



# Caregiver Connection

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Welcome to the Caregiver Connection Ezine, your source for the most current information about caregiving events, conferences, and issues that are important to you.



Please consult our website for more information: [www.njcaregivers.org](http://www.njcaregivers.org).

## Quick Links

- Caregivers of New Jersey
- The Family Support Center of New Jersey
- The Family Resource Network

[Join our Mailing List!](#)

## Caregivers Weekly Support Group in the Ocean County Area

Tuesdays, 12:30pm-2:30pm or Wednesdays, 11:45am-1:45pm

St. Barnabas Healthcare System  
 Kimball Medical Center  
 Center for Healthy Living  
 198 Prospect Street, Lakewood, NJ

These free group meetings are facilitated by a licensed clinical social worker who offers support and education for caregivers to enhance their coping skills and maintain balance in their lives.

Registration is not required.

Call Kathleen Holahan at 732-730-9112 for more information.

## Complementary Winter Breakfast Hosted by the Alzheimer's Association

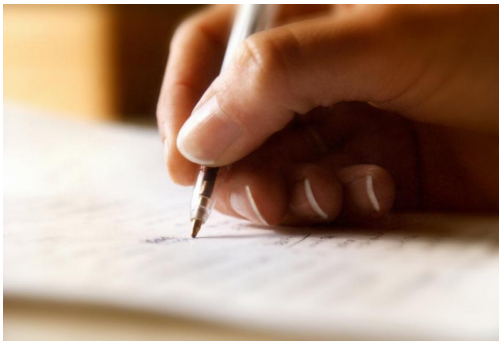
January 20, 2010 - 8am  
Atlantic City Country Club  
900 Shore Road, Northfield, NJ 08225

The program will feature the importance of a brain healthy lifestyle, working together to positively impact the community and moving the mission of the Alzheimer's Association forward as a result of corporate support.

Enter to win special prizes including tickets to a 2010 Phillies game!

Please RSVP by January 14, 2010 to Laura Loro at (856) 797-1212 or at [laura.loro@alz.org](mailto:laura.loro@alz.org).

## Writer's Group for Family Caregivers



The purpose of this group is to give caregivers an opportunity to tell their own stories, in their own words through essays, poetry, fiction, letters to loved ones or any way a participant chooses.

Meetings are held every other month on Saturday mornings at The Middlesex Public Library, 1300 Mountain Avenue, Middlesex, which give people a chance to share their work and support one another as both writers and caregivers. Writers can

also share their work on the group's listserv.

The group is facilitated by Kathy Roberson, Policy and Information Coordinator at The Boggs Center. Kathy has masters degrees in both social work and english/creative writing, and is herself a parent of a young adult with developmental disabilities.

To read some examples, visit [Writing Our Journey: Poems and Essays by Family Caregivers](#). To learn more about the group, please contact Kathy at 732-235-9317 or by email at [kathy.roberson@umdnj.edu](mailto:kathy.roberson@umdnj.edu).

## New Jersey Lifespan Respite Summit - A Great Success

Caregivers of New Jersey, with the help of guest speaker, Jill Kagan, MPA, Chair, National Respite Coalition met at the Renaissance Woodbridge Hotel in Iselin, NJ at the end of October to prepare New Jersey for future funding opportunities related to the Lifespan Respite Care Act of 2006.

The group consisted of about 50 professionals from the nonprofit sector, State Departments and for-profit companies, all united by the same topic in mind - the future of respite in New Jersey. With a change in government in Trenton, looming budget deficits, and the economic plight of many residents (especially those with loved ones with disabilities) respite programs are more crucial now than ever to preserve. Attendees divided up to discuss and conquer common road blocks, possible partnerships and unique ideas to continue providing the care today and maintain care in the future.

To learn more about the Lifespan Respite Care Act of 2006, please see the article below. To learn about how you can get involved in the effort and to read the notes gathered from the Summit, please email [dgoldberg@njcaregivers.org](mailto:dgoldberg@njcaregivers.org).

## Help the Lifespan Respite Care Act Receive Funding!

The New Jersey Lifespan Respite Coalition is seeking funding for the Lifespan Respite Care Act (PL 109-442) in the authorized level of \$71.1 million. Despite its widely supported enactment in 2006, the program received only \$2.5 million in FY09, a small fraction of the \$289 million originally requested.

We are asking that you, citizens of the United States, family caregivers, supporters, friends and advocates, sign on to this petition in hopes that the families of those with disabilities and chronic illnesses may receive the deserved respite care services they desperately need.

Please follow [this link](#) to sign the Lifespan Respite Care Petition.

Thank you in advance for your continued support!



## Cleaning for a Reason



For women receiving chemotherapy and other types of cancer treatments, there is a wonderful new nonprofit organization called "Cleaning for a Reason". Based out of Texas, the agency provides a free housecleaning service once a month for four months while a woman undergoes treatment.

Registration with a doctor's note confirming the treatment is all that is needed to help keep your home in order and your mind at ease. Once registered, Cleaning for a Reason contracts with a participating maid service in the local area and organizes all the details. Cleaning for a Reason currently has 609 partners across the US and Canada providing this free service.

For more information, please visit [www.cleaningforareason.org](http://www.cleaningforareason.org).

## Senate Health Reform Bill Includes New Voluntary Self-Funded Program to Help Americans Plan for Long-Term Care Services and Supports

The Senate continues to debate key elements of the health care reform bill. Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) discussed an important provision in the bill that would create a new voluntary program to help Americans pay for long-term care. The measure is called the CLASS (Community Living Assistance Support and Services) Act, and it allows workers to voluntarily pay a monthly premium into a dedicated fund that could be used for a variety of support services if a person becomes disabled, due to an accident or illness. Once eligible (after 5 years of paying for the monthly premiums), funds could be used to pay for transportation services, or a personal care attendant to help with activities of daily living. Funds could even be used to make homes more accessible for those living with a disability. Over the first four years of its implementation, the bill would actually save Medicaid \$1.6 billion by mitigating the need for nursing home institutionalization.

In addition, Senator Harkin talked about the new Community First Choice Options program, in the

health reform bill. This measure will, for the first time, boost federal payments to states if they agree to provide personal care supports and services to all eligible Medicaid beneficiaries. This is a new incentive to help more people stay in their homes for as long as possible. Few Americans realize it, but 40 percent of all Medicaid spending goes for nursing home care. Without new incentives for individuals to age at home, the Congressional Budget Office says that Medicaid spending for long-term care will top \$200 billion by 2045. These are designed to help reduce some of those costs.

## Valuing Families at Work: Priorities for Federal Action

(Initiated by Family Values @ Work Consortium and National Partnership for Women and Families)

The economic upheaval has exacerbated the predicament millions of workers face of having to risk their jobs in order to care for their families, or put their loved ones at risk in order to do their jobs. Workplace standards still reflect a 20th century assumption of a father with a full-time job and a stay-at-home wife. The 21st century reality is that most parents are in the workforce, most families need two incomes to be financially secure, many families depend solely on women's incomes and workers have care giving responsibilities for extended family and community members.



Nearly half the private sector workforce has no paid sick days for routine illnesses. And, the vast majority of all workers have no wage replacement if they need to take extended leave for serious illness or to care for a new child.

The Valuing Families at Work has 3 goals on its agenda. The first is to Support Strong and Healthy Families by providing all workers with paid sick days to be used to for preventative care, minor illnesses for themselves and their loved ones, as well as time off for other familial duties or issues. The second goal is to Make Family and Medical Leave Fully Accessible. The Valuing Families at Work group believes all workers should have job-protected family and medical leave and insurance that provides meaningful wage replacement when they need extended time off to care for a new child or household member with a serious health condition. The third goal is to Facilitate Fair Work Schedules so that workers can have greater control over their own work schedules to better meet their caregiving responsibilities.

## All 50 States to Screen Newborns for Cystic Fibrosis by 2010

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation announced that all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, have passed legislation requiring all newborns be screened for cystic fibrosis (CF) by 2010.

Early diagnosis of CF was adopted nationwide at a rapid pace, following the aggressive advocacy efforts of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, its volunteers and many local national interest groups. In 2005, only 5 states required that CF be included on the list of mandatory screening conditions.

## Family Caregiver Program Act of 2009 for Wounded 9/11 Vets

The Committee on Veterans Affairs established a three-year pilot caregiver assistance program in eight regions of the US. A one year extension was included afterwards. These pilot programs offered services such as caregiver education, training, improved care coordination and peer networking. They did not provide health care, mental health services, counseling or financial assistance to caregivers. Based on the comprehensive needs of caregivers, identified as the part of the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), Research Policy Fellow of the WWP, Ralph Ibson testified on the need for a comprehensive set of services for family caregivers. He argued that surveys done by the WWP indicate that most young veterans wish to remain in the home and strongly resist institutionalization.

The Family Caregiver Program Act of 2009, introduced by Senator Daniel Akaka (D-HI) referred to the Committee on Veterans affairs. The bill was reported unanimously and placed on the Senate calendar on September

Thank you for reading Caregiver Connection! If you have any information you would like included in our e-zine, or know of anyone that would like to be added to our listserv, please email me at [dgoldberg@njcaregivers.org](mailto:dgoldberg@njcaregivers.org) or click the "Join Our Mailing List" button on the top right side of the newsletter.

Additionally, CNJ is dedicated to spreading awareness and knowledge of caregiving, so we invite you to utilize the "Forward Email" button at the bottom of this email.

Sincerely,

Dana Goldberg, Administrator  
Caregivers of New Jersey

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