Southwest Nebraska
Public Health Department

News Release

For Immediate Release
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November is National Family Caregivers Month: Caregivers Need Care, Too!

November is recognized as National Family Caregivers Month, and Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) wants to recognize, celebrate, and support the many family caregivers who dedicate their time and energy to caring for loved ones. This month also serves as an important reminder that caregivers need support, encouragement, and time to care for themselves.

"Caregiving is one of the most meaningful things a person can do, but it can also be one of the most challenging," explains Paula Wimer, Respite Coordinator at SWNPHD. "Many caregivers provide around-the-clock care while balancing work, family responsibilities, appointments, and their own personal needs. The physical, emotional, and mental demands of caregiving can lead to exhaustion, stress, and caregiver burnout."

According to Nebraska DHHS, 1 in 5 adults in Nebraska are serving as family caregivers. National Family Caregivers Month helps bring awareness to the challenges these caregivers face while encouraging communities to recognize their efforts, educate caregivers about available resources, and increase support for those providing care.

Why Respite Matters

Even the most dedicated caregivers need time to rest and recharge. Taking a break does not mean someone cares any less about their loved one. In fact, taking time for yourself can help prevent burnout and support your overall well-being.

This is where respite care can make a difference.

Respite is a service that provides temporary relief to caregivers by allowing someone else to care for their loved one while they take a break. This time can be used to attend appointments, run errands, spend time with family, enjoy a hobby, or simply rest.

Through the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network, eligible caregivers may receive assistance through the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Program. The program helps make respite more accessible by providing:

- **$125 per month** toward respite care provided by a person of the caregiver's choice.
- **Up to $2,000 in additional funding** for families with exceptional needs.

A respite provider may be a trusted family member, friend, coworker, or another person chosen by the caregiver. This allows families to find someone they feel comfortable having care for their loved one.

The program is available regardless of household income, helping more Nebraska families access the support they need. Visit respite.ne.gov for more information.

Taking Care of Yourself Is Part of Caring for Others

Caregivers often put their loved one's needs before their own. However, without time to recharge, the demands of caregiving can become overwhelming. Making time for yourself is not selfish; it is an important part of maintaining your own health and continuing to provide care.

Respite can offer caregivers peace of mind, knowing their loved one is being cared for while they take some much-needed time for themselves. It can also help families maintain their caregiving arrangements and continue caring for their loved ones at home.

This November, Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) and the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network want to recognize everyone who has been, is currently, or will be a caregiver. Whether you are caring for a child, spouse, parent, family member, or friend, your time, dedication, and compassion make a difference.

We encourage caregivers to reach out, learn about available resources, and remember that they do not have to do everything alone.

Opportunities to Connect and Recharge

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department also recognizes the importance of bringing caregivers together and providing opportunities for them to take time for themselves. This year, Respite Coordinator Paula Wimer will be hosting two respite events for caregivers: a Paint Party and a Candle-Making Workshop.

“The Paint Party has been a highly requested activity by caregivers, and we are excited to bring it back!” continues Wimer. “The candle workshop will offer another opportunity for caregivers to relax, get creative, connect with others, and enjoy some time away from their daily responsibilities.”

These events are a reminder that respite is not just about taking a break from caregiving. It is also about making time for yourself, connecting with others, and doing something you enjoy.

For more information or to sign up for respite services contact Paula at 308-345-4990 or visit respite.ne.gov. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department’s respite program serves Arthur, Chase, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow, and Thomas counties. You can follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, or view the website at www.swhealth.ne.gov.

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