

ENGAGE

The Quarterly Caregiver Newsletter from AGE of Central Texas

Navigating the realities and opportunities of aging and caregiving

Winter 2019

| www.AGEofCentralTX.org



CAREGIVER TRAINING CAMP



New Conference Event Launches Feb. 8, 2020

AGE of Central Texas will launch the new caregiver support conference "Caregiver Training Camp" on Saturday, February 8, 2020. Designed to help first-time, unpaid family members effectively care for an older adult, the free conference will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Williamson County EMS Training Center, located at 3189 SE Inner Loop in Georgetown.



Lori Hill

The conference is a joint effort between regional non-profit organization AGE of Central Texas and the Williamson County EMS to help first-time caregivers to better manage the dynamics of their new caregiving role.

The day will launch with light breakfast and Resource & Information Fair, followed by the first session, "I'm a Caregiver, Now What?!" CaregiverU Program Associate Lori Hill will discuss useful information about what to do early on in the caregiving journey, the importance of self-care, and different options available for respite care.

In the second session, Lina Supnet-Zapata – Executive Director/Managing Partner for MIR Care Consultants, Inc. –

will address "Tackling Medical Issues," discussing medication management, what to do in the event of an older adult's hospitalization, and how to effectively provide home-based health care.



Dr. Amy Walters

Following a complimentary lunch, the third session will feature Dr. Amy Walters – Assistant Professor and Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at the St. Augustine University – demonstrating "Preventing Falls and Caregiver Safety." According to recent AARP study, half of American family caregivers are expected to perform medical tasks that they are not trained to do, and they are carrying a heavier burden than caregivers who are not taking on those responsibilities. This session will address how to utilize mobility devices and assist an older adult who has limited movement.

The final session will address "The Caregiver Playbook." AGE of Central Texas experts will discuss how to find and access area resources, create a community of support, and answer attendees specific caregiving questions.

Registration for the event is free, but space is limited. Participants can register by calling (512) 600-9275, or online at <http://www.TinyURL.com/AGEcampFeb2020>.

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- Free "Meaningful Dementia Activities" Seminar on Jan. 18th
- The Benefits of an Early Memory Loss Diagnosis

Free Caregiver Seminar



Meaningful Activities for Persons with Dementia

AGE of Central Texas caregiving and dementia experts Naomi Dalsbo and K.C. Lawrence will explore activities that caregivers and care recipients can do together.

Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020 | 10 am - Noon
Onion Creek Senior Center in Buda

Free Caregiver Seminar on January 18th Explores Meaningful Dementia Activities

AGE of Central Texas will host the free caregiver support seminar exploring “**Meaningful Activities for Persons with Dementia**” on Saturday, January 18, 2020. Part of the on-going workshop series to help family members effectively care for an older adult, the free seminar will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Onion Creek Senior Center, located at 420 Barton Crossing in Buda.

AGE of Central Texas caregiving and dementia experts Naomi Dalsbo and K.C. Lawrence will explore activities that caregivers and care recipients can do together, with an emphasis on stimulating activities for persons with dementia. Naomi serves as the Activities Director for the Williamson County Thrive Social & Wellness Center, and K.C. is the Program Director for the Memory Connections early memory loss support program.

Registration for the seminar is free.

Register by calling (512) 600-9275, or

online at www.TinyURL.com/AgeJanuary2020.

Get More Caregiver Resources, Delivered to Your In-Box!

Sign up for the AGE of Central Texas
Caregiver Communique

Register with your Smart Device



Or sign-up online at
www.AGEofCentralTX.org

The Benefits of an Early Memory Loss Diagnosis

Of the estimated 34.2 million Americans who are caregivers to an adult aged 50 or older, a recent study finds that approximately 25% of those caregivers are aiding an older adult with a memory issue, such as Alzheimer’s disease or other form of dementia.

But among individuals who are living with dementia, evidence collected by the Alzheimer’s Association indicates that about half of these older adults have not been correctly diagnosed. This statistic is in line with the nation’s 10-year public health agenda, *Healthy People 2020*, which found that only about 35% of Medicare beneficiaries age 65 and older who had a dementia diagnosis were aware of their physician’s determination.



An accurate diagnosis of early memory loss can bring many benefits, for both the older adults and their caregivers. Families who know that a decline in cognitive abilities is caused by dementia are more able to choose appropriate medical treatment, build a care team, and access supportive services. And the process of an early diagnosis is often more accurate, owing to the person’s ability to more-fully answer questions and report their concerns prior to the on-set of significant cognitive decline.

Another advantage to having an early diagnosis is it provides a greater opportunity for an individual to receive the right advice and support they need while cognitive functioning is still heightened. Individuals who are diagnosed early can take advantage of early-stage support programs – such as the AGE of Central Texas Memory Connections program – where they can learn tips and strategies to better manage and cope with the symptoms of early memory loss.

Follow AGE on Social Media for Daily Caregiver News, Updates & Resources:



@AGEofCentralTX

A Caregiver's Practical Guide to Surviving the Holiday Season

By Faith Unger, M.Ed., CaregiverU Program Director

We all carry visions of what the holidays should look like, but often those visions don't jibe very well with reality. At this time of year, many of us visualize a Norman Rockwell type scene with everybody gathered happily around a perfectly laid holiday table. Reality is often a bit different!

When my the kids were younger, my spouse was cognitively able to partner with me in all the holiday preparation. Today, my husband has a cognitive disability, and my children are young adults with spouses and responsibilities of their own. As a caregiver, managing the holidays have come to mean managing many different issues—disruptions in schedule and routine, traveling, adapting to new surroundings, decorating the home, shopping for gifts, and preparing food, to name a few.

When we need to stray from our well established regular routine, I find dry erase boards are a valuable resource. We focus on one day at a time, so on a dry erase board I write down that day's schedule. As I write, we talk about what to expect and how to be prepared. Then I leave the board out in a place that will be easily seen throughout the day. Sometimes we need an additional board on which to write details or items to be brought with us.

On these "irregular" days, it's easy to forget about medications, or to not be home when they should be taken. Keeping a regular medication schedule is also important to well being, so I sometimes set the cell

phone alarm as a reminder and keep the pills with me as we meander about.

My middle child, Christopher, has developed a wonderful resource for the days that we are visiting the city in which he lives. He puts together a resource bag for his father and gives it to him upon our arrival. The bag has a variety of things Christopher has found at very little cost. Usually there are word game books and puzzles, and a few books on adult themes with lots of funny pictures. A delightful one was on the hundreds of uses for duct tape!

My daughter, Joy, often provides a craft activity for her father that the two of them do during the visit. She also has a list of cleaning chores that need doing, all that her father is capable of doing with a little supervision. And doing those chores not only fills his time, but also gives him a feeling of pride that he is able to contribute to the common good.

A valuable resource that I learned about from a good social work friend is a tool that can be used to discretely communicate to strangers that my husband may behave differently than is expected. That great tool is a set of business cards which simply say, "My dear husband has a cognitive difficulty. Thank you for your understanding." It's fairly easy to give out these cards when needed, and the recipient usually becomes my new helper in the situation!

Holiday times can still be very delightful for us, if we keep an easy pace, continue to provide what he needs, and share the care when the sharing is available. It will never be like it was in the past, but today is a new day and we can still make it good!



FREE Caregiver Education for Family Members Caring for a Loved One

CAREGIVERU
A Program of AGE of Central Texas

Classes are now forming in Travis, Williamson, Hays, and Bastrop Counties; find a free class near you:

www.CaregiverUcenTX.org



AGE of Central Texas is a non-profit organization that helps older adults and their caregivers thrive as they navigate the realities and opportunities of aging and caregiving. We envision a society where aging is a shared journey marked by connection, strength, and vitality, and the role of caregiving is supported through community, collaboration, and guidance. Visit online at www.AGEofCentralTX.org or call (512) 451-4611 for more information.

Thrive Social & Wellness Centers

- Providing daytime care for older adults with physical or cognitive needs in the longest-operating licensed, non-residential Day Activity and Health Service Centers in Central Texas.
- Specialized in caring for individuals with memory loss or dementia.
- Convenient locations in Austin and Round Rock, open Monday - Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Full-time nurse at each Center to assist with health monitoring and medication management.
- Activities designed to engage both the mind and body including music, brain boosters, gardening, and more
- All-inclusive: full day of activities, meals and snacks, and transportation options.
- Accepting Medicaid, Veteran's benefits, or private pay at \$65 per day.
- Call today for additional information and to schedule a free visit:



Thrive Social & Wellness Center - Austin
3710 Cedar Street
(512) 458-6305

Thrive Social & Wellness Center - Williamson Co.
475 Round Rock West Drive, #120
(512) 255-4865

AGE of Central Texas is an Equal Opportunity Provider

AGE of Central Texas
www.AGEofCentralTX.org

Central Office and Thrive Social & Wellness Center - Austin
3710 Cedar Street, Austin, Texas 78705
(512) 451-4611

Thrive Social & Wellness Center - Williamson County
475 Round Rock West Drive, #120
Round Rock, Texas 78681
(512) 255-4865

Caregiver Education & Resources

- Navigation center offering free personalized assistance and guidance by phone, email, or walk-in.
- Free educational seminars and conferences with free respite services available.
- Free caregiver support group meetings every month in Austin and Round Rock.



CaregiverU

- Free evidence-based courses for non-professional, family caregivers, offered year-round at locations in Travis, Williamson, Hays, and Bastrop Counties.
- Visit www.CaregiverUcentx.org for current schedules.

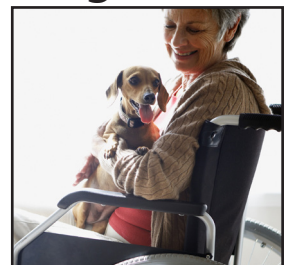
Memory Connections

- Evidence-informed, weekly cognitive activities and support for individuals with a diagnosis of early-stage Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or memory loss.
- Five weekly area locations around Central Texas with sessions from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.



Health Equipment Lending

- Free loans of gently-used durable medical equipment and free incontinence products available.
- Call (512) 600-9288 or email Help@AgeofCentralTX.org to request or reserve items.



Peer-Based Computer Classes

- Peer-to-peer technology instruction through low-cost classes and seminars for senior adults.
- Visit www.AGEcomputer.org for the current class schedules and more information.