

# Caregiver Corner

*Ideas and Information for People Caring for Others*

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**November & December 2019 / 607-778-2411 / [www.gobroomecounty.com/senior](http://www.gobroomecounty.com/senior)**

## Events for Caregivers

### Care Options

#### An Educational Program for Family Caregivers

**Date:** Wednesday, November 13

**Time:** 2:30 – 4:30 PM

**Location:** Broome County Public Library  
(Decker Room) 185 Court St., Binghamton

This event will give an overview of in-home support options that are available as well as different levels of care found in supportive housing.

#### Topics and Speakers Include:

**Resources Available to Keep Someone in the Home Environment**, presented by Judy Bobinski of the Broome County Office for Aging

**Alternative Housing Options: It's More than Just Home to Nursing Home**, presented by Tracy Thompson of Broome County CASA

**Paying for Long Term Care**, presented by Jane Talbot from Action for Older Persons' Health Insurance Counseling Program

**What to Expect When Someone Moves to a Facility**, presented by a staff person from United Methodist Homes.

Please Call 778-2411 to reserve your seat.

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## **The Bone Builder Exercise Program: How it can Benefit Caregivers**

**Date:** Wednesday, December 11

**Time:** 1:00 – 2:00 PM

**Location:** Broome West Senior Center  
2801 Wayne Street, Endwell

**Presenter:** Debra Kerins, RSVP Program Director  
and Bone Builder Instructor

As a caregiver, it's important to stay healthy and strong. The Bone Builder exercise program is one way to do this.

Bone Builder is a gentle routine that provides strength training done slowly with hand and ankle weights. Balance training to prevent falls and flexibility training are also provided. Regular Bone Builder participants report feeling stronger, having better balance, flexibility, energy and stamina to complete everyday chores. Bone Builder is also a great way to reduce the risk of developing Osteoporosis, a bone thinning condition that can cause fractures in the hips, wrists, ankles and spine.

Come prepared to participate in this demonstration by wearing sneakers and comfortable clothing.

Pre-registration is requested; please call (607) 778-2411

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## **Caregiver Chat Groups**

These informal chats are open to caregivers of any age. No registration required.



**Place:** Stay Healthy Center  
Oakdale Mall, Johnson City, NY

**Date:** Monday, November 4  
Monday, December 2

**Time:** 1:00-2:30 PM

**Place:** Broome West Senior Center  
2801 Wayne Street, Endwell

**Date:** Wednesday, November 20  
Wednesday, December 18

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

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“Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it only robs today of its joy.” – Leo Buscaglia

## Caregiver Corner Q & A

**Q**uestion: My father is wandering. What can I do to address this situation?



**A**nswer: Wandering is a common issue for caregivers of those with memory loss or confusion. Here are some tips to help control the issue:

- Look for patterns—does your father tend to wander at a specific time each day? Is he looking for something or someone specific?
- Monitor basic needs—is he hungry, thirsty, cold, hot or needing to use the restroom?



It's important to create a safe environment for people who wander.

- Lock up dangerous objects.
- Use night lights and soft lighting in the evening.
- Put a gate across stairs
- Lock doors and windows
- Try using a room monitor, such as those used for infants, to allow you to hear what they are doing.
- Bells can be placed on doors to alert you when they are opened
- Locks can be placed at the top of the entry door

Personal identification bracelets or necklaces will allow others in the community to call you if your father wanders off. Most cell phones have a GPS tracking system that will allow you to determine his whereabouts via computer. There are other personal tracking devices that can be obtained online. Searching “real time GPS tracking devices” will provide you with some internet links.

If your father wanders off and becomes missing, the Broome County Sheriff's Department advises you to contact your local police department to file a report. If it's possible he's in physical danger, call 911. (an example of danger may be the clothing he's wearing for the current weather conditions or time of day).

Social Day Programs or personal respite workers can provide your father with socialization, stimulation and exercise in a safe environment. Contact the Broome County Office for Aging at 778-2411 for more information on this topic.

## Home Energy Assistance Program 2019 – 2020

The Regular Season Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides non-emergency benefits to assist with the cost of home heating for eligible homeowners and renters. The Regular HEAP season opens on **November 12, 2019**.

Keep the Heat on with HEAP



There are several ways you can apply for HEAP. You can apply online at [www.mybenefits.ny.gov](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov). If applying on paper, the following agencies can help:

**Broome County Office for Aging (OFA)** accepts applications for Regular HEAP for homeowners and renters who are age 60 or over and for those with a permanent disability who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSD). If you received a HEAP benefit in the 2018-2019 season, you should have received an “early outreach” application in the mail at the end of August. Please mail in your completed application to the Office for Aging.

If you are new to HEAP and need an application or if you have questions about HEAP, call the OFA HEAP line at 778-2063. Families receiving Temporary Assistance (TA) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) may receive HEAP automatically and do not need to apply at OFA.

**Department of Social Services (DSS)** accepts applications for homeowners and renters under age 60 and not disabled. You can call DSS HEAP at 778-1100, extension 8, to request an application. DSS also accepts applications for fuel emergencies (Emergency HEAP will open on January 2, 2020) as well as for the HEAP Clean and Tune program and the HEAP Heating Repair and Replacement program.

Call OFA at 778-2411 if you would like to explore other financial benefits you may be eligible to receive.

### **2019-2020 HEAP Income Eligibility Guidelines:**

(subject to change, additional income guidelines apply to larger households)

Household Size	Monthly Income Limit
1	\$2,494
2	\$3,262
3	\$4,030

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## **Respite Care: All of Us Need It Once in a While!**

by Helen Hunter, ACSW, LSW

Respite is a period of rest or relief. For those who give constant care, whether it is for an aging parent, an ill relative or for babies or small children, respite care can be very welcome indeed. The need to relieve a primary caregiver is becoming more and more apparent, and community agencies are training personnel who serve as respite workers for those in need.

Respite workers go through many hours of instruction in order to understand the needs of both the caregiver and the care receiver. Their primary purpose in the home is to relieve the primary caregiver. They provide companionship and supervision. They can also provide comfort and safety by providing meals and snacks, taking walks around the neighborhood, engaging the person in stimulating activities such as reading, listening to music, making a craft or completing a crossword puzzle. Respite workers are NOT allowed to administer medications or provide housekeeping or chore services.

While most respite work is found in the home, this service may also be performed in other arenas. Some caregivers take their family members to a day facility, where meals are provided and participants can engage in a variety of activities, such as exercise classes, crafts, reading discussion groups and writing classes. Other caregivers may need occasional help from an assisted living facility or a skilled nursing facility. Some facilities will provide respite care for a few days, and some can take care of a person for up to a few weeks.

Respite care is available for family members who try to “do it all” when it comes to caring for their loved one, but need a break once in a while. It is very important for all caregivers to have an occasional rest period, where they can do something just for them. Whether caregivers take a nap, walk around the block, go for a swim or go out to lunch with a friend, the time away gives them a chance to return with more energy.

Caregivers are ultimately better able to face the daily demands of care. Respite is also good medicine for the care receiver as well. Having someone different providing care gives the person a chance to develop a new friendship. Care receivers are then better able to work with their family members who service their daily needs.

Respite care just may be the best family medicine on the market today!

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*Editor's Note: The Broome County Office for Aging offers several options for caregiver respite. Call to learn more: (607) 778-2411.*

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.

The Office for Aging, Broome County Senior Centers, and Broome County Adult Day Programs will be closed on the following days:

**Thursday, November 28**

**Friday, November 29**

**Wednesday, December 25**

**Wishing all a safe and happy holiday season!**

**Caregiver Corner**

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

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[ofa@co.broome.ny.us](mailto:ofa@co.broome.ny.us)

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**Thank you!**