

Helping Hands

A Monthly Newsletter for family Caregivers and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

November

2009

To All Caregiver and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Caregiver Advisory Services

Ford-Iroquois Public Health Department
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I'm Thankful for You

Thanksgiving is a time
For focusing on the good in our lives.
It is a time for being thankful for the
people around you.

It's a time for loving and caring and
giving.

You are unique in your own way.
You make me feel good when I'm
around you.

So,
On Thanksgiving,
I'm thankful for you.

Adriana

Thanksgiving



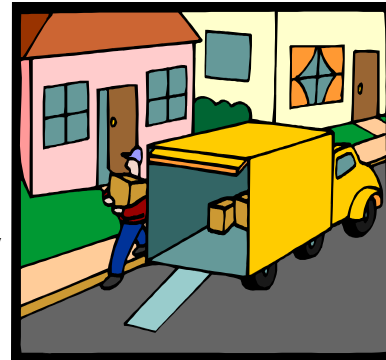
**Are you or someone
you know being
mistreated or
abused?**

If the person being
mistreated is 60 years
old or older call:
1-815-432-5395

If the person being
mistreated is 18 years
of age or younger
call:
1-800-252-2873

If the person being
mistreated is between
the ages of 19-59 call
your local
**Law Enforcement
Agency**

Moving in With Family: Issues to Consider



Too often, the decision to move into a family member's home is made when a crisis develops or as a last resort. Sudden illness or injury strikes and the family is left without a plan for long-term care for their loved one. Experts suggest that all families discuss the possibility of the need for long-term care, and the possibility of family members living together as a solution to the daily care situation. The following are some items to discuss with all members of the family before making such a move.

Accessibility

Is the home "elder friendly"? It is necessary to review the setup of the home, in terms of stairs, additional bedrooms, bathrooms and general safety issues. If home modifications are needed, they should be completed prior to the move.

Care

How much care will the relative require? Daytime supervision, medication management, meal preparation and entertainment are just a few examples of important issues to consider. Assess the level of assistance needed now and in the foreseeable future. If the relative is in poor health, who will be in charge of providing the care? Will other family members share in the caregiving duties? Establish basic rules and a care routine to help prevent conflicts and caregiver burnout.

Emotions

How do family members get along with each other? How are conflicts dealt with? All families have their share of problems and each family handles them differently. The loss of independence is difficult for anyone and reactions or behavior change is to be expected. It is important to be able to talk about how everyone is feeling and encourage the relative to continue with a life of their own. Communication skills, including active listening, are necessary in handling and resolving conflicts successfully.

Finances

How will the change in household expenses be handled? An increase in family size usually means an increase in family expenses. Will the relative contribute? Are there other family members who can help with financial support?

Responsibilities

What is expected of the relative? What responsibilities will they have for care of the home? If there is a separate apartment, will everyone dine together? What about family outings-will the relative always be included?

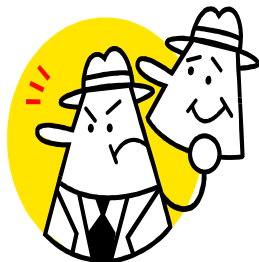
Once the move has been made to live together, it is very important for all family members to have continual open and honest communication with each other on all matters. Don't hold in your feelings-both positive and negative feelings need to be shared. Families who maintain open and honest communication and are willing to share in the financial and caregiver responsibilities for a needy relative can successfully reside together in the same home. Support can and should be a two-way street. Where better to get the daily support that we all need than from our family.

Caregivers - Your attitude can be the biggest barrier to taking care of yourself

As a caregiver, you have to be realistic about what can and can't be controlled. You can't control the fact that your loved one has a chronic or progressive disease or the impact of that disease. But you CAN control how you respond to the situation. The first step is taking **ownership** of your caregiver role and admitting that it might be a long-term job. This acknowledgement allows you to plan and seek help. The National Family Caregivers Association has reported that this simple shift in attitude can have a profound impact on your situation. By accepting the job and putting a name on it, you will be less inclined to set yourself up for stress and emotions that prevent you from seeking help.

The next step is to understand the scope of long-term caregiving. If you don't pace yourself, you're going to be depleted before the job is done. Think of caregiving as a marathon, not a sprint. Marathoners get through a race by pacing themselves and getting sustenance and water along the way. A lot of people throw themselves into a "caregiving frenzy" that quickly leads to emotional and physical burnout. Understand that long-term caregiving can have long-term effects. Set your pace for a long race and accept the reality that you will need help along the way. The earlier you understand pacing and asking for help, the better you and your loved one will do.

Fight negative or unrealistic thinking. Your attitude can be the biggest barrier to taking care of yourself and doing the best job for your loved one. Your mind will believe what you tell it. Tell it that you're a caregiver, that you need to stay healthy, that you have rights and that you will do the best you can but you'll have to find help for certain things.

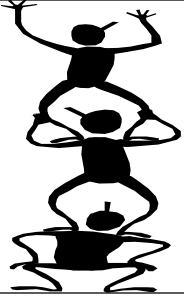


How to Wash Your Hands Correctly

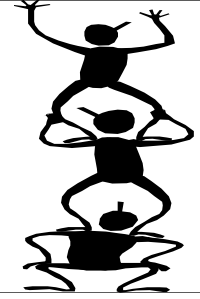


There's a right way to wash your hands. Follow these simple steps to keep your hands clean:

- Use warm water (not cold or hot).
- Use whatever soap you like. Antibacterial soaps are popular but regular soap works fine. If you suspect that your hands have come into contact with someone with an infection, think about using an alcohol hand sanitizer.
- Rub your hands together vigorously and scrub all surfaces: Lather up on both sides of your hands, your wrists, between your fingers, and around your nails. Wash for 15 seconds — about how long it takes to sing "Happy Birthday."
- Rinse well under warm running water and pat dry with a clean towel.
- In public restrooms, consider using a paper towel to flush the toilet and open the door because toilet and door handles harbor germs. Throw the towel away after you leave.
- To prevent chapping or dry skin, use a mild soap with warm water, pat rather than rub hands dry, and apply a moisturizing lotion liberally afterwards.
- When there is no soap or water available, waterless hand soaps or scrubs are a good alternative. They're usually available as a liquid, wipes, or towelettes, and often come in small travel sizes that are perfect for keeping in your book bag, car, locker, purse, or sports bag. Remember, proper and frequent hand washing is the key to preventing the spread of many common infections. So hum a few verses of "Happy Birthday" and lather up!



Ford-Iroquois Public Health Support Groups



<p>Caregiver Support Group Meeting the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 1:30 p.m. at the Ford-Iroquois Public Health Department 114 N. Third St Watseka, IL For more information call Tammy Barragree 1-815-432-2483</p>	<p>Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the 3rd Wednesday of every month Iroquois Mental Health Center 323 W. Mulberry St. Watseka, IL For more information call Tammy Barragree 1-815-432-2483</p>	<p>Alzheimer's Support Group Gibson City Heritage Manor 620 E. First St. Gibson City, IL 60936 Meeting in the East Day Room On the 3rd Wednesday of the month 5:30 p.m. For more information call Rita 1-217-784-4257</p>
	<p>Illinois Knights Templar Caregiver Support Group 450 E. Fulton Street Paxton, IL 60957 Contact: Carol MacNeil 217-379-6073 November 10th & 24th, 2009 1:30 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Prairieview Lutheran Home-Alzheimer's Support Group 402 North 4th St. Danforth, IL November 11th, 2009 @ 2:00 p.m. Contact Jenny 815-269-2970</p>

Reminder



Jingle Bells Jury

by Jay Morality
and directed by Sally Webb
Will be presented

NOVEMBER 27th, 2009

4:00 p.m. in the courtroom
of the Old Courthouse Museum.

Tickets are on sale now for the play.

Tickets are \$3 for children 12 and under
and \$5 for all others.

Seating is limited and early purchase is recommended.

Call The Watseka Park District for more information.

815-432-3931

Registration underway for youth basketball and cheerleading



The Watseka Park District is accepting registrations for youth basketball for children in

kindergarten through sixth

grades as well as cheerleading for children in kindergarten through sixth grades.

Children will practice one night per week with games on Saturdays beginning in January.

Registrations are due by November 9th for cheerleading and December 1st for basketball.

These youth programs are open to anyone in the area. For more information and registration

contact the Watseka Park District

815-432-3931.

Reach Out



As a caregiver, you need to communicate with many people to survive. You've got to connect with family, friends, co-workers, employers, healthcare professionals, insurance companies — and a loved one who may not be the same person they used to be. Constructive and effective communication is vital. When your communication is clear, assertive and constructive, you're more likely to be heard and get the response you need. Your stress level and the added responsibilities are going to make it harder to stay focused, articulate your needs and feelings and make sure you understand what everyone is demanding from you. You'll need to stay organized, have patience and control conflicting emotions. Here are some basic guidelines for good communication.

General Communication Tips

- Be assertive, honest and patient. You've got a long road ahead. You need support from your loved one and those who will be on your team.
- Use "I" messages rather than "you" messages. By saying "I feel angry" rather than "You made me angry," you can express your feelings without blaming others or causing them to become defensive.
- Respect the rights and feelings of others. Don't say something that will violate another person's rights or intentionally hurt the person's feelings. Recognize that the other person has the right to express feelings.
- Be clear and specific. Speak directly to the person. Don't hint or hope the person will guess what you need. Other people are not mind readers. When you speak directly about what you need or feel, you take the risk that the other person might disagree or say no to your request, but your action also shows respect for the other person's opinion. When both parties speak directly, the chances of reaching understanding are greater. Be a good listener. Listening is the most important aspect of communication.
- If at first you don't succeed, try and try again. If you're not getting your point across, or you're getting no response, try again later. Sometimes, it's just not the right time.

2009 American Heart Association

Communicating with family

The illness and dependency of a loved one can strain family relationships. Additional stress may result as family members begin sacrificing time and money as a result of caregiving. Emotions may run high when everyone is frightened and concerned about the situation, and nerves may be on edge. Roles may be reversed. The best intentions of families can sometimes lead to misunderstandings, resentment and fear. Start the process of good communication by holding a family meeting. Then minimize misunderstandings by keeping communication with family members open, honest and constructive.

Communicating with friends

Your friends want to know how you're doing and how they can help. Don't shut them out. You need them for emotional support and to help you keep living your life.

