

# Caregiver Chronicles

July 2017



**AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY**  
2865 N SHERMAN AVE, MADISON, WI 53704  
608-261-9930  
[HTTPS://AAA.DCDHS.COM/](https://aaa.dcdhs.com/)



## **Did you know the *Caring for the Caregiver Program* has resources for Grandparents & Other Relatives as Parents?**

In Wisconsin, 74,457 (5.7%) of children under 18 live in homes where householders are grandparents or other relatives

- 57,476 (4.4%) of these children live with grandparents
- 16,981 (1.3%) of these children live with other relatives

Source: [Grandfacts Wisconsin](#)

### “The Young, The Old, and What We Can Achieve Together”

July 4th is our Independence Day, a celebration marked by parades, fireworks, and family picnics. As Americans, our focus on the holiday is often on family, with multiple generations joining in the summertime fun. Family caregiving involves and affects all members of the family, and it is typically the youngest and the oldest who are most vulnerable and require the most care. The Dane County “Caring for the Caregiver Program” has resources for caregivers who provide care for either or both. Funded by the National Family Caregiver Support Program, Older Americans Act, and Dane County, the program provides help to *those caring for*:

- persons age 60 and older
- persons with Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders regardless of age
- children (under 18) being raised by their grandparents or other relatives (age 55+)
- disabled adults (age 18—59) receiving care by their parents or other relatives (age 55+)

In mid-June, I had the opportunity to attend the Global Intergenerational Conference in Milwaukee. It was organized and presented by [Generations United](#) along with Milwaukee’s [St. Ann’s Center for Intergenerational Care](#). It was an inspiring opportunity to see some of the most innovative programs benefitting people of all ages worldwide. Of particular interest were workshops to support grandfamilies. Situations that require grandparents to step in and raise their grandchildren involve loss and trauma for both the children and the grandparents, no matter how loving. There are a number of resources for grandfamilies on the Generations United website, the most popular of which is, [Raising the Children of the Opioid Epidemic: Solutions and Supports for Grandfamilies](#). In Dane County, resources include [The Rainbow Project, Inc.’s](#) “Grandparents and Other Relatives as Parents Caregiver Support Group,” and the [North/Eastside Senior Coalition’s](#) “LatinX Grandparents Raising their Grandchildren Caregiver Support Group” (see page 3 for more on these programs).

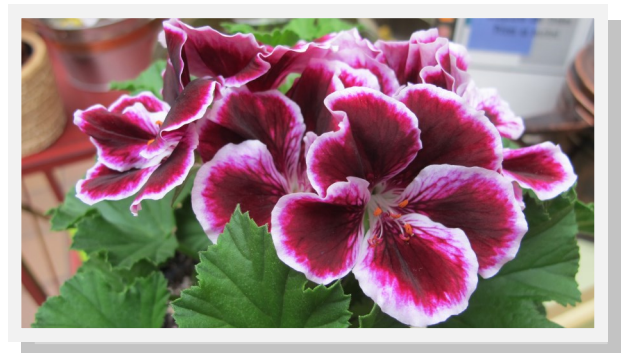
And, in another aspect of intergenerational dynamics, I’ve heard from several caregivers recently who are struggling with adult sibling relationships in caring for their parents. “When You’re the Target: How Caregivers Can Handle Family Criticism” (pp. 4—5) offers some perspective on the issue and ideas for coping.

May your Independence Day celebrations also be celebrations of interdependence among generations. Because we’re stronger together.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane De Broux".

Jane De Broux  
Caregiver Program Coordinator  
Dane County Area Agency on Aging



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## Dane County Programs Help Grandfamilies and Other Relatives as Caregivers Thrive

“Many people who are raising relative’s children are turning to each other for the comfort and support they need. ‘Grandparents and Other Relatives as Parents’ recognizes the many roles that relatives play as primary caregivers.

### Grandparents and Other Relatives as Parents Caregiver Support Group Meeting 2nd Saturday of each month, 10:00 am—noon

**The Rainbow Project, Inc.**  
831 E. Washington Ave, Madison, WI 53703  
608-255-7356, x316

*Free Childcare Provided*



### NESCO LatinoX Grandparents Raising Their Grandchildren Caregiver Support Group

**4th Wednesday of every month**  
at the **Fitchburg Senior Center**  
from 5:45 pm—8:00 pm



At meetings we discuss health and wellness topics that are relevant to the seasonal, social, and overall lives of the LatinX senior population living in Dane County. Many members double as caregivers for their younger family members providing home support, cooking, and overall guidance for the younger generations.

By providing a savory meal and some much needed socialization (the group does a good job of looking out for one another), they are able to recharge and reduce feelings of isolation, remain an integral part of the community, and learn new ways to care for themselves. Our next Caregiver Support Group will meet at the Fitchburg Senior Center on **Wednesday, July 26th**.

If you are interested in joining, contact Rodrigo Valdivia at 608-243-5252, or [rvaldivia@nescoinc.org](mailto:rvaldivia@nescoinc.org).

Saludos!



## Caregiver Chronicles

### Caregiver News Online

#### [How daughters who are caregivers have it rough at work](#)

Next Avenue | June 21, 2017

“I knew that holding down a job and being a caregiver to your parent on the side is tough. But I don’t think I knew how serious the strain can be for women, especially, until I saw the new Daughters in the Workplace survey from Home Instead Senior Care, the largest senior care organization in the world. (Two thirds of caregivers are female.) The report is being released at the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) conference in New Orleans today.”

#### [Who will be there when boomers need elder care?](#)

CBS News | June 16, 2017

“A New study by the Center for Retirement Research (CRR) at Boston College, found that less than 20 percent of men and women in their 60s need care. However, by age 85, more than half will require assistance to perform such daily activities as cook meals, tie their shoes, and just get out of bed. Unfortunately, the burden may fall on adult children who are aging themselves.”

#### [Creative caregiving solutions for the “sandwich generation”](#)

St. Louis Post-Dispatch | June 11, 2017

“Stretched thin by the needs of your children and your elderly parents? Try this ‘sandwich generation’ solution: Move your young adults in with their grandparents and let them take care of each other.”

Be sure to check out the [Summer 2017 issue](#) of *Resource Wise*, newsletter for the ADRC of Dane County.



***Connecting People with the Assistance They Need***

Open 7:45—4:30 pm Monday through Friday

Call (608) 240-7400

Visit the ADRC office, 2865 N. Sherman Ave., Madison

Website: [www.daneadrc.org](http://www.daneadrc.org)

Email: [ADRC@countyofdane.com](mailto:ADRC@countyofdane.com)





[www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org)



## Free Telephone Learning Sessions

Date	Time	Topic
Monday, July 10th	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	<p><b>Avoiding Caregiver Isolation with Zanda Hilger, LPC</b> <i>It's easy for caregivers to become isolated. You may feel that other people just do not understand what your life is now. Staying connected with others, and even forging new relationships, can be key to your well-being. Learn some ways to identify what might help get you motivated and resources in the community.</i></p> <p><b>***Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection***</b></p>
Wednesday, July 19th	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	<p><b>Dealing with Sex and Other Dementia-Related Surprises with Elaine Sanchez</b> <i>There are many challenges associated with caring for people who have dementia. One of which is surprising and inappropriate sexual behavior. Elaine Sanchez offers insights into the reasons people with dementia exhibit surprising and inappropriate sexual behavior and provides practical strategies for improving communication with people who are living with dementia-related diseases. Elaine Sanchez is the author of <b>Letters from Madelyn, Chronicles of a Caregiver</b> and is the co-founder of <b>CaregiverHelp.com</b>, an online support program for family and professional caregivers.</i></p>
Monday, July 24th	12:00 pm Eastern 11:00 am Central 10:00 am Mountain 9:00 am Pacific	<p><b>Enough is Enough when setting personal boundaries as a Caregiver with Lucy Barylak, MSW</b> <i>Lucy Barylak, MSW, is a Social Gerontology Consultant with West-Central Montreal Health in Montreal, Canada. Lucy is a renowned expert in caregiving having won the Queen's Jubilee Award twice, presented by the Canadian Homecare Association. In this session Lucy will focus on what it means to set boundaries and why it is important for Caregivers to do this. She will also go over strategies that Caregivers can use when setting boundaries with the person they are caring for as well as with those around them.</i></p>



A program of the WellMed Charitable Foundation

Register online at [www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org) or call 866.390.6491 Toll Free

\*\*\*Registration required at least 24 hours in advance\*\*\*

### When You're the Target: How Caregivers Can Handle Family Criticism



It's an unfortunate reality that the caregiver will always be a potential target for criticism; particularly from family members and friends who don't understand what it's like to provide care for an elderly loved one. If you find yourself in this situation, here are a few strategies you can use to cope with any sharp remarks:

**Don't make it personal:** Try to avoid internalizing any insults you receive, whether they come from an elderly loved one that you're taking care of, another family member, or a friend. In all likelihood, the source of their venom has nothing to do with you, but with their own individual challenges and burdens.

**Accept that you can't make everyone happy:** It's cliché, but especially true for family caregivers: if you try to please everyone, you will end up pleasing no one. Family members and friends will not always agree with the decisions you make regarding a loved one's care. While it's a good idea to take into account the viewpoints of others, it's also important to learn how to [trust your instincts](#) and stand by your choices.

**Understand that criticism is inevitable:** No one relishes receiving negative feedback, but unfortunately it's an inevitable consequence of assuming the caregiver role.

**Turn your frown upside down:** You've probably heard it before, but research has consistently shown that even a fake smile may provide mood-boosting benefits, and can help you mentally and physically relax.

**Don't be a pushover:** Criticism may be unavoidable, but that doesn't mean that you should tolerate abusive behavior. If a family member is consistently hurling hurtful remarks in your direction, calmly tell them that you refuse to be treated that way and physically remove yourself from their presence.

**Seek support:** Receiving a harsh critique—especially when it comes from a family member or close friend—can be difficult to cope with. Many of those who find fault with your caregiving decisions probably don't fully understand the spectrum of emotion and stress that weigh on a caregiver's heart and mind. It's not their fault; they've just never been in your shoes. One of the best ways to cope with criticism is to find an outlet where you can share your experiences and receive honest feedback from men and women who've been family caregivers before. Online support groups, such as the AgingCare.com [Caregiver Forum](#), can allow you to tap into an ever-present wellspring of encouragement, inspiration and guidance from fellow caregivers.

It may be hard, especially in the beginning, but eventually you will develop your own process for coping with criticism in a healthy, productive way.

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Provided courtesy of AgingCare.com. AgingCare.com offers resources and support to help caregivers manage stress and minimize [family conflict while caregiving](#).

***Happiness and misery consist in a progression  
towards better or worse;***

***it does not matter how high up or low down you are,***

***it depends not on this,***

***but on the direction in which you are tending.***

—Samuel Butler

# Caring for the Caregiver Program

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## Save paper and reduce postage costs

Please let us know if:

- You are willing to receive the newsletter via email
- You are no longer interested in receiving the newsletter

Contact:

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