

United States Department of Health and Human Services
Administration on Aging
Focus On Family Caregiving:
The National Family Caregiver Support Program

Did You Know?

- 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
- The contribution of America's caregivers to our health care system is valued at \$196 billion annually.

Background On: The 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 2002, the National Family Caregiver Support Program was funded at \$141.5 million. Of that amount, \$5.5 million is for the Native American Caregiver Support Program, established within the NFCSP to address the special needs of caregivers of Native American elders. In September 2002, \$7 million was awarded to 39 national, state and local organizations to develop and continue successful innovative approaches to assist family caregivers .

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:

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

Who is Eligible for Services?

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

Stages in a Caregiving Career

**Adapted from the "Seven Markers in the Caregiver Trajectory" by Rhonda J. V. Montgomery, PhD, Director of the Gerontology Center at the University of Kansas*

1. **Performing Caregiver Tasks** - when a dependency situation emerges in which a family member or close friend performs tasks designed to assist an older individual with routine activities.
2. **Self Definition as a caregiver** – when an individual comes to view themselves as a caregiver and incorporate this activity into their social or personal identity
3. **Performing Personal Care** –when a caregiver begins providing personal care such as assistance with bathing, dressing, or aspects of personal hygiene.
4. **Seeking Assistance and Formal Service Use** – when a caregiver actively seeks out formal support services designed to help caregivers
5. **Consideration of Nursing Home Placement** – when the caregiver seriously considers place the care recipient in a nursing home as an alternative to caregiving
6. **Institutionalization** – when nursing home placement occurs
7. **Termination of Caregiving Role** – when caregiving ends.

Where You Can Get Help

For information on senior community services, contact the Administration on Aging at (202) 619-0724 or <http://www.aoa.gov>.

If you or someone you care about needs assistance, please contact AoA's Eldercare Locator at 1 (800) 677-1116. or <http://www.aoa.eldercare.gov>

From the Assistant Secretary

“One of the greatest strengths of this country is that we are a compassionate nation with a strong spirit of generosity with a commitment to help people of all walks of life now and to pave the way for a better future for our children and grandchildren. The National Family Caregiver Support Program embodies this compassionate spirit.”

Josefina G. Carbonell
Assistant Secretary for Aging