

# Generations

Area 13 Agency On Aging & Disability

A member of the **IN**connect Alliance.



Summer 2018 • Volume 60



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Helping Kids Understand Alzheimer's Disease

CASA – More Than Just a Volunteer

The Healing Power of Pets for Elderly People

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# Generations

## Area 13 Agency On Aging & Disability

A member of the  connect Alliance.

Generations, affiliated with Vincennes University, is a not-for-profit agency which serves older adults, individuals with disabilities of all ages and caregivers in the counties of Daviess, Dubois, Greene, Knox, Martin and Pike, without regard to race, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, and/or sexual orientation by providing resources that foster personal independence while assuring individual dignity and an enhanced quality of life.

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# Letter from Generations' Executive Director

My youngest son decided he wanted to have a garden this year. Which took me a little bit by surprise since he doesn't eat vegetables. I tried explaining that you can't grow honey buns in a garden. He gave me a dirty look and rolled his eyes. After multiple discussions about it, I finally gave in and said we would get a few plants. I reiterated several times that he was solely responsible for the plants once we got them in the ground. We came home with 8 pepper plants, 5 cucumbers plants, 3 different melon plant and 2 tomato plants.

The pepper plants are not doing very well. We have more cucumbers than we know what to do with and the golden melon plant took over the entire garden. We have 5 melons on the golden melon plant and we aren't really sure we will know when they are ripe.

With so many cucumbers it was suggested that we should can pickles. I am not sure who suggested that, but I know it wasn't me. When I was growing up my summers were spent supporting my mom and grandma's canning endeavors. Before my mom went to work she spent every summer canning and freezing multiple fruits and vegetables. In our basement, we had 3 freezers and more shelves than the canned food aisle at the grocery store.

*"Enjoy the little things in life because one day you'll look back and realize they were the big things."*

KURT VONNEGUT

It is no wonder I was anxious to get a real job as a teenager because helping my mom involved the picking, snapping and cleaning of all the different things my mom felt we needed to "put up." I learned at a very young age how to pick everything from blueberries to green beans. I dug up potatoes, stood in the bed of a truck to pick cherries and learned to trust my mom when she said we needed to wear long sleeves to pick blackberries. To this day I am terrified of snakes and blame my brother. Whenever we were on one of these picking expeditions with my mom, he would make it a point to look for a snake to torment me with.

I didn't spend my summers sleeping in or playing video games. I got up early to pick tomatoes before it got too hot. I sat in the garage with a fan while snapping green beans and cleaning corn. I loaded and unloaded thousands of canning jars in and out of the dishwasher. I helped label and date hundreds of jars of jelly. My payment was a bottle of coke - which was a treat.

I was a teenager before I realized that not everyone did this. Everyone we knew did this because they were out there picking with us. I knew you could buy jelly at the grocery store, but thought it was more for back-up in case your grapes didn't do well. At least I think that was what I was told.

I was in college when I purchased my first can of green beans. At home I would get a jar from the basement and just open it and eat them. I loved my mom's canned green beans cold or hot. The can from the store didn't taste quite the same and I will never forget that disappointment. Or the disappointment of store bought grape jelly.

I was never sure why we had to go to all the trouble. Did it save money? Did it taste better? Did she do it because that is what generations before her did and it was just expected? Was it for the sense of accomplishment or part of her work ethic? Maybe it was all of the above.

For the last few summers we talked about canning green beans again, but we never got around to it. I lost my mom a few months ago and so she won't be able to teach my son how to preserve pickles. As much as I hated all that work, I am grateful for the memories and all the lessons I learned. Lessons that were about more than just how to can green beans.



**Laura Holscher**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Holscher".

# HELPING KIDS UNDERSTAND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

## *National Institute on Aging*

When a family member has Alzheimer's disease, it affects everyone in the family, including children and grandchildren. It's important to talk to them about what is happening. How much and what kind of information you share depends on the child's age and relationship to the person with Alzheimer's.

### **Helping Kids Cope**

Here are some tips to help kids understand what is happening:

- Answer their questions simply and honestly. For example, you might tell a young child, "Grandma has an illness that makes it hard for her to remember things."
- Help them know that their feelings of sadness and anger are normal.
- Comfort them. Tell them no one caused the disease. Young children may think they did something to hurt their grandparent.

Talk with kids about their concerns and feelings. Some may not talk about their negative feelings, but you may see changes in how they act. Problems at school, with friends, or at home can be a sign that they are upset. A school counselor or social worker can help your child understand what is happening and learn how to cope.

A teenager might find it hard to accept how the person with Alzheimer's has changed. He or she may find the changes upsetting or embarrassing and not want to be around the person. Don't force them to spend time with the person who has Alzheimer's. This could make things worse.

Give children information about Alzheimer's that they can understand. For Alzheimer's books and other materials, visit Resources for Children and Teens About Alzheimer's Disease.

## **Spending Time Together and Alone**

It's important to show kids that they can still talk with the person with Alzheimer's disease and help him or her enjoy activities. Many younger children will look to you to see how to act.

Doing fun things together can help both the child and the person with Alzheimer's. Here are some things they might do:

- Do simple arts and crafts
- Play music or sing
- Look through photo albums
- Read stories out loud

If kids live in the same house as someone with Alzheimer's disease:

- Don't expect a young child to help take care of or "babysit" the person.

*Continued on Page 4*



# HELPING KIDS UNDERSTAND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

*Continued from Page 3*

- Make sure they have time for their own interests and needs, such as playing with friends, going to school activities, or doing homework.
- Make sure you spend time with them, so they don't feel that all your attention is on the person with Alzheimer's.
- Be honest about your feelings when you talk with kids, but don't overwhelm them.

If the stress of living with someone who has Alzheimer's disease becomes too great, think about placing the person with Alzheimer's into a respite care facility. Then, both you and your kids can get a much-needed break.

## For More Information About Helping Kids Understand Alzheimer's:

### NIA Alzheimer's and related Dementias Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center

1-800-438-4380 (toll-free)  
adear@nia.nih.gov  
www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers

The National Institute on Aging's ADEAR Center offers information and free print publications about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias for families, caregivers, and health professionals. ADEAR Center staff answer telephone, email, and written requests and make referrals to local and national resources.

### Alzheimer's Association

1-800-272-3900 (toll-free, 24/7)  
1-866-403-3073 (TTY/toll-free)  
info@alz.org  
www.alz.org

### Alzheimer's Foundation of America

1-866-232-8484 (toll-free)  
info@alzfdn.org  
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### National Respite Locator Service

www.archrespice.org/  
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# Yoga and Older Adults

## National Institute on Aging

Yoga is a mind and body practice that typically combines physical postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation. Researchers are studying how yoga may help improve health and to learn more about its safe use in older adults.

Recent studies in people in their late 40's have found that yoga is helpful in reducing chronic low-back pain and improving function. However, evidence is not yet available on its effectiveness and safety for older adults.



**If you're thinking about practicing yoga, keep the following in mind:**

**Put safety first.** Yoga is generally safe in healthy people. However, if you have special health considerations such as a joint replacement, arthritis, balance problems, high blood pressure, glaucoma, or other health issues, talk with your health care provider before starting yoga. Start with an appropriate yoga class—such as one called Gentle Yoga or Seniors Yoga—in order to get individualized advice and learn correct form.

**Look for a well-trained instructor who's attentive to your needs.** Ask about the teacher's experience and training. Standards for teacher training and certification differ

depending on the style of yoga. The International Association of Yoga Therapists has developed standards for yoga therapy requiring at least 800 hours of training.

**Practice mindfully.** Be sure to let your yoga teacher know about any medical issues you have and ask about the physical demands of yoga. Listen to your body. Yoga poses should be modified based on individual abilities. Be careful to avoid overstretching. Because older adults are at higher risk of developing strains and sprains when doing yoga, you may need to modify or avoid some poses to prevent injury.

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 All faiths or beliefs are welcome.

# Making Your Vehicle Safe

## *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*

### Common Safety Features

The vehicle, as well as the driver, should be safe. Many newer vehicles have up-to-date safety and comfort features, such as

- front and side airbags to protect car occupants in a crash
- properly adjusted head restraint systems to protect against neck injuries
- electronic stability control for crash avoidance
- power steering
- adjustable seats, which help shorter drivers sit high enough to see the road well
- bigger, brighter displays on the dashboard
- large, glare-proof mirrors, or light-sensitive mirrors that darken automatically to reduce headlight glare
- wide-angle rear-view mirrors and convex side mirrors — these may help drivers with neck problems, but they distort distances and take getting used to
- a steering wheel that tilts up or down and moves closer to or farther from the driver's chest — this helps drivers sit safely and comfortably no more than 10 inches from the steering wheel.

For more information about vehicle safety and recalls, see [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov)

### In an Emergency

Even a well-maintained vehicle can break down. Put together an emergency roadside kit to carry with you. A cell phone is especially important. Here are suggested emergency roadside kit contents.

- cell phone
- first aid kit
- flashlight
- flares and a white flag
- jumper cables
- jack (and ground mat) for changing a tire
- work gloves and a change of clothes
- basic repair tools and some duct tape (for temporarily repairing a hose leak!)
- a jug of water and paper towels for cleaning up
- nonperishable food, drinking water, and medicines
- extra windshield washer fluid
- maps

### Adaptive Equipment

People with permanent disabilities can benefit from special equipment in their cars. Such “adaptive” equipment helps drivers who have lost strength or flexibility due to an injury, stroke, or another health condition. Some people can modify the vehicle they already own, while others buy new vehicles.

Adaptive equipment includes pedal extenders, steering wheel knobs, and hand controls for the gas pedal and brake. A driver rehabilitation specialist can assess your situation, recommend the proper equipment, and tell you where to get it installed. This specialist can also teach you how to drive your newly equipped vehicle.

The cost of adaptive equipment depends on specific vehicle modifications. A state vocational services agency or nonprofit that assists people with disabilities may pay part of the cost. Also, most car manufacturers offer rebates on adaptive equipment when you buy a vehicle less than 1 year old.

For more information about adaptive equipment, see *Adapting Motor Vehicles for Older Drivers* from the National Highway Safety Traffic Administration.



# The Problem That Piles Up When Hoarding Is a Disorder

## National Institute of Health

You may have seen reality TV shows about people who hoard mail, gadgets, cats, and even trash. Or, maybe for you, the reality is a little closer. It could be a neighbor or a family member.

When people aren't able to throw things away, piles can grow to the ceiling. These piles can make it impossible to use bathrooms, bedrooms, and kitchens.

The piles may fall over, trap, and injure people. They can catch on fire. Cluttered homes and yards may attract pests. Neighbors may call the police. Parents may lose custody of children.

People don't choose to be hoarders. And they aren't being sloppy or lazy. "This is a very real mental disorder," says hoarding disorder expert

Dr. David F. Tolin of Hartford Hospital's Institute of Living. "It is important to recognize that people with hoarding disorder have lost control of their decision-making abilities."

Tolin's NIH-funded research suggests why it's hard for people with this disorder to part with items, even things with no real-world value. He found that brain activity was different between people with hoarding disorder and healthy people.

"We're always puzzled by the fact that many people with hoarding disorder often don't seem terribly bothered by their circumstance," he says. "If they don't have to make a decision, the parts of their brain that are largely in charge of becoming bothered are underactive."

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## The Problem That Piles Up

*Continued from Page 7*

But if they are forced to decide about whether to discard something, that part of the brain becomes overactive. “And so, the brain is essentially screaming that everything is important.”

Doctors don’t know what causes hoarding disorder. There’s no X-ray or blood test for a diagnosis. Instead, doctors assess how well people are functioning in their lives.

Hoarding disorder can start during a person’s teens or later. It may grow more severe over the decades.

Do you know someone who may need help? Try to be gentle, calm, and patient. It may take several conversations before the person agrees to work on the problem.

Try not to start an argument. “If a person is not really motivated to do something about the problem, they can dig in their heels. Arguing can even make the problem worse,” Tolin warns.

There’s no effective medication for hoarding disorder, although studies are in progress. Tolin says, “Right now, cognitive behavioral therapy is the only evidence-based treatment we have for hoarding.” This is a type of talk therapy that teaches people how to change their thinking patterns and react differently to situations.

Tolin’s team hopes to improve cognitive behavioral therapy so that it’s even better at helping people to discard items. They’re analyzing the brain

activities of people before and after they’re successfully treated for hoarding disorder. If the research team can identify the biological mechanisms of successful treatments, they may be able to develop treatments that are even better.

Some people with hoarding disorder are helped by joining a support group with others who have the disorder. There are also organizing professionals who specialize in helping people get rid of clutter. To find more resources for this and other mental health issues, visit [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help).



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# How to Get Rid of Junk Mail and Telemarketing Calls for Good

*The article, **How to Get Rid of Junk Mail and Telemarketing Calls for Good** by Carrie Kerskie was contributed by Aging.com.*

As a child, I used to get so excited when I received something in the mail. Maybe it was because the only time I would get mail was either around my birthday or Christmas and it usually contained a check from my grandmother. Now, as an adult, my relationship with mail is quite the opposite. The only correspondence I receive is either bills or junk, neither of which I look forward to receiving.

While there is not much anyone can do to eliminate their bills, there are a few things you can do to get rid of junk mail. In fact, scams and spam seem to be on the rise via most methods of communication these days. Taking steps to declutter your mailbox and protect your phone number(s) can greatly minimize your frustration and reduce your vulnerability to fraud and identity theft.

## How to Opt Out of Junk Mail

The first step toward eliminating a large portion of one's junk mail is to participate in the DMAchoice program from the Data & Marketing Association (DMA). This program was created to give you control over what mail you receive and help the DMA's more than 3,600 members avoid mailing to uninterested customers.

The categories of mail you may opt out of receiving include credit card offers, catalogs, magazine offers (such as subscription offers, newsletters, periodicals and other promotional mailings), donation requests, bank offers, retail promotions and more. You can choose to opt out of specific direct mail categories like the ones above or all of them. Once registered, the DMA forwards your preferences to the appropriate members.

To register, visit [www.dmachoice.org](http://www.dmachoice.org) and enter your information. There is a \$2 fee to register online, but this registration lasts for 10 years. Caregivers also have the option to register on behalf of their care recipients to prevent them from receiving junk mail as well. Just visit the DMA website's Do Not Contact for Caretakers page and follow the

instructions. There is no cost for removing a vulnerable senior from the DMA's databases.

## Cancelling Pre-Approved Credit Offers

In the same way that DMAchoice works with member organizations to streamline marketing and promote consumer satisfaction, the OptOutPrescreen program works directly with the credit bureaus Experian, Equifax, TransUnion and Innovis to allow consumers to opt out of pre-approved and pre-screened credit and insurance offers.

To register for the program, visit [OptOutPrescreen.com](http://OptOutPrescreen.com) or call 888-567-8688. If you register online or by telephone, your registration is valid for five years. To opt out permanently, you will need to print, sign and mail back a permanent opt out election form. This form will be emailed to you when you register online or be mailed to you if you register by telephone.

## Doing Away with Unsolicited Mail

In order to opt out of generic mail (the type that says "Dear Occupant" or "Current Resident"), you must directly contact the organization that sent you the solicitation. If you'd like to send a written request, provide your name and mailing address and state clearly that you wish to opt out from receiving future mail.

## "Junk" Can Overwhelm Your Phone, Too

While junk mail is a nuisance that can literally pile up, unsolicited telephone calls can be equally as annoying but even more dangerous. Scammers will often call pretending to be from a legitimate organization in an attempt to get you to send them money or share your sensitive financial or identifying information.

*Continued on Page 10*



## How to Get Rid of Junk Mail and Telemarketing Calls for Good

*Continued from Page 9*

One common scam is where the caller pretends to be from the IRS. He or she states that you owe money and if you do not pay within a certain timeframe you will be arrested. They use fear and intimidation to get the victim to do what they want.

But how can you tell which calls are legitimate and which are scams? It is often difficult to make that determination based on the call alone. One way to reduce, if not eliminate, legitimate solicitation calls is to register both your home and cell phone numbers on the Federal Trade Commission's national Do Not Call Registry. Once you have registered, solicitors are prohibited from contacting you.

However, this does not apply to organizations with which you currently conduct business (known as established business relationships or "ERBs") or tax-exempt organizations. You will still receive calls from entities you have given permission to contact you, like your bank, charities soliciting donations and—everyone's favorite—political calls.

To register for this free service, call 1-888-382-1222 from the telephone number you wish to register. You can also register online at [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov). Keep in mind that this registration does not expire, so there is no need to ever re-register.

Telemarketers have 31 days from your registration date to remove your information from their call list and cease contact. If you receive a call after this 31-day period, notify the caller that you are on the national Do Not Call Registry and ask to be removed from their contact list. If they continue to call you, then you can report them online at the FTC's complaint website. By law, organizations that are not tax exempt must remove a consumer's contact information from their call list upon request.

This will not eliminate all calls, but it will greatly reduce the number of legitimate, unsolicited calls. You should be wary of whatever calls continue to come in from unknown sources. Here are a few indications that you're talking to a scammer on the phone:

- Caller is asking you to provide sensitive information
- Caller is threatening or bullying you
- Caller demands money, especially in the form of a money order

- Caller refuses to remove your information from their call list
- Caller claims to be from the IRS or another "official source" and demands money or sensitive information
- Caller threatens your arrest if you do not comply

Also, don't be fooled by what appears on your caller ID. Caller ID can easily be manipulated using free online tools. This process is called "spoofing." I could call you and have the caller ID read "IRS" or "police station." It really is just that simple.

If you are in doubt when you receive an unsolicited telephone call, simply hang up the phone. If you get a call from someone claiming to be from your bank or credit card company, hang up and call the official telephone number printed on your bank statement or the number printed on the back of your credit card. If they claim to be from the IRS, you can visit the IRS website ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)), and call them at the telephone number listed there. You get the idea. It's always better to be safe than sorry.

### Tackling Unwanted Text Messages

If you receive spam-type text messages on your cell phone, you can typically report it to your carrier by forwarding the text message to 7726. This works for AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Sprint and Bell customers. They will then add this to their identified spam messages list and attempt to block the sending number. This process is similar to identifying an unsolicited email as spam or junk mail. Once you have labeled it as such, your email provider will block future emails from that sender from getting into your inbox.

The same handling rules for spam emails apply for text messages as well. Don't reply to the sender, click on any links in the messages or provide any personal information. Legitimate businesses will not ask for your account or login information via text. The next safest thing after reporting the message to your carrier is to delete it immediately.

While you may not be able to block all potential frauds and scams, these tools will help you to eliminate most legitimate solicitors, making it easier for you to identify the remnants as fraudsters and scammers. At that point, you can simply toss the mail, hang up the telephone or delete the text.

# CASA – More Than Just a Volunteer

By Dena Held

As a staff member of the Knox County CASA program and being a CASA myself, I am constantly asked, “What is CASA” and “What do you do”? Even today this question is a tough one to answer as there is so much to say about the program itself and the CASAs who make us who we are. The best response might just be, “Sit and let’s chat”.

## CASA...the program:

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocate and is the official name of the volunteer who speaks up for the best interest of the child. CASAs are appointed through the court system to advocate for children who are victims of abuse and/or neglect. CASAs are the eyes and ears of the court as the children go through a process to obtain a safe and permanent home. The program, through its 30 hour pre-service, trains the CASA to look at all aspects of the child’s life so they can find out what is going on within that child’s life and report this information to the court through either written reports or testimony during a hearing.

Not only does program staff make certain the CASAs receive training to prepare them for the journey they go on with the children, staff work with CASAs to try to ensure that the cases they are appointed to be a good match. Ultimately the CASA will decide if they feel a certain case is one they are able and willing to take. The work is tough, but also rewarding, and the program strives to support CASAs in all aspects of what they do.

## CASA...the volunteers:

CASAs walk alongside the children as they go

through a process they neither asked for nor probably want. There are times this walk is straightforward and ends positive for the child, family, and CASA. Other times this walk is arduous, tough, and fraught with obstacles and frustrations. Although CASAs don’t know how a case will turn out, they step-up and say, “I’ll do it” and that’s the amazing part of these people called CASAs.

*“We make a living by what we get,  
but we make a life by what we give.”*

WINSTON CHURCHILL

Through their work with the program and having witnessed firsthand the trauma of children who have been not only abused and/or neglected, but also removed from their home and loved ones, two CASAs decided that they wanted to provide something to every child in Knox County that would provide support and comfort. From this simple idea, the **Blanket Bundle** program was created. Now every child who is removed from their home is given a soft cuddly blanket, age appropriate book, stuffed animal, socks, and hygiene products. Since the program rolled out in November 2014, 477 children have received a bundle. These CASAs don’t usually see the impact of their actions, but they continue to strive to make sure the program is meaningful and sustainable.

In the summer of 2017 a movement of Kindness Rocks/Knox Rocks began. A child who had a CASA became active in this movement, routinely walking with family to find rocks to create, paint, and hide in the community.

*Continued on Page 16*

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# THE HEALING POW



*The article, [The Healing Power of Pets for Elderly People](#) by Barbara Ballinger was contributed by [AgingCare.com](#).*

For elderly pet owners, who often live alone or in group facilities, pets can help reduce stress, lower blood pressure, increase social interaction and physical activity and help them learn.

"A new pet can stimulate someone to read up on an animal or breed, which can be very mentally stimulating and important at that age," says Dr. Katharine Hillestad, a veterinarian with the office of Doctors Foster and Smith in Rhinelander, Wis., which provides online advice and retails pet supplies and pharmaceuticals.

Pets provide other intangibles. "Dogs and other pets live very much in the here and now. They don't worry about tomorrow. And tomorrow can be very scary for an older person. By having an animal with that sense of now, it tends to rub off on people," says Dr. Jay P. Granat, a New Jersey psychotherapist.

And pets can reduce depression and lessen loneliness. "Older pet owners have often told us how incredibly barren and lonely their lives were without their pet's companionship, even when there were some downsides to owning an active pet," says Linda Anderson, who founded the Angel Animals Network in

Minneapolis with her husband Allen. The couple speaks about the joys of pet ownership and has authored books.

In "Angel Dogs: Divine Messengers of Love" (New World Library, 2005), the Andersons tell the story of Bonnie, a golden retriever that quickly became an indispensable member of her adoptive family. "We never felt alone when Bonnie was in the house. As we aged and tended to go out less, she provided us with loving companionship," say her owners, Marjorie and Richard Douse.

Psychologist Penny B. Donnenfeld, who brings her golden retriever mix Sandee to her New York City office, has even witnessed animals' ability to rev up elder owners' memories. "I've seen those with memory loss interact and access memories from long ago," she says. "Having a pet helps the senior focus on something other than physical problems and negative preoccupations about loss or aging."

Pets benefit, too, particularly when older folks adopt older pets. "These lucky pets go from the pound to paradise. Since most of the adopters are retired, they have lots of time to devote to a previously unwanted pet," says Chicago veterinarian Tony Kremer, who with his wife Meg operates Help Save Pets—Humane Society, which operates adoption centers.

## **Here are some things caregiver's should consider when purchasing a pet for their senior mom or dad.**

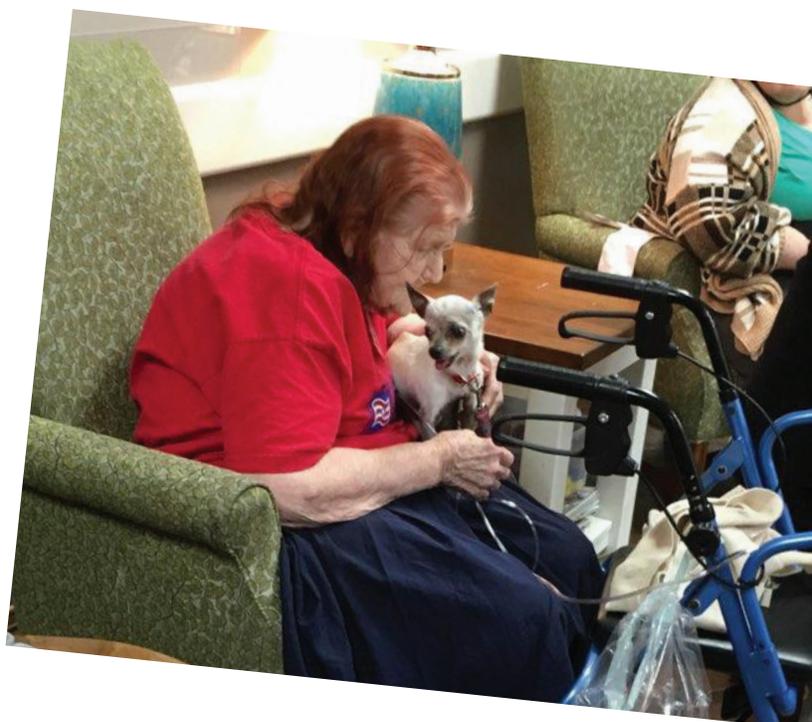
- **Right pet for the right owner.** But because people age so differently, the decision needs to be made carefully—and not just by grown loving children who think it sounds like a way to provide camaraderie. Because there's no single right pet, ask the following questions to help narrow the field, says Dr. Donnenfeld.
- **Are you set in your ways?** If you don't like change, you may not be a good candidate, say the Andersons.

# ER OF PETS FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE

- **Have you had a pet before?** Amy Sherman, a licensed therapist and author of "Distress-Free Aging: A Boomer's Guide to Creating a Fulfilled and Purposeful Life," thinks it's best if the elderly person is an experienced owner.
- **Do you have disabilities?** Dogs can be wonderful companions who encourage a senior with no major physical limitations to walk and interact with others, Dr. Donnenfeld says. For those who are physically challenged, cats often need less care than dogs, she says. A small dog that's paper-trained or an indoor bird is also sometimes preferable, she says.
- **Do you need a therapy pet?** If the person is very infirm or impaired, they may be a candidate for an assistance or therapy dog to help them function or interact.
- **Is the pet the right age?** A puppy or kitten may not be the best choice for elderly owners because of the care they require. A young pet may outlive its owner. Birds especially have long life spans. Yet, it's also important that the pet isn't too old since it may start to have physical limitations and get sick, Dr. Donnenfeld cautions.
- **Does the pet have a good temperament?** Although some older owners may think a Great Pyrenees would be too big to handle, Daffron found one mixed two-year old so mellow that it would have been a good pet for a senior. "Many older people might think they'd do better with a Jack Russell terrier because it's small but they are very, very, very high energy and require more effort and commitment. So much depends on personality," she says.
- **Is the pet healthy?** It's important that any pet be examined by a professional. "You don't want to compromise an older person's immune system since some pets carry diseases," says Dr. Hillestad.
- **One pet or two?** While multiple pets can keep each other company, that may not be a good idea for an older person, says Dr. Hillestad. "Two puppies may bond with each other rather than with the owner," she says.
- **Are finances an issue?** Pets cost money. A small puppy can run more than \$810 its first year for food, medical care, toys and grooming while a fish is less expensive--about \$235, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. If the pet takes ill, dollars snowball. Groups are available to help allay costs.

Susan Daffron, author of "Happy Hound: Develop a Great Relationship with Your Adopted Dog or Puppy" (Logical Expressions, 2006), has taken pets to nursing homes through shelter outreach programs. "I go down halls and people will say, 'Oh, this looks just like my dog,'" she says. She has also helped elderly folks adopt the right animal. One woman, 86, wanted to be able to walk a dog but didn't want a hyper pet. "She was good at judging her limitations," Daffron says.

*Continued on Page 14*



# THE HEALING POWER OF PETS FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE

*Continued from Page 13*

Angie Jones became interested in training therapy dogs after bringing her dog Hunter to visit her late father in a retirement home. "It took us half hour to get to my dad's room because everyone stopped us along the way and wanted to pet the dog and tell me about their dog," she says. "Hunter brought my father great joy and opened the door of communication since he was more of a recluse," says Jones who started Central Ohio Good Shepherds, a chapter of Therapy Dogs International Inc.

Where to find the pet. While breeders are a good source, some shelters also provide a pet for less and offer the advantage of rescuing it from euthanasia. Purina Pets for Seniors partners with 200 shelters nationwide to provide seniors pet adoptions at a reduced cost ([www.petsforpeople.com](http://www.petsforpeople.com)). Local services also exist.

Shelter employees often know the pet's personality well and can make a good match, says Daffron. Online pet shopping is also possible, thanks to sites like [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com), which pairs owners with 250,000 adoptable pets from 11,000 animal and rescue groups nationwide.

How to provide care long-term for a pet. Because an older owner may take ill or die, it's important that the pet is provided for in a will and a caregiver named, says Dr. Hillestad. Even more basic is that someone knows that an elderly person has a pet. "If the person is rushed to the hospital, it could be left alone if nobody knows," says Allen Anderson.



*Photos courtesy of Vincennes Animal Shelter.*

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# Caregiver Corner

## A Caregiver's Guide to Creating a Respite Care Plan: Getting help from family and friends

AARP

Taking care of an aging or ill family member can be enormously rewarding and, at the same time, exhausting and emotionally draining. As a caregiver, you feed and read, clean up, make meals, change sheets, and offer comfort and good cheer. You manage your own life during the short, sometimes unpredictable lulls in your loved one's schedule. Small wonder 38 percent of family caregivers rate their job as emotionally stressful.

Plowing through might feel doable in the short term, but too much time without a break can lead to caregiver burnout, depression and health problems. Short breaks help you make it through the long haul.

### STEP BY STEP: DESIGN A CUSTOM RESPITE PLAN

#### Step 1: Know your needs and theirs

- **What do you need?** Three hours off, twice a week? Twenty-four hours away from the house? A regular caregiver's day (or night) out with your spouse or friends? A combination of the above?
- **What does your loved one need?** Companionship? Meals? Light housekeeping? Personal care? Help transitioning to a wheelchair? Daily walks? Therapy? An aide with special skills? List every job, large and small.

#### Step 2: Compile a list of possible pinch-hitters

- **Cast a wide net.** List family, near and far, your friends and your loved one's friends.

#### Step 3: Call a family meeting

Gather siblings, adult children, nieces and nephews, aunts, uncles and other extended family. Include out-of-town family via Skype, FaceTime, Google Hangouts or other video-chat technology.

- **Explain.** Tell the group you need regular and as-needed time away from the family member you share. Do not wear your superhero cape or expect them to intuit your needs. Be specific about the caregiving the family member requires.
- **Be flexible.** If you need coverage on the same day at the same time, every week, say so — but remember, flexibility makes it easier for family to pitch in.
- **Encourage questions.** Many people expect caregiving to be overwhelming or fear making a mistake. Be specific about what's required. For example: Make meals, give prescribed medicines, and offer compassion, conversation, comfort and assistance.

If an aide or medical professional is part of treatment, assure your helpers that they will arrive as scheduled. If a family member is uneasy about administering personal care, consider arranging to have a home health aide come in the morning and evening.

If your loved one has mobility issues, demonstrate how to assist the person.

If family members are worried that a health crisis will happen on their watch, tell them it's possible and that if it does, they should call 911 right away. For a nonemergency concern, they should call the doctor.

*Continued on Page 17*

# CASA – More Than Just a Volunteer

*Continued from Page 11*

During a home visit, the child showed his CASA a rock that he had created. He was so proud of his **Be Colorful** rock which portrayed a beautiful peacock. He explained that this was his favorite rock, and he wanted to give it to his CASA. He was encouraged to give a different rock as it was quite sentimental to the whole family. Although he was insistent the CASA should have the peacock rock, he finally went about finding another one.

At the end of the visit as the CASA was leaving, the child barreled out the back door yelling, “Stop! Stop! You forgot your Peacock Rock! It is yours; I am giving it to you!!” Obviously an awkward situation, the child urged on, saying “but she is the kindest person there is.” Begrudgingly approval was given for the CASA to keep it. The child bestowed the gift to the CASA and kiss and hugged the CASA. It was made clear to the CASA that this was big deal for the child to not only share, but also show any

type of affection. CASA was thanked for how they had helped the family through some tough times, which is commendable. But more importantly they were all able to share a special moment.

Through simple caring and consistently showing up, the CASA gave this child a voice and the child chose it to say “thank you”.

A plan to replicate and distribute the **Be Colorful** rock was developed to represent the relationships developed as a CASA and also honor this special child. One hopes he and others will see what an impact kindness and sharing have.

As CASA we pay respect to the relationships we have with the children, families, and each other as CASA.

And of course we encourage others to do the same. So **Be Colorful** and consider being a CASA. Let’s sit and chat.





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# A Caregiver's Guide to Creating a Respite Care Plan

Continued from Page 15

## Step 4: Stop talking

Silence will give everyone time to consider how they can help or join forces to cobble together a solution. Group brainstorming can motivate a reluctant helper.

## Step 5: Offer options

- If family members beg off because work and kids eat up weekdays, ask if they can cover Friday nights or the early morning run to adult day care. The sibling who can't contribute time may be able to contribute money to cover a car service or a once-a-week professional caregiver. Your out-of-town sister and her family can come to stay for a week while you take a vacation.
- If you're doing all the heavy lifting but family dynamics would make for a stressful meeting — or past efforts were unproductive — invest in professional direction from an eldercare mediator.

## Step 6: Make it simple

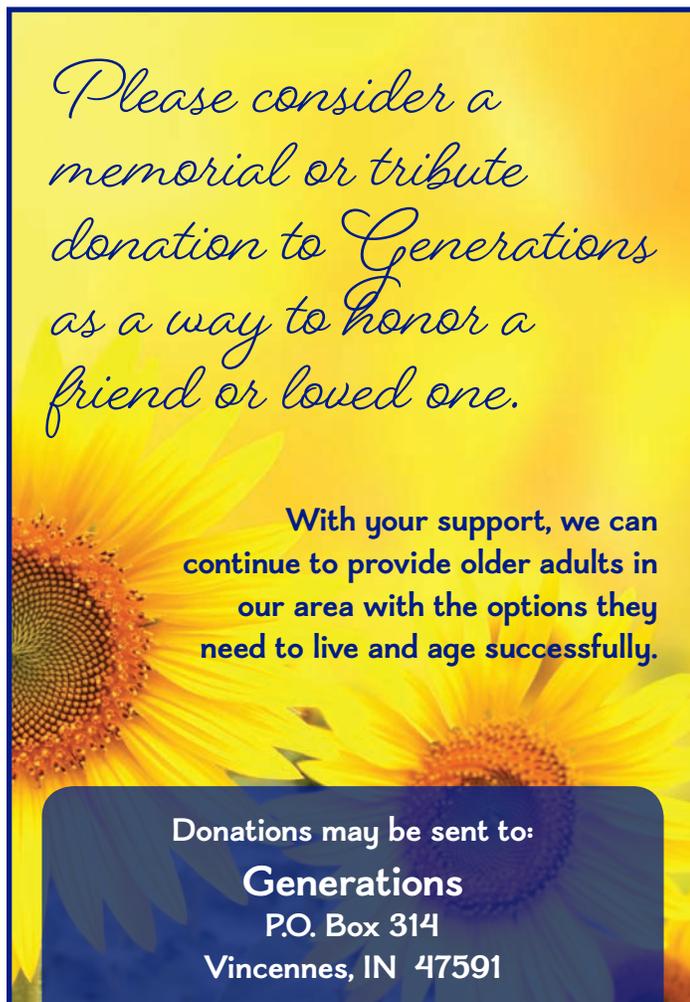
When everyone is onboard, join a free online scheduler like Lotsa Helping Hands or CareCalendar that lets you specify what you need so others can sign up to provide services. Use the notes feature to update news about your loved one's condition.

## Step 7: Spread the word

After you create your calendar, email the link and any ID or password needed to open it. Send to your family, friends, your loved one's friends, your neighbors and your loved one's neighbors. (Longtime friends and neighbors are often glad to spend a few hours a month with someone with whom they have a shared history.)

## Step 8: Go away!

Leave written instructions about meals, medicine and phone numbers for a backup home health aide or personal care provider and for your loved one's medical team.



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# Skin Care and Aging

## National Institute on Aging

Your skin changes with age. It becomes thinner, loses fat, and no longer looks as plump and smooth as it once did. Your veins and bones can be seen more easily.

Scratches, cuts, or bumps can take longer to heal. Years of sun tanning or being out in the sunlight for a long time may lead to wrinkles, dryness, age spots, and even cancer. But, there are things you can do to protect your skin and to make it feel and look better.

## Dry Skin and Itching

Many older people suffer from dry spots on their skin, often on their lower legs, elbows, and lower arms. Dry skin patches feel rough and scaly. There are many possible reasons for dry skin, such as:

- Not drinking enough liquids
- Spending too much time in the sun or sun tanning
- Being in very dry air
- Smoking
- Feeling stress
- Losing sweat and oil glands, which is common with age

Dry skin also can be caused by health problems, such as diabetes or kidney disease. Using too much soap, antiperspirant, or perfume and taking hot baths can make dry skin worse.

Some medicines can make skin itchy. Because older people have thinner skin, scratching can cause bleeding that may lead to infection. Talk to your doctor if your skin is very dry and itchy.

Here are some ways to help dry, itchy skin:

- Use moisturizers, like lotions, creams, or ointments, every day.
- Take fewer baths or showers and use milder soap. Warm water is less drying than hot water. Don't add bath oil to your water. It can make the tub too slippery.
- Try using a humidifier, an appliance that adds moisture to a room.

## Bruises

Older people may bruise more easily than younger people. It can take longer for these bruises to

heal. Some medicines or illnesses may also cause bruising. Talk to your doctor if you see bruises and don't know how you got them, especially on parts of your body usually covered by clothing.

## Wrinkles

Over time, skin begins to wrinkle. Things in the environment, like ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun, can make the skin less elastic. Gravity can cause skin to sag and wrinkle. Certain habits, like smoking, also can wrinkle the skin.

A lot of claims are made about how to make wrinkles go away. Most of them don't work. Some methods can be painful or even dangerous, and many must be done by a doctor. Talk with a doctor specially trained in skin problems, called a dermatologist, or your regular doctor if you are worried about wrinkles.

## Age Spots and Skin Tags

Age spots, once called "liver spots," are flat, brown spots often caused by years in the sun. They are bigger than freckles and commonly show up on areas like the face, hands, arms, back, and feet. Using a broad-spectrum sunscreen that helps protect against two types of the sun's rays (UVA and UVB) may prevent more age spots.

Skin tags are small, usually flesh-colored growths of skin that have a raised surface. They become common as people age, especially for women. They are most often found on the eyelids, neck, and body folds such as the armpit, chest, and groin.

Age spots and skin tags are harmless, although sometimes skin tags can become irritated. If your age spots or skin tags bother you, talk to your doctor about having them removed.



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## Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is a very common type of cancer in the United States. The main cause of skin cancer is the sun. Sunlamps and tanning booths can also cause skin cancer.

Anyone, of any skin color, can get skin cancer. People with fair skin that freckles easily are at greatest risk. Skin cancer may be cured if it is found before it spreads to other parts of the body.

There are three types of skin cancers. Two types, basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma, grow slowly and rarely spread to other parts of the body. These types of cancer are usually found on parts of the skin most often exposed to the sun, like the head, face, neck, hands, and arms. But they can happen anywhere on your body. The third and most dangerous type of skin cancer is melanoma. It is rarer than the other types, but it can spread to other organs and be deadly.

Check your skin once a month for things that may be signs of cancer. Skin cancer is rarely painful. Look for changes such as a new growth, a sore that doesn't heal, or a bleeding mole.

### Check Moles, Birthmarks, or Other Parts of the Skin for the "ABCDE's"

**A = Asymmetry** (one half of the growth looks different from the other half)

**B = Borders** that are irregular

**C = Color** changes or more than one color

**D = Diameter** greater than the size of a pencil eraser

**E = Evolving**; this means the growth changes in size, shape, symptoms (itching, tenderness), surface (especially bleeding), or shades of color

See your doctor right away if you have any of these signs to make sure it is not skin cancer.

### Keep Your Skin Healthy

Some sun can be good for you, but to keep your skin healthy, be careful:

- **Limit time in the sun.** It's okay to go out during the day, but try to avoid being in sun during peak times when the sun's rays are strongest. For example, during the summer, try to stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Don't be fooled by cloudy skies. The sun's rays can go through clouds. You can also get sunburned if you are in water, so be careful when you are in a pool, lake, or the ocean.
- **Use sunscreen.** Look for sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) number of 15 or higher. It's best to choose sunscreens with "broad spectrum" on the label. Put the sunscreen on 15 to 30 minutes before you go outside. Sunscreen should be reapplied at least every 2 hours. You need to put sunscreen on more often if you

are swimming, sweating, or rubbing your skin with a towel.

- **Wear protective clothing.** A hat with a wide brim can shade your neck, ears, eyes, and head. Look for sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of the sun's rays. If you have to be in the sun, wear loose, lightweight, long-sleeved shirts and long pants or long skirts.
- **Avoid tanning.** Don't use sunlamps or tanning beds. Tanning pills are not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and might not be safe.

Your skin may change with age. But remember, there are things you can do to help. Check your skin often. If you find any changes that worry you, see your doctor.

### For More Information About Skin Care and Aging

#### U.S. Food and Drug Administration

1-888-463-6332 (toll-free)

druginfo@fda.hhs.gov

www.fda.gov

#### MedlinePlus

National Library of Medicine

www.medlineplus.gov

#### National Cancer Institute

1-800-422-6237 (toll-free)

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# An Estate Plan Must Clarify "Right Things"

## Loaded Language: Do the Right Thing

The four-word phrase, "do the right thing," occurs in many estate plan disasters. The phrase is simple, but people overload it with unbearable importance. The meaning of "do the right thing" may be different, depending on whether the speaker uses the phrase in instruction, assurance, hope, or accusation. This article discourages the reader from building an estate plan or business decision on "the right thing," because it's a shaky foundation.

## Miscommunication of Estate Plan Instructions: Do the Right Thing

The familiar story of a parent instructing the oldest or most dependable child to "do the right thing" rarely ends well. First, the parent gives the child fiduciary responsibility without detailed instructions.

Then, parent makes ambiguous statements to the family that the child will "do the right thing." This common estate plan pattern usually produces heartbreaking results, especially in families with stepchildren.

## Misconceived Estate Plan Expectations: Do the Right Thing

Inaccurate estate plan expectations can cause as much family dysfunction as sloppy planning and poor communication. Consider, for instance, children's expectation of their parent's equal estate plan distributions. However, the parent may want to reward a local child for extra attentiveness. What do you think "do the right thing" will mean to the kids that moved to the city when they find out that their shares of the trust or estate are smaller than their local sibling's share? Of course, the urbanites will expect their small-town sibling to share equally regardless of his entitlement.

## Definition Problem of the "Right Thing"

Have you ever heard someone use an old word with a new meaning? Words and phrases change meaning over time, so poor estate plan word choices create big problems. Incomplete or unclear estate plan details describing the "right thing" contribute to family strife and heartache.

## Character Problem of the "Right Thing"

A common estate plan and business decision failure occurs when the "right thing" depends on the "wrong person." An incorruptible person resists temptation and coercion, but that kind of person is uncommon. A trustee, attorney-in-fact (under a power of attorney), or personal representative (under a last will and testament) must be incorruptible. Unfortunately, it is not unusual for a person's materialistic and aggressive spouse to

turn the person against his or her family. Other common factors behind failures to "do the right thing" include health crises, financial distress, and addictions to such things as gambling, alcohol, drugs, and pornography.

## Ability and Willingness Problem of the "Right Thing"

No estate plan or business decision is stronger than the ability and willingness of the person on whom it depends. Even clearly communicated and confirmed instructions to an honorable person may become impossible or undesirable. For example, a task's performance may become too difficult or undesirable if its cost escalates or a better alternative emerges. A great estate plan empowers reliable people with thorough details and flexible alternatives.

## An Estate Plan for the "Best Thing" Achieves the "Right Thing"

An experienced estate planning attorney can help a family avoid these heartaches and disappointments. An expert estate planning attorney asks probing questions that expose vulnerabilities in a client's assumptions and expectations. After the attorney and client discover hidden problems, they can plan with flexibility and detailed instructions to overcome the problems. Then, the estate plan's flexibility and thoroughness can help the right people achieve the best possible outcome. After all, if an excellent estate plan can produce the best outcome, isn't that the "right thing?"

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*Jeff R. Hawkins and Jennifer J. Hawkins are Trust & Estate Specialty Board Certified Indiana Trust & Estate Lawyers and active members of the Indiana State Bar Association and National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys. Both lawyers are admitted to practice law in Indiana, and Jeff Hawkins is admitted to practice law in Illinois. Jeff is also a registered civil mediator, a Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel and the Indiana Bar Foundation; a member of the Illinois State Bar Association and the Indiana Association of Mediators; and he was the 2014-15 President of the Indiana State Bar Association.*

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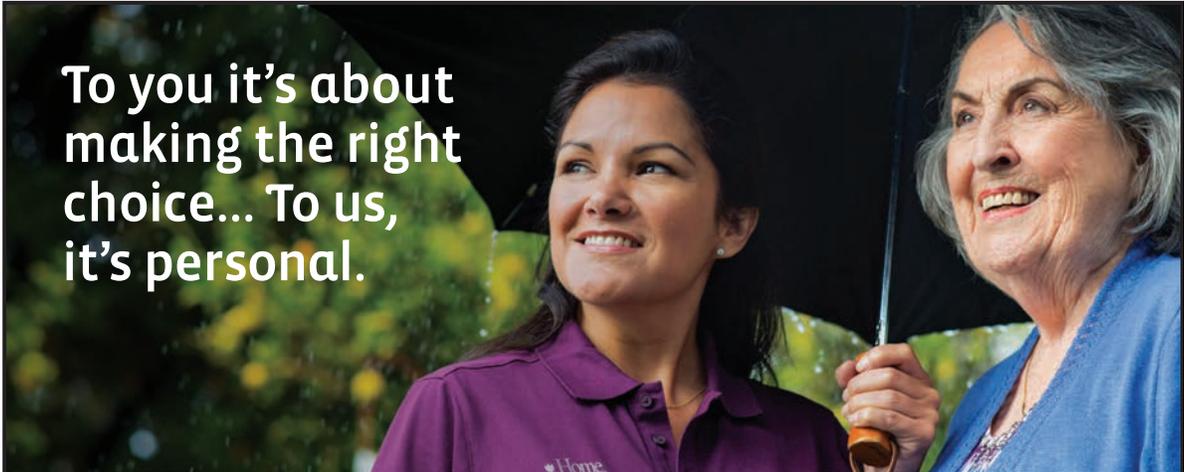
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## OUR MISSION

Generations' mission is to offer older adults, individuals with disabilities and caregivers options for a better quality of life.

## WHAT WE OFFER

Generations works with community partners and contracted providers to offer services to our clients in Daviess, Dubois, Greene, Knox, Martin & Pike Counties. We offer:

- Aging and Disability Resource Center
- Care Transitions
- At Home Pre-Admission Screening for nursing home placement
- AngelWorx Volunteer Program
- Generations Magazine
- Contracted providers allow us to offer transportation, adult day services and legal assistance.
- Meals on Wheels
- Health & Wellness Programs
- Case Management
- Ombudsman Services
- Caregiver Services
- Options Counseling

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# COPD

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A program of the National Institutes of Health.

## COPD: BETTER TALK MEANS BETTER TREATMENT.

12 million Americans are receiving treatment for COPD that is helping them to live longer and better with this serious lung disease. But, another 12 million have COPD and aren't yet diagnosed. Why? A recent survey points to a communications gap between health care providers and patients.

For tools to help start the conversation, visit [COPD.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://COPD.nhlbi.nih.gov)

### TOP DIAGNOSIS BARRIERS HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ENCOUNTER<sup>1</sup>



48%

Patient does not fully report symptoms



35%

Patient doesn't fully report smoking history



30%

Patient has more immediate health issues

### “COPD IS TREATABLE”

89%

PHYSICIANS  
AGREE<sup>2</sup>



57%

PUBLIC  
DO NOT AGREE<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: 2012 Porter Novelli DocStyles, survey of 1,000 primary care physicians  
<sup>2</sup> Source: 2009 Porter Novelli DocStyles, survey of 1,000 primary care physicians (Agree with the statement: “Current treatments for COPD are helpful for optimizing a patient's quality of life.”)  
<sup>3</sup> Source: 2013 Porter Novelli HealthStyles, survey of 4,703 US adults nationwide

### TOP REASONS

PATIENTS WITH COPD  
SYMPTOMS AREN'T  
TELLING THE DOCTOR<sup>3</sup>



I didn't think of it.



I don't want another 'quit smoking' message.



These problems will just go away in time.



I have had these problems for years.



National Heart, Lung,  
and Blood Institute

# Generations

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