

1-800-798-0988

www.alternativesforyou.org

CAREGIVER NEWS

Spring Cleaning to Support Your Mental Health

Caregiver Support— one-on-one support services with Caregivers feeling overwhelmed in their caregiving role with the goal of reducing stress and strengthening their natural support system.

Care Coordination— professionally certified Care Coordinators provide free, in-home assessments to identify and set up supports for individuals living independently in the community.

LTC Ombudsman— meet with nursing home residents to help resolve concerns or complaints. They provide a listening ear to residents and families.

Adult Protective Services— investigate and resolve reported cases of self neglect, abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation for older adults, (over age 60) and adults with disabilities (age 18-59).

Money Management Program— assist individuals with bill paying, writing checks, budgeting and balancing their checkbook.

Bridges Community Center— Support for the lower two thirds of LaSalle County. Offering options counseling and assistance with benefits registration including Medicare, Medicaid, state supported programs, or e benefits. Bridges offers a full calendar of events for active older adults.

As flowers bloom & the air fills with promises of spring, it's not just nature that undergoes renewal. Our homes & minds can also benefit from a fresh start. For caregivers, spring cleaning holds a unique significance beyond the traditional notion of tidying up. It becomes a therapeutic practice offering numerous health benefits for both the caregiver & the care recipient. Caregiving can be taxing, often leading to heightened stress & overwhelming feelings. However, spring cleaning can present an opportunity to reclaim a sense of control & restore order. By decluttering & organizing living spaces, caregivers can create an environment promoting calmness & tranquility. The space can serve as a sanctuary for moments of rest amidst the demands of caregiving.

Spring cleaning can also facilitate meaningful connections between caregivers & care recipients. Involving the care recipient in cleaning tasks can provide a sense of purpose & accomplishment, fostering a sense of teamwork & shared responsibility. Additionally, the shared experience of cleaning together can serve as an opportunity for quality time & bonding, strengthening the caregiver-care recipient relationship. Spring cleaning also offers caregivers an opportunity to enhance the safety & comfort of their loved one's living environment. By assessing the home for potential hazards & making necessary modifications, caregivers can create a space that promotes independence & reduces the risk of accidents. This proactive approach to caregiving fosters peace of mind for the caregiver but also contributes to the overall well-being of the care recipient.

The act of spring cleaning can serve as self-care for caregivers, allowing them to prioritize their own well-being amidst their responsibilities. Engaging in physical activity associated with cleaning releases endorphins, the body's natural stress-relievers, leading to improved mood & reduced anxiety. Additionally, the sense of accomplishment that comes from completing cleaning tasks can boost self-esteem & provide a much-needed mental break from caregiving duties.

Tips to Declutter with Confidence Try the following strategies, to approach decluttering with confidence & gradually create a more organized & harmonious living space, enhancing both your physical environment & mental well-being.

- Start small by setting realistic goals for specific areas, cleaning in short bursts to prevent burnout. Too much, too fast can get you down physically & make the task feel overwhelming. You don't need to organize the entire kitchen. Make a goal to organize that one drawer so it will shut all the way.

- Utilize designated spaces for everyday items to maintain organization. Use baskets, bowls, & trays to keep everything from mail to shoes together & organized.

- Apply the 12-month rule to assess an item's necessity based on usage frequency. If you haven't used it in that time, is it worth the valuable space it is taking up in your home?

- Implement a "one in, one out" policy to prevent clutter accumulation. Before making a purchase, identify what will go out (either donate, recycle, or pitch) to make space for the new.

Alternatives' mission is to promote the independence & quality of life for older adults, adults with disabilities, & their families.

Alternatives' programs have served 10 Counties in Midwestern Illinois since 1984.

Designated by the State of Illinois, Alternatives is the lead advocate for adults over 60 & their caregivers in their service area of Rock Island, Henry, Mercer, LaSalle, Putnam, Knox, Henderson, Warren, Bureau, & McDonough Counties.

Additionally, Alternatives' Ombudsmen serve Brown, Hancock, Schuyler, Adams, Pike, & Calhoun Counties.



**Check out a new service available on our website
alternativesforyou.org/caregiver-support/**

Alternatives offers Caregiver Support through the Tailored Caregiver Assessment & Referral System Program (TCARE). TCARE is an accredited program offering customized support to family caregivers.

What TCARE Does

- ◆ Creates a care plan **just for you** that offers support & improves your effectiveness as a caregiver
- ◆ Reduces your stress & provides strategies for reducing root causes of caregiver burnout
- ◆ Connects you with resources for your physical health & mental well-being
- ◆ Promotes aging in place and may delay nursing home placement for your loved one

How TCARE Works

Once you complete the online TCARE enrollment form, an Alternative's Caregiver Counselor will meet with you twice over the phone. During the first meeting, the Caregiver Counselor will learn about your sources of stress as well as your individual strengths. They will take this information to create a care plan just for you. During the next meeting, you will discuss your individualized care plan & how to put it into action. Periodically, the Caregiver Counselor will reach out to check in with you & see how the plan is working.

Stress Busting Chronic Illness Program for Caregivers

Who

Family caregivers of a person with a chronic health condition
Caregivers coping with the stress of caring while caring for themselves

What

Holistic program focused on the caregiver
Learn stress management techniques, relaxation, & coping strategies
Workbook & materials for take home study & practice
Meets 90 minutes weekly for 9 weeks

Local senior service providers are partnering with Alternatives' Caregiver Counselors to provide this free new program. Please see below for dates & registration information.

Not all Centers have established dates & are taking registration information for waitlists for future programs.

	Dates or waitlist availability:	Time:	Contact for registration:
Bridges Community Center	Waitlist	1:30-3:30 pm	815-431-8034
Bureau Co. Senior Center	Mar. 26—May 21	1—2:30 pm	815-879-3981
Mercer Co. Senior Citizen Center	Waitlist	9—10:30 am	309-582-7221
Putnam Co. Community Center	Apr. 5—May 31	10—11:30 am	815-339-2711
Rock Island Co. Senior Center	Apr. 29—Jul. 1	1—2:30 pm	309-788-6335
YMCA of McDonough Co. Senior Center	May 1—Jun. 26	2—3:30 pm	309-837-5733

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