



# National Family Caregiver Support Program

## Did You Know?

**Families**, not social service agencies, nursing homes or government programs, are the mainstay of long-term care (LTC) for older persons in the United States.

In many cases, both the caregivers and care recipients are aging adults.

More than **22.4 million** US households are serving in family caregiving roles for persons over the age of 50, and that number will increase rapidly as the population ages, and as medical science continues to extend life.

**One out of every four people** is a caregiver for a family member or friend.

In the absence of a spouse who is able to provide care, a **daughter or daughter in law** is most likely to assume the role of caregiver.

**Prolonged caregiving can adversely affect** one's physical and psychological health, current and future employment status and earning capability, ability to balance the needs of older parents and younger family members, and the ability to meet personal needs.

The contribution of America's caregivers to our health care system is valued at **\$257 billion annually**.

## Employed Caregivers

One half of all caregivers are employed, and, according to the National Alliance for Caregiving, it is projected that by 2007, the total number of employed caregivers in the United States is expected to increase to nearly **15.6 million working** Americans. That is roughly **one in ten employed workers!**

Employees who are also caregivers cost U.S. employers **\$29 billion annually**, which translates into an annual cost of \$1142.50 per employee. Costs are a result of absenteeism, partial absenteeism, coming in late, and leaving early.

## Employed Caregivers Have:

**More stress-related illnesses**

**Utilize** a company's health care plan more  
**Add additional cost** for the employer

The **impact** on work is:

- **Decreased productivity,**
- **Increased absenteeism,**
- **Increased turnover rate,**
- **Loss of between 5-12 days of work annually**

## Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

According to the U.S. 2000 Census, 5.8 million grandparents live with grandchildren younger than 18.

Among these grandparents, 2.4 million are "grandparent caregivers," defined by the U.S. Census as people who have primary responsibility for their grandchildren younger than 18.

Among grandparent caregivers, 39% have cared for their grandchildren for 5 or more years.

## National Family Caregiver Support Program

Administered by the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging, the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) was **established in November 2000** as a new component of the Older Americans Act. In FY **2003, the National Family Caregiver Support Program was funded at \$155.2 million**. Of that amount, **\$6.2 million is for the Native American Caregiver Support Program**, established within the NFCSP to address the special needs of caregivers of Native American elders.

Innovation Grants and Projects of National Significance were awarded to 39 national, state and local organizations to develop and test model caregiving approaches. These grants focus on systems development, service components, linkages to special populations and communities, testing new approaches and national projects that enhance the development of caregiver programs.

## Five Basic Services

The NFCSP calls for all states, working in partnership with area agencies on aging and local community service providers to have five basic services available for family caregivers, including:

1. Information to caregivers about available services;
2. Assistance to caregivers in gaining access to supportive services;
3. Individual counseling, organization of support groups, and caregiving training to assist the caregivers in making decisions and solving problems related to their caregiver roles;
4. Respite care to enable caregivers to be temporarily relieved from their caregiver responsibilities; and
5. Supplemental services on a limited basis, to complement the care provided by caregivers.

### Who is eligible?

Family caregivers of older adults (age 60 and older) and grandparents and relative caregivers (60 and older) of children not more than 18 years of age are eligible for NFCSP services.

## Older Americans Act is Vital

Caregiver support is not provided in a vacuum. Many older people who receive assistance from family members also receive assistance from other OAA-funded home and community-based services such as meals, personal care and transportation. These services help lessen the burden on family caregivers.

A 2002 survey of caregivers shows that:

- 86% said OAA services allowed them to provide care longer than they would have been able to on their own
- 69% reported that the services helped a lot in their efforts to provide care
- 96% were very or somewhat satisfied with the OAA services

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

AoA recognizes the importance of making information readily available to consumers, professionals, researchers, and students. Our website provides information for and about older persons, their families, and professionals involved in aging programs and services. For more information about AoA, please contact: US Dept of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Washington, DC 20201; phone: (202) 401-4541; fax (202) 357-3560; Email: [aoainfo@aoa.gov](mailto:aoainfo@aoa.gov); or contact our website at: [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov)

## NFCSP in Action

**The National Aging Services Network** (which includes 56 State Units on Aging; 655 Area Agencies on Aging; 244 tribal organizations and about 30,000 local service providers) has:

- **Reached out to over 3.8 million** individuals with information about caregiver programs and services;
- Provided assistance in accessing services to approximately **436,000 caregivers**-significantly exceeding the agency target of 250,000 caregivers;
- Served almost **180,000 caregivers** with counseling and training services;
- Provided respite to over **70,000 caregivers**;
- Provided supplemental services to over **50,000 caregivers**

**Native American and American Indian tribal organizations** have seized the opportunity the NFCSP presents to develop systems of support that meet the unique needs of their family caregivers. Most tribes are in the development stages of their programs. A total of 119 tribes received their initial funding in 2002 and:

- At least **4,230 caregivers** received one or more caregiver support services
- All programs are administering public awareness campaigns
- **Respite service** is provided by most programs (92%), including respite for grandparents
- 58% of the programs are providing caregiver **training**
- Caregiver conferences have been held by 28% of the programs
- 64% of the programs are conducting **support groups or individual counseling**

\*Program accomplishments through December 2002

*Where You Can Get Help- If you or someone you care about needs assistance, please contact AoA's Eldercare Locator at 1 (800) 677-1116 or on the web at <http://www.eldercare.gov>*