AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER OF RACINE COUNTY

ADRC Connections

Newsletter Date Summer 2021

Inside this issue:

Connecting You to Your Community's Resources

The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) provides older adults, people with physical or developmental/ intellectual disabilities and their caregivers the resources needed to live with dignity and security and achieve maximum independence and quality of life. The goal of the ADRC is to give individuals information to make informed choices and streamline access to the right and appropriate services and supports. The ADRC provides free, accurate and unbiased information to people regardless of their income or asset levels. Elder and Disability Benefit Specialists are also available to answer questions about your benefit needs. 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.

Out and About

Have you been cooped up and are looking for something new to do? With a little information and investigation, everyone has access to healthy and enjoyable recreational activities.

To choose your ideal activities, make a list of what things you may be interested in. Choose activities that are meaningful. This will make it easier for you to stick with this activity. Many activities provide health benefits, especially if you are consistent. You will see the rewards.

Keep in mind, when beginning something new, that training and special equipment or tools may be necessary. Many communities offer a

variety of recreational activities, as well as the equipment through their parks department, community centers or their local college or university.

Whether your interest takes you to learn photography, swimming, canoeing, gardening or playing tennis, making sure you are safe will make the activity more enjoyable. If the activity is physically demanding, consult your physician as needed. Other considerations and guidance to navigate COVID-19 safely in various environments can be found at: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/public-guidance.htm

I hope you're proud of yourself for the times you've said "yes," when all it meant was extra work for you and was seemingly helpful only to somebody else.

...Fred Rogers

Are You a Caregiver?

What do you think of when you hear the word caregiver? Do you picture someone who spends their day providing hands-on care for someone? If so, you are not alone. It's common for people to think of a caregiver as someone who lives with a loved one and assists them with daily activities such as dressing, grooming, walking, and meals. But caregiving includes much more than those hands-on tasks.

Caregiving also includes helping someone with a wide assortment of tasks that enable them to live more independently in the community. The tasks others help with, no matter how big or small, are enabling people to continue to live in their homes.

There are thousands of people who are playing a vital role in maintaining the independence of an older person, but don't realize it or don't consider their work as very important. They certainly would not call themselves a caregiver. Are you one of them? Read on to find out.

Are you a son, daughter, neighbor, relative, or friend who:

- Arranges medical appointments and provides transportation too?
- Prepares meals to ensure nutritious food is available?
- Helps pay bills and/or balance the checkbook?
- Helps with cleaning and/or laundry?
- Assists with weekly grocery shopping?
- Sets up medication?
- Receives frequent phone calls with requests for help?
- Feels the need to regularly "check-up" on your parent/loved one to be sure they are okay?

Are you a spouse who:

- Has taken on duties that used to be done by your spouse? (cooking, cleaning, laundry, car maintenance, bookkeeping, bill paying, etc.)
- Needs to accompany your spouse to places he/she used to go alone?
- Is assisting with daily living tasks like dressing, grooming, and bathing?
- Ensures medications are taken properly?
- Makes medical decisions for your spouse?
- Feels unable to leave your spouse home alone?

If you answered "yes" to any of these, then you are a caregiver! You may think that these tasks are just things that you do for the people you love. While that is true, don't downplay the importance of your assistance in these areas. Without your help, the older person may not be able to continue to live in their own home. The "little" things that you do are crucial to the independence of your loved one.

Identifying yourself as a caregiver is important because it opens the door to many supports and resources that can benefit the person you are caring for as well as yourself. We know that when caregivers are supported, they can provide care more effectively, more safely, and for a longer period which is a benefit to everyone.

Jane Mahoney
Caregiver Support Specialist
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources

Vaccination News

Federal and State Officials Advise COVID-19 Vaccine Providers in Wisconsin that Individuals Seeking Vaccinations Cannot Be Charged.

"COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective, and free for everyone 12 years old and up across our state," said Wisconsin Secretary-designee Karen Timberlake. "We stand with our federal partners in our commitment to making sure everyone in Wisconsin can get vaccinated without worrying about what they may have to pay."

If you know or suspect that any healthcare provider, healthcare facility, vaccination site, or pharmacy is improperly charging any costs for the COVID-19 vaccine, please call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).
Complaints may also be submitted to the State of Wisconsin 844-684-1064.

Vaccine Access for those who are Homebound in Racine County:

If you are homebound in Racine County and would like to schedule an in-home vaccine, call today! We can also help if you are having trouble getting a ride or need other assistance. 262-636-3200 Hablamos Español.

Consumer Resource

For seniors and their caregivers, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's "**Senior Guide**" has long been a trusted source of information on consumer issues and scams that the state's elderly residents face. The Senior Guide contains more than 50 pages of information to help Wisconsin seniors through difficult consumer issues or to help them identify scams.
See: https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Publications/SeniorGuide.aspx

Community Resources

Wisconsin Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

You can meet with **Caroline Ludka** to discuss a variety of topics tailored to the unique needs of Deaf, Deaf-Blind, or Hard of Hearing residents. She will meet with those who walk in, or you can contact her at:
262-565-6349 for an appointment.
See information about the Office at: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/odhh/index.htm

ODHH
Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Promoting Equal Communication Access and Accommodations

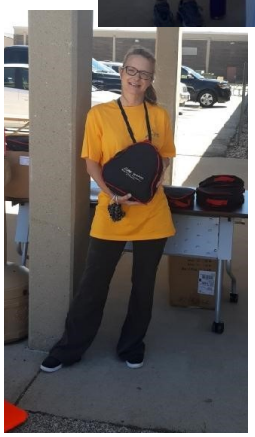
Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Rehabilitation services are provided by OBVI to help individuals who are blind or visually impaired to achieve their own goals of independent living. These specialized skills allow individuals to adapt and adjust to vision loss, enabling them to live as independently as possible.

Call: Kathleen Connell 414-227-4207

Information see: https://

OBVI
WISCONSIN
Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired



Communities of Strength

In tough times, communities find strength in people—and people find strength in community. In the past year, we've seen this time and again in Racine County as friends, neighbors, and businesses have found new ways to support each other.

May was Older Americans Month and the ADRC celebrated in several ways including our first drive though resource fair! Photos of the event are at the left. We have been encouraging connection in many forms.

Here are some ways for you to share and connect:

Look for joy in the everyday: Celebrate small moments and ordinary pleasures by taking time to recognize them. Start a gratitude journal and share it with others, or call a friend or family member to share a happy moment or to say thank you.

Reach out to neighbors: Even if you can't get together in person, you can still connect with your neighbors. Leave a small gift on their doorstep, offer to help with outdoor chores, or deliver a homecooked meal.

Build new skills: Learning something new allows us to practice overcoming challenges. Take an art course online or try a socially distanced outdoor movement class to enjoy learning with others in your community. Have a skill to share? Find an opportunity to teach someone, even casually.

Share your story: There's a reason storytelling is a time-honored activity. Hearing how others experience the world helps us grow. Interviewing family, friends, and neighbors can open up new conversations and strengthen our connections.

When people of different ages, backgrounds, abilities, and talents share experiences—through action, story, or service—we help build strong communities. And that's something to celebrate!

World Elder Abuse Day

June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. On that day, communities in the USA and all over the world will sponsor events to highlight solutions to this systemic social challenge. Once again the ADRC will share a visual reminder of the reports of Elder Abuse in Racine County at our location, 14200 Washington Ave.

As Americans, we believe in justice for all. Yet we fail to live up to this promise when we allow older members of our society to be abused or neglected. Older people are vital, contributing members of American society and their maltreatment diminishes all of us. Just as

World Elder Abuse Day *continued*

we have confronted and addressed the social issues of child abuse and domestic violence, so too can we find solutions to address issues like elder abuse, which also threatens the well-being of our community.

Our policies and practices make it hard for older people to stay involved with and connected to our communities as they age. As a result, older people are more likely to experience social isolation, which increases the likelihood of abuse and neglect. We can design stronger societal supports to keep our older people connected and protect them from abuse, whether financial, emotional, physical or sexual. When we address a root cause, like social isolation, we also make it less likely that people will become neglected. Older adults who are socially connected and protected from harm are less likely to be hospitalized, less likely to go into nursing homes and less likely to die.

We can, and must, create healthier and safer living environments for older adults, including their homes, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities.

In Racine County, call 262-833-8777 weekdays between 8 am and 4:30 pm and at 262-638-6741 after hours to report Elder abuse.

See: https://www.adrc.racinecounty.com/site/469/adults___elders_at_risk.aspx

WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY
Building Strong Support for Elders

NCEA
National Center on Elder Abuse

ACL
Administration for Community Living

June 15th

Get more information about how to make a difference by visiting the National Center on Elder Abuse https://ncea.acl.gov or by calling the Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116 to explore local community services and supports. For Information Publications See: https://ncea.acl.gov/Resources/Publications.aspx

Your Benefits

Important Numbers
(Toll Free):

Social Security
Local:
866-270-8629
USA:
800-772-1313

Medicare
1- 800 – Medicare
(800-633-4227)

Wisconsin
Medicaid - Member services:
800-362-3002

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

*The **Elder Benefit Specialist** serves those age 60 and older.*

*The **Disability Benefit Specialist** provides services to individuals 17.5 to 59 years old who have physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, and mental illness.*

A Benefit Specialist can provide information and assistance with public and private benefit programs including application and appeal procedures.

Contact the ADRC for a referral to a Benefit Specialist.

Social Security Disability Insurance

Coverage that Workers Earn
Excerpted from The Faces and Facts of Disability. See the full article at: https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityfacts/facts.html

Eligibility rules for Social Security's disability program differ from those of private plans or other government agencies. Social Security doesn't provide temporary or partial disability benefits, like workers' compensation or veterans' benefits do.

To receive disability benefits, a person must meet the definition of disability under the Social Security Act (Act). A person is disabled under the Act if they can't work due to a severe medical condition that has lasted, or is expected to last, at least one year or result in death.

The person's medical condition (s) must prevent them from doing work that they did in the past, and it must prevent them from adjusting to other work.

Because the Act defines disability so strictly, Social Security disability beneficiaries are among the most severely impaired in the country. In fact, Social Security disability beneficiaries are more than three times as likely to die in a year as other people the same age. Among those who start receiving disability benefits at the age of 55, 1-in-6 men and 1-in-8 women die within five years of the onset of their disabilities.

For a Fact Sheet about Disability Benefits See: https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10029.pdf

Working While Disabled — Social Security Can Help

While it may be best known for retirement, Social Security is also here to help you get back to work if you are disabled. For millions of people, work isn't just a source of income, it's a vital part of who they are — it gives them purpose and pride — it's a connection to community. If you're getting Social Security disability benefits, we have good news for you. Social Security's work incentives and Ticket to Work programs can help you if you're interested in working. Special rules make it possible for people receiving Social Security disability benefits or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to work and still receive monthly payments.

The Ticket to Work program may help you if you'd like to work. You can receive:

- Free vocational rehabilitation;
- Training;
- Job referrals; and

Other employment support.

You can read more about working while collecting disability benefits at https://www.ssa.gov/work/.
Work incentives include:

- Continued cash benefits for a time while you work;
- Continued Medicare or Medicaid while you work; and

Help with education, training, and rehabilitation to start a new line of work.
If you're receiving Social Security disability benefits or SSI, let us know right away when you start or stop working, or if any other change occurs that could affect your benefits.

If you returned to work, but you can't continue working because of your medical condition, your benefits can start again — you may not have to file a new application.

You can learn more about the Ticket to Work program by reading Working While Disabled: How We Can Help (https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10095.pdf).

Part of securing today and tomorrow is giving you the tools to create a fulfilling life. Getting back to work might be part of that. We're here with a *ticket* to a secure tomorrow.

By Jim Borland, Acting Deputy Commissioner for Communications
Social Security Administration
August 2, 2018
Last Updated: March 17, 2021

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@racinecounty.com Mail: 14200 Washington Ave, Sturtevant, WI 53177

ADRC
Aging & Disability Resource Center of Racine County

Senior Nutrition Program

The dining sites continue to be closed at this time. The Meals on Wheels program in Racine County, continues to address the needs of the community. For more information, call them at **262-833-8766.**

Part of what makes Meals on Wheel special is that it is a time that someone is also checking on the well-being of the program participants.

It is important during this time of social distancing that we are not socially isolated.

Tips for Cooking With a Physical Disability

Image credit: Apartment Therapy

Another resource for checking out adaptive equipment and finding out options that are available to you is to contact the ***Independent Living Center*** *(ILC). You can often try items out in your home to see if they work for you. The ILC can be reached by calling 262-637-9128.*

For those with a permanent or temporary physical disability involving mobility impairment, cooking can present challenges as well as opportunities for creative problem solving. Not all disabilities or people are the same, but some of the common issues include limitations in standing, reaching, or using one side of the body.

Strategies

• Plan ahead: While planning saves time, money and hassle for every home cook, it is crucial for those with disabilities. An accident like a broken glass or missing ingredient might leave a disabled person without anything to eat. Make careful shopping lists, and build leeway into your cooking schedule. Work with small quantities, saving bulk cooking for days you have help. Always keep food on hand for days you don't feel up to cooking. – Hannah Katsman

• Break it down: Look at whatever you want to cook and break it down. For example, plan to hit the refrigerator once instead of 10 times throughout the process of making a dish. Have everything ready before you start cooking. – Cat Holden

• De-clutter: Storing too many things together makes it physically difficult to get to what you need, especially when heavy items are stored. Roll out trays, smart storage at convenient heights, and a de-cluttered kitchen will help make work in the kitchen more efficient and pleasant. Rearrange, throw out and generally reduce and organize food and other items so that access is greatly enhanced. – Susan Serra

• Rest if needed: Fatigue can be an issue, so take frequent breaks and keep a chair or stool nearby in case you need to sit down. – Cat Holden

• Appreciate the process: Cooking food can be therapy for the soul. If you

Tips for Cooking With a Physical Disability ... Continued

have limited motor skills, it might affect how "perfectly" you can cut an onion or roll out sushi, but enjoying the tactile experience, using your senses – that in itself is just as important as the end product. – Rodelio Aglibot

Kitchen Design

• Countertop height: If you're in a wheelchair, lowering counters is good. If you have the funds, having a counter that can go up and down would be wonderful. Having a small table on wheels as a working surface can also work. – Nicolas Steenhout

• Countertop material: Easy clean, smooth surfaces and clean lines throughout the kitchen help the cleaning process, for a healthier kitchen. Engineered stone such as Silestone provides ease of maintenance. – Susan Serra

• Appliances: I like any appliances that have good lighting and easy access into the appliance. Lighting around appliance knobs, large letters and numbers and smooth, rounded corners are preferred. Look for handles and doors that are easy to use and open. For ovens, look for easy roll out shelves. – Susan Serra

• Lighting: Add adequate lighting overhead and task lighting if necessary. – Susan Serra

• Hardware: Replace hardware for better access – small knobs can be difficult to use. Pulls can often be a better solution. – Susan Serra

• Faucets: A faucet that is hands free or electronic touch is very welcome for many people as it is a simple touch to turn on and off. – Susan Serra

(Image credit: Apartment Therapy)

Kitchen Tools

• Adaptive equipment: Many people don't even know about the range of adaptive tools that exist. For example, there are cutting boards with a spear that help you secure the food, rocker knives, silverware with built-up handles, and more. Check medical supply stores and catalogs or talk to an occupational therapist, who can be a great resource.

• Push cart: A push cart on wheels, like the kind you can get at Target or Home Depot, is a good secret weapon. You can use it if you have difficulty carrying foods, and it's easy to slide from the fridge to the counter or stove. – Cat Holden

• Cutting boards:

If you cannot stand, I recommend using a cutting board on your lap. Some people put a cushion under the board. – Nicolas Steenhout

Continued next page

Strawberries

Not just for pie…

- Add to cereal & yogurt
- Make jelly or jams
- Toss into salads and sandwiches
- Add to pancake and waffle batters
- Add to lemonade and smoothies
- Freeze them for later use

Strawberries are an excellent source of vitamin C and other antioxidants and flavonoids. These may be beneficial in promoting better memory, lower cardiovascular disease, ease inflammation, promote bone health and promote eye health.

If you have a topic of interest you would like covered or a comment on the content of this newsletter, please let us know your opinions.

Email -
ADRC@racinecounty.com
Call -
262-833-8777 or
Write -
ADRC 14200 Washington Ave Sturtevant, WI 53177

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In a wheelchair, it is almost impossible to get up close enough to the typical counter because your feet will be blocked by the cabinets below. I wound up doing most of my food preparation on a pullout chopping board, sometimes even laying another board on top of it to try to extend the surface. – Mike Shirk

• Hook on a stick: Because of the depth of the typical countertop, one of my most useful gadgets is a hook on the end of the pole. I use it to grab the blender, the breadmaker, the food processor, the toaster, pull pots and pans out from under the stove with the space – you get the idea. – Mike Shirk

• Pastry cutter: My fingers are too weak to use a conventional knife for chopping, so I use a pastry cutter for that purpose. What it lacks in sharpness I make up for with better leverage. – Mike Shirk

• Disposable gloves: Some have mentioned a worry about hygiene, having to handle wheelchair wheels then food. From the health and hygiene point of view, disposable gloves are wonderful. – Nicolas Steenhout

Advice for family members and friends

• Respect: When someone has a disability it's tempting to jump in and take over. Respect the autonomy of the disabled person. Think about the tasks that might be difficult and offer to help in a few specific ways. For instance, if you are going shopping offer to pick up some things or to take the person along. If budget allows, consider paid help or gadgets. Community services or volunteer organizations may offer assistance. Figuring out the best strategies is often a matter of trial and error.

Finally, we must always keep in mind to treat people with physical disabilities as capable adults. Respect their choices, privacy and desire for independence. – Hannah Katsman

• Empower: Many times a person with a physical disability can still participate in cooking. Empower them to be included in the task. Even if they can't stand at the stove to stir the spaghetti sauce, they might be able to chop the onions or measure ingredients. – Cat Holden

By EMILY HAN, updated JUNE 5, 2019
Adapted from https://www.thekitchn.com/cooking-with-a-physical-disability-171416

The Experts:

Hannah Katsman is the author of Cooking Manager. When she was 12, her mother, an avid cook, was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. "I believe she viewed her disability as a new cooking challenge," says Hannah. Read her Ten Tips for Cooking with a Disability or Injury.

Cat Holden is an occupational therapist at Sinai Hospital's RETURN! Brain Injury Community Re-Entry Program. She works with a wide variety of clients who have a physical and/or cognitive disability.

Susan Serra, CKD, CAPS, is President of kitchen/bath design firm Susan Serra Associates and is a Certified Aging in Place Specialist. With her daughter Kelly, she writes the blog The Kitchen Designer.

Music and Memory

Do you have a loved one that is living with Dementia and enjoys music?

Call the ADRC today to inquire about Music & Memory!

What is Music and Memory? It is a program that taps into a person's deep-rooted love of music. It's about bringing joy to the lives of people suffering from Alzheimer's, other forms of dementia and a wide range of cognitive and physical impairments.

Through a conversation about life history and interests, a personalized playlist is created on a loaned iPod for your loved one to enjoy.

Why Music & Memory? The music can be used to improve quality of life, or as a tool for respite.

See: https://musicandmemory.org/

If you are interested or wanting to know more, call Taylor Scherer at 262-833-8777.

Classes and Workshops

All dates will be confirmed. Call to ask, or check our website at: https://www.adrc.racinecounty.com/site/470/classes_and_seminars.aspx

Stepping On
Stepping on is a seven week, two-hour per week course for older adults about falls prevention. During the course, participants learn exercises specific to balance and falls prevention, along with discussing a multitude of other topics that relate to falls prevention, such as footwear, medication, and vision.
Next class:
August 3rd-September 7th

Call Ruth for more information
262-833-8764

Powerful Tools for Caregivers
Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a six week, two-hour per week course. Caregivers learn many different tools to work with their loved one and others during their caregiving journey. There are communication techniques, relaxation options, and many other things that are very helpful along any caregiving journey. **Next Class** - August 3rd-September 7th

Call Ruth for more information
262-833-8764

Medicare Workshops:

Medicare Basics (Part 1)
June 11th 1-2:30
July 9th 1-2:30

Medicare & Medigap Insurance (Part 2)
June 21st 10-11:30
July 19th 10-11:30

Taking both parts is recommended. Call 262-833-8777 for more information.

Support Groups

In Person, Virtual or Telephone Support Groups - Now Available!

1st Friday
Noon-1:00 pm

2nd Wednesday
1:00 - 2:00 pm

3rd Thursday
6:30 - 7:30 pm

For our support groups we have started using Zoom which also offers a call-in option. We are also working on in-person options. Contact Ruth Stauersbol at 833-8764 for information.

Aging & Disability Resource Center of Racine County

14200 Washington Ave
Sturtevant, WI 53177

www.adrc.racinecounty.com

Caregiver Opportunities

Support Groups

Find information about ADRC sponsored Support Groups on page 11.

Caregiver Consultations

The Alzheimer's Association makes appointments for care consultations that can be held virtually or via phone as convenient for you. To arrange an appointment, contact Felicia at 262-833-8777. Check their website for a variety of virtual classes - https://www.alz.org/wi?set=1

Memory Cafés

Share your stories and socialize with others concerned about their memory. A virtual opportunity is available. Please contact the Alzheimer's Association to register at 800-272-3900.

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.