

# CAREGIVING

SUPPORT FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER PEOPLE PROVIDING VOLUNTARY CARE AND ASSISTANCE



**AGING TEXAS WELL** MEANS THAT TEXANS PREPARE FOR AGING IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE AND THAT STATE AND LOCAL SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITATES AGING WELL THROUGHOUT THE LIFESPAN.

## TRENDS

- Caregivers spend the majority of their time helping loved ones with activities of daily living, such as dressing, housework, meals, laundry, transportation, medications, money management and legal issues.
- The majority of Texas caregivers are women between 36 and 65 years old.

An estimated 7 to 10 million adults care for their parents from a long distance.

Approximately 1 in 4 Americans are caregivers.

- When asked how the job of caregiving has affected them, caregivers most often cite lack of sleep, lack of consistent help from other family members, and feelings of frustration and depression.
- In spite of heavy responsibilities nearly 75 percent of caregivers attempt to maintain fulltime employment.
- Half of caregivers take a leave of absence and 20 percent have to give up work temporarily or permanently, creating a financial toll and loss of productivity on the part of both caregivers and their employers.
- American businesses lose between \$11 billion and \$29 billion each year due to employees' need to care for loved ones.

More than 14 million U.S. workers care for aging family members.

## POLICIES, PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- In 2000, Congress created the National Family Caregiver Support Program for caregivers in every state. In Texas, the program is administered by the Texas Department on Aging and its affiliated area agencies on aging who provide services in 5 priority areas:
  - *Services available in their communities*
  - *Assistance in arranging for these services*
  - *Education and training to help make decisions and solve problems*
  - *Short-term relief for caregivers in the form of respite, adult day care, and other services*
  - *Support services that include, but are not limited to, home care, transportation, meals, health maintenance, legal assistance, and certified nursing home ombudsmen*
- The area agencies on aging can direct families to additional resources such as support groups and other services that are available in their communities.

## GET INVOLVED!

- Encourage caregivers to call their local area agencies on aging to find out about information, resources, and support that can in turn reduce stress and foster informed decisions.
- Encourage employers to create supportive work environments and policies such as flex-time and telecommuting.
- Create coordination among the aging network and service providers to strengthen community capacity.

Urge employers to sponsor eldercare services so caregivers can maintain employment.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CAREGIVING

Contact your local **area agency on aging** at: **800.252.9240** for Aging Texas Well resources and services in your community. Or, visit TDoA at **[www.tdoa.state.tx.us](http://www.tdoa.state.tx.us)** for this and other Aging Texas Well publications.