

CAREGIVER
STATISTICS:

- In New Jersey alone, nearly 1.1 million unpaid caregivers support a family member often from birth through adulthood.
- 30,000 NJ children are primary caregivers for parents, grandparents or siblings.
- Caregivers tend to die 12-15 years before non-caregivers.
- The value of the services family caregivers provide for “free” is estimated to be almost \$300 billion a year.

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Caregiver Connection

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Just Say No to your Parents!

(Empty nest does not mean empty the IRA)

(Taken from WISERWoman Newsletter)

Fair or not, Baby Boomers have a reputation for over-indulging their children, and my own parents are definitely guilty. As near-retirees, ages 56 and 59, their desire to help me and my sisters has not slowed much. Although I love my parents and appreciate their support, I am worried about their financial security in retirement.

Boomers like my parents are particularly vulnerable to irresponsible generosity. If it is difficult to deny children in general, it is especially difficult when the money is technically there—for instance in an IRA. Couples who wouldn’t dream of spending an extra dollar on a vacation for themselves will dish out thousands of dollars—too often using money that should be set aside for retirement—to help their children.

WISERWoman strongly cautions against this sort of love. Bruce W. of Maryland recently drained his and his spouse’s IRA—approximately \$70,000—to finance his daughter’s wedding. While Bruce, age 57, says it was a great family party, he admits he will have to work “forever”.

(Article continued on last page)

Become a member of Caregivers of New Jersey!

Receive discounts and advanced registration to special events, help advertize your organization or practice, and network with others in the caregiving field.

To find out more about our membership program or to fill out an application please email:
dgoldberg@FamilyResourceNetwork.org

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

- Family Caregiver Membership
\$20 per year
- Professional Membership
\$30 per year
- Organizational Membership
\$100 per year
- Partner Organization Membership
\$250 per year



Caregivers of
New Jersey

Helping a Grandchild with a Disability

A grandparent’s support is invaluable to a family caring for a child with a disability. As the financial and legal issues facing the family change over time, grandparents can bolster a long-term plan for the grandchild’s care that will have long-lasting positive affects on an entire family.

Good planning by the whole family can alleviate unease

arising from such costs or concerns as medical expenses or therapy not covered by insurance or government programs. While reducing worries about the child’s future and the life-long responsibility for the child’s supervision, a grandparent’s assistance can also diminish any emotional impact on other grandchildren in the family.

Monetary gifts to a grandchild with disabilities can create problems if not properly managed. Normally at age 18, a person with a significant disability becomes eligible both for a monthly cash benefit – or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – as well as Medicaid health insurance and funding for adult services.

(Article continued on last page)

New Act to Assist Wounded Soldiers Introduced

On April 28, 2008, Senator Hilary Clinton introduced S. 2921, legislation to authorize pilot programs on training and certification for family caregiver personal care attendants for veterans and members of the Armed Forces with traumatic brain injury. The legislation includes, among other things, a provision to allow compensation for a family caregiver who receives certification as a personal care attendant for care provided to a veteran or Armed Forces member.

S 2921 will be recognized by the Veterans Affairs Committee on May 21st at a legislative hearing and then considered in early June. The National Alliance for Caregiving joined several other organizations in endorsing this legislation.

Medicare Rights Center Free Seminar about Medicare Rights and Coverage Now Available Online

The Medicare Rights Center hosted an educational web seminar which discussed information about when and how much Medicare pays for skilled nursing home care, how to receive Medicare-covered care in a nursing facility, and making sure you are aware of your rights.

Visit www.medicarerights.org/webinars.html to watch the entire seminar.

The Medicare Rights Center is the largest independent source of health care information and assistance in the United States for people with Medicare.

Corzine Signs Family Leave Bill with Nod Toward State's Values

Taken from the Star-Ledger, written by Susan K. Livio

Declaring it a "legacy" moment in NJ history, Gov. Corzine signed legislation yesterday granting employees up to 6 weeks off with limited pay to take care of a new child or sick parent, child or spouse.

With the stroke of the governor's pen, NJ became the 3rd state in the nation to create a paid family leave program, although benefits will not be available until July 2009.

Nearly 200 supporters gathered for the bill signing ceremony at the Statehouse to revel in the victory that took a dozen years to achieve.

Corzine addressed the criticism with a touch of blunt humor. "I may be an old washed-up businessman, but I passionately believe this bill is not anti-business".

He said enactment of the leave bill represented a "commitment to family values" and shows a just how the state feels about families.

"I mean this from the bottom of my heart—this is a legacy day as far as I am concerned", Corzine said.



To learn more about CNJ contact Dana Goldberg

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Spotlight On...

Family Care NavigatorSM

State-by-State Help for Family Caregivers

The National Center on Caregiving at Family Caregiver Alliance has launched the **Family Care Navigator**, a first-of-its-kind comprehensive online guide intended to help families in all 50 states and the District of Columbia locate government, nonprofit, and private caregiver support programs. The resource is at: http://caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/fcn_content_node.jsp?nodeid=2083

The easy-to-use Navigator lists programs for family caregivers as well as resources for older or disabled adults living at home or in a residential facility.

It also includes information on government health and disability programs, legal resources, living arrangements, disease-specific organi-

zations, FAQs, a glossary and more. There is no charge to use the Navigator.

For people providing care to an older or disabled family member or friend, navigating the long-term care system can be difficult and confusing. Programs vary from state to state and community to community; caregivers can spend hours on the phone trying to locate appropriate services. Until now, there has not been one central site for families to find help in their communities. FCA gets thousands of calls each year from family caregivers who simply don't know where to turn to find the specialized support they need as they take on the challenges of caring for someone with Alzheimer's, stroke, traumatic brain injury, Parkinson's disease and other serious disorders requiring long-term

care. Based on input from those families, FCA created this new web-based feature to guide them to services and programs designed to help.

The Navigator is the newest feature on Family Caregiver Alliance's award-winning website at www.caregiver.org. The site offers a wealth of caregiving advice, newsletters, fact sheets, research reports, policy updates and discussion groups, all at no charge. The Family Care Navigator is funded in part by a grant from the Jacob and Valeria Langeloth Foundation.

For further information about Family Care Navigator, contact Kathleen Kelly, Executive Director at kkelly@caregiver.org.

Upcoming Event!**WALK FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW!**

Benefitting The Family Resource Network

Join The Family Resource Network and affiliates for a fun filled day of a casual 5k walk and family fun day!

**Sunday, October 12, 2008
Roosevelt Park, Edison, NJ**

Stick around after the walk for a family fun day consisting of a hockey clinic by the Trenton Devils, baseball activities sponsored by the Somerset Patriots, live music by Irie Sound, free food provided by Pizzeria UNO and Famous Dave's BBQ and much more!

Walk teams are forming now, so visit www.walkforabrightertomorrow.org to register online or call 800-FRN-2345!

Just Say No to Your Parents! (continued from front page...)

This may sound like a reasonable plan, but more than half of people Bruce's age who expect to work beyond the traditional retirement age end up leaving for reasons such as illness or a job loss.

But there is hope, and it can begin with the younger, if not yet wiser, generation. So, children of Boomers everywhere, hear me: Before accepting the financial generosity of your parents, realize that without enough retirement savings, Mom and Dad may one day become the needy ones—a new and se-

rious financial strain when they suddenly need help to afford their prescriptions, or must move in with you at a time with you may have children of your own.

So whatever the situation—college tuition, a wedding, a master's degree, a second wedding, or even a real emergency—Boomers and their children should practice saying “no” very firmly to themselves (perhaps every night before bed), whenever compelled to give or receive money meant for retirement.

Helping a Grandchild with a Disability (continued from front page...)

However, any resources or investments in excess of \$2,000 render the grandchild ineligible for benefits covering the costs of sought-after supervised living arrangements and adult day programs.

In an actual case, a patient qualified for Medicaid at age thirteen, and in the five years until he qualified for SSI at age 18, he consumed over \$1 million in benefits. His application for SSI prompted a routine computerized search of his Social Security number and revealed \$15,000 in savings bonds purchased by his grandfather. Although the bonds were unknown to his parents, the patient was potentially ineligible for Medicaid and his parents were potentially liable to repay the \$1 million. The case was resolved favorably but not without considerable trauma.

A grandchild's future is made secure by making modest monetary gifts directly to the parents, and any larger ones to a grandchild's

singular Special Needs Trust (SNT) of future gifts and bequests that, when properly drafted, will not be counted as a resource terminating eligibility for SSI and Medicaid.

In addition to having the ability hold real estate where the grandchild may eventually live, an SNT can purchase services not attainable through government or private programs, or therapy and healthcare, education and training, vacations, and recreation to protect and enhance the grandchild's lifestyle. Funds can also reimburse family members for expenses incurred while monitoring the grandchild's health.

As an alternative, when paid out, the benefits of a life insurance policy, purchased for one or both parents, and held by the SNT, will alleviate the burden of setting aside assets for the child with a disability while even saving estate taxes in some cases. The best choice here would be a joint survivorship life insurance policy on the lives of both parents as it costs less and will prove more useful over time.

Does a Will leave an inheritance to a grandchild with a disability? A Will that names the grandchild specifically instead of the grandchild's SNT can cause serious problems. It is also important to be aware that should the grandparents' own children predecease them, the grandchildren often are the next beneficiaries under the will or on retirement and 529 accounts or life insurance.

Within a wide range of circumstances in each family exists many good choices for providing long-term care and support to a grandchild with a disability. The involvement of grandparents can make a difference in the family's overall quality of life as they collectively navigate the needs of the grandchild.

For more information about this topic, please contact Valerie A. Powers Smith, Esq. from Hinkle, Fingles & Prior: Attorneys At Law, at (609) 896-4200.