

## **News Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

November 17, 2022

Contact: Paula Callahan, Respite Coordinator at [respite@swhealth.ne.gov](mailto:respite@swhealth.ne.gov) or 308-345-4990

### **Family Caregivers Month**

National Family Caregivers Month is celebrated each November. This month is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) would like to recognize those that have been a caregiver or are currently caregiving. We recognize the dedication, commitment, honor, and devotion they show when caring for a loved one or neighbor.

Caregiving can be one of the most difficult jobs. It may involve around-the-clock care, little rest, stress, emotional situations, and often inadequate compensation. The mission of National Family Caregivers Month is designed to raise awareness of those challenges and improve the caregiver's overall well-being.

Even the most driven and dedicated caregivers will become tired and need to recharge to avoid emotional or psychological burnout. "You must take care of yourself to give the best care to your loved ones," explains Paula Callahan, Respite Coordinator at SWNPHD. "Self-care is one of the most important things any person can do. Without self-care, there is a greater chance of burnout from stress and fatigue."

The Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network is a program that provides funding to those in need of assistance paying for respite services. They can also connect families with respite providers that have completed a background check. Funding starts at \$125 a month, but in exceptional circumstances, that family also has the potential to receive an additional \$1,000 per year, which can be distributed any way they choose. Currently, Southwest Nebraska Respite Network is assisting fifteen family caregivers.

Anyone may be a family caregiver at some point in their lives. They may be parents caring for a child with a physical disability or behavioral condition, adult children caring for elderly parents, or grandparents caring for a grandchild with a long-term illness, for example.

#### **Benefits of Respite for Caregivers**

- Reduces the risk of abuse and neglect. *"Life is stressful. We all say and do things we regret when things get tough. Respite helps me be a much better mom. It is a wonderful, wonderful thing."*
- Offers hope. *"Some days are tough, but I know my respite provider will be here soon and I can make it until then."*
- Helps families stay together longer. *"Respite has been a lifesaver! I don't know what I would do without it."*

If you are caring for a loved one and would like to learn more about respite services, contact Paula at 308-345-4990 or visit [respite.ne.gov](http://respite.ne.gov). The Lifespan Respite Network Southwest Service Area serves Arthur, Chase, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow, and Thomas counties.

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