by having prescription medications, meals or groceries delivered. Please contact the ADRC of Racine County to discuss further transportation opportunities and stay safe.

## Help at Any Time

It's late at night (or the middle of the night), or perhaps you have a little stretch of time, and you would like to know more about that new behavior your loved one has started to show. Or you may want some more information on what they are going through. You can do some basic searching on the internet, but where? Why not sign up for the free Trualta learning tool where your questions can be answered by one trustworthy source? You can find out more about this free program by contacting the ADRC, or you can go online and check it out at: https://

wisconsincaregiver.trualta.com/login

Picture "Winter Scenes and Such" Stan Stewart Flickr



## **Caregiver Appreciation**

November is the month where we take time to recognize and give praise and support to the many, many people who dedicate their time, often unpaid, caring for a family member, friend or neighbor who is in need.

As we approach the end of year holiday season, a time when great focus is placed on family and quality time together, it is important that we show our appreciation for those who work tirelessly to provide care. This care comes in many forms, financial, medical, physical/domestic or emotionally.

At the ADRC we do not underestimate the strength that caregivers require to provide this support to those people who need it the most, nor the toll that it can take both emotionally and physically upon them. We work hard to support them.

If you know someone who could use support in their caregiving, send them our way, or simply thank them for the hard work they do every day.



Picture of man and woman supporting each other in an open doorway. Caption: "A caregiver gets some support at the Longest Day Event"

## Classes (for those age 60+)

Coming soon to a location or computer near you!

## Stepping On

Marian Housing Center 4105 Spring St. Racine, WI 53405 Tuesday's, Oct 31st - Dec 12th 10:00am -Noon

## **Powerful Tools for Caregivers**

**Thursday's** Oct 5<sup>th</sup> – Nov 9<sup>th</sup> I:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Virtual

#### Tuesdays

January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024- February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 2:00-3:30 PM. Virtual

## Eat Smart, Move More, Prevent Diabetes Online & Eat Smart Move More

## Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less Online

Both of these free programs have classes starting every month

Questions contact Ruth Stauersbol 262-833-8764 or Email <u>Ruth.Stauersbol</u> @racine county.com

## Why Consider Stepping On?

We know that falls among older adults are an issue in Wisconsin because of the data. We have the highest death rate due to falls in the nation. Programs like Stepping on are a proven fall reducer. For other information and tips see: Falls Free® Wisconsin at: https:// fallsfreewi.org/



14200 Washington Ave Sturtevant, WI 53177

www.adrc.racinecounty.com

## **Caregiver Opportunities**

### **Book Club for Caregivers**

I<sup>st</sup> Friday Caregiver Book Club – Noon – Ipm / Zoom and Call-In. Contact Ruth Stauersbol at 262-833-8764 to receive the current book, any materials, and call-in/virtual group information.

### Support Groups—See page 10

### **Memory Cafés**

Memory Cafés are a comfortable, social gathering that allow people experiencing memory loss and a loved one to connect, socialize, and build new support networks.

Ist Monday of each month 1:00pm - 2:30pm Grace Church, 3626 Highway 31, Racine, WI 53405 For information contact 262-833-8777.

**2nd Tuesday of each month** 1:00—2:30 pm Racine Public Library, 75 7th St, Racine, WI 53403 English and Spanish For information contact 262-636-9217.

3rd Friday of each month 10:00am–11:00am
Burlington Aurora Wellness Center,
300 McCanna Pkwy, Burlington, WI 53105
For information contact Chad at 262-212-3596

le need you

Racine County Senior Nutrition Program is looking for help delivering meals to those who need it the most!

