

Caregiver Support

What is caregiving?

- Caregiving describes any situation in which one individual helps another with essential activities of daily living. Caregiving activities may include help with dressing and bathing, grocery shopping, managing money, providing transportation, dressing wounds and administering medication.

What is the difference between “formal” and “informal” caregiving?

- Care provided by an employee of an agency or organization, or a trained individual (usually for a fee), is considered “*formal caregiving*.”
- Care provided by family members and friends, most often unpaid, is considered “*informal caregiving*” or “*family caregiving*.”

Who is an informal caregiver?

- Relatives and non-relatives can be informal caregivers. If you aren’t currently affected by caregiving issues, chances are you will be at some point in your life.
- Relative caregivers are most often adult children or spouses.
- Fifty-seven percent of Ohio caregivers are female, 40 percent are at least 50 years old, and 62 percent are employed.

Does informal caregiving impact communities?

- Caregiving often negatively impacts the health and wellness of the caregiver as well as his or her relationships with friends and neighbors.
- Caregivers comprise 13 percent of the workforce. The cost of informal caregiving to U.S. businesses is estimated to be as much as \$34 billion annually.

How does caregiver support help?

- Use of caregiver support services has been shown to have clinically significant outcomes in improving caregiver depression, anxiety and anger.
- Caregiver stress is a strong predictor of nursing home entry. Reducing key stresses on caregivers, such as physical strain and financial hardship, can reduce nursing home entry.

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- Caregivers are often unaware of the availability of support services. As many as one in four has unmet needs.
- More than 90 percent of caregivers who see themselves as such proactively seek resources and skills to assist their loved ones.

What help is available for informal caregivers in Ohio?

The **National Family Caregiver Support Program** helps individuals rise to the challenges of informal caregiving.

- Area Agencies on Aging and service providers help caregivers access supportive services, provide counseling, facilitate support groups and caregiver training, organize respite care (temporary relief from caregiving responsibilities) and more.
- Information and some supportive services are available to all caregivers. However, to be eligible for respite and supplemental services, the caregiver must be caring for an individual who is age 60 or older and frail or a person with Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder. Services are also available for grandparents or other relatives age 55 or older (not including natural or adoptive parents) who care for children under 18 or an adult child age 19-59 with a disability.

Ohio's **Alzheimer's Respite Program** assists caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease.

- Area Agencies on Aging and service providers give these caregivers a break from caregiving duties through a combination of personal care and homemaker services, adult day services, institutional care, case management, education programs and more.
- The toll-free Alzheimer's disease Helpline (**1-800-272-3900**) connects caregivers to the Alzheimer's Association chapter serving their community.

How can I get help with caregiving?

- Call toll-free **1-866-243-5678** to contact the Area Agency on Aging serving your community for details.

Where can I learn more about caregiver support programs?

- Visit the following Ohio Department of Aging Web page for more information about caregiver support.
www.aging.ohio.gov/resources/nationalfamilycaregiversupport/

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