Aging and Disability Resource Center of Racine County

ADRC Connections

Newsletter Date Fall 2024

Connecting You to Your Community's Resources

ADRCs are the first place to go to get free, accurate, unbiased information on all aspects of life related to aging or living with a disability. ADRCs are friendly, welcoming places where anyone - individuals, concerned families or friends, or professionals working with issues related to aging or disabilities can go for information tailored to their situation. The ADRC provides information on a broad range of programs and services, helps people understand the various long -term care options available to them, helps people apply for programs and benefits, and serves as the access point for publicly funded long term care. These services can be provided by the ADRC via telephone, virtually or through a home visit, whichever is more convenient to the individual seeking help regardless of their income or asset levels and are available in all counties in Wisconsin.

General and common scenarios we encounter:

- "I am getting older or living with a disability and want to know how to plan for the future."
- "I am caring for someone, and I need a break, is there assistance for this?"
- "My son/daughter is living with a disability and is turning 18. What options do they have as an adult?"

Call the ADRC and we will be happy to speak with you about your concerns

Caregiver Appreciation: Honoring those who give Selflessly

In a world that often moves too quickly, caregivers are the quiet, compassionate heroes working tirelessly behind the scenes. They provide essential support to those who need it most—be it aging parents, children with special needs, or individuals dealing with chronic

Photo: Fall Foliage by Forest Wander—Flickr

illness or disabilities. Caregiving is more than just a role; it's an act of love, dedication, and sometimes sacrifice.

The Role of Caregivers

Caregivers come in many forms: family members, friends, or professional aides. Regardless of their title, they all share a common purpose—to ensure the well-being

continued next page...

Inside this issue:

Safety Tip of the day

If you have to evacuate during an emergency TAKE YOUR PET(s)! Do you have a kit ready to go? Be sure it contains current printed photos of all family members (including Spot and Snuffy-and that they're wearing collars and ID tags).

For more safety tips follow Ready Wisconsin on Facebook (www.facebook.com/readywisconsin) and Instagram (www.instagram.com/readywisconsin).

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and quality of life for those under their care. They assist with daily activities such as bathing, dressing, and feeding, while also providing emotional support and managing medical appointments, medications, and complex care routines.

For family caregivers, this role is often unpaid and can be physically and emotionally exhausting. Many juggle full-time jobs, family responsibilities, and caregiving duties without respite, often sacrificing their own health and well-being in the process. In fact, research shows that caregivers are at a higher risk for anxiety, depression, and other stress-related illnesses due to the demands of their role.

Appreciating caregivers goes beyond simply recognizing their hard work; it's about acknowledging the profound impact they have on society. Without caregivers, many individuals would be unable to live independently, and countless families would struggle to provide the necessary care for their loved ones.

Ways to Show Appreciation

There are many ways to show appreciation for caregivers, whether they are professionals or family members:

- Say "Thank You": A heartfelt thank you, whether in person, through a card, or in an email, can mean the world to a caregiver. Words of appreciation validate their hard work and dedication.
- Offer Practical Help: Caregiving is often overwhelming. Offering to help with errands, providing meals, or offering a few hours of respite can be incredibly supportive.
- Gift of Time: Give caregivers the gift of time. Whether it's by offering to take over their duties for an afternoon so they can take a break or simply spend time with them to talk, these moments can rejuvenate their spirit.
- Support Groups and Resources: Encouraging caregivers to join support groups or providing them with access to resources can help reduce the emotional toll of caregiving. These groups offer a space to share experiences and receive emotional support from others in similar situations.
- Encourage them to connect with the Aging and Disability Resource Center for information, assistance, education and support.

Caregiver appreciation matters. A simple gesture of gratitude can make a significant difference, reaffirming their sense of purpose and giving them the strength to continue in their caregiving journey.

When we show appreciation for caregivers, we're not only lifting their spirits but also improving the quality of care they provide. A caregiver who feels valued is more likely to stay engaged, energized, and committed to their role Caregiving is a demanding and selfless act that often goes unnoticed. By showing our appreciation for caregivers, we honor their contributions and recognize the vital role they play in our lives and society as a whole. Simple acts of gratitude can go a long way in sustaining caregivers, ensuring they feel supported, valued, and, most importantly, appreciated.

Photo: Free Image of Wooded park in Autumn https://free-bie.photography/nature/slides/wooded_park.htm

SSA Resources for Transition-Aged Youth

Recently, the Social Security Administration (SSA) began mailing notices to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients between the ages of 14 and 17 and their representatives. The letters were sent to help youth to understand SSA policies and to access resources to aid in their transition to adulthood.

The letters include a QR code to link to the Youth Resources webpage and information on the publication What You Need To Know About Your Supplemental Security (SSI) When You Turn 18. Note: This publication can be downloaded in English and Spanish from the SSA website.

Topics covered in these resources include:

- The age 18 redetermination and how to appeal if benefits stop.
- Earnings and the age 18 redetermination.
- Available work incentives and supports.
- SSI program rules about higher education funds.
- Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts.

Other services that may be helpful. SSA encourages organizations who work with transitioned-aged youth to promote these resources through their networks.

Photo: Wheelchairs on wooded path https://socialmarketing.blogs.com/r_craiig_lefebvres_social/audience_insights /

Community Resources –Voting

You can check your voter registration status or register to vote online **MyVote Wisconsin**: myvote.wi.gov

For additional information or assistance, please see the following resources below.

Wisconsin Elections Commission: 866-VOTE-WIS / 866-868-3944 (The phone line is staffed Monday—Friday from 7:45 AM – 4:30 PM, but they have longer hours on Election Day.) Email: elections@wi.gov; Website: elections.wi.gov

Disability Rights Wisconsin Voter Hotline: Call: 844-DIS-VOTE / 844-347-8683 or Email: info@disabilityvote.org

Wisconsin Election Protection (non-partisan assistance from volunteer attorneys): Call 866-687-8683 or text "Our Vote" to 97779

Wisconsin DMV Voter ID Hotline: Call (844) 588-1069

Vote411.org: nonpartisan information about the candidates

Disability Vote Coalition: disabilityvote.org or Facebook www.facebook.com/wisconsindisabilityvote/

Absentee Voting in Residential Care Facilities and Retirement Homes (SVD Voting), Wisconsin Elections Commission: elections.wi.gov/resources/manuals/absentee-voting-residential-carefacilities-andretirement-homes-svdvoting

Board on Aging and Long-Term Care: longtermcare.wi.gov/Documents/Ombudsman/Voting%20Rights_onepage_2024.pdf

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@racinecounty.com

ADRC
Aging and Disability Resource Center of Racine County

Residents Rights

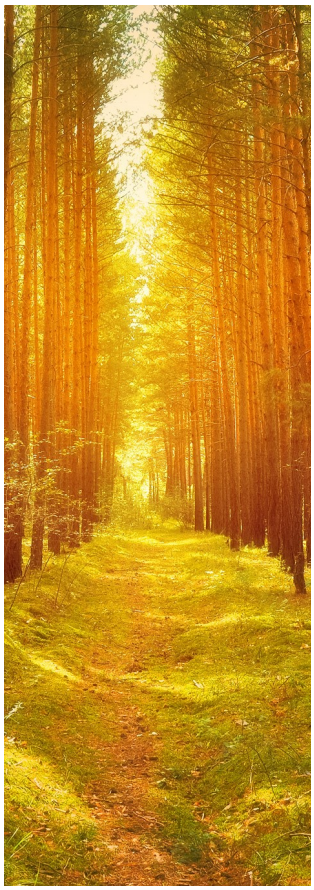

Photo: Path in the woods https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Path-in-the-woods-1361546074613.jpg

October is **Residents' Rights Month**, an annual event designated by Consumer Voice to honor residents living in all long-term care facilities and those receiving care in their home or community. It is an opportunity to focus on and celebrate the dignity and rights of every individual receiving long-term services and supports.

Residents have the right to self-determination and to use their voice to make their own choices.

This year's Residents' Rights Month theme, **The Power of My Voice**, emphasizes self-empowerment and recognizes the power of residents being vocal about their interests, personal growth, and right to live full, enriching lives. See ideas and information at: National Consumer Voice (theconsumervoice.org)

Social Security In Plain Language

Article at right provided by the Social Security Administration.

The terms and acronyms people use when they talk about Social Security can be a little confusing. Knowing where to find easy-to-understand definitions can be very helpful.

If there's a technical term or acronym that you don't know or understand, you can easily find the meaning in our online glossary at www.ssa.gov/agency/glossary. We strive to explain our programs and benefits using plain language. In fact, the Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires federal agencies like the Social Security Administration to communicate in a way the public can understand. This can be challenging when talking about complicated programs like Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Medicare. That's why the glossary is helpful.

If you're nearing retirement, you may want to know the meaning of PIA (primary insurance amount), FRA (full retirement age), and DRCs (delayed retirement credits). These terms all relate to your benefit amount — based on when you decide to take your Social Security. If you start receiving your retirement benefit at FRA, you'll receive the full PIA (amount payable for a retired worker who starts benefits at full retirement age). So, FRA is an age and PIA is an amount.

What about DRCs? Delayed retirement credits are the incremental increases added to your PIA if you delay taking retirement benefits beyond your FRA. If you wait to begin benefits beyond FRA — say, at age 68 — your benefit increases for each month you delay up until you reach age 70.

Once you receive benefits, you typically get an annual COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment) that increases your monthly benefit most years.

Learning our terminology can deepen your understanding of how Social Security works for you and your family.

Here Come the Holidays!

Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and more. This equals family gatherings, parties, teas, concerts, shopping, presents, decorations, greeting cards and the list goes on. Many people look forward to the hustle and bustle, reconnecting with family and friends and the snowy magic of the holiday season. Others, however, look to this season as a time of stress, chaos and sadness.

People who have experienced changes due to Alzheimer's, stroke or other medical conditions may feel a great deal of loss during the holidays. Those who are caring for these loved ones may feel overwhelmed by trying to keep up holiday traditions while continuing to provide care. They may also be uncertain about gathering with friends and family for fear the changes in physical health, behavior and personality may make others uncomfortable.

Here are some ideas to help reduce stress this holiday.

Adjust your expectations. You may not be able to do everything you've always done. Choose a few traditions that are the most important. For those with dementia, traditions from the past are more likely to have meaning that newer ideas.

Ask for help in meeting your goal. Involve other family members or friends. Not only does this reduce your stress, but it provides you and your loved one with good socialization. Write down tasks that need completing so you can be specific when people offer to help. And remember that some things can be left undone!

Prepare family and friends before getting together Give them ideas on how best to communicate with them and what they can expect.

Involve your loved one in the preparations. They may be able to assist, and even just watching can help make them feel a part of the festivities and give you some time to spend together.

Offer suggestions about gifts. Things such as music cd's, photo albums, comfortable clothing, videos or audio books. Don't forget your own wishes, too! Gift certificates for dining, laundry or cleaning services are some ideas.

Keep the needs of your loved one in mind. Perhaps an afternoon of looking at old photos and reminiscing would be more appropriate than sharing a meal. Gatherings during the day rather than in the evening since symptoms often are worse in the evening.

Be good to yourself. Be aware that holidays can be stressful and prioritize time for you to get away. A lunch out with friends, trip to the beauty parlor or movie theater, or going to a concert are simple things that can leave you feeling rejuvenated and better able to have a happy holiday.

May everyone enjoy a stress-free holiday season filled with love, joy and good memories!

Adapted from an article written by Jane Mahoney OAA Consultant—Caregiver Specialist GWAAR

Image: Colorful yellow autumn foliage. https://freebie.photography/nature/

Fall Prevention Bingo

A fun, engaging educational tool that can be used to improve knowledge of fall risks. Download the free Fall Prevention Bingo word sheets, bingo cards and the instruction sheet:

https://starklab.wustl.edu/resources/fall-prevention-bingo/

Your Benefits

Important Numbers

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

Medicare
1-800–Medicare
800-633-4227)
Continued...
Web: https:www.medicare.gov/

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

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

Medicare and You

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.

Part D Changes in 2025

- $2,000 maximum out-of-pocket for all Medicare Part D plans for 2025
- Elimination of the Coverage Gap (Donut Hole)
- Manufacturer Price Discounts
- Spreading Out-of-Pocket Payments

Do not forget to review and re-apply for any assistance programs you may be receiving.

Other helpful numbers:

Medigap Helpline: 800-242-1060
Prescription Drug Helpline (over age 60) 855-67 PART D or 855-677-2783
Prescription Drug Helpline (under age 60) 800-926-4862

Benefit Specialists Welcome Calah

The ADRC welcomes a new Elder Benefit Specialist.

Here are a few words from Calah:

Hello, I'm Calah Arnett. I've been working with aged and disabled adults for almost 19 years. I've been with the Racine County ADRC for 3.5 years, and in July, I accepted the position of Elder Benefit Specialist. In my free time, I love to enjoy the outdoors, gardening, and movie nights.

MEDICARE'S OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD

Medicare's Open Enrollment runs October 15 through December 7 and is the time of year when you can make certain changes to your Medicare coverage. The last change you make will take effect on January 1. Take action during Medicare's Open Enrollment to make sure your coverage will meet your needs in 2025.

Making changes during Medicare's Open Enrollment

The changes you can make include:

Joining a new Medicare Advantage Plan or Part D prescription drug plan

Switching from Original Medicare to Medicare Advantage

Switching from Medicare Advantage to Original Medicare (with or without a Part D plan)

Call 1-800-**Medicare** or visit **Medicare**.gov to make changes.

Review your coverage for 2025

Medicare Advantage and Part D plans usually change each year. Make sure that your drugs will be covered next year and that your providers and pharmacies will still be in the plan's network.

Original Medicare
Read *Medicare & You* or visit **Medicare**.gov to learn about Medicare's benefits for the upcoming year.

Medicare Advantage or Part D plan
Read your plan's Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) and Evidence of Coverage (EOC).

SHIP State Health Insurance Assistance Program

Contact your SHIP if you have questions about any notices you receive. SHIP counselors can help you review your options and pick a plan that meets your needs. SHIP counselors provide trusted, unbiased, and individualized Medicare help. Contact information for your local SHIP at www.**shiphelp**.org.

You can use Medicare's Plan Finder tool to compare plans by visiting **Medicare**.gov/plan-compare/ or by calling 1-800-**Medicare**

This document was supported, in part, by grant numbers 90SATC0002 and 90MPRC0002 from the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.

Protect Yourself from Marketing Violations and Misleading Marketing

Ask for your Medicare number, Social Security number, or bank information, especially before you decide to enroll. Someone can use this information to enroll you in a plan without your permission.

Say they represent Medicare. Plans are never allowed to suggest they represent or are endorsed by Medicare or any other government agency. They cannot use the Medicare name or logo on their marketing materials.

Send you unsolicited text messages or phone calls. Plans must provide you with the option to opt out of communications about Medicare products. It must be done annually and in writing

Pressure you with time limits to enroll in their plan. You can use the entire Open Enrollment Period to make your decisions. You will not receive extra benefits for signing up early for a plan, and you will not lose your Medicare coverage if you don't pick a plan.

Offer you gifts to enroll in their plan. Gifts must be given to everyone at an event regardless of their enrollment choice, and cannot be worth more than $15.

The Medicare Rights Center

Racine County 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.

WE Need Volunteers!

Call us at: **262-833-8766**

Toll free at: **1-866-219-1043**, or email RCNutrition@racinecounty.com

Dining Center Locations:

- ◊ Mount Pleasant Place
- ◊ Salvation Army
- ◊ Burlington Senior Center
- ◊ Bruno's –Restaurant Model location

Contact the program for specifics about these sites.

Menus:

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

Urgent:

Meals on Wheels is in immediate need of volunteer drivers! Help make a difference in the lives of homebound seniors. Even a few hours can have big impact. Contact us today or use the QR code below to apply.

Beneficial Bites—Squash!

Probably one of the most diverse group of vegetables would have to be squash. Just look at the variety of shapes, sizes and colors… zucchini, crookneck, butternut, acorn, pumpkin, spaghetti, and hubbard are just the varieties we commonly see in Wisconsin.

In North America, squash are grouped into summer and winter varieties. Summer squash are those that are harvested as "immature" vegetables, which means they are harvested when their skin is still soft and the fruit is rather small. They include zucchini, patty pan and crookneck.

Winter squash means they are harvested as mature vegetables, typically, the end of summer. Due to their late harvest, their skin is harder making them less likely to spoil. The name "winter squash" really comes from the fact that they can be stored through the winter. Some varieties include butternut, hubbard, acorn, and pumpkin.

Squash are loaded with vitamins, minerals and FIBER!!! They also have cancer fighting and anti-inflammatory properties, and are very beneficial for your cardiovascular system.

Even if the health benefits don't persuade you, the flavor alone should make you want to eat them!

7-Minute Squash

2 cups butternut squash, winter squash, cut 1-inch cubes
3 TBSP extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp orange juice
Salt & pepper to taste

Fill the bottom of the steamer with 2 inches of water. While steam is building up in steamer, peel & cut squash into 1-inch cubes. Steam covered for 7 minutes. Squash is done when it is tender, yet still firm enough to hold its shape. Transfer to a bowl. For more flavor mash with the oil, orange juice, salt, and pepper while it is still hot.

Optional: *Feta cheese, Chopped fresh rosemary, ½ small onion sliced thin, cooked with the squash Also try combining 4 tsp finely minced fresh ginger, ½ tsp cinnamon, & 2 tsp honey with the olive oil*

Photo: Many and varied squashes
Ruth Hartnup Flcker
https://www.flickr.com/photos/95142644@N00/23413001525

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
Christ Church United Methodist
5109 Washington Ave Racine

First Thursday
6:30 - 7:30 pm
Zoom/Call in
See contact below to connect

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

Kudo's for Caregivers

"Kudos For Caregivers" Appreciation Event

On September 13th, the ADRC of Racine County honored our special caregivers with an Appreciation Day at Grace Church. The role of caregivers can often be overwhelming and feel isolating at times. We wanted to provide an opportunity for a much-needed break from their daily commitment and a day to connect with others that are on this similar journey.

A special thank you to our sponsors, vendors, volunteers and staff that made this incredible day a success. We enjoyed much needed laughter while connecting to our speaker Jolene Brackey, author of "*Creating Moments of Joy*." The hammered dulcimer group, Sweet Melody Strings, performed the most smoothing music, and an opportunity to meet directly with the players. Plus, Our Harmony Club provided much needed respite for our attendees.

Here's some comments that our caregivers shared….

"Thanks to you and all of the ADRC and sponsors of the Caregiver thank you event yesterday. It was well organized and a refreshing chance to catch up with others dealing with the challenges of dementia and the emotions and stresses of each and every day. The keynote speaker was excellent. All in all, a successful day and a much-appreciated break. I live one day at a time and yesterday was a good day."

"Thank you to you and your team. Yesterday exceeded my already positive expectations. The timing was perfectly matched to my needs on my journey along this ever evolving and changing path.
My wife enjoyed having her friends from the various Our Harmony Club locations all together in one place. She slept for 13 hours last night. I had time to get up and read."

We were happy to bring back this important event, please be sure to watch for our annual Kudos for Caregiver Event in 2025 and we hope you will join us!

Photo of Caregiver Support staff members and helpers at Kudo's event.

Ask Me About 7.5

This initiative by the Wisconsin Institute for Health Aging is to Fight Ageism. Ageism is everywhere. And it's BAD for everyone. Join the fight against ageism. See https://wihealthyaging.org/initiatives/ageism/

Research has show that people with Positive perceptions of aging live 7.5 years longer than those who don't. and they…

- Experience much higher rates of recovery from illness and injury
- Have better brain performance and improved memory
- Have a greater sense of control over their lives and a greater will to live
- Are more likely to talk to a doctor about health problems, get preventive care such as blood pressure screenings and flu shots, and pursue health promotion programs.

Positive View on Aging = 7.5 Years Longer life!

All research conducted by Becca Levy, PhD, Yale School of Public Health

Photo: Fall leaves, author unknown

When I think of Robert Frost's poems, like "The Road Not Taken," I feel the support of Someone who is on my side, who understands what life's choices are like, someone who says, "I've been there, and it's okay to go on."

Fred Rogers
"The World according to Mr. Rogers"

ADRC
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14200 Washington Ave
Sturtevant, WI 53177

https://adrc.racinecounty.com

Caregiver Opportunities

Book Club for Caregivers
1st Friday Caregiver Book Club – Noon – 1pm / 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.

1st 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 1:00pm - 2:30pm
Yorkville United Methodist, 17645 Old Yorkville Rd, Union Grove
For information contact 262-878-2388.

2nd Friday of each month 1:00—2:30 pm
Emmaus Lutheran Church 1925 Summit Ave, Racine, WI 53404
English and Spanish
For information contact 262-636-9217.

3rd Friday of each month 9:30am– 10:30am
Burlington Aurora Wellness Center,
300 McCanna Pkwy, Burlington, WI 53105
For information contact Chad at 262-212-3596

Image Fall Foliage leaves Wikimedia www.forestwander.com/foliage