

Caregiver Corner

Ideas and Information for People Caring for Others

September & October 2021 / 607-778-2411 / www.gobroomecounty.com/senior

Events for Caregivers

Guardianship and Power of Attorney

Date: Wednesday, September 15

Time: 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Location: Broome County Public Library
185 Court Street, Decker Room
Binghamton, NY 13901

Presenter: Kristen Luce, Attorney
from Coughlin and Gerhart, LLP

Kristen and associates will discuss how guardianship or having a power of attorney can work for you and those you care for. Please join us to learn more about these important documents.

Pre-registration required. Call Caregiver Services at (607) 778-2411 to register.

Senior Scams: What Caregivers Need to Know



Date: Wednesday, October 13

Time: 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Location: Broome West Sr. Center Classroom
2801 Wayne Street
Endwell, NY 13760

Presenter: Mike Danaher,
Assistant Attorney General

This presentation will review the various types of scams that can target older adults, and what caregivers need to know to protect themselves and the people in their care.

Pre-registration required. Call Caregiver Services at (607) 778-2411 to register.

Caregiver Chat Groups

Let's chat! These informal discussions are open to caregivers of any age.



The Stay Healthy Caregiver Chat: participants will have the option of meeting face to face or calling in using a landline or cell phone.

Date: Mondays, September 13 & October 4

Time: 1:00-2:30 PM

Location: Johnson City Sr. Center Library
30 Brocton Street
Johnson City, NY 13790

OR Dial-In: (607) 778-6547

Meeting Code: 2187 #

Attendee Access Code: 123456#

The Wayne Street Caregiver Chat: participants can meet face-to-face or use Zoom.

Date: Wednesdays, September 15 & October 20

Time: Time: 9:30-11:00AM

Location: Broome West Sr. Center
2801 Wayne Street
Endwell, NY 13760

OR Zoom address:

<https://broome.zoom.us/j/97041617223?pwd=aHU1ZlhFL1VQSDhybjlDSGsxenRkZz09>

ID: 98867802737

Password: 037464

For questions on the Wayne Street Caregiver Chat, call (607) 778-2946 or email

Machelle.spinelli@broomecounty.us

“Every leaf speaks bliss to me, fluttering from the autumn tree.” – Emily Brontë



Virtual Senior Center Pilot Program

Are you a caregiver and looking for activities your family or friends you are caring for can participate in from the comfort of the home? Are you looking for activities you can participate in to help you get a break from caregiving? Consider joining the **Virtual Senior Center Program**. Through this program you will gain free access to online activities and classes that help participants stay active, engaged and connect with others while learning new skills.

A variety of classes about history, arts and crafts, computer training and exercise are offered each month. Several chat groups are available almost daily to help older adults connect with others. The **Virtual Senior Center Program** is available for free to Broome County residents age 60+ through the end of 2021.

If you are caring for someone and are looking for engaging activities for them or yourself, consider joining today! **Please contact the Broome County Office for Aging at (607) 778-2411 or send an email to ofa@broomecounty.us**. Technical assistance is available to help with set up and access to online classes.

6 Reasons Caregivers Need More Sleep

Age, emotional stress, depression, physical inactivity, chronic disease, and nontraditional or constantly changing sleep/wake cycles are all risk factors for sleep disorders like insomnia, so it should come as no surprise that so many family caregivers are sleep deprived. Those who are caring for dementia patients have an especially difficult time getting uninterrupted rest. One study found that 92 percent of dementia caregivers report poor sleep quality marked by short total sleep time, frequent awakenings and a long sleep-onset latency (the amount of time it takes to fall asleep).

Caregiver respite can be hard to work out, but it should be a priority in any elder care plan. Take the following reminders to heart when making care decisions, especially those that affect your ability to sleep through the night.

6 Benefits of Sleep for Caregivers:

1. **Reduced Stress Levels:** It is perhaps the single most common affliction of family caregivers, and it can be greatly affected by

sleep quantity and quality. Studies show that, when you fail to get the necessary amount of sleep, your brain will hit the panic button, releasing excess cortisol and causing stress levels to climb. Conversely, when you're stressed, it can be nearly impossible for you to fall and stay asleep no matter how tired you are. If you're unable to control your stress levels, this can turn into a damaging sleep-stress cycle that is very hard to break.

2. **Magnified Memory:** Are you ever worried that your loved one's dementia might be rubbing off on you because you keep forgetting where you put your car keys? These minor lapses in memory may occur because you're simply not getting enough sleep. Although the exact process remains elusive, scientists have concluded that sleep plays an essential role in processing and retaining new information. Sleep deprivation also negatively affects higher-level cognitive functions like concentration and logical reasoning.
3. **Diminished Depression:** The trials and tribulations of caregiving are enough to make anyone feel hopeless, but evidence indicates that sleep deprivation can also play a role in mood regulation. Inadequate sleep may increase a person's risk for developing mood disorders like depression and anxiety. It can also intensify symptoms of depression in people who already suffer from this mental health condition. This connection partially explains why certain sleep disorders, such as restless legs syndrome and sleep apnea, have also been linked to depression.
4. **Curbed Food Cravings:** Do you find yourself reaching for junk food like ice cream or chips more and more often? According to the National Sleep Foundation, a lack of sleep contributes to comfort food cravings and overeating. After a poor night's sleep, hormones that control hunger are knocked out of balance and a type of neurotransmitter is released that triggers cravings for sweet and salty foods. Over time, chronically sleep deprived caregivers who consume excess calories and fat can experience weight gain, blood sugar issues and high blood pressure.

5. **Heightened Health:** Even if you can find the time and money to exercise and eat healthy, your efforts may be for naught if you aren't getting adequate rest. Countless research studies have linked sleep deprivation with a variety of health problems, including obesity, increased risk of developing certain cancers, heart disease and inflammation.
6. **Decreased Anxiety:** Too little sleep can make you go from a concerned caregiver to wound-up worrywart in no time. Researchers from the University of California, Berkeley, recently discovered that people who don't get enough sleep at night can experience up to a 30 percent increase in anxiety levels the next day. Brain scans of participants in the study who received no sleep experienced reduced activity in areas of the brain that regulate anxiety and increased activity in emotional centers. The results point to deep sleep as a natural anxiety inhibitor.

The truth is that your wellbeing and that of your caregiver depend upon you meeting basic human needs like sleep. There are shortcuts and services available to grocery shop for you, help bathe your loved one and manage their medications, but the responsibility for getting quality rest falls on you. Whether you hire in-home care for a few hours a week or decide it's time to place your loved one in long-term care, seek out regular respite care if only to help you get the shuteye you need. There is no substitute for sleep.

<https://www.agingcare.com/articles/reasons-caregivers-need-sleep-151983.htm>



10 Ways to Manage Caregiver Stress:

1. **Learn healthy ways to manage your stress.** The Broome County Office for Aging has a Monday Chat Group that meets the first Monday of the month and a Caregiver Chat Group that meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Please refer to Page 1 of this newsletter for the schedule.
2. **Think of challenges as opportunities to shine.** In the midst of a challenge, it can be very helpful to see it as an opportunity to grow and stay positive.

3. **Look for the best in others and yourself.** You are strong, giving and definitely appreciated!
4. **Eat right and get plenty of rest.** At the Office for Aging, you can get connected to nutrition counseling if you are not eligible to receive medical nutrition therapy through another program. For more information call (607) 778-2411.
5. **Exercise for 30 minutes or more on most days of the week.** Read the *Senior News* for health and wellness classes hosted by the Office for Aging, including beginner's yoga or Tai Chi.
6. **Focus on the joys in life and remember to laugh.** Making time to laugh can significantly improve your well-being.
7. **Do something nice for someone.** It can be as easy as sending a "thinking of you" card! Or, consider contacting the Office for Aging for volunteer opportunities.
8. **Make time each day to relax.** Remember, selfcare is not some guilty extravagance. It can be as simple as reading a book, taking a walk, or practicing meditation.
9. **Surround yourself with upbeat people.** There are several support groups in the area for caregivers to meet and talk to other people. Try listening to a motivational podcast or talk show. Or, call a friend or relative to chat.
10. **Take pride in your work and your achievements.** Life does not always give us the recognition we deserve for the work we do. So, it does not hurt to pat yourself on the back for the amazing things you do for those you love!

The Caregiver Services Program is sponsored by a grant from the Administration for Community Living, New York State Office for Aging, and Broome County.

Contributions are accepted to help support this program. No one is denied service because of an inability or unwillingness to contribute and all contributions are confidential.

To make a contribution, please send checks or money orders to: Broome County Office for Aging, PO Box 1766, Binghamton, NY 13902.

Caregiver Corner
Broome County Office for Aging
60 Hawley Street
PO Box 1766
Binghamton, NY 13902-1766

PRSRT FCM
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 122
Binghamton, NY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED