

Taking Care

A close-up photograph of two hands clasped together in a supportive grip, one hand resting on top of the other. The hands are positioned horizontally across the middle of the frame. The background is a solid, light purple color. The text 'A Resource Guide for Caregivers' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the hands.

A Resource Guide for Caregivers

TAKING CARE

This guide was created by the Virginia Caregiver Coalition (VCC). It is composed of public, private and non-profit organizations and individual caregivers. The VCC is dedicated to improving the caregiving experience through education and resource accessibility so that caregivers are valued and supported. The VCC meets every odd month for networking, training, education, project brainstorming, and resource sharing.

Mission

The VCC will work passionately to improve the experience of caregiving through education and access to resources.

Vision

All Virginia caregivers will be valued, respected, and supported and will have easy access to information, education and services.

Who Can Join the VCC?

Our members include family caregivers, disability and aging community agency staff, state agency employees, and university and independent researchers.

How Do I Get Involved?

Membership Is Free! Complete a Membership Form and mail, fax or email to:

Nick Slentz
Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services
1610 Forest Ave, Suite 100
Henrico, VA 23229
Nick.Slentz@dars.virginia.gov
804-588-3978

For more information visit the VCC website at vda.virginia.gov/vcc.htm or Contact the VCC Membership Chair Mauretta Copeland at mcopeland@vcu.edu



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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



Every caregiving situation is unique. This comprehensive guide is meant to reflect those intricacies and serve numerous types of caregivers. Some sections and content may not apply to your specific caregiving situation. We encourage you to pick out the sections that are applicable to you!



INTRODUCTION

ARE YOU A CAREGIVER?

If you are helping a spouse, relative, friend or neighbor with some of their activities of daily living, then you are a caregiver. Caregivers are the backbone of the long-term care system, providing assistance and support to those who need help.

THE TWO SIDES OF CAREGIVING

Being a caregiver is difficult, as it requires adding another set of responsibilities to those you already have to your job, your spouse, your children, your friends, etc. In addition, the nature of your relationship with the person needing care is changing. Many caregivers eventually find themselves unable to cope with the rising levels of stress in their life, resulting in “burnout,” depression, anxiety and even physical ailments that threaten their health. To avoid or minimize the negative effects of caregiving, at the outset your plans should address the two sides of caregiving:

- Plans that will help you to take care of another person; and
- Plans to ensure that you continue to take care of yourself.

WHAT DOES A CAREGIVER DO?

Caregivers typically provide any of the following types of assistance:

- Help with paying bills;
- Help with household chores such as shopping, cooking, laundry and/or home maintenance;
- Help with personal care (dressing, bathing, feeding toileting, etc.);
- Help moving around the house or outside the house (transportation);
- Help with taking medications;
- Help with making or receiving telephone calls;
- Help arranging or coordinating services outside the home; and
- Companionship through personal visits or by telephone.

¹ Caregiving in the U.S.: Spotlight on Virginia, National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, 2004, p.1 & p. 3

BOOKS ABOUT CAREGIVING

BOOK	AUTHOR	CARING FOR A...
The Caregiving Wife's Handbook: Caring for Your Seriously Ill Husband, Caring for Yourself	Diana B. Denholm	Spouse
A Bittersweet Season: Caring for Our Aging Parents — and Ourselves	Jane Gross	Parent
10,000 Joys and 10,000 Sorrows: A Couple's Journey through Alzheimer's	Olivia Hoblitzelle	Spouse
Making Toast	Roger Rosenblatt	Grandchild
When the Time Comes: Families with Aging Parents Share Their Struggles and Solutions	Paula Span	Parent
Caring for Your Parents: The Complete Family Guide — Practical Advice You Can Trust from the Experts at AARP	Hugh Delehanty and Elinor Ginzler	Parent
Caregiving at a Glance	Insight Memory Care	Loved One with Dementia
The 36 Hour Day	Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins	Loved One with Dementia

CAREGIVERS IN VIRGINIA



Nearly **1 in 5** Virginians provides unpaid care to an adult with health or functional needs



64% of caregivers work while providing care



56% of Virginian caregivers are women

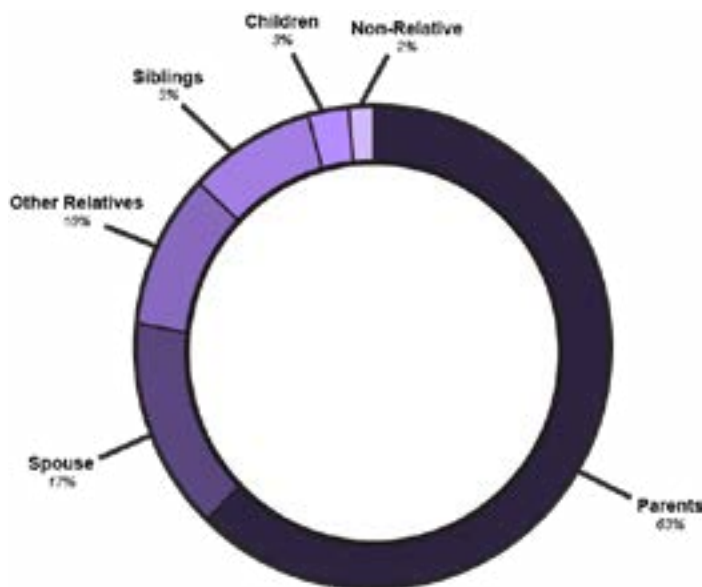


Almost **13%** of Virginians currently care for an adult loved one.



18% of Caregivers provide 40+ hours of care per week

Who Do Virginians Care For?



Caregiver Commandments

ALWAYS

AGREE

Never Argue

REDIRECT

Never Reason

DISTRACT

Never Shame

REASSURE

Never Lecture

REMINISCE

Never say, "Remember?"

REPEAT

Never say, "I already told you."

SAY "DO WHAT YOU CAN."

Never say, "You can't."

ASK

Never Command

ENCOURAGE AND PRAISE

Never Condescend

REINFORCE

Never Force

Taking Care

OF YOURSELF



NEW TO CAREGIVING?

Information regarding caregiving can be overwhelming. Here are some essential organizations that serve as excellent starting points for you:

AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

There are 25 local area agencies on aging (AAAs) that provide services for older Virginians. Each AAA serves a defined geographic area within one of five regions in the state. To find the AAA that serves your area, you first need to determine the region of the state in which you live. To find the AAA that serves your region see page 83.

To search for more information online for your local AAA, go to the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging website: vaaaa.org

SOCIAL SERVICES

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal program that provides financial assistance to children through their parents or other caregiving relatives who qualify for the program.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The same application that is used to apply for TANF can be used to apply for SNAP, which is an electronic benefits that can be used like cash to buy food.

SOCIAL SECURITY

If you are caring for someone who is 65 or older or has a disability you should contact the Social Security Administration. Social Security provides you with a source of income when you retire or if you can't work due to a disability. It can also support your legal dependents (spouse, children, or parents) with benefits in the event of your death.

There are four main types of benefits that the SSA offers: Retirement benefits

- *Disability benefits*
- *Benefits for spouses or other survivors of a family member who's passed*
- *Supplemental Security Income (SSI)*

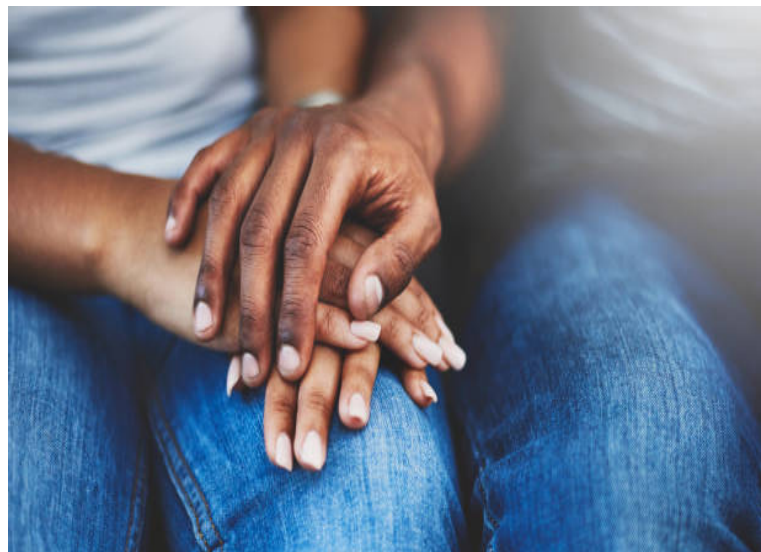
MEDICARE/MEDICAID

Medicare

Medicare is the national health insurance program for people age 65 and older and for some younger persons with disabilities. Medicare only covers a portion of medical costs such as hospitalizations, visits to the doctor, and diagnostic tests. In some cases, it may cover short-term care in a skilled nursing facility and limited home health care. Medicare-approved home health care may include the services of a nurse, physical, speech or occupational therapist, medical social worker or home health aide. For more information call 1-800-633-4227 or go to medicare.gov.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a program that provides health care insurance for low-income older and adults with disabilities. It also covers nursing home care for eligible individuals. For more information, contact your local Department of Social Services (DSS).



BENEFITS OF BEING A CAREGIVER

A SENSE OF GIVING BACK TO SOMEONE WHO HAS CARED FOR THEM

THE SATISFACTION OF KNOWING THAT THEIR LOVED ONE IS GETTING EXCELLENT CARE

PERSONAL GROWTH

INCREASED MEANING AND PURPOSE IN ONE'S LIFE

PASSING ON A TRADITION OF CARE



83% of caregivers viewed it as being a positive experience

PLAN FREE TIME

Do something you enjoy every day - indulge a hobby, visit a friend, see a movie, read, etc. Make plans to get away occasionally for a weekend or a longer.

ASK FOR ASSISTANCE

Respite is defined as a short period of rest or relief from something difficult. Respite Care provides temporary relief to to a primary caregiver from the continuous support and care of a loved one who has a disability or medical condition. Ask other family members for help when you need it, or contact organizations that help older adults. Consider joining a support group (see below) for care providers. Mental health centers can also help you deal with any difficult feel-ings you may have.

JOIN OR FORM A SUPPORT GROUP

Support groups can be found across Virginia. Many are designed to assist caregivers of people with specific diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease. In some instances, these support groups are sponsored by national or state associations, such as the Alzheimer's Disease Association, the American Parkinson's Disease Association, and the Autism Society. Contact information on these organizations can be found in the Appendices at the end of this book.

There are also general caregiver support groups, which are often sponsored by a local aging service provider or a faith-based organization such as a church or temple. A growing number of groups offer support online as an option for caregivers who have Internet access but limited time or ability to attend group meetings. Support groups allow caregivers to:

- Discuss their concerns and frustrations;
- Share practical solutions to caregiving situations;
- Have a sense of community; and
- Receive and offer emotional encouragement.

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR EMOTIONS

Just as hunger lets you know that you need food, emotions can let you know when you need assistance or support. Often, when caregivers feel angry, frustrated, sad or inadequate, they try to make the feelings go away instead of figuring out what their emotions are telling them that they need. Having these feelings is completely normal, and almost every caregiver experiences them at some point in the caregiving process. Obtaining the support you need early in the process will benefit both you and your loved one.





AVOIDING BURNOUT



Your needs and feelings are important too! Caregivers are very susceptible to stress and can become “burned out.” In order to be a reliable caregiver for another person, you (the caregiver) should make taking care of yourself a top priority at the very beginning. Listed below are some ways to help you accomplish this:

SEEK HELP EARLY

Caregivers who **seek help early** in the caregiving process are, on average, able to provide better care for a longer period of time.

DISCUSS YOUR FEELINGS

There will always be many demands on your time and attention - your job, your family, caring for your loved one, etc. Feelings of helplessness, anger, fear and guilt may occur. When these feelings arise, or when conflicts occur, discuss them with the individuals involved or with a support group or mental health provider.

SEE YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER(S)

Remember to have checkups regularly, including dental and vision exams. Take care of any health problems you might have as soon as possible. If you believe that you are becoming depressed, see a mental health professional as soon as possible.

RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS OF “CAREGIVER BURNOUT”

A caregiver may be experiencing "burnout" if:

- Their body weight either increases or decreases.
- Their personal appearance or the appearance of their environment changes.
- They sleep for unusually long periods or short periods of time.
- They feel "boxed in" by their responsibilities and feel that they have no options.
- They frequently lose their temper and exhibit anger towards the person receiving care, their family members, their doctors, or service providers.
- They cry for no apparent reason, feel depressed, or no longer take pleasure in activities they once enjoyed.
- Their sex life suffers due to stress.
- Their caregiving duties are interfering with their work and social life to an unacceptable degree.

If you suspect that you or someone you know is suffering from “caregiver burnout,” seek assistance immediately. The person suffering from “burnout” can talk with their doctor, call their local Area Agency on Aging, contact their local chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, or get in touch with their local community mental health center.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPITE

Gives opportunity to engage socially outside of caregiver, reducing social isolation and depression

Allows caregivers to rest so they can return to caregiving refreshed

Allows the caregiver to attend to their personal responsibilities beyond caregiving

Reduces caregiving related stress

Restores energy levels

Boosts caregiver immune system

Offers the caregiver distance from the situation

Allows the caregiver to engage in his or her own life

Improves caregiver patience

Taking Care

OF ANOTHER PERSON



Getting Started



DECIDE WHAT KIND OF ASSISTANCE YOUR LOVED ONE NEEDS

Each person is different, and their circumstances and resources reflect that. A person who is aging may need different types of services than a younger person who has disability. In addition, people who need care may be affected physically, mentally, socially, occupationally or financially, or they may be experiencing changes in several of these areas. However, a variety of services exist to help you and your loved one cope with these changes.

Service examples:

- Home-delivered meals;
- Congregate meals (group meals served at a particular location);
- Adult day programs;
- Care management (also referred to as case management);
- In-home aide service;
- Therapy (physical, speech, occupational, etc.);
- Senior center programs;
- Transportation;
- Health and wellness promotion;
- House cleaning and home maintenance;
- Medication management;
- Abuse, neglect or exploitation education and awareness;
- Information and assistance about other resources; and
- Respite care (to help both the individual and the caregiver).

DEVELOP A CARE PLAN

In developing a care plan, you must HONESTLY assess the type(s) of care that you can provide, and what types of care others (such as relatives, friends or service professionals) will have to provide. It is best, when developing a care plan, to actually underestimate your own abilities, so that if an illness or an emergency occurs, it will be easier to put a backup plan into place. For example, no one person can provide care for an individual 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The Person I am Caring For	Service They Need	Where to Find Help
A. Wants to get out and socialize	Socialization or volunteering programs.	Senior centers, adult day services, friendly visitors, city recreation departments, faith-based orgs.
B. Is grieving over the death of a loved one	Bereavement support	Bereavement Support Programs, hospice programs, hospitals, local funeral homes
C. Cannot drive or use public transportation	Transportation for older persons	Local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), private transportation services, transportation for people with disabilities
D. Is unable to remain in his or her present housing situation	Special housing options	Local housing authority, local AAAs, geriatric care managers, local DSS
E. Needs help with food preparation and/or housekeeping	Homemaker services	Private homemaker services, personal care agencies, local AAAs.
F. Needs help with personal care (bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting, etc.)	Home Health or Personal Care	Home health agencies, geriatric care managers, personal care agencies, or some local AAAs
G. Needs skilled nursing care or occupational, speech, and physical therapy.	Skilled nurse or therapist	Home health agencies or geriatric care managers
H. Needs 24-hour supervision	Private Home Care or Nursing Home Care	Personal care agencies, home health agencies, local AAAs, geriatric care managers
I. Cannot be left alone during the day	Supervision, Monitoring, and Safety	Adult day service, live-in attendant, home health agencies, geriatric care managers
J. Has health care costs which are overwhelming	Health Insurance Counseling	Medicare, Medicaid, local AAAs, Virginia Insurance Counseling & Assistance Program (VICAP)
K. Is depressed/angry/suspicious	Talk with their primary care physician or clinical social worker	Mental health departments, geriatric care managers, emergency rooms, Community Services Boards
L. Has a terminal illness and wants to die at home	Hospice care	Hospice organizations, American Cancer Society, faith-based organizations

Together, make decisions that will shape the care plan. If everyone who will be involved in caring for your loved one (or paying for them to receive care from service professionals) has a chance to provide input at the beginning of the caregiving process, they are less likely to have concerns about it later.



GATHER INFORMATION ON SERVICES AND RESOURCES

Once you develop an idea of what kind of services your loved one needs and have a rough idea of what you can realistically contribute, the next step you will need to take is gathering information about services and resources available in your area that can assist you. You will need assistance of some kind, whether it be from friends, relatives, volunteers or service professionals, so it is best to explore options at the beginning of the caregiving process. In Virginia, there are several avenues you can take to identify resources in your local area, as follows:

A. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

To determine which AAA serves your community, turn to page 83 of this guide.

B. Use the Internet.

If you have internet access, you can use:

VirginiaNavigator

This is a family of websites that connects you with all sorts of resources close to you! These sites allow you to search for services by zip code, city or county to locate service providers near you. There are three websites in the VirginiaNavigator family:

SeniorNavigator

The trusted guide to healthy aging in Virginia. Search for housing options, transportation programs, caregiving resources, and other services for older adults.

SeniorNavigator web site located at seniornavigator.com

disAbilityNavigator

The best way to find disability services in Virginia, including personal assistance, accessible housing, benefits and more.

disAbilityNavigator web site located at disabilitynavigator.org

VeteransNavigator

Helps Virginia veterans and their families navigate post-military life with resources related to benefits assistance, health care, employment training and more.

VeteransNavigator web site located at veteransnavigator.org

CONTACT SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Once you have decided which services to contact, get a notebook or pad where you can record contact information for each organization, such as:

- Name and address of the organization;
- Days and hours of normal operation (when they are open for business);
- Date and time of your telephone call or visit;
- The name of the person you spoke to; and
- The person's telephone number.

Sample Questions to Ask

When you call a service organization, the conversation might be like this:

"Hello, I would like some information about programs that can help me provide my loved one with some assistance with X." (Replace the X with the type of assistance you need, such as help with meals, transportation, etc.) "Can you please answer some questions for me, or direct me to someone who can?"

1. What types of services do you or your organization provide?
2. How can I receive an application for these services?
3. Are there eligibility requirements?
4. If I can't complete the application by myself, can someone at your organization help me complete it?
5. What documents will you need to verify my and/or my loved one's identity? (Driver's license, Social Security card, Virginia ID card, etc.)
6. What documents will you need to verify my or my loved one's level of income? (pay stubs, pension forms, Social Security check stubs, etc.)
7. What documents will you need to verify my loved one's medical condition, mental status, medication levels, etc.? Will you contact his doctor(s), therapists or pharmacists?
8. What type of documents can you provide to me to verify that your organization and your employees are properly screened, licensed, trained and insured?
9. If I don't have the documents I need to verify my or my loved one's identity or income level, can I provide them to you at a later time?
10. If I don't have the necessary documents or medical records, can someone at your organization help me get them?
11. Does your organization charge a fee for providing the help I need?
 - If so, how much will it be?
 - Does your organization have a "sliding fee scale" based on income level/ability to pay?
 - Will I need to pay you "up front" or will you send me a bill?
 - What forms of payment will you accept (check, credit card, etc.)?
 - Must I pay the whole fee at once or can I pay in installments?
 - Will any interest be charged if I pay in installments?
 - If I am unable to pay the fee, can it be waived?
12. Is any or all of the fee covered by my private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid?
13. Will your organization seek approval from, and/or file claims with my private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid, or will I need to do it myself?
14. What type of service schedule(s) does your organization offer? (i.e., visits twice a week, every day, etc.) What is your company's policy in case of inclement weather?

DRAFT FINAL CARE PLAN AND DISTRIBUTE IT

Write down the final version of the plan, and make sure that all the information on it is correct. Make sure that the plan includes instructions for inclement weather, power outages, fires, medical emergencies, etc. Include the number for the CDC's poison control center, 911, doctor's and dentist's numbers, etc. Also include the names of each caregiver, along with their address, telephone numbers (work, home, cell, or fax) and e-mail addresses.

Effective and ongoing communication with your loved one's doctor(s) can enhance your relationship with the physician(s). It is helpful to be as prepared for a visit as possible, as it will tell the doctor that you value your loved one's health. It will also encourage him or her to keep you informed. The following are some tips for improving communication with your loved one's doctor(s):

- Write down any symptoms your loved one may be experiencing, along with other pertinent information (time of day, what food or liquid they received and when, their emotional state at the time, etc.). Also write down any questions you may want to ask, or any concerns that you have.
- Regardless of how insignificant you feel the doctor may think it is, **ASK THE QUESTION!** You are guarding your loved one's health, and the doctor may not know about your concerns if you do not discuss them.
- Ask the doctor if the treatment he or she is prescribing is standard for your loved one's condition, or if it is new, controversial or experimental.
- Be sure to discuss the medications that your loved one may take. Ask about any side effects they may experience while taking medication prescribed by the doctor.
- Make sure you know the correct spelling of the name of each medication that your loved one is taking, as well as how many times a day they take it, and the dosage.
- Make a list of all of your loved one's current medications (both prescription and over-the counter (OTC) medicines,) as well as vitamin and mineral supplements. Keep a copy of the list in case you need to provide it to a healthcare provider or care provider.
- Ask if a new medication will interact negatively with your loved one's current medications (both prescription and over-the counter (OTC) medicines,) as well as any vitamin, mineral or herbal supplements.
- Ask if medications can be obtained in "generic" form, as they cost less than brand-name medications.
- Ask the pharmacist for special packaging, such as easy-open caps or child-proof caps, liquids or capsules versus tablets, etc.
- Never give prescription medications to anyone other than the individual for which they were prescribed.

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH PHYSICIAN(S)





General Information

FAMILY CAREGIVER CHECKLIST



Here is a list of the documents and information that you should have prepared for your loved one in case of an emergency:

- ⌘ Emergency Contacts
- ⌘ Doctor information
- ⌘ A list of all medications and allergies
- ⌘ Bank account numbers, types of accounts and the location of banks
- ⌘ Insurance Company, policy numbers, beneficiaries on policies, types of insurance
- ⌘ Deeds and titles to property
- ⌘ Loan information
- ⌘ Social Security and Medicare numbers
- ⌘ Military history, affiliations and papers (discharge paperwork)
- ⌘ The most up to date Will (keep in safe place)
- ⌘ Living will, advanced directive information, or DNR Order
- ⌘ Durable Power of Attorney
- ⌘ Instructions for funeral services/last wishes
- ⌘ Maintain a record of where all important documents are kept

ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

Advance care planning is a process through which people decide what kind of care they want administered to them at the end of their life.

Advance directives are the legal document(s) that individuals share with their health care providers and appropriate family members to make sure that they get the kind of medical treatment they want if they become unable to speak for themselves at any point in their lives. In an advance medical directive (often called a Living Will), a person can:

- Direct that a specific procedure or treatment be provided, such as artificially administered hydration (fluids) or nutrition (feeding);
- Direct that a specific procedure or treatment be withheld; or
- Appoint a person to act as their agent in making health care decisions for them, if it is determined that the person is unable to make health care decisions for themselves. This includes the decision to make anatomical gifts of a specific part or parts of their body via organ and tissue donation, or of all of the body.

According to a survey conducted by AARP, 20-30% of all adults are estimated to have advance directives, yet in nearly 35% of those cases, the documents containing the directives cannot be found when they are needed. Make sure that (if possible) the person you are caring for has an advance medical directive, and that up-to-date copies are provided to their doctor(s) and family members.

You can also document your wishes for the future in areas of your life other than medical care. This process is often referred to as "Personal Planning." AARP has materials to help guide you through this process, as follows:

- Personal Planning Checklist
- Retirement & Finances Guide
- Power of Attorney Materials
- Tools For Life Planning Guide
- Special "Power of Attorney for Child Care" Materials

For more information, visit:
aarp.org/caregiving/financial-legal/



ABUSE & NEGLECT PREVENTION

There are many kinds and varying degrees of abuse and neglect, but they are all painful and destructive. Vigilance is needed to protect persons with disabilities and older adults in the same way that children should be protected.

TYPE OF ABUSE	DEFINITION	WHAT TO LOOK FOR
ABANDONMENT	The desertion of an person by an individual who has assumed responsibility for providing care for that person, or by a person who has physical custody of that person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have been deserted at a hospital, a nursing facility • They have been deserted at a shopping center or public place • They report that they have been abandoned.
NEGLECT	The failure of a caregiver to provide goods or services necessary for the person receiving care to avoid physical harm, mental anguish or mental illness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirt, smell of feces/urine, or other health/safety hazards in their environment • They have rashes, sores, or lice. They are inadequately clothed • If they are malnourished or dehydrated • Medical conditions are going untreated.
FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION	The illegal or improper use of another person's funds, property, or assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual or inappropriate activity in their bank or other accounts. • Signatures on checks/other documents do not resemble the account holder's signature • Recent changes have been made to their Power-of-Attorney. • Numerous unpaid bills or overdue rent. • Care recipient is placed in a nursing home or other residential care facility that does not "agree" with the size of their estate. • They lack amenities, such as TV, personal grooming items or appropriate clothing that their estate could well afford. • They are missing personal belongings such as art, silverware, jewelry or collections of value. • They are deliberately isolated from their friends and family, resulting in the caregiver alone having total control.
PHYSICAL ABUSE	The willful infliction of physical pain or injury.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuts, lacerations, wounds, bruises, welts. • An injury that is incompatible with history. • An injury which has not been cared for. • An injury that is hidden on areas of their body normally covered by clothing. • Poor skin condition or poor skin hygiene. • An absence of hair and/or hemorrhaging below scalp. • Dehydration and/or malnourishment without an illness-related cause. • Weight loss. • Burns from cigarettes, caustic substances, acids, or friction. • Soiled clothes or bedding.

TYPE OF ABUSE	DEFINITION	WHAT TO LOOK FOR
PSYCHOLOGICAL OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE	The infliction of anguish, pain, or distress through verbal or nonverbal acts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express helplessness, anger, or fear. • Are hesitant to talk openly. • Seem confused, disoriented or withdrawn. • Exhibit unusual behavior usually attributed to individuals with dementia (such as sucking, biting, rocking). • Appear agitated or depressed. • Report being verbally/emotionally mistreated.
SELF-ABUSE OR NEGLECT	The failure of an individual to provide for himself or herself because of inattention or a decline in their ability to care for themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are unable to manage personal finances • Are unable to manage activities of daily living, such as personal care, shopping, meal preparation or housework • Self-destructive tendencies, such as considering/attempting suicidal acts, wandering, or refusing medical attention. • Live in dangerous or unsanitary conditions, • Have poor personal health and/or appearance, indicated by the presence of chronic untreated rashes or sores, the smell of feces or urine, etc. • Have changes in intellectual functioning, e.g. confusion, inappropriate or no response, disorientation as to time and place, memory failure, incoherence, etc. • Does not keep medical appointments necessary to treat serious illnesses or conditions.
SEXUAL ABUSE	The infliction of non-consensual sexual contact of any kind. Sexual contact with any person incapable of giving consent is also considered sexual abuse. It includes but is not limited to unwanted touching; all types of sexual assault or battery, such as rape or sodomy; coerced nudity; and sexually explicit photographing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver displays inappropriate affection towards them or makes sexual suggestions or lewd comments to them. • Caregiver has a history of abuse or molestation of others. • There are conflicting accounts of incidents between them and their caregiver. • Bruises around their breasts or genital area. • Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections. • Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding. • Underclothes are torn, stained, or bloody. • They report being sexually assaulted or raped.

REPORTING ABUSE & NEGLECT



WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE OR NEGLECT

If there is immediate danger to the care recipient:

Find a telephone and dial 911. An emergency exists and you need the assistance of police and/or rescue personnel.

If no immediate danger exists:

You still need to report the abuse or neglect. Contact the Virginia Department of Social Services' Adult Protective Services (APS) 24-Hour Hotline toll-free at 1-888-832-3858. For more information on Adult Protective Services, or on reporting abuse to APS, you can request a copy of the materials shown below:

- Adult Protective Services (APS) Brochure
- How to Report Abuse to APS

These materials can also be obtained by

- Visiting the VDA website at: vda.virginia.gov/abuseandfraud.htm#abuseneglect
- Calling your local Department of Social Services and ask for "Adult Protective Services" department. You can find their telephone number in the "blue pages" section of your local telephone directory.
- Contacting the Office for Aging Services (OAS) by calling toll-free 1-800-552-3402 (Nationwide Voice/TTY), or by e-mail to aging@dars.virginia.gov.

LEGAL SERVICES

Some persons with disabilities and older adults experience problems that threaten their autonomy, dignity, health, income, rights and/or security. Many of these problems can either be avoided or resolved by legal intervention.

If you or your loved one is experiencing such a problem, you can call the Virginia Lawyer Referral Service's nationwide toll free number 1-800-552-7977 to get a list of lawyers in your area that may be able to assist you. You can also contact the Legal Aid Helpline at 1-866-534-5243.

If you need more information additional legal resources can be found on page 99.

All Virginia Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) receive Older Americans Act Title-III funds through DARS to offer seniors access to legal services. The AAAs contract with local legal services offices or use staff attorneys to provide the services. Contact your local AAA for legal assistance.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, employees who meet certain eligibility requirements can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period to care for an ill family member.

Check with your employer if you have questions about your eligibility, or visit the federal Department of Labor's web site at: dol.gov/elaws/fmla.htm



MEDICARE

Medicare is the federal health insurance program for people who are 65 or older, some people under 65 with disabilities and people with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). You have options in how you receive your coverage. Once you enroll, you will need to decide if you want to receive your coverage through Original Medicare or Medicare Advantage. Original Medicare includes Part A and Part B. If you want drug coverage, you can add Part D. If you want help with out-of-pocket costs you have the option to add supplemental coverage, such as a Medigap policy. Medicare Advantage, sometimes called Part C, is offered by Medicare approved companies that must follow rules set by Medicare.

Many people believe that Medicare will cover the cost of long-term care, but it does not. There is no long-term non-medical care coverage under Medicare. Medicare does provide limited short-term care after a hospital stay, and will provide home health care services under certain conditions. Coverage is not available for long-term care for chronic illnesses.

Medicare coverage is divided into four parts, as follows:

Medicare Part A

Covers inpatient hospital stays, care in a skilled nursing facility, hospice care, and some home health care. Most people don't pay a monthly premium for Part A. If you don't qualify for premium-free Part A, you can buy Part A.

Medicare Part B

Covers certain doctor's services, outpatient care, medical supplies, and preventive services. Everyone pays a monthly premium for Part B.

Medicare Part C

Part C is an alternative to Original Medicare. Medicare Advantage is offered through Medicare-approved private plans. You must have both Part A and Part B and most plans include Part D. In most cases, you'll need to use doctors who are in the plan's network. Most plans offer extra benefits that Original Medicare doesn't cover such as vision, hearing and dental. There may be a monthly premium for Part C.

Medicare Part D

Helps cover the cost of prescription drugs (including many recommended shots or vaccines). To get coverage you must join a Medicare-approved plan that offers drug coverage. There may be a monthly premium for Part D.

MEDICAID

Medicaid is a program that provides health care insurance for low-income older and disabled adults. It also covers nursing home care for eligible individuals.

For more information, call the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) toll-free at 1-888-734-6433 or visit coverva.org/medicaid/#home.

Who Qualifies for Virginia Medicaid?



Childless adult

Eligible with annual income at or below 133% FPL



Family of 3

Eligible with annual income at or below 133% FPL



Adult with a disability

Eligible with annual income at or below 133% FPL

Medicare Savings Program

Also known as Medicare Buy-In, helps Medicare members with limited income to pay their Medicare premiums, and in some cases, deductibles and co-payments.

The Medicare Savings Programs provide four different levels of assistance depending on an individual's or couple's income.

- *Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program (QMB)*
- *Specified Medicare Beneficiary Program (SLMB)*
- *Qualifying Individuals Program (QI)*
- *Qualified Disabled and Working Individuals Program (QDWI)*

SUPPLEMENTAL COVERAGE

You can get supplemental coverage (like a Medigap) to help pay your remaining out-of-pocket costs (like your 20% coinsurance) or you can use coverage from a former employer or union, or Medicaid. Medigaps are Medicare Supplement Insurance policies sold by private companies. Some Medigap policies also offer coverage for services that Original Medicare doesn't cover, like medical care when you travel outside the U.S.

LONG TERM CARE

Medicare and most health insurance plans, including Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) do not pay for this type of care, sometimes called "custodial care." You may be eligible for this type of care through Medicaid, or you can choose to buy private long-term care insurance.

MEDICARE'S HOSPICE BENEFIT

To qualify for hospice care, a hospice doctor and your doctor (if you have one) must certify that you're terminally ill, meaning you have a life expectancy of 6 months or less. When you agree to hospice care, you are agreeing to palliative care rather than care to cure your illness. You also must sign a statement choosing hospice care instead of other Medicare-covered treatments for your terminal illness and related conditions. For more information on Medicare coverage and benefits, contact your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). You can also visit Medicare's web site at: medicare.gov

ONLINE RESOURCES

VirginiaNavigator

There are thousands of programs and organizations that serve older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, caregivers and their families. You can find them on VirginiaNavigator's website. They are a statewide nonprofit that helps Virginians access the information and services they need, close to home. The web site contains a family of websites that connects you with all sorts of resources close to you! These sites allow you to search for services by zip code, city or county to locate service providers near you. For more information, visit: virginiannavigator.org/



No Wrong Door

No Wrong Door is a person-centered system and statewide network of partners supporting older adults, caregivers, individuals with disabilities, veterans and their families. It uses secure technology to link providers together, to support individuals and families seeking long-term services and supports.

A national leader in supporting older adults, family caregivers, and individuals with disabilities of all ages, No Wrong Door Virginia provides valuable tools to strengthen communities and promote person-centered practices, empowering you to evaluate available options and make informed decisions. For more information, visit: nowrongdoorvirginia.org/

Virginia Family Caregiver Solution Center

The Virginia Family Caregiver Solution Center provides respite resources for parents of children with disabilities, adults with disabilities, and for caregivers of older adults. You can find services in your community, as well as educational information to help you stay emotionally and physically healthy. For more information, visit: vf.virginiannavigator.org/

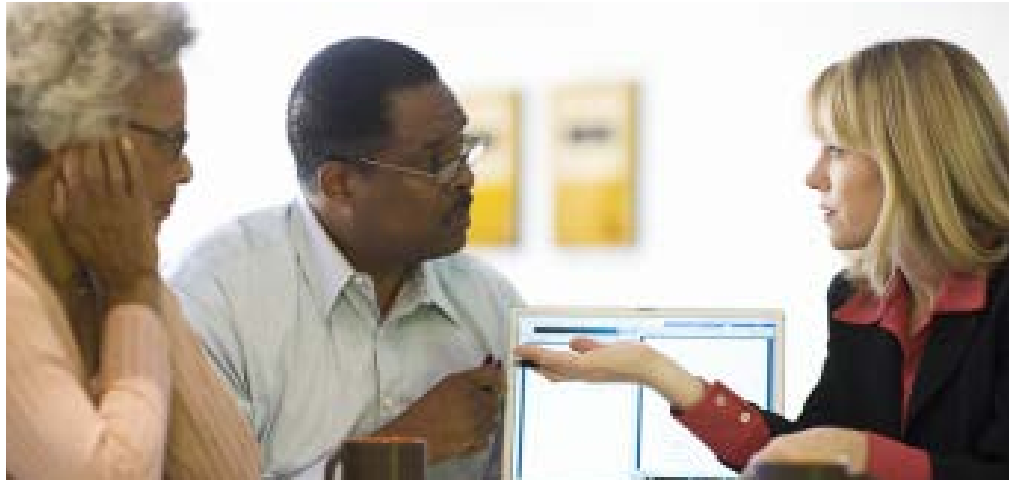


VirginiaNavigator



Virginia Family Caregiver | Solution Center





VIRGINIA INSURANCE COUNSELING AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (VICAP)

Insurance Counseling

Part of a national network of programs (SHIP) that offers FREE, unbiased, confidential counseling and assistance for people with Medicare. VICAP counselors are not licensed to sell insurance. Counselors are trained and certified annually to help you understand and compare benefits, assist with filing for benefits based on income and resources, and inform you of your rights.

Counseling Topics

- Medicare
- Medicare Part D
- Medicare Advantage Plans
- Medigap
- Commonwealth Coordinated Care
- Long-term care insurance

VICAP counselors can help all Medicare beneficiaries, including those under 65 with disabilities explore options that best meet their needs. Counselors will help you compare the quality of care and services given by health and prescription drug plans available in your area.

VICAP counselors can help you file for medical benefits, low-income subsidies, health care appeals and grievances. Working with you, counselors are able to help you resolve health care issues and assist you in understanding complex medical bills.

VICAP works collaboratively with the Senior Medicare Patrol, helping to educate and empower beneficiaries to take an active role in detecting and preventing health care fraud.

NUTRITION

IMPORTANCE OF GOOD NUTRITION

Older Adults and persons with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Because of this, it is especially important that older adults maintain a healthy weight and diet.

Home Delivered Meals

Provides meals and related nutrition services for older individuals who are homebound, such as meals on wheels. This program provides much more than food. It provides a nutritious meal plus a safety check, and sometimes the only opportunity for face-to-face contact an individual has for that day.

Congregate Meals

Provides meals and related nutrition services in congregate (group) settings, such as senior centers, which help to keep older Americans healthy and prevent the need for costlier medical interventions. In addition to serving healthy meals, the program presents opportunities for social engagement, information on healthy aging, and meaningful volunteer roles, all of which contribute to an older individual's overall health and well-being.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

Virginia's Farm Market Fresh program provides eligible seniors with coupons that are exchanged for fresh, tasty, and nutritious produce. Approved farmers at farmers' markets and roadside stands can accept Farm Market Fresh coupons from eligible seniors for locally grown fresh fruit, vegetables and cut herbs. This program also provides nutrition education opportunities that encourage SFMNP recipients to add fresh fruits and vegetables to their diets. Education includes how to select, store and prepare the foods that participants buy with their SFMNP coupons.

Women, Infant, and Children (WIC)

The WIC program provides nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, supplemental nutritious foods, counseling at WIC clinics, and screening and referrals to other health, welfare, and social services.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The SNAP program provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of families in need so they can purchase healthy food and move towards self-sufficiency.

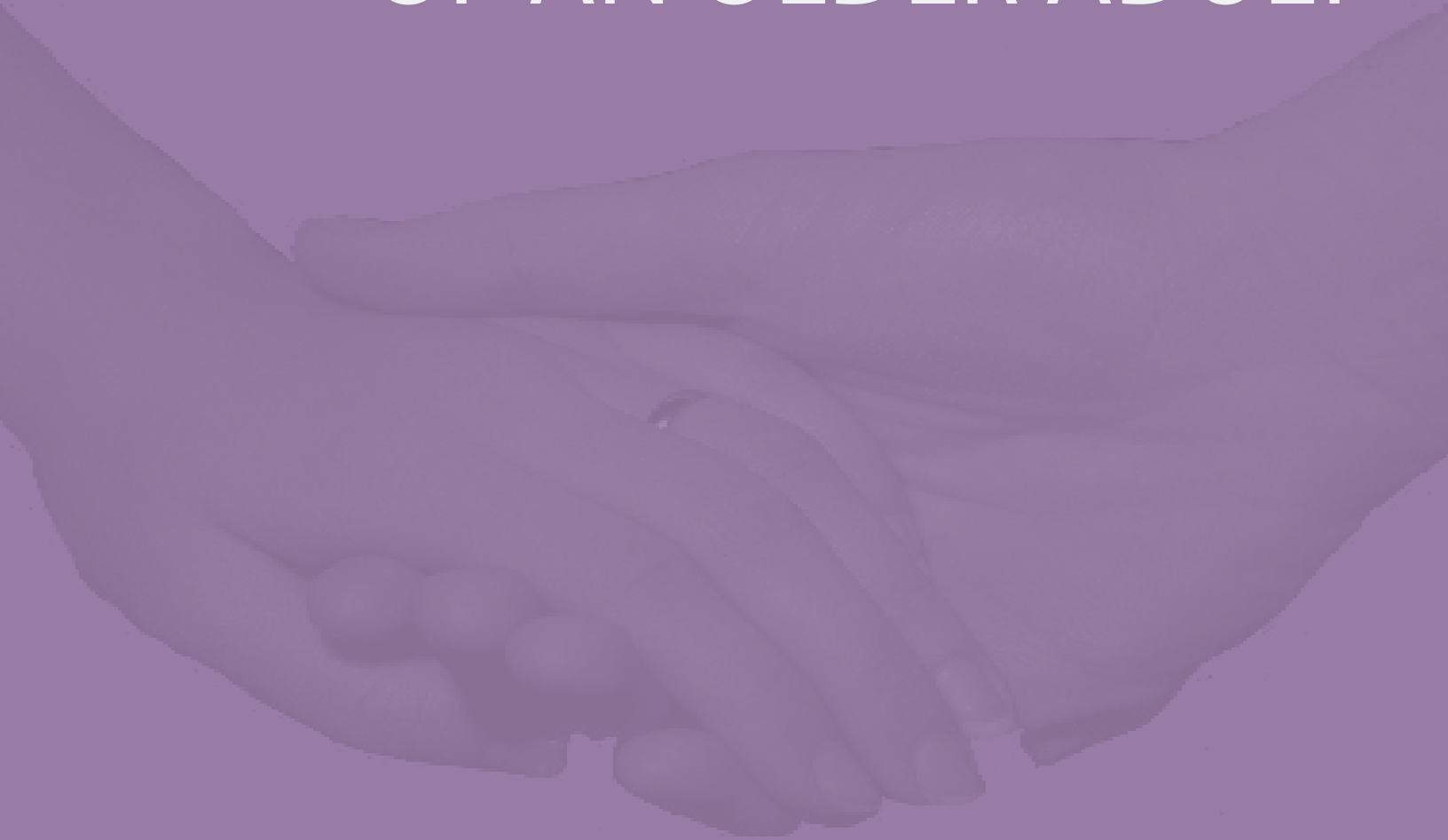
Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP)

CDSMP, developed by Stanford University, is a six week, 2.5 hour workshop that offers tools and information to help people manage their chronic illnesses and participate more fully in life.

For More Information, Please Visit: vda.virginia.gov/nutrition.htm

Taking Care

OF AN OLDER ADULT



1. Include older adult in the decision making process

While they may need you as a caregiver it is still important that they feel in control of their life. You should never make a decision for them. You should make decisions WITH them.

2. Person-Centered Care Planning

It is important to ensure the care plan is person-centered. This will improve success with the care plan and ease of implementation.

3. Share the Caregiving Responsibility

As much you want to care for your loved one, you can't do it all. It is essential to create a caregiving team to assist you in the caring responsibilities.

4. Pay attention to any changes in your loved one

You may have to reevaluate your caregiving situation depending on how your loved one is doing. This includes living arrangement.

5. Stay informed on current caregiving resources

Staying on top of current caregiving resources will ensure that all of your needs are being met. Requirements and eligibility for services can change. Just because you were not eligible at one time does not mean it can't change in the future. By staying up to date with resources you can ensure services are available to you as quickly as possible.

CARING FOR AN OLDER ADULT

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES

AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

There are 25 local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) that provide services for older Virginians. Each AAA serves a defined geographic area within one of five regions in the state. To find the AAA that serves your area, you first need to determine the region of the state in which you live. To find the AAA that serves your region see page 83.

To search for more information online for your local AAA, go to the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging website: vaaaa.org

SOCIAL SECURITY

If you are caring for someone who is 65+ or has a disability you should contact social security. Social Security provides you with a source of income when you retire or if you can't work due to a disability. It can also support your legal dependents (spouse, children, or parents) with benefits in the event of your death.

There are four main types of benefits that the SSA offers:

- *Retirement benefits*
- *Disability benefits*
- *Benefits for spouses or other survivors of a family member who's passed away*
- *Supplemental Security Income (SSI)*



AARP

AARP's mission is to empower people to choose how they live as they age. AARP is an advocacy organization, but they also provide education for older adults on various topics related to aging. This includes:

- Healthy aging
- Family caregiving
- Retirement
- Social Security

For More Information about AARP in the Commonwealth of Virginia visit: states.aarp.org/virginia/

MEDICARE/MEDICAID

Medicare

Medicare is the national health insurance program for people age 65 and older and for some younger persons with disabilities. Medicare only covers a portion of medical costs such as hospitalizations, visits to the doctor, and diagnostic tests. In some cases, it may cover short-term care in a skilled nursing facility and limited home health care. Medicare-approved home health care may include the services of a nurse, physical, speech or occupational therapist, medical social worker or home health aide.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a program that provides health care insurance for low-income older adults and people with disabilities. It also covers nursing home care for eligible individuals. For more information, call the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) toll-free at 1-888-734-6433.

AGENCY ON AGING SERVICES

Services offered at your local Area Agency on Aging serve as excellent resources for your loved one to keep them independent and at home for as long as possible. Not all AAAs offer all services. Go to vaaaa.org for more information.



Care Coordination

Assesses an individual's needs and assists them and/or their family members with locating, applying for, receiving, and coordinating needed services and supports.

Care Transitions

A set of actions designed to ensure the coordination and continuity of health care as patients transfer between different locations or different levels of care within the same location.

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP)

A six week, 2.5 hour workshop that offers tools and information to help people manage their chronic illnesses and participate more fully in life.

Congregate Meals

Provides meals, nutrition services, and social engagement for older adults in congregate (group) settings, which help to keep older Americans healthy and prevent the need for costlier medical interventions. The program also provides information on healthy aging and meaningful volunteer roles.

Home-Delivered Meals

Provides meals and related nutrition services for older individuals who are homebound. The Home-Delivered Nutrition program serves homebound, or isolated individuals who are age 60 and over, and in some cases, their caregivers, spouses, and/or persons with disabilities.

Chore

The performance of tasks such as heavy cleaning, yard work, and removal of ice and snow for individuals who are unable to do it themselves.

Homemaker

Services provide assistance with activities such as light housework, preparing meals, and grocery shopping.

Ombudsman

Serves as an advocate for individuals who receive long-term care services. The program investigates and resolves complaints made by, or on behalf of, older persons in long-term care facilities (nursing homes and licensed adult homes) or who are receiving community-based long-term care services.

Options Counseling

An interactive decision-support process where individuals, with support from family members, caregivers, and /or significant others, are supported in their deliberations to make informed long-term support choices based on their individual preferences, strengths, needs, values, and circumstances.

Personal Care Services

Services provide assistance with critical activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, eating, and toileting. Personal care providers are licensed by the Virginia Department of Health.

Transportation

Transports older adults to and from needed community facilities and resources. Unassisted transportation is typically curb-to-curb while assisted transportation is door-to-door.

Falls are serious public health problems among older Virginians. One in four older Americans falls every year. Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries for people aged 65+.

As a caregiver you can take steps to help your loved one prevent falls. Here are some tips for fall prevention:



FALLS PREVENTION



TIPS TO PREVENT FALLS

EXERCISE!

To maintain strength and flexibility, exercise regularly. Ask a physician about the best type of exercise.

KEEP IT CLEAR!

Halls, stairs and walkways should be kept free of obstacles and clutter, both inside and outside the home.

COMMUNICATE!

Have a conversation with your loved one about their fall risk. Work together to identify whether they may be at risk for a fall and develop an action plan to ensure their safety.

STEP CAREFULLY!

Be careful when going up or down steps, and make sure that stairways are well lighted at both the top and the bottom.

STEP ON IT!

Footwear is important in helping to maintain balance, so shoes should fit well. They should also be sturdy and low-heeled with non-slip soles.

DON'T SLIP!

Be very careful on or around surfaces that may be wet. Use nonskid mats or appliqués on bathtub and shower floors. Install grab bars or railings next to toilets, showers and bathtubs.

THROW IT OUT!

"Throw rugs" can literally "throw you," so make sure that rugs have a rubber, nonskid backing. If not, or if in doubt, get rid of them.

LOOK OUT!

To help prevent falls, have a vision check at least once a year. At night, use night lights to brighten often used paths, such as between the bedroom and bathroom.

HOLD ON!

Do not try to carry too many bags at once. Make more than one trip if necessary.

SLOW DOWN!

Rushing or being distracted increases the chance of falling.

PLAN!

Create a falls prevention action plan to address potential concerns.

HOW TO DEVELOP A FALLS PREVENTION PLAN WITH YOUR LOVED ONE

1. Enlist support in taking steps to stay safe by coming up with a list of friends and family who can help in an emergency.
2. Discuss current health conditions with your loved one and how they are managing these conditions.
3. Note when your loved one's last eye checkup was and make sure they are going regularly.
4. Notice if the person you are caring for is holding onto walls, furniture, or someone else when walking, or if there is difficulty arising from a chair.
5. Talk about medications and make sure they are not making your loved one dizzy.
6. Do a walk-through safety assessment of the home and look for potential fall hazards.
7. Find an appropriate community-based falls prevention program for your loved one to attend. The Area Agencies on Aging offer evidence-based falls prevention programs, such as A Matter of Balance and Bingocize.

For More Information Visit:

ncoa.org/resources/falls-prevention-conversation-guide-caregivers

MATURE DRIVER INFORMATION

MATURE DRIVER SAFETY

VIRGINIA'S GRANDDRIVER PROGRAM

While most mature drivers are good drivers, the physical changes associated with aging can ultimately affect a person's ability to drive safely. Drivers age 65 and older actually have the lowest per capita crash rate. However, the number of crashes that occur per mile driven does increase with age, as does the fatality rate per capita. Drivers in the age 85 and older group have the highest fatality rates per capita among all drivers. To help make people aware of this, Virginia has implemented the information and educational program, Virginia GrandDriver.

The Virginia GrandDriver program provides information about aging and its effects on driving. It urges the driving public - particularly drivers over 65 and their loved ones - to learn more about the common age-related impairments, how it affects their ability to drive, and to talk about the issues involved. For example, mature drivers have a dissimilar set of driving difficulties than do other age groups. Mature driver crashes tend to happen during daylight, in good weather, at low speeds, and close to their homes. They rarely involve alcohol. They often happen at intersections where the mature driver is attempting a left turn, across oncoming traffic, due to delayed reaction time. Other common problems mature drivers experience include:

- Difficulty changing lanes;
- Difficulty backing up;
- Problems turning at intersections;
- Poor judgment about the right-of-way at intersections;
- Impaired interpretation of visual and spatial clues while driving; and
- Impaired interpretation of traffic signs.

In addition, some types of driving are more dangerous than others for older persons, including:

- Driving at dusk, night, and early mornings (dawn);
- Driving in rain, snow, ice, fog, or glare;
- Driving on interstate highways where high speeds are expected and driving too slowly creates a hazard;
- Driving during rush hour or when the roadways are especially congested;
- Driving for long distances where an older driver can become fatigued or disoriented; and
- Driving on two-lane roads that require increased driving skills to pass slower moving vehicles.

WARNING SIGNS

Many mature drivers find that by limiting driving in these situations, they are able to continue to drive to the grocery store, doctor's office, pharmacy, or church as needed without putting themselves or others



unduly at risk. Some signs that you, an older relative or friend may be having problems driving safely are that you/they:

- Are generally nervous about driving;
- Have problems maneuvering through intersections (the lane and turn markings or the various traffic signals are confusing);
- Are nervous about high speed driving, Interstate highway driving, or making left turns at busy intersections;
- Are nervous and have problems safely merging into traffic;
- Have started to bump the curb when turning corners or are having difficulty parking;
- Get lost driving on once-familiar roads;
- React more slowly to traffic situations than you did when you were younger;
- Find gaps in traffic harder to judge;
- Fail to notice traffic lights, stop signs, or other critical highway warning signs, or do not see them until it is too late to respond;
- Are now finding yourself driving on the wrong side of the road or the wrong way down one-way streets; and
- Feel generally overwhelmed in trying to pay attention to traffic lights, road signs, other cars, and pedestrians all at the same time.

DRIVER EDUCATION, EVALUATION & REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

There are a number of clinics that conduct driver assessments, or “comprehensive driver assessments” for mature drivers. These clinics assess a driver’s physical and mental ability to drive safely. They may also be able to recommend simple changes in driving habits that will make driving safer and also recommend simple devices (such as a wide-angle rear-view mirror) that can help drivers continue to drive safely. These assessments are not covered by health insurance. Most programs will charge a fee for this service. However, some clinics, have grants to provide free or low cost assessments.

A partial listing of Driver Education & Evaluation Services in Virginia (with contact information) can be found in the “Resources” section at the end of this book.

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles

Toll Free: 1-866-DMVLINE

(1-866-368-5463) or 1-800-435-5137

2300 West Broad Street

Richmond, VA 23269

Web Site: *dmvnow.com*

Fax: (804) 367-1490

E-mail: use secure form on DMV web site

For more information about Virginia GrandDriver, Visit:

vda.virginia.gov/drivingtransport.htm

granddriver.net

TURNING 75? GO SEE DMV!

Effective January 1, 2015 drivers age 75 and older are required to appear in person at DMV and pass a vision screening before they renew their driver’s licenses. Renewals are for 5 year renewal periods after age 75.

Customers have two vision screening options: they can either take their vision test at DMV or present a screening report completed by an ophthalmologist or optometrist.

The screening must have been conducted within 90 days before the renewal.

With or without corrective lenses, a person’s vision must be 20/40. If a person has vision problems in one eye, an individual must have 20/40 vision in the other eye, with or without corrective lenses.

FIRE PREVENTION

People age 65 and older are twice as likely to die in a home fire as the population at large. You can reduce this risk by having your loved one follow the simple tips shown below.

TIPS TO PREVENT FIRES

Give smokers a large, deep ashtray.

Also, wet cigarettes, cigars and ashes before emptying ashtrays into a trash can. Smokers should never smoke when they are drowsy, in bed or lying down.

Leave adequate space around space heaters.

At least 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including people and pets. Unplug heaters when you shut them off, go to bed, or leave the house.

Be smart in the kitchen.

Wear tight-fitting, rolled-up or short sleeves when cooking. Use oven mitts or pot holders to handle hot pans. Never leave food that is cooking unattended. If a pan of food catches fire, slide a lid over it and turn off the burner. Don't cook if you are drowsy from alcohol or medication.

Remember to Stop, Drop & Roll!

If your clothing catches on fire, STOP, don't run. DROP gently to the ground and cover your face with your hands. ROLL over and over to smother the flames. If you can't do this, smother the flames with a towel or blanket. Immerse burns in cool water for 10 to 15 minutes. Do not apply butter, lotion or any type of ointment to the burns. If the burns are severe, seek medical help immediately.

Get smoke alarms, and keep their batteries fresh.

Have smoke alarms installed outside all sleeping areas and on each level of the home. Test each alarm once a month by pushing the test button. Make sure that everyone in your home can hear the alarms. If a person in your home is hearing-impaired, get visual (flashing) alarms installed as well as audio (sound) alarms. Consider getting and installing carbon monoxide detectors as well.

Plan and practice escape routes, including a predesignated meet-up point.

Know two ways out of every room in the home. Make sure windows and doors open easily, and get emergency escape ladders if necessary. Buy reflective stickers for windows if pets or disabled individuals are in the house, and exchange keys and/ or information with trusted neighbors.

If the house catches on fire, get out and stay out!

If the house is filled with smoke, crawl out as the air nearest to the floor will be the most clear.

Know your local emergency telephone number.

It may be 911 or the fire department's telephone number. Once you have escaped from a fire, call the fire department from a neighbor's telephone or a cell phone. Do not go back into a burning house.

Plan an escape to fit your abilities.

Have a telephone in the bedroom and keep the emergency telephone number near it in case someone is trapped by a fire.

MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

What is Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI)?

According to the Alzheimer's Association, Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) causes cognitive changes that are serious enough to be noticed by the person affected and to family members and friends, but do not affect the individual's ability to carry out everyday activities.

Approximately **15% to 20%** of people age 65 or older have MCI.

What treatment options are there?

Unfortunately, there are no curative treatment options for Mild Cognitive Impairment. The best thing you can do is visit their physician and put supports in place to ensure the safety of your loved one. These supports may include:

- A home health aide or CNA
- Adult Day Services

What are the signs of MCI?

There are two types of MCI, *Amnesic* and *Nonamnesic*.

Amnesic MCI	Nonamnesic MCI
A person may start to forget important information that he or she would previously have recalled easily, such as appointments, conversations or recent events.	A person may begin to lose the ability to make sound decisions, judge the time or sequence of steps needed to complete a complex task, or visual perception.

alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/what-is-dementia/related_conditions/mild-cognitive-impairment

Dementia Services provides assistance across the Commonwealth to persons with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, and their caregivers. The primary role of Dementia Services is to monitor the development and implementation of Virginia's Dementia State Plan by coordinating, facilitating, and supporting the activities of the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission. Additional functions include: Disseminating information, Coordinating services and activities, and Identifying interdisciplinary memory assessment centers.

DEPARTMENT FOR AGING AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

DEMENTIA SERVICES

For More Information Visit:
vda.virginia.gov/dementia.htm

Why Does Socialization Matter?

Research has shown that older adults who engage in social activities have better mental and physical health.



Mental Health



Physical Health

Mental Health Benefits

Studies show that increased social support reduces feelings of loneliness, stress, anxiety, and depression.

Cognitive Benefits

Studies also show that older adults who engage in social interactions more frequently show a slower decline in cognitive abilities.

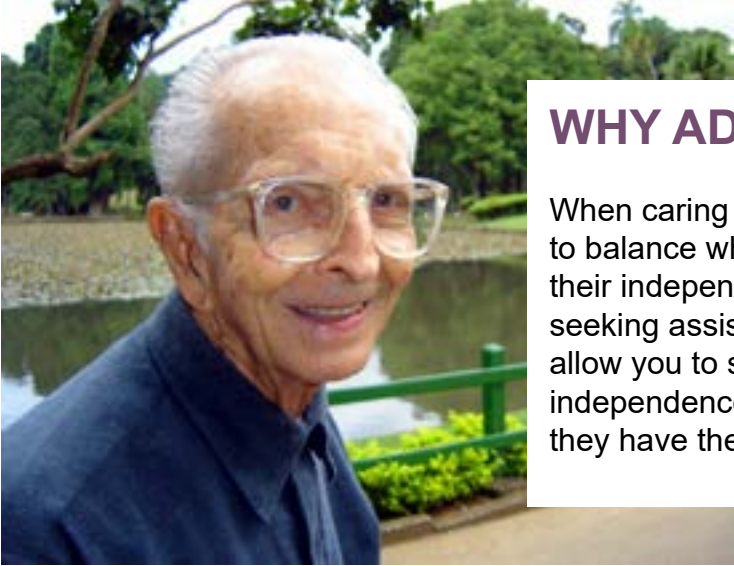
Socialization Programs for Older People

Program	Description	Perfect for...
Congregate Meals	Allows older adults an opportunity to meet people their own age and share a meal. Typically congregate meal programs meet one to two times a week.	Older adults who still have the ability to drive themselves
Buddy Programs	Connects older adults with a “buddy” to come and visit their home. Typically agreed upon between the buddy and the older adult.	Older adults who live alone and may not be able to leave the house.
Senior Centers	Provides older adults with various activities such as group exercise classes, game nights, and educational seminars.	Older adults who want a variety of activities to do throughout the week.
Lifelong Learning Institute	A learning community of peers who are committed to ongoing education and their own intellectual development. Typically offered at a local college or university.	Older adults who are trying to stay mentally active with peers.

**IMPORTANCE
OF
SOCIALIZATION**

For More Information about the Lifelong Learning Institute please visit:

vcoa.chp.vcu.edu/programs/lifelong-learning-institute



WHY ADL/IADLS MATTER

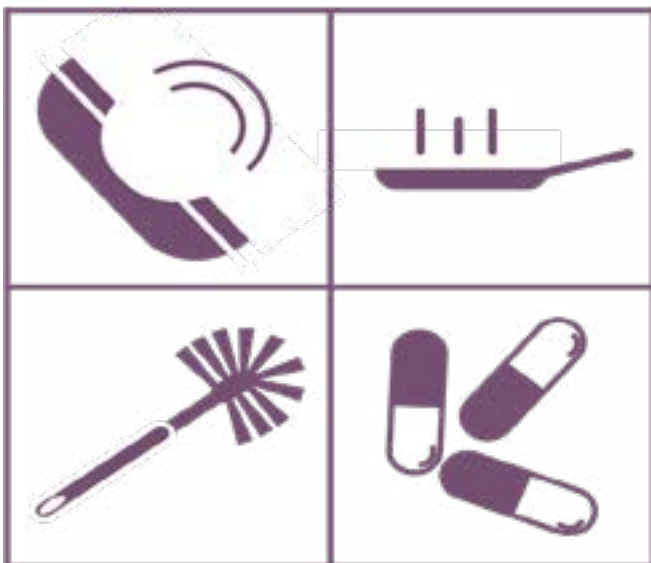
When caring for an older adult it is important to balance where to let the older adult have their independence and where they should be seeking assistance. Evaluation of ADLs and IADLs allow you to safely allow the older adult to keep independence where possible, but still ensure they have the help they need with other areas.

Activities of Daily Living

Includes all activities necessary to get a person ready for the day.

Activities include:

- Walking
- Bathing
- Dressing
- Toileting
- Brushing Hair
- Brushing Teeth
- Eating



Instrumental Activities of Daily Living

Includes more complex activities required for living independently.

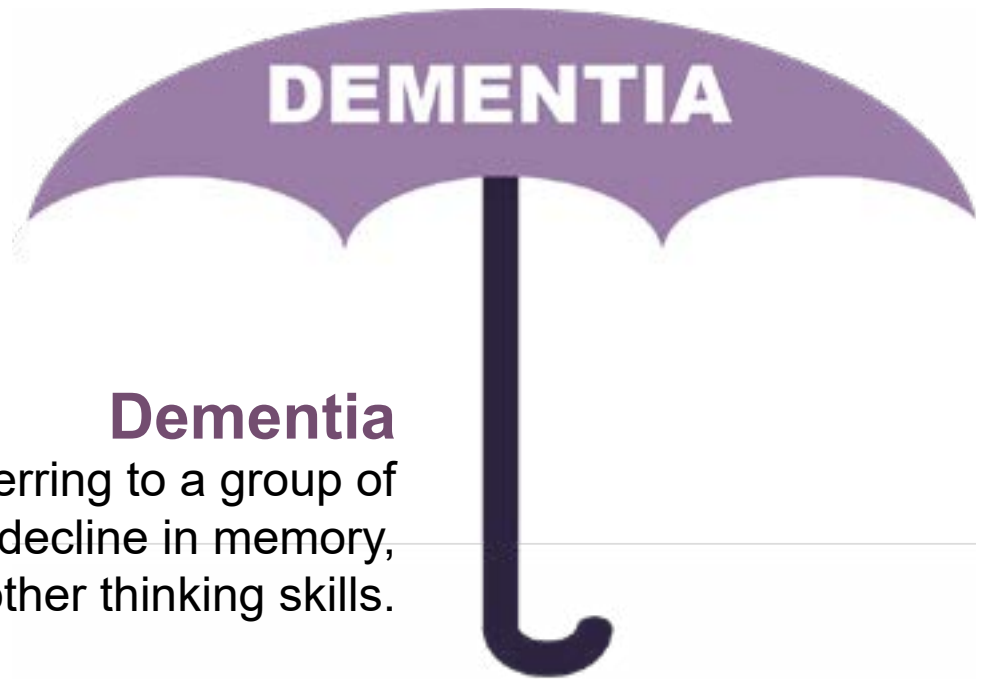
Instrumental Activities include:

- Using the telephone
- Cooking
- Grocery shopping
- House cleaning
- Taking medication
- Using transportation
- Managing finances

Taking Care

OF SOMEONE WITH DEMENTIA





Dementia

is an umbrella term referring to a group of symptoms such as a decline in memory, reasoning or other thinking skills.

These symptoms can be caused by diseases of the brain that include Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal dementia, vascular dementia, and Lewy body dementia. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of the symptoms of dementia. Often individuals are affected by more than one cause of dementia (sometimes known as mixed dementia).

Over time individuals with these conditions experience changes in memory, thought, perception, communication, behavior, mood and personality. As the disease progresses, changes may become apparent in other functional areas such as movement and sleep.

While there are currently few treatments and no cures for many of these diseases, the symptoms of dementia may be caused by other conditions that are treatable or curable, such as thyroid problems or infections. Any concerns with memory or thinking should be shared with a healthcare provider.

Dementia VS. Alzheimer's

According to the Alzheimer's Association:

Dementia describes a group of symptoms associated with a decline in memory, reasoning or other thinking skills.

Alzheimer's is a degenerative brain disease that is caused by complex brain changes following cell damage. It leads to dementia symptoms that gradually worsen over time.

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES

AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

There are 25 local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) that provide services for older Virginians. Each AAA serves a defined geographic area or planning district within one of five regions in the state. To find the AAA that serves your area, you first need to determine the region of the state in which you live. To find the AAA that serves your region see page 83.

To search for more information online for your local AAA, go to the DARS website: vda.virginia.gov/aaamap.htm

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. They provide information, education, and resources to persons with Alzheimer's and other related dementias and their families. They provide the following services:

- Support groups for caregivers and persons living with dementia
- 24/7 Help Line: **(800)-272-3900**
- Early-stage social engagement programs
- Educational programs

In the Commonwealth of Virginia there are 5 Alzheimer's Association Chapters. For more information about services near you visit: alz.org/local_resources/find_your_local_chapter

NO WRONG DOOR

No Wrong Door supports older adults, caregivers, individuals with disabilities, veterans and families. It begins with a network of providers, linked through a secure technology system, allowing your information to be shared safely, with your permission, to quickly and easily connect you to services.

To speak with someone about your questions, you can connect with one of Virginia's 2-1-1 operators 24/7 by dialing "211" on your phone or visiting their website: 211virginia.org/consumer/index.php

SENIORNAVIGATOR

The trusted guide to healthy aging in Virginia. Search for housing options, transportation programs, caregiving resources, and other services for seniors.

SeniorNavigator web site located at seniornavigator.com

DARS DEMENTIA SERVICES

Dementia Services provides assistance across the Commonwealth to persons with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, and their caregivers. The primary role of Dementia Services is to monitor the development and implementation of Virginia's Dementia State Plan by coordinating, facilitating, and supporting the activities of the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission. Additional functions include: Disseminating information, Coordinating services and activities, and Identifying interdisciplinary memory assessment centers.

For more information on DARS Dementia Services visit: vda.virginia.gov/dementia.htm

INSIGHT MEMORY CARE CENTER

A nonprofit adult day health and resource center providing specialized care, support, and education for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other memory impairments, their families, caregivers, and the community. Serves the Northern Virginia area, but does offer some services online.

For more information visit: insightmcc.org/welcome.html

Persons with Dementia may be able to qualify for early social security benefits or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Contact the Social Security Administration:
ssa.gov/

Types of Dementia

Alzheimer's Disease

Occurs with the development of plaques and tangles throughout the brain but especially in areas of the brain responsible for memory. Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia accounting for 60-80% of dementia cases.

Vascular Dementia

Occurs when there is a blockage or reduced blood flow to the brain which deprives the brain of oxygen and nutrients. It is the second most common cause of dementia after Alzheimer's disease, accounting for 5% to 10% of cases.

Mixed Dementia

Occurs when brain changes related to more than one cause of dementia occur simultaneously. The most common form is a combination of the abnormal proteins in Alzheimer's disease coexisting with blood vessel problems linked to vascular dementia.

Lewy Body Dementia

Occurs when protein deposits, called Lewy bodies, develop in the brain regions involved in thinking, memory and movement (motor control). Lewy body dementia is the third most common cause of dementia, accounting for 5% to 10% of cases.

Parkinson's Disease Dementia

Occurs in people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease due to abnormal microscopic deposits composed of alpha-synuclein proteins. It is estimate that 50% to 80% of those with Parkinson's experience dementia.

alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/what-is-dementia/types-of-dementia



Dementia Caregiving

Caring for a loved one with dementia can be difficult. According to the CDC, Caregivers of people with Alzheimer's and related dementias provide care for a longer duration than caregivers of people with other types of conditions (79% versus 66%). They also report that well over half (57%) of family caregivers of people with Alzheimer's and related dementias provide care for four years or more.

The demands of caregiving can limit a caregiver's ability to take care of themselves. Family caregivers of people with Alzheimer's and related dementias are at greater risk for

- anxiety,
- depression,
- poorer quality of life

For More Information, Visit: cdc.gov/aging/caregiving/alzheimer.htm

10 WARNING SIGNS OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE



Dementia is not a normal part of aging. If you notice any of these changes in your loved one, it may be time to discuss your concerns with a healthcare professional. It may or may not be Alzheimer's.

Confusion with time or place

Withdrawal from work or social activities

Memory loss that disrupts daily life

Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships

Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps

Difficulty completing familiar tasks

Changes in mood and personality

Challenges in planning or solving problems

New problems with words in speaking or writing

Decreased or poor judgment

THE STAGES OF DEMENTIA

Diagnosis	Stage	Signs and Symptoms	Expected Duration in Stage
No Dementia	Stage 1: No Cognitive Decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Normal function – No memory loss 	N/A
No Dementia	Stage 2: Very Mild Cognitive Decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Forgets names – Misplaces familiar objects – Symptoms not evident to loved ones or doctors 	Unknown
No Dementia	Stage 3: Mild Cognitive Decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increased forgetfulness – Slight difficulty concentrating – Decreased work performance – Gets lost more frequently – Difficulty finding right words – Loved ones begin to notice 	2 to 7 years
Early Stage	Stage 4: Moderate Cognitive Decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Difficulty concentrating – Forgets recent events – Cannot manage finances – Cannot travel alone to new places – Difficulty completing tasks – In denial about symptoms – Socialization problems: Withdraw from friends/family – Physician can detect cognitive problems 	2 years
Mid-Stage	Stage 5: Moderately Severe Cognitive Decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Major memory deficiencies – Needs assistance with ADLs (dressing, bathing, etc.) – Forgets details like address or phone number – Doesn't know time or date – Doesn't know where they are 	1.5 years
Mid-Stage	Stage 6: Severe Cognitive Decline (Middle Dementia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cannot carry out ADLs without help – Forgets names of family members – Forgets recent events – Forgets major events in past – Difficulty counting down from 10 – Incontinence (loss of bladder control) – Difficulty speaking – Personality and emotional changes – Delusions, Compulsions, Anxiety 	2.5 years
Late-Stage	Stage 7: Very Severe Cognitive Decline (Late Dementia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cannot speak or communicate – Requires help with most activities – Loss of motor skills – Cannot walk 	1.5 to 2.5 years

DEMENTIA-RELATED BEHAVIORS

Dementia varies widely by person and specific disease. There is no “typical” case of dementia, but there are some common challenges that can occur. Dementia-related behaviors can often be better understood as attempts to communicate. Understanding the underlying message, such as “I am in pain,” can help you address the behaviors.

WANDERING

Persons living with dementia can experience wandering when they leave their home and get lost or forget where they are. This can be a traumatic and dangerous experience for the person with dementia and their loved ones. It is important to have safety precautions in place to prevent this from occurring.

For more information on wandering and getting lost visit: vda.virginia.gov/downloads/Dementia%20Fact%20Sheet__Getting%20Lost.pdf

HALLUCINATIONS

Sometimes persons living with dementia can hallucinate; they may see or hear things or people that are not actually there. This can be concerning, but it is important that you reassure the person and try to join them in their reality. If the hallucinations are distressing to the individual, discuss the issue with a healthcare professional.

For more information on hallucinations visit: vda.virginia.gov/downloads/Dementia%20Fact%20Sheet__Hallucinations.pdf

SUNDOWNING

Persons living with dementia or Alzheimer’s can experience increased difficulty as the day progresses. This is referred to as “sundowning” because it typically happens later in the day or as the sun goes down. Often sundowning manifests as an increase in confusion, an increase in anxiety, and an increase in agitation. It is important to try to keep your loved one calm, and comfort them as much as possible.

For more information on sundowning visit: vda.virginia.gov/downloads/Dementia%20Fact%20Sheet__Sundowning.pdf

ANGER & FRUSTRATION

Many people living with dementia can become easily agitated and frustrated, particularly if they are unable to communicate verbally. They may lash out due to their anxiety and confusion. While you want to comfort your loved one, it is also important to protect yourself and make sure you do not feel unsafe.

For more information on anger & frustration visit: vda.virginia.gov/downloads/Dementia%20Fact%20Sheet__Anger%20Frustration%20Fighting.pdf

REPETITIVE SPEECH

It is extremely common for persons living with dementia to repeat themselves and ask questions multiple times. While this can be frustrating for you, it is important to remember that your loved one is not doing this behavior on purpose, and may be even more frustrated from not being able to remember.

For more information on repeating visit: vda.virginia.gov/downloads/Dementia%20Fact%20Sheet__Repeating.pdf

Taking Care

OF SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY



SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING

What is Supported Decision Making?

Supported decision making allows people with disabilities to make their own choices with the assistance of supporters. The supporters do not make the decisions for them, but instead help the person living with a disability to make choices themselves.

Who Should Assist in Supported Decision Making?

Supporters can include friends, family members, or professionals. Really anyone can be a supporter as long as they have the person's best interest at heart!

What do Supporters Do?

Supporters help the person with a disability understand, consider, and communicate decisions. They give advice and often provide the person with a disability the tools they need to make their own, informed, decisions.

What is a Supported Decision-Making Agreement?

This is an agreement between the person with a disability and their supporter which states the supporter will provide assistance to the person with a disability in the decision-making process. It is not a contract, but an authorization.

Why would someone need a Supported Decision-Making Agreement?

Sometimes doctors, lawyers, or other professionals do not believe that the person with a disability has the capacity to make their own decisions. This agreement clarifies these worries and assures them that the person is able to make their own informed and supported choices.

For More Information, Visit
aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/faq_about_supported_decision_making.pdf



ESSENTIAL RESOURCES

Centers for Independent Living (CILS)

CILS provide an array of independent living services. They are places of action and coalition where people with disabilities develop skills for empowerment, independence, and productivity and advocate for integration and full inclusion.

For more information, visit: vadars.org/cbs/cils.htm

Personal Assistance Services (PAS)

Provides assistance with non-medical activities of daily living such as bathing, toileting, dressing, transferring, food preparation, feeding, and ambulation. This program supplements the cost of these assistant services.

For more information, visit: vadars.org/cbs/pas.htm

Brain Injury Association of Virginia (BIAV)

The Brain Injury Association of Virginia is the primary source of information and personal support for thousands of individuals, families, and professionals living in Virginia whose lives have been touched by a life-altering, often devastating brain injury.

For more information about the services BIAV offers, please visit: biav.net/services

Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center (WWRC)

WWRC is a vocational-educational facility which is operated under the scope and mission of the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), specifically the Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS). They provide various services that prepare persons with disabilities for the workforce.

For More Information about WWRC, please visit: wwrc.net



disAbilityNavigator

The best way to find disability services in Virginia, including personal assistance, accessible housing, benefits and more.

disAbilityNavigator web site:
disabilitynavigator.org



CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING



What is a CIL?

A consumer-controlled, cross-disability, nonresidential, private nonprofit agency. CILs are designed and operated within a local community by people with disabilities – 51% of staff and board have significant disabilities.

CILs provide an array of independent living services. They are places of action and coalition where people with disabilities develop skills for empowerment, independence, and productivity and advocate for integration and full inclusion.

Where are CILs located?

Each CIL serves a Virginia planning district. There are 17 CILs and 3 satellite CILs currently. 3 planning districts are completely unserved and 1 is partially unserved.

For more information, visit:
vadars.org/cbs/cils.htm

All CILs provide core services to people with significant disabilities (consumers) to support their independent living goals:

- Information and referral
- Peer counseling
- Independent living skills training
- Individual and systems advocacy
- Transition services for youth and people living in institutions
- Diversion services that prevent institutionalization

CILs also provide many other services that consumers determine they need including, but not limited to:

- Assistive technology
- Housing and home modifications
- Vocational support
- Personal assistance services
- Transportation (e.g. using transit systems, travel support)

In addition to consumers, CILs also provide many services to others in the community including, but not limited to:

- Information and referral
- Disability awareness and education programs
- Technical assistance
- Accessibility surveys and consultation
- Resolving disputes

GUARDIANSHIP



Guardianship over a loved one is a very serious decision that should take careful consideration. Before becoming someone's legal guardian, you should educate yourself about the responsibilities involved in being your loved one's full-time decision maker.

Once you decide if guardianship is the right path for your caregiving situation, there are a few steps you should take to gain guardianship of someone with a disability:

STEPS TO BECOME THE APPOINTED GUARDIAN OF AN ADULT

You must fully comply with all the requirements of Chapter 20 of the Code of Virginia to include:

Petition

The first step is filing a petition for the appointment of a guardian or conservator. This petition should be filed in the county in which the person with a disability lives or where he/she lived immediately before moving to a nursing home, assisted living facility, or other institution.

Guardian Ad Litem

On the filing of every petition for guardianship or conservatorship, the court shall appoint a Guardian Ad Litem to represent the interests of the individual with disabilities. The Guardian Ad Litem looks into the statements in the petition and they file a report with the Court.

Evaluation Report

The petitioner must provide a report that the person with a disability is incapacitated and needs the assistance of a Guardian or Conservator.

Hearing

The court or the jury, if a jury is requested, shall hear the petition for the appointment of a guardian or conservator. If, after considering the evidence presented at the hearing, the court or jury determines on the basis of clear and convincing evidence that the respondent is incapacitated and in need of a guardian or conservator, the court shall appoint a suitable person to be the guardian.

Court Order

The court's order appointing a guardian or conservator (1) addresses the extent of the person's incapacity, (2) defines the powers and duties of the guardian, (3) specifies whether the appointment of a guardian or conservator is limited to a specified length of time, (4) specifies any legal disabilities of the person related to incapacity findings, and (5) when a petition is filed before the incapacitated person's 18th birthday, the order will take effect immediately upon entry or on the incapacitated person's 18th birthday.

Qualification

A guardian or conservator appointed in the court order shall qualify before the clerk upon the following: (1) Subscribing to an oath promising to faithfully perform the duties of a guardian, (2) Posting of bond, as ordered by the court; and (3) Official acceptance in writing by the guardian.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY



CASE MANAGEMENT

A process of assisting an adult or child with a brain injury and their support network with identifying his/her needs and developing plans to address those needs.

- Based on the identified needs, a case manager connects and/or coordinates referrals to the appropriate community resources.
- Follow up with individuals to make sure that they are getting the supportive services that they need.
- Case Management can be delivered in the person's home and community.
- Case Management services are available for as long as the individual needs or requests them.

BRAIN INJURY CLUBHOUSE

Clubhouses are a place for individuals with brain injuries to participate in a supportive work-ordered day. These programs operate 5 days a week with the primary focus of assisting individuals with brain injuries to lead productive lives. This is achieved through skill building, volunteerism, vocational exploration, and Employment Development Services (EDS).



DAY PROGRAMS

Day Programs are typically more educational and social in nature than a Clubhouse Program and may also offer volunteering and other community participation activities. The therapeutic-but non-medical-environment of these programs aids in physical, cognitive, and emotional recovery, while enhancing socialization skills which contribute to an individual's ability to function more successfully in community and work settings. Programs operate 5 days a week and provide educational, vocational, and therapeutic social environments for survivors of brain injury.



HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL SUPPORTS

Many of the community-based brain injury programs across Virginia help survivors find housing through their Case Management programs.

- Only a few provide residential supports directly.
- Some, like Virginia Supportive Housing in Richmond and the BridgeLine in Charlottesville have housing with staff onsite to provide assistance, as needed.
- Brain Injury Services in Northern Virginia contracts with an outside agency to provide limited in-home support and life skills training.

PERSONAL ASSISTANT SERVICES

PAS - sometimes called attendant care – is the provision of assistance with non-medical activities of daily living which includes – but is not limited to - bathing, toileting, dressing, transferring, food preparation, feeding, and ambulation.

PAS is provided to individuals with physical disabilities. This includes:

- spinal cord injury,
- cerebral palsy,
- muscular dystrophy,
- brain injury

Individuals must meet required PAS general eligibility and demonstrate functional limitations in performing multiple activities of daily living (ADLs).

PAS does not directly provide these services to individuals, but *supplements* the cost of this consumer-directed program.

PAS consumers are empowered through self-direction to recruit, hire, schedule, and direct the personal care they receive as the employers of record of their own personal assistants.

PAS for People with Brain Injury (PAS/BI) requires a consumer-designated representative to assist with management of attendant care.

Personal Assistance Services strive to support individuals in carrying out activities of daily living... As the Employer of Record, PAS services recognize the individuals right to choose and provides support where needed.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION
GO TO:**

vadars.org/cbs/pas.htm

WILSON WORKFORCE AND REHABILITATION CENTER (WWRC)

WWRC is a vocational-educational facility which is operated under the scope and mission of the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), specifically the Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS). WWRC accepts applications of any individual with a disability whose needs are compatible with the structure, staff, and other WWRC resources.

Postsecondary Education Rehabilitation Transition (PERT) Program

Assists students in their transition from high school to post secondary options

Vocational Training

Prepares clients for employment, higher education, and/or other career development goals by maximizing their employment, occupational, and self-sufficiency skills.

Vocational Evaluation

Identifies and assesses a client's vocational interests, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, aptitudes, and functional needs relative to employment goals.

Pre-employment Readiness and Education Program (PREP)

Exposes clients to soft skills that support a client's ability to secure entry level employment; develops an awareness of personal interactions that may impact employment; expands interpersonal, personal management and practical living skills that increase potential for living more independently.

Rehabilitation Counseling

Provides guidance and counseling during a client's program.

Medical Rehabilitation Services

Available for individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities, such as those related to spinal cord injury, stroke, traumatic brain injury or other neurological or orthopedic conditions. Comprehensive treatment programs are coordinated by a medical case manager and may include a vocational evaluation. WWRC also provides assistive technology services for DARS referred individuals.

WWRC Residency Options

- *Dormitories:* The majority of WWRC clients live in either Barnett or Carter-Ashley Halls. Each dormitory suite consists of three or four bedrooms with shared bath. Clients may have a roommate depending upon enrollment at their time of admission.
- *Rothrock Hall:* Clients who require assistance with medical needs or personal daily living skills may reside in Rothrock Hall where they have access to 24/7 nursing assistance. Wireless Internet access is available in each client's room.
- *Transitional Living Cottages:* Clients who are nearing the end of their vocational training program and are ready to transition back to the community may apply to live in one of WWRC's five transitional cottages. Cottage living provides those that have never lived on their own experience in maintaining their home, shopping, and cooking their own meals. Space is limited and is on a first come, first served basis for eligible candidates.



Taking Care

OF A CHILD WITH AUTISM



CARING FOR A CHILD WITH AUTISM

1. Get your child out in the community

Do not hide your child away from the outside world! Get them into the community and going out and doing things. The more they are exposed to new experiences the easier it will be for them... and for you!

2. Join a support group

Support groups are excellent opportunities to meet people in similar caregiving situations to your own. Support groups allow you to share ideas and stories.

3. Share the Caregiving Responsibility

As much you want to care for your child by yourself, you can't do it all. It is essential to create a caregiving team to assist you in the caring responsibilities.

4. Tackle the big issues one at a time

You can only eat an elephant one bite at a time! Tackle issues one at a time so you do not overwhelm yourself or frustrate your child!

5. Educate your friends and family

Let your friends and family know about your caregiving situation. The more they understand the better equipped they will be to help you when the time comes!

6. Take care of yourself!

You can't care of someone else if you don't take care of yourself first! Make sure you take time to get out without your child. Hire a babysitter regularly to give you a break!

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES

AUTISM SPEAKS

Autism Speaks is an advocacy and support organization aiming to increase understanding and acceptance of people with autism; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions. They provide a lot of education and resources for persons with autism and their caregivers. For more information about the education they provide please visit: autismspeaks.org

MEDICAID

Medicaid is a program that provides health care insurance for low-income older and disabled adults. It also covers nursing home care for eligible individuals. For more information, call the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) toll-free at 1-888-734-6433.

disAbilityNavigator

The best way to find disability services in Virginia, including personal assistance, accessible housing, benefits and more.

disAbilityNavigator web site:
disabilitynavigator.org

DARS AUTISM SERVICES

DARS Autism Services program helps individuals on the autism spectrum prepare for the world of work through Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) practices, evidence-based services, meaningful collaboration, and access to providers.

For more information on DARS Autism Services, please visit:
vadars.org/drs/autismservices.htm

SOCIAL SECURITY

If you are caring for someone who is 65+ or has a disability, you should contact Social Security. Social Security provides you with a source of income when you retire or if you can't work due to a disability. It can also support your legal dependents (spouse, children, or parents) with benefits in the event of your death.

There are four main types of benefits that the SSA offers:

- *Retirement benefits*
- *Disability benefits*
- *Benefits for spouses or other survivors of a family member who's passed*
- *Supplemental Security Income (SSI)*

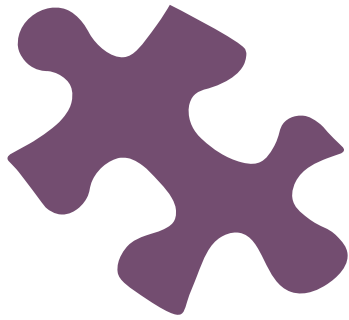
AUTISM SOCIETY

Autism Society provides education, advocacy, services, and support for individuals with autism, their families and friends, and professionals. They provide information, host support groups, hold educational workshops, and provide scholarships for persons with autism to participate in recreational programs in the community.

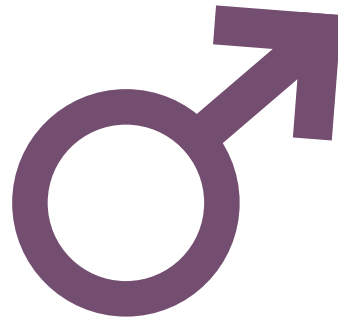
For more information about resources for persons with autism please visit:
ascv.org/resources/resource-directory/

WHAT IS AUTISM?

According to the Autism Society, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can be defined as, “a lifelong developmental disability that impacts an individual’s ability to communicate, interpret language, and interact with others.”



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that as many as **1 in every 54 children** in the United States has autism.



Autism is seen in all racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds, but prevalence rates suggest it is more common in **boys**.

It is common for autism to be looked at in a negative light. But it is important to remember that there are also strengths associated with having autism. Altogether Autism developed a list of potential strengths that persons with autism have such as:

- Learning to read at a very early age (known as hyperlexia).
- Memorizing and learning information quickly.
- Thinking and learning in a visual way.
- Logical thinking ability.
- May excel (if able) in academic areas such as science, engineering and mathematics as they are technical and logical subjects that do not heavily rely on social interaction.
- Having an extraordinarily good memory (being able to remember facts for a long period of time).
- Being precise and detail oriented.
- Exceptional honesty and reliability.
- Being dependable in regards to schedules and routines.
- Having an excellent sense of direction.
- Be very punctual.
- Strong adherence to rules.
- Able to concentrate for long periods of time when motivated.
- A drive for perfection and order.
- A capability for alternate problem solving.
- A rare freshness and sense of wonderment.

For More Information, Please Visit:

altogetherautism.org.nz/strengths-and-abilities-in-autism/

STRENGTHS

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

People with ASD often have problems with social, emotional, and communication skills. They might repeat certain behaviors and might not want change in their daily activities. Many people with ASD also have different ways of learning, paying attention, or reacting to things. Signs of ASD begin during early childhood and typically last throughout a person's life.

CHILDREN OR ADULTS WITH ASD MIGHT:

- ⚠ not point at objects to show interest (for example, not point at an airplane flying over)
- ⚠ not look at objects when another person points at them
- ⚠ have trouble relating to others or not have an interest in other people at all
- ⚠ avoid eye contact and want to be alone
- ⚠ have trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about their own feelings
- ⚠ prefer not to be held or cuddled, or might cuddle only when they want to
- ⚠ appear to be unaware when people talk to them, but respond to other sounds
- ⚠ be very interested in people, but not know how to talk, play, or relate to them
- ⚠ repeat or echo words or phrases said to them, or repeat words or phrases in place of normal language
- ⚠ have trouble expressing their needs using typical words or motions
- ⚠ not play "pretend" games (for example, not pretend to "feed" a doll)
- ⚠ repeat actions over and over again
- ⚠ have trouble adapting when a routine changes
- ⚠ have unusual reactions to the way things smell, taste, look, feel, or sound
- ⚠ lose skills they once had (for example, stop saying words they were using)

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF AUTISM?

For More Information, Visit:
cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/signs.html

The Autism Spectrum

Autism Spectrum Disorder is just that, a spectrum! Persons living with ASD can require a lot of support or very little support depending on the severity of their disability.

The following chart breaks down the different levels of the spectrum:

Severity Level	Support Required	Persons In this Level....
Level 3	Requires very substantial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have significant difficulties with social skills. • Have restrictive or repetitive behaviors that get in the way of functioning independently and successfully with everyday activities. • May not communicate verbally or use many words. • Struggle with unexpected events. • May be overly or under sensitive to particular sensory input. • Have restrictive or repetitive behaviors such as rocking, echolalia, spinning things, or other behaviors that preoccupy their attention.
Level 2	Requires substantial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have more difficulty with social skills. • May or may not communicate verbally. If they do, their conversations may be very short or only on specific topics or they may need extensive support in order to participate in social activities. • May not make much eye contact. • May not express emotions through tone of voice or through facial expressions. • Struggle with restrictive or repetitive behaviors. • May become upset if routines or habits get interrupted.
Level 1	Requires support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May struggle in social situations. • May have some concerns with restrictive or repetitive behaviors. • Only requires minimal support to help them function in their day to day activities. • Most likely able to communicate verbally. • May be able to have some relationships. • May struggle maintaining a conversation. • Prefer to stick to established routines and feel uncomfortable with changes or unexpected events.

For More Information, Visit:

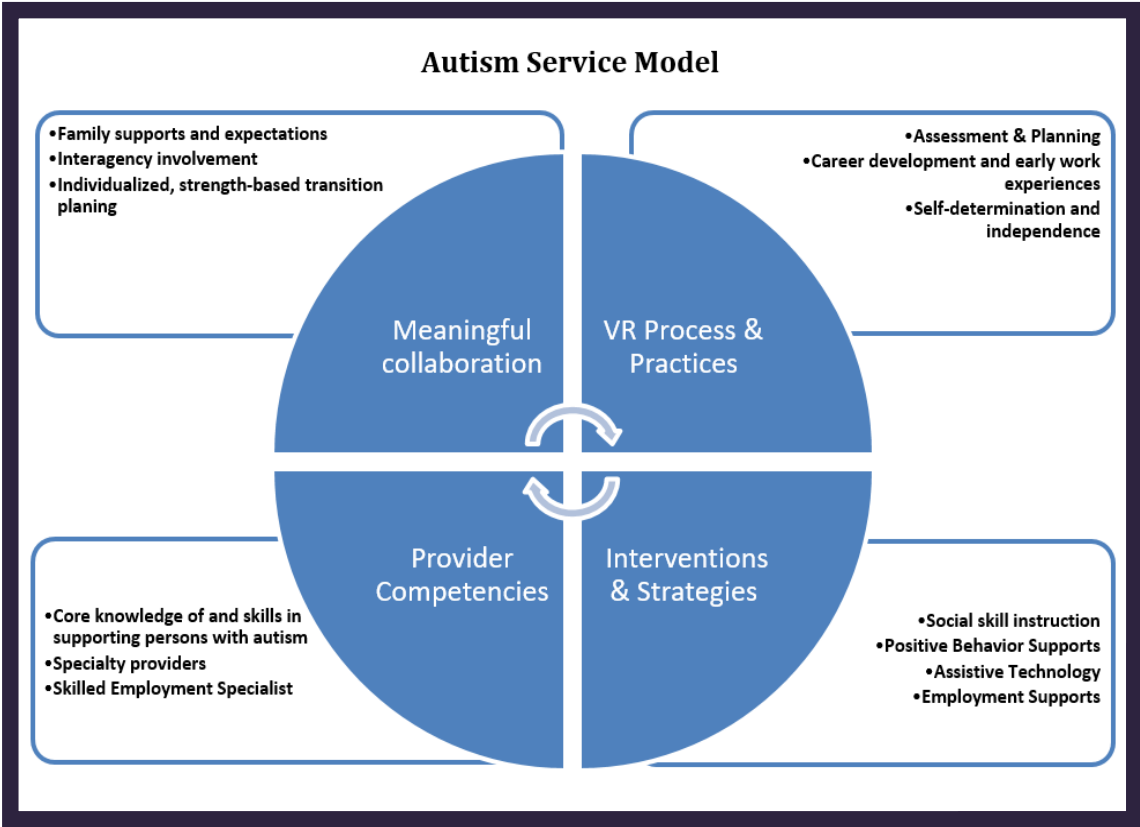
pro.psychcentral.com/child-therapist/2019/11/levels-of-autism-understanding-the-different-types-of-asd/

DARS AUTISM SERVICES

The DARS Autism Services program helps individuals on the autism spectrum prepare for the world of work through a comprehensive model that incorporates effective VR practices, evidence based services, meaningful collaboration, and access to providers with essential expertise, knowledge and skills for working with persons with autism.

When it comes to maintaining a workforce that includes people with disabilities, the most successful employment settings take advantage of individuals' strengths and abilities while simultaneously supporting them in areas where they are challenged. Our innovative model promotes a team-based process that is uniquely tailored for individuals with autism. The result is a program designed around strengths and needs that promotes success at work and builds pathways to self-sufficiency and independence.

The team-based model includes the designated ASME, assistive technology expert, and agency vendors of Supported Employment, Community Support Services, and Therapeutic Behavior Services. A template of tools is available to guide you through the assessment, planning, and service coordination process and to promote consistency of processes across all regions and offices. This includes a digital community-based assessment and planning tool to help with identifying strengths, interests, abilities, and challenges across multiple domains, as well as recommendations for services and supports.



For More Information, Visit:
vadars.org/drs/autismservices.htm

SCHOOL RESOURCES

According to Autism Speaks, learning about your child's legal rights in regard to school is pivotal in advocating for their education. Knowing what options are available, who to contact, and which program is best for your child is key for their success. Here are a few must-know facts when considering the best school option for your child:

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)

Mandates that the state provide all eligible children with a free and appropriate public education that meets their unique individual needs.

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Your child is entitled to an education that is tailored to his or her special needs and a placement that will allow them to make educational progress.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Placed in the environment in which he or she has the greatest possible opportunity to interact with children who do not have a disability and to participate in the general education curriculum. This is commonly referred to as mainstreaming or inclusion.

Early Intervention Services (EI)

Aimed at minimizing the impact of disabilities on the development of a child. Services for a child may include, but are not limited to, speech and language instruction, occupational therapy, physical therapy, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and psychological evaluation. Services for families may include training to help reinforce the affected child's new skills and counseling to help the family adapt. For Early Intervention Services, if a child is under the age of three, call the local Early Intervention Agency.

Special Education

Special education services pick up where early intervention services leave off, at age 3. Your local school district provides these services through their special education department. The focus of special education is different from that of early intervention. For Special Education Services, if a child is three or older, contact the local school district.

For More Information, Visit:

autismspeaks.org/au-tism-school-your-childs-rights

doe.virginia.gov/special-ed/index.shtml



INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM (IFSP)

The Individual and Family Support Program (IFSP) assists individuals with developmental disabilities and their families with accessing person-centered and family-centered resources, supports, services and other assistance. The program's primary target population is individuals on the waiting list for Virginia's Developmental Disabilities (DD) Medicaid waivers.

IFSP helps individuals and families by providing:

- financial assistance,
- education, Information, and referrals,
- family mentoring, and
- support for community action

For More Information about IFSP, please visit:

www.dbhds.virginia.gov/developmental-services/ifsp

My Life, My Community

My Life, My Community is an online tool that helps people with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families answer basic questions about services and supports and where to go to find help.

This website is a one-stop, searchable website to help you find resources in your community.

You can use this site to find information about:

- Virginia's waiver options for people with developmental disabilities
- Assistance with finding housing options in your community
- Information about providers who can assist with your service needs
- Connections to support networks of families and individuals with developmental disabilities across Virginia.

Visit the My Life, My Community web page at mylifemycommunityvirginia.org

Applying for Waivered Services

According to the Virginia Department of Medicaid Assistance Services, parents should keep the following guidelines in mind when applying for Medicaid:

- If determined eligible and a slot is made available to the child, only the child's income is considered: parent income is never considered for Medicaid Waiver eligibility.
- The child's Medicaid eligibility must be reviewed every 12 months.
- The child must have a disability determination performed by Disability Determination Services (Social Security) before age 18.
- The child's level of care must be reviewed annually to ensure he/she continues to meet functional eligibility to receive waiver services.

There are two types of waivers provided by Virginia Medicaid:

- Developmental Disability Waivers (DDW)
- Commonwealth Coordinated Care (CCC) Plus Waiver

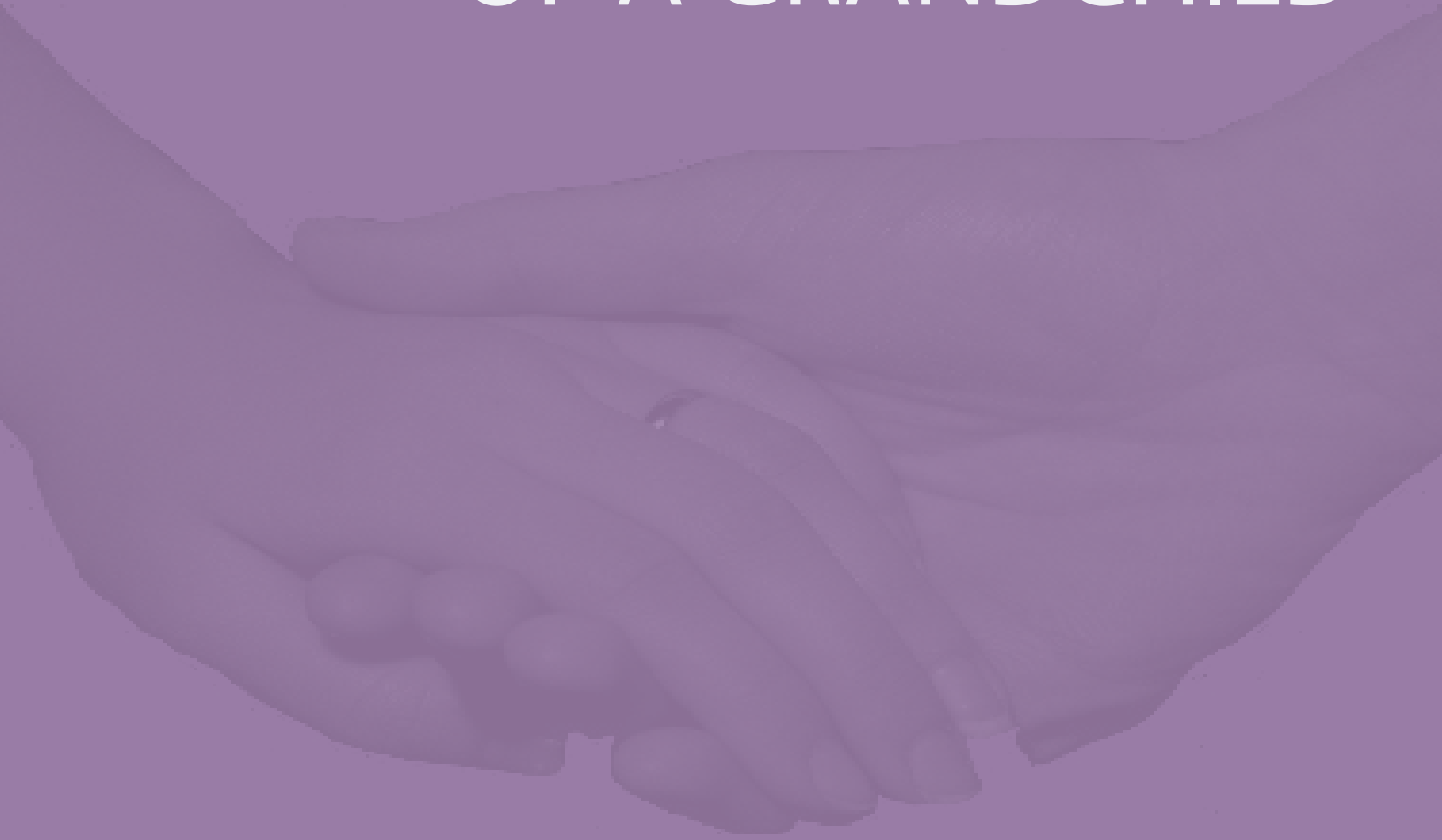
Virginia has three waivers that are focused on those individuals that have a diagnosis of developmental disability. The three waivers that provide a continuum of services are:

- Building Independence (BI) for individuals 18 and older
- Family & Individual Support (FIS)
- Community Living (CL).

For More Information, Visit coverva.org/disabledchild/

Taking Care

OF A GRANDCHILD



INTRODUCTION



As a grandparent, you may unexpectedly find yourself as the primary caregiver for one or more of your grandchildren. While this change may bring joy and fulfillment to you, it may also create stress and uncertainty. Identifying the financial, educational, legal, medical, and emotional resources you need to assist you can be difficult, especially if you find yourself in this role for the first time. This guide has been developed to help address any concerns you may have, and direct you towards services you may need as you begin to provide a safe, secure, and nurturing environment for your grandchild.

SERVICES & ASSISTANCE

A variety of services are available to help you take care of your grandchild, so you should consider what kind of assistance you need. Do you need help providing nutritious meals for the child? Do you need help providing transportation for the child? Individuals at your local area agency on aging can describe different types of services available in your area, and a list of these agencies can be found at the end of this book. The toll free number for the DARS is: 1-800-552-3402. The website is: vda.virginia.gov/.

GETTING STARTED

Each service will likely have different requirements and processes, so you should expect to provide various pieces of information when you first apply. To make the process as smooth as possible, prepare a list of questions before you contact an organization. A sample list is shown on page 68. Record the questions and the information you receive in a notebook so you can refer to it in the future.

Questions for Service Providers

A typical conversation might begin something like this:

“Hello, I would like some information about programs that can help me provide my grandchild with some assistance with X.” (Replace the X with the types of assistance you need, such as help with meals, transportation, etc.)
“Can you please answer some questions for me, or direct me to someone who can?”



1. What types of services do you provide?
2. Are there eligibility requirements for this service?
3. How can I receive an application?
4. If I can't complete the application by myself, can someone at your organization help me?
5. What documents will you need to verify my identity? (Driver's License, Social Security Card, Virginia ID Card, etc.)
6. What documents will you need to verify my level of income? (Paycheck stubs, Pension forms, Social Security check stubs, etc.)
7. If I don't have the documents I need to verify my identity or income level, can I provide them to you later?
8. If I don't have the documents, can someone at your organization help me get them?
9. What documents will you need to verify my grandchild's identity? (Birth Certificate, Social Security Card, Baptismal Certificate, etc.)
10. Does your organization charge a fee for providing the help I need?
11. Once I have completed the application, will I need to schedule an appointment to meet with someone so they can review it? (Make sure you write down the details of your appointment i.e., date, time, name and number of person you are meeting.)

If you make an appointment with the organization, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your meeting to fill out any forms they might need. Once the appointment is over, ask what the next step in the process will be, and how soon you can expect a decision.

IDENTITY DOCUMENTS FOR YOUR GRANDCHILD

You will need to get one or more of these documents before applying for assistance in caring for your grandchild.

Once you have them, **DO NOT MAIL IN THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS WITH AN APPLICATION.** Make photocopies of the documents, and submit the photocopies with the application. If you make an appointment to apply for services in person, take the original documents with you. Make sure that the person who meets with you makes photocopies of the original documents (if they need them) and then returns the original documents to you for safekeeping.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

As your grandchild's primary caregiver, you can apply to have a Social Security Number assigned to the child, or to have a replacement card issued if the original has been lost.

You can find the Social Security Administration Office in your area online at ssa.gov, or call toll-free 1-800-772-1213 between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Friday EST. If you have a touch-tone telephone, recorded information and services are available 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays. People who are deaf or hard of hearing may call the toll-free TTY number, 1-800-325-0778, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Monday through Friday EST. Please have your Social Security number handy when you call. Information is also available on their web site at: ssa.gov.

As part of the application process, you will be required to show your grandchild's original or certified birth certificate as well as other proof of their identity. If you are signing the Social Security Application Form on behalf of your grandchild, you will need to provide them with proof of your identity as well.

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

One of the most important documents you will need as proof of your grandchild's identity is his or her birth certificate. If you do not have your grandchild's original or certified birth certificate, you should mail a signed request for a duplicate to the Office of Vital Records.

The request must include the following information:

- Your grandchild's full name;
- The full name of each of the parents, including the mother's maiden name;
- The date and place of the grandchild's birth;
- Your relationship to the child; and
- Payment of the fee for obtaining a birth certificate.

Contact the Office of Vital Records to determine the fee amount. Checks or money orders for the fee should be made payable to the Virginia Department of Health, as cash will NOT be accepted.

Mail requests to the following address:

Virginia Department of Health
Office of Vital Records & Health Statistics
P.O. Box 1000
Richmond, VA 23218-1000

If you need to contact the Office of Vital Records, call (804) 662-6200. Please note that this is not a toll-free number, and your telephone company will charge you for the call if it is not within your local calling area. Information can also be found on their web site at vdh.state.va.us/vitalrec/index.asp.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal program that provides financial assistance to children through their parents or other caregiving relatives. For you to receive TANF, your grandchild must be: (1) under age 18; or (2) if they are between 18 and 19, they must be attending a school of secondary equivalence (high school) and are expected to complete the school program before or in the month of their 19th birthday. The grandchild may also have to meet other eligibility criteria. You do not need to have legal custody of your grandchild in order to apply for assistance. However, you will be required to provide documents that prove you are the child's grandparent and his or her primary caregiver.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

The same application that is used to apply for TANF can be used to apply for SNAP, which are electronic benefits that can be used like cash to buy food. SNAP is intended to help supplement your food dollars and assist you in serving healthy meals to your grandchild. The Virginia Department of Social Services will consider factors such as your income, your assets and the total number of persons living in your household when determining your eligibility for SNAP.



APPLYING FOR TANF AND SNAP

You can apply for these programs by requesting an "Application for Benefits" form from your local Department of Social Services. You can also download an application by visiting the Virginia Department of Social Services' web site at: dss.state.va.us/form/index.html, or call VDSS' toll-free number (1-800-552-3431) to request that an application be mailed to you.

After you have completed the application, you may either mail the form back to the local office, or drop it off.

You will need to provide copies of

identification documents along with your application. Different programs will require different documents, but some commonly requested forms of identification are:

- For Grandparent: Driver's License; Virginia ID Card; Social Security Card; Voter Registration Card; Birth Certificate, and Court Order giving you custody of your grandchild (if applicable).
- For Grandchild: Birth Certificate; Social Security Card; proof of income or resources; location of child's parents if you do not have custody of the child and, a parent's birth certificate as the parent must be related to the grandparent.

You must prove that your grandchild is related to you. You can provide proof by displaying a copy of your grandchild's birth certificate, a copy of your child's birth certificate (the grandchild's parent), and your birth certificate. Other documents such as family Bibles, notarized statements, and court/paternity records also may be acceptable.

You may be required to prove that your grandchild is living with you. Written statements from your neighbors or landlord, along with documents such as your grandchild's school records can be useful in this instance. After your application has been received, you may also be required to come into your local DSS office for an interview.

WIC AND OTHER NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE

If you do not have enough money to buy nutritious food for your grandchild, you may be eligible for assistance under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Located within your local health department, it provides free food and nutritional information that can help you if your grandchild is less than five years of age.

You may be eligible for WIC if: You reside in Virginia; Your income level is within the specified guidelines; and Your grandchild meets the medical and/or nutritional requirements for the program.

The WIC program provides: Free healthy foods; Assistance in improving your grandchild's health; and answers to any questions you might have.

You do not need to have legal custody of your grandchild to receive WIC, but you may need to prove that your grandchild lives with you. To learn more about the WIC program, contact your local health department or call toll-free 1-888-942-3663. Additional information on helping your grandchild establish and maintain healthy eating habits can be obtained from your grandchild's doctor or school nurse. Your local health department may also be able to help you plan nutritious meals for the child.

CLAIMING GRANDCHILDREN AS DEPENDENTS FOR TAX PURPOSES

If your grandchild lives with you for at least half of the year, you may be able to claim him or her as a dependent on your income tax return. Contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) toll free at 1-800-829-1040 to receive information about tax credits or allowances that may be applicable. Information is also available in the IRS publications #503 "Child and Dependent Care Expenses" and #972 "Child Tax Credit". Both of these publications are available on the IRS' web site at irs.gov/formspubs/index.html.

Grandparents raising grandchildren may also be eligible to pay lower taxes. If you are a grandparent who had income from work and can claim a "qualifying child," you may qualify for any or all of the following tax credits:

THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC)

Can provide tax credits to workers who are raising children, thereby reducing or eliminating federal income taxes. Some low income workers actually may receive money from the government. You must meet income requirements, which vary depending on how many children you are raising. You must also file a federal tax return. Eligible employed grandparents can file a W-5 form with their employer and receive advance payments during the year that increase the amount taken home in each paycheck. Check with your employer to get a copy of the W-5 form.

THE CHILD AND DEPENDENT CARE CREDIT

Helps families who must pay for child care in order to work or look for work. This credit reduces federal income tax. Unlike the EITC, it does not provide refunds to families who do not pay federal income tax. The dollar amount of the credit depends on the number of children, family income, and the amount paid for care. The Child Tax Credit can also be claimed on your federal income tax. This credit reduces the federal income tax but, like the Child and Dependent Care Credit, does not provide refunds over the amount of income tax paid. Grandchildren are identified as 'qualified' dependents. Grandparents can be eligible for both the Earned Income Credit and the Child Tax Credit.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI)

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a form of Social Security that allows certain persons to receive monthly payments. To be eligible for SSI, you must:

BE		MEET		HAVE
Aged, Blind, or Disabled	AND	Citizenry and Residency Requirements	AND	Limited income and resources

You do not need to have legal custody of your grandchild to apply for SSI. For your grandchild to be eligible for SSI, he or she must be:

BE		MEET		HAVE
Under the Age of 18	OR	Between the Ages of 18-22	OR	Over the age of 18 and have a mental or physical disorder that prevents him or her from working and that is expected to last for at least one year.

The application process for SSI can take several months. However, special provisions can be made for children who have mental or physical disorders that are so severe they are “assumed” to be disabled. In these instances, children can begin receiving payments while their eligibility for SSI is still being determined. Some of the categories in which the Social Security Administration assumes a child to be disabled are:

- HIV Infection (AIDS);
- Blindness;
- Deafness (in some cases);
- Cerebral Palsy (in some cases);
- Down’s Syndrome;
- Muscular Dystrophy (in some cases);
- Significant Mental Retardation;
- Diabetes (with amputation of one foot); or
- Amputation of two limbs or amputation of a leg at the hip.

If your grandchild has not been able to receive SSI in the past, you may want to reapply. They may now qualify for SSI under some new disability rules written to cover children.

APPLYING FOR SSI

You can apply for SSI at the Social Security Administration office in your region. Call Social Security’s toll-free number (1-800-772-1213; hearing-impaired (1-800-325-0778) to find the office nearest you.

Recorded information is available 24 hours a day, and calls between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on a business day will allow you to speak to a service representative.

To avoid delays, call at the end of the week and in the second half of the month. All calls will be kept confidential.

If you need assistance in completing the application form, a Social Security Administration staff member will help you fill it out or complete it for you. They can also tell you what documents to copy and attach to your application. If you do not have the necessary documents, they can help you obtain them if you would like their assistance.

Information is also available on their web site at:

ssa.gov

HEALTHCARE FOR GRANDCHILDREN



Keeping your grandchild healthy is important, as it will help him or her achieve their full potential in life. To assure that your grandchild stays as healthy as possible, you should make sure that he or she:

- Has health insurance
- Has regular physical and dental examinations
- Receives immunization shots to protect them from disease.

Learning about hazards such as lead poisoning and other dangers to which children are more susceptible than adults will also assist you in protecting your grandchild's health.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Having health insurance coverage is just as important for children as it is for adults. To determine

if your health insurance company can provide coverage for your grandchild, contact them and speak with a representative. If coverage is not available for your grandchild under your existing policy, the representative may be able to assist you in purchasing additional coverage that will include him or her. If your grandchild has coverage under another person or in another state, you would want to contact that entity.

HEALTHCARE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

If your grandchild does not receive assistance from Medicaid or does not have coverage under the Family Access to Medical Insurance Security Plan (FAMIS), you may want to submit an application to one or both of these programs. Medicaid and FAMIS pay health care costs for people who otherwise could not afford services, including immunization shots and dental care. To receive more information, contact your local Department of Social Services or call the Virginia FAMIS line toll-free at 1-855-242-8282.

IMMUNIZATION SHOTS

Immunization shots are safe and effective in helping to protect your grandchild from dangerous diseases that can hurt, disable, or kill him or her. Your grandchild should have begun an immunization program by the time he or she is two months old. If your grandchild never received immunization shots as an infant, he or she still needs them in order to attend kindergarten, day care, school, or summer camp. If you are not sure what immunization shots your grandchild has received, check with the child's parent(s) or their doctor. Call the Virginia Department of Health's Immunizations Hotline at 1-800-568-1929 for information about the shots your grandchild needs and how to obtain them.

LEAD POISONING AND OTHER HAZARDS

Lead-based paint is often found in older homes on walls, on floors, in plaster and on radiators. Your grandchild can get lead poisoning from eating paint chips or flakes, and from breathing paint dust. Lead poisoning from soil can also be a hazard when children play on bare soil, or when people bring soil containing lead into their house on their shoes. Lead in your grandchild's body can cause brain damage, blindness, learning disabilities, developmental delays and death.

You can help protect your grandchild from lead poisoning by:

- Keeping your floors clean and dust free;
- Keeping beds and cribs away from painted window sills, radiators, or other painted surfaces your grandchild might chew on; and
- Feeding your grandchild foods that are high in calcium and iron and low in fat.

If you suspect that your grandchild may have been exposed to lead by eating it, breathing it, or contacting it through the soil, have him or her tested for lead poisoning. Your grandchild's doctor can perform this simple test, or you can contact your local health department for information on how to have your grandchild tested. You can also contact the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at the Virginia Department of Health toll-free at 1-877-668-7987.

MENTAL HEALTH

You and your grandchild may benefit from programs designed to help maintain emotional and mental health. Fees charged by these programs may be partially or totally covered by your insurance or Medicaid plan. Some programs will charge a set fee, while others will have a sliding fee scale based on your ability to pay. Contact your doctor or your local community services board to find out what types of programs are offered in your community. The number for your local community services board will be listed in the telephone book or online at: dbhds.virginia.gov/community-services-boards-csbs. You may also contact your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for information.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Many grandparents have benefited from the understanding and friendship they have gained by becoming members of a grandparents support group. Though you may be able to take care of your grandchild on your own, joining a support group where you can learn parenting tips and receive information about programs or services could benefit both you and your grandchild. There are Grandparents, Parents, and Kinship Care Support Groups throughout Virginia.

Your local AAA can help you determine if a support group is present in your community.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

If you are caring for a grandchild who is of “school age,” you may find that things have changed significantly since your children were young. Registration, special education classes, parent-teacher conferences, and residency status are just a few of the topics with which you will need to become familiar.

By law, your grandchild must begin attending school if he or she turns five years old on or before September 30th. If your grandchild will reach the age of five after that date, but you feel that he or she will be ready to begin school, contact your local school district office to inquire about their “early admission” policy. Your grandchild will be assigned to attend a public school in the district in which you live. Call your local school district office to determine which school your grandchild will attend. You can find the number in your local telephone book listing. You should also ask if the school system requires that you (the grandparent) have legal custody of the child in order to register him or her.

REGISTERING YOUR GRANDCHILD FOR SCHOOL

Once you know which school your grandchild will attend, contact the school office to ask how to register him or her. Different schools may have varying requirements, but you will likely need the following but you will likely need the following four items:

- Proof of residency
- Copies of your grandchild’s immunizations (shots) and medical records
- Your grandchild’s Social Security Number (not required but usually preferred).

If your grandchild was enrolled in a school in another district prior to coming to live in your home, you may need additional information to enroll your grandchild in the new school. Contact the office at the child’s new school to determine what you will need.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS AND MEDICAL RECORDS

If your grandchild is entering kindergarten, you will need to have proof that he or she has had a physical examination by a doctor within the previous twelve months. Contact the child’s physician to receive documentation of the exam. If your grandchild is older and previously attended school elsewhere, contact the previous school and ask that his or her records be sent to the new school. These records should include the documentation of a physical exam and the child’s immunization records.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

To help your grandchild's new school meet his or her educational needs, you need to make the school personnel aware of any significant changes in the child's life. Big changes, like coming to live with you, can affect your grandchild's behavior in school as well as his or her ability to learn or concentrate in class. Contact the office at the new school and give them any information you think might be important.

You should also tell your grandchild's teacher(s) and principal if you suspect that the child's parents might try to take him or her out of school for any reason. The school personnel are concerned for your grandchild's safety and well-being, and they should be encouraged to contact you if the child is experiencing any problems. If you have legal custody of your grandchild, you have the authority to tell the school personnel about any court orders or other information that might affect the child.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

If you believe that your grandchild has special educational needs, contact their teacher or the school's guidance counselor and request a meeting. Ask the school to give the child special tests or evaluations to determine if he or she needs help in school. If they determine that your grandchild needs special educational services, the school will provide them. As your grandchild's primary caregiver, you have the right to make the request. If your grandchild is determined to have a physical, emotional or mental disability, he or she is legally entitled to receive help.

EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

In most school districts, there are early intervention programs for children with disabilities or for those who need special help. These programs help the child reach his or her potential. To ask about these programs, call his or her teacher or the school office. If a program is available, then testing and evaluation for the program should be available for your grandchild.

EDUCATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Do not wait for your grandchild's teacher to contact you about problems they may be having before you become involved. Call the child's teacher and set up a time to visit the school and introduce yourself. Keep in contact with the teacher throughout the school year. Being active in the PTA or other parent-teacher organization is another great way to stay involved. Some schools also encourage grandparents to volunteer to aid teachers in their classrooms. Becoming involved in your grandchild's educational experience will help him or her do their best in school.

HOMEWORK ASSISTANCE

Some schools offer special programs, tutoring services, and telephone numbers that may help your grandchild with his or her homework. Call your grandchild's teacher or the school office to learn about the types of help available in your community.

LEGAL INFORMATION

Grandparents caring for their grandchildren may need assistance with legal questions or in providing proof of their relationship to the child. While obtaining legal custody may make it easier for you to receive assistance in meeting your grandchild's needs, it is not the only option available and it is not the answer in every situation. Each family and set of circumstances is different, so it is best to get legal advice about your particular situation.

LEGAL OPTIONS

The following legal options are open to all grandparents caring for grandchildren in Virginia:

- Legal Custody;
- Adoption;
- Guardianship; and
- Special Powers of Attorney.

Due to the complex nature of the other options, this guidebook will only focus on the first option, legal custody. To obtain more information about adoption, guardianship and special powers of attorney, contact any of the organizations listed under "Legal Resources" in this guidebook. They can provide you information geared to your specific situation.

LEGAL CUSTODY

After assuming responsibility for your grandchild, it may be necessary to obtain legal custody of the child in order to receive the types of assistance you need. Legal custody is a court order that gives a grandparent the power to make important decisions about the grandchild's life. As your grandchild's legal custodian, you will have most of the powers parents would have regarding their children.

Legal custody can be obtained in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in the city, county or state where the grandchild lives. If the grandchild lives in another city, county or state, you will need to ask the court in that location for custody. If a grandchild has been living with you for at least six months, you can ask the court in your location to grant you custody of the grandchild.

You and your grandchild's parents may agree that it is best for you to raise your grandchild (called "consent"). In this case, all of you will need to go to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court and fill out a Uniform Child Custody Form. If possible, have both of the child's parents accompany you so that they can tell the court they want the child to live with you. If the location of one of the child's parents is unknown, you will be asked to fill out a form called an "Affidavit" stating that you do not know where that parent is living.

Bring your grandchild's birth certificate and Social Security Card with you. In many courts, an intake worker will help you complete the form. After the consent forms are completed, they will be sent to a judge. If the judge approves the form, he or she will sign a court order granting custody of the child to you. A copy of the form will be mailed to you.

If you are requesting custody of your grandchild without his or her parent's consent, you must go to the Juvenile Domestic Relations Court in the location where your grandchild lives and petition for custody. Once all the necessary forms are complete, a date will be set for the court to hear your case. The court will then send a written notice to both parties of the child. The notice will inform the parents that you have petitioned for custody and will let them know the date and time of the court hearing.

You will not need a lawyer to obtain custody unless either of the child's parents objects to your getting custody of the child. If this happens, a lawyer may be able to help you obtain custody despite the parent's objections. If you cannot afford a lawyer, call your local legal aid office to see if they can assist you. A list of telephone numbers is included at the end of this section for your information.

The judge will make a decision about what is best for the child. According to Virginia law, it is usually best for the child to live with his or her parent(s) if possible. You will need to tell the judge why your grandchild should live with you and not with his or her parents. The judge will also look at what living situation would be best to meet the child's physical, emotional, educational, and moral needs. In some courts, the judge may order a social worker to visit both the parent's home and your home to see which provides the best environment for the child.

The parent(s) will need to prove that they are able to care for the child and that the situation which raised the issue of custody no longer exists. You will need to prove to the judge that it would be in the child's best interests if you had custody. Keep a diary or notebook with information about the situation(s) that led you to seek custody of your grandchild. Also, record information about the parent's behavior that can help the judge reach a decision, and be sure to give the information to the court. If the Department of Social Services has custody of your grandchild, you will need to work with the department in the county or city where your grandchild lives in order to obtain custody. Contact the department and tell them you want to obtain custody of your grandchild. You may need to speak directly with your grandchild's social worker, who will tell you what steps to take to gain custody of your grandchild.

Once you have custody of your grandchild, if the parent(s) want to regain custody, they will need to file papers with the court that issued the custody order asking the judge to return custody to them. To regain custody, the parent(s) would need to prove that:

- Major changes in their situation(s) have occurred that might alter the judge's decision about what is best for the child; and
- Due to these changes, it would be best for the child to return to live with the parent(s).

PARENTS' VISITATION RIGHTS

The judge will allow the child's parent(s) to visit him or her if the judge believes it will be in the child's best interest. Visitation rights are usually defined in the custody order, including how and when the parent can visit the child. If the parent(s) do not obey the rules set out in the custody order, you can ask the court that issued the custody order for assistance. You can do this by going to the court clerk's office and filing a petition. Keep a diary or notebook and record the date and time of each visit by the child's parent(s). Also record what took place during the visit, and your grandchild's emotional state (happy, upset, scared, etc.) after the visit. The information in your diary or notebook can be useful if you need help changing parental visitation rights in the future. Do not try to stop the parents from visiting if the court has given permission for them to visit the child. This could negatively affect your grandchild and could cause the judge to remove legal custody of your grandchild from you.

CHILD AT RISK DURING VISITS

If you are concerned about your grandchild's safety during parental visits, you should ask the judge to limit the number and length of the visits. The judge can also require that a representative of the court be present during parental visits.

If you think the parent is putting your grandchild in danger or is hurting the child in some way, call the Child Abuse and Neglect hotline at 1-800-552-7096 (24 hours a day, seven days a week). This number is toll-free only inside Virginia. Persons outside Virginia should call (804) 786-8536, which is not a toll-free call. Describe the situation and ask for information on how to best protect the child.

VIRGINIA LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE

If you think you have a problem which may require the services of a lawyer, you can call the Virginia Lawyer Referral Service (VLRS). VLRS is a service provided by the Virginia State Bar. Your call will be answered by a referral specialist who will request your name and a brief description of your problem. Based on this information, you will be provided with the name and telephone number of a lawyer in your community who has indicated an interest in handling your type of problem. The lawyer will be licensed and a member in good standing with the Virginia State Bar. It will then be your responsibility to call the lawyer to schedule an appointment. If it appears that you do not need a lawyer, you will be directed to an agency or organization that may be able to assist you. Any information that you provide will be kept strictly confidential.

If you are referred to a lawyer, you will be entitled to consult with him or her for up to one half hour for a fee of \$35. You should be prepared to pay the lawyer at the time of your appointment. This initial consultation may answer your questions and enable you to solve your problem without further legal action.

If your problem requires additional time and work, you will be responsible for paying any additional legal fees. The lawyer with whom you consult will be glad to discuss with you his or her fees and the cost of services beyond the initial half-hour consultation. However, there is no obligation for either you or the lawyer to continue to work together beyond the half-hour consultation.

Virginia Lawyer Referral Service

1111 E. Main Street, Suite 700

Richmond, VA 23219-0026

Toll-free: 1-800-552-7977 (Nationwide)

Phone: (804) 775-0808

TDD/Voice Line for Hearing-Impaired: (804) 775-0502

Fax: (804) 775-0501

Web site: vsb.org/vlrs.html

Hours of Operation - Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
EST. Closed on state holidays.

VIRGINIA LEGAL AID SOCIETY (VLAS)

Is a not-for-profit law firm that provides free civil legal services to income-eligible residents in 20 counties and 7 cities in Central, Southside, and western Tidewater Virginia. VLAS serves the entire community by providing free information, advice and representation in such areas as housing, healthcare, economic self-sufficiency, education, public benefits, consumer purchases, and family relations.

VLAS Statewide

Toll-Free Client Access Number(s): 1-866-LegalAid (1-866-534-5243)

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

GRANDPARENTS' VISITATION RIGHTS

Legal rights to visit your grandchildren must be obtained from the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in the locality where they reside. You may need to prove that you have a close relationship with your grandchild and that it would be in his or her best interest for you to be allowed to visit. If the Department of Social Services has custody of your grandchild, contact the child's social worker to obtain legal permission to visit the child. The social worker will tell you how to obtain the necessary permission.

TRAVELING

TIPS FOR TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN

- Always secure children under age eight in an approved child safety seat or booster seat, even if you plan to take only a short trip.
- Children from birth to age 12 months must ride in their safety seat, with the seat facing the back of the car.
- Children ages one through five should ride facing forward in a child safety seat or booster seat.
- The safest place to install a child safety seat is in the center of the back seat. NEVER place a rear-facing infant seat in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger-side air bag in the front dashboard.
- Numerous child safety seat checks are held in localities across Virginia. Attend one of these checks to make sure that your child's safety seat is installed correctly.
- Never hold a child in your lap. In a crash, the child may be flung through a window or crushed between your body and the dashboard.
- Make sure that all car doors are securely closed and locked before driving. Don't allow children to play with door handles or locks. If you must open a door, pull the vehicle off the road and come to a complete stop before opening it.
- Never allow children to ride in the luggage area of hatchbacks, station wagons or vans. It is illegal to transport children under the age 16 in the bed of a pickup truck, even if the truck is equipped with a truck cap or camper shell.
- Never leave a hatchback open when a child is riding in the back seat.



Because child safety seats can be expensive, the Commonwealth of Virginia has the Child Safety Seat Education & Distribution Program, a statewide program that is available to families who otherwise might not be able to afford a child safety seat. Over 9,000 seats are provided each year with funding from the Child Restraint Special Device Fund and are distributed at 120 distribution sites statewide. Ongoing regular training, assistance and refresher courses are provided to educate parents, foster parents and legal guardians about the correct way to install and use a child safety seat. To qualify for a free child safety seat, applicants must be:

- Eligible for Medicaid;
- Legal residents of Virginia;
- The parent, legal guardian, or foster parent of a child, or (in the case of expectant mothers), in the last trimester of pregnancy (at the earliest).

Recipients must attend a class that will teach them how to install and correctly use the child safety seat. Class attendees must also sign a waiver of liability release form. For more information concerning the program, or for other technical assistance on child passenger protection and resources, contact:

Virginia Department of Health Center for Injury & Violence Prevention Office of Family Health Services
Phone: (804) 864-7737
Website: vdh.virginia.gov/child-passenger-safety/

Taking Care

CAREGIVER RESOURCES



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AGENCY ON AGING

Eastern Virginia AAAs

Agency on Aging	Counties Served	Contact Information	Website
Bay Aging	Essex, Gloucester, Lancaster, King & Queen, King William, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, and Westmoreland	5306 Old Virginia Street, P.O. Box 610, Urbanna, VA 23175 Phone: (804) 758-2386 Fax: (804) 758-5773	bayaging.org
Eastern Shore Agency on Aging	Accomack and Northampton	5432 Bayside Road, Exmore, VA 23350 Toll-Free: 1-800-452-5977 Phone: (757) 442-9652 Fax: (757) 442-9303 E-mail: info@esaaacaa.org	esaaa-caa.net/
Penninsula Agency on Aging	James City and York. Cities of Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson and Williamsburg	739 Thimble Shoals Blvd., Exec. Center, Building 1000, Suite 1006, Newport News, VA 23606 Phone: (757) 873-0541 Fax: (757) 873-1437 E-mail: information@paainc.org	paainc.org
Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia	Isle of Wight, and Southampton. Cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk and Virginia Beach	Interstate Corporate Center, Bldg. 5, 6350 Center Drive, Suite 101, Norfolk, VA 23502 Phone: (757) 461-9481 Fax: (757) 461-1068 E-mail: services@ssseva.org	ssseva.org

Central Virginia AAAs

Agency on Aging	Counties Served	Contact Information	Website
Crater District	Dinwiddie, Greensville, Prince George, Surry and Sussex. Cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell and Petersburg	23 Seyler Drive, Petersburg, VA 23805 Phone: (804) 732-7020 Fax: (804) 732-7232 E-mail: craterdist@aol.com	cdaaa.org
Lake Country Area Agency on Aging	Brunswick, Halifax and Mecklenburg. City of South Boston	1105 West Danville St., South Hill, VA 23970 Toll-Free: 1-800-252-4464 Phone: (434) 447-7661 Fax: (434) 447-4074 E-mail: lakecaaaa@lcaaaa.org	lcaaaa.org
Piedmont Senior Resources	Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward	1413 South Main Street, P.O. Box 398, Burkeville, VA 23922-0398 Phone: (434) 767-5588 Fax: (434) 767-2529 E-mail: psr@psraaaa.org	psraaaa.org
Senior Connections: The Capital Area Agency on Aging	Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent and Powhatan. City of Richmond	24 E Cary Street, Richmond, VA 23219 Phone: (804) 343-3000 Fax: (804) 649-2258 E-mail: seniorconnections@youraaa.org	seniorconnections-va.org

Northern Virginia AAAs

Agency on Aging	Counties Served	Contact Information	Website
Alexandria Office of Aging and Adult Services	City of Alexandria	6101 Stevenson Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304 Phone: (703) 746-5999 TDD: (703) 836-1493 E-mail: DAAS@AlexandriaVA.gov	ci.alexandria.va.us/dhs/community_partners/aging_network.html
Arlington Agency on Aging	County of Arlington	2100 Washington Boulevard, 4th Floor, Arlington, VA 22204-5703 Phone: (703) 228-1700 TTY: (703) 228-1788 Fax: (703) 228-1174 E-mail: arlaaa@arlingtonva.us	aging-disability.arlingtonva.us/
Fairfax Agency on Aging	County of Fairfax. Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church	12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 708, Fairfax, VA 22035 Phone: (703)-324-7948. Fax: (703) 449-9552	fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/olderadults
Loudoun County Area Agency on Aging	County of Loudoun	742 Miller Drive SE, Leesburg, VA 20175 Phone: (703) 777-0257 Fax: (703) 771-5161 E-mail: prcs@loudoun.gov	co.loudoun.va.us/prcs/aaa/index.htm
Prince William Area Agency on Aging	Prince William. Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park	5 County Complex. Suite 240 Woodbridge, VA 22192 Phone: (703) 792-6400 TDD: 7-1-1 for Virginia Relay System Fax: (703) 792-4734	pwcgov.org/aoa/

Northwest Virginia AAAs

Agency on Aging	Counties Served	Contact Information	Website
Jefferson Area Board for Aging	Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson. City of Charlottesville	674 Hillsdale Drive, Suite 9, Charlottesville, VA 22901 Phone: (434) 817-5222 Fax: (434) 817-5230 E-mail: info@jabacares.org	jabacares.org
Healthy Generations Area Agency on Aging	Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford. City of Fredericksburg	460 Lendall Lane, Fredericksburg, VA 22405 Phone: (540) 371-3375 Fax: (540) 371-3384 E-mail: info@healthygenerations.org	healthygenerations.org
Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services Board and Area Agency on Aging	Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock	15361 Bradford Road, P.O. Box 1568, Culpeper, VA 22701 Phone: (540) 825-3100 TDD: (540) 825-7391 Fax: (540) 825-6245 E-mail: rrcsb@rrcsb.org	rrcsb.org

Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging	Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, and Warren. City of Winchester	207 Mosby Lane, Front Royal, VA 22630-2611 Toll-Free: 1-800-883-4122 Phone: (540) 551-5615 Fax (540) 636-7810 E-mail: saaa@shenandoahaaa.com	shenandoahaaa.com/
Valley Program For Aging Services	Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge and Rockingham. Cities of Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, and Waynesboro	325 Pine Avenue, P.O. Box 14205, Waynesboro, VA 22980-0603 Toll-Free: 1-800-868-8727 Phone: (540) 949-7141 Fax: (540) 949-7143 E-mail: vpas@vpas.info	vpas.info

Southwest Virginia AAAs

Agency on Aging	Counties Served	Contact Information	Website
Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens	Buchanan, Dickinson, Russell and Tazewell	216 College Ridge Road, Wardell Industrial Park, P.O. Box 765, Cedar Bluff, VA 24609 Toll-Free: 1-800-656-2272 Phone: (276) 964-4915 Fax: (276) 963-0130 E-mail: aasc@aasc.org	aasc.org
Central Virginia Area Agency on Aging	Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell. Cities of Bedford and Lynchburg	501 12th Street, Suite A, Lynchburg, VA 24504 Phone: (434) 385-9070 Fax: (434) 385-9209 E-mail: cvaaa@cvaaa.com	cvaaa.com
District Three Senior Services	Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Washington, and Wythe. Cities of Bristol and Galax	4453 Lee Highway, Marion, VA 24354 Toll-Free: 1-800-541-0933 Phone: (276) 783-8150 Fax: (276) 783-3003 E-mail: district-three@smyth.net	district-three.org
LOA Area Agency on Aging	Allegheny, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke. Cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem	4932 Frontage Road NW, P.O. Box 14205, Roanoke, VA 24038-4205 Phone: (540) 345-0451 Fax: (540) 981-1487 E-mail: info@loaa.org	loaa.org
Mountain Empire Older Citizens	Lee, Scott, and Wise. City of Norton	1501 3rd Avenue East, P.O. Box 888, Big Stone Gap, VA 24219-0888 Toll-Free: 1-800-252-6362 Phone: (276) 523-4202 Fax: (276) 523-4208 E-mail: info@meoc.org	meoc.org
New River Valley Agency on Aging	Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. City of Radford	6226 University Park Drive, Suite 3100, Fairlawn, VA 24141 Toll-Free: 1-866-260-4417 Phone: (540) 980-7720 Fax: (540) 980-7724 E-mail: nrvaoo@nrvaoo.org	nrvaoo.org
Southern Area Agency on Aging, Inc.	Franklin, Henry, Patrick and Pittsylvania. Cities of Danville and Martinsville	204 Cleveland Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112 Toll-Free: 1-800-468-4571 Phone: (276) 632-6442 Fax: (276) 632-6252 E-mail: info@southernaaa.org	southernaaa.org

CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)

CILs	Areas Served	Contact Information	Website
Junction Center for Independent Living	Counties: Lee, Wise, & Scott City: Norton	1520 Third Avenue East Big Stone Gap, VA 24219 Phone: (276) 524-4081 Fax: (276) 524-1510 E-mail: jcil1@junctioncenter.org	junctioncenter.org/
Clinch Independent Living Services	Counties: Dickenson, Buchanan, Tazewell, & Russell	1176 Boothe Branch Road Grundy, VA 24614 Phone: (276) 935-6088 Fax: (276) 935-6342 E-mail: cils@clinchindependent.org	cilsonline.org/
Appalachian Independence Center	Counties: Washington, Smyth, Wythe, Bland, Grayson, & Carroll Cities: Galax & Bristol	230 Charwood Drive Abingdon, Virginia 24210 Phone: (276) 628-2979 Fax: (276) 628-4931 E-mail: aicinfo@aicadvocates.org	aicadvocates.org
New River Valley Disability Resource Center	Counties: Giles, Floyd, Pulaski, & Montgomery Cities: Radford	61 Staples St. Radford, VA 24141 Phone: (540) 266-1435 Fax: (540) 251-3451 E-mail: info@nrvdrc.org	nrvdrc.org/
Blue Ridge Independent Living Center	Counties: Roanoke, Craig, Botetourt, & Alleghany Cities: Salem, Roanoke, & Covington	1502-B Williamson Road NE Roanoke, Virginia 24012 Phone: (540) 342-1231 Fax: (540) 342-9505 E-mail: brilc@brilc.org	brilc.org
Valley Associates for Independent Living	Counties: Rockingham, Rockbridge, Augusta, Highland, & Bath Cities: Buena Vista, Lexington, Staunton, Waynesboro, & Harrisonburg	23 Seyler Drive, Petersburg, VA 23805 Phone: (804) 732-7020 Fax: (804) 732-7232 E-mail: craterdist@aol.com	govail.org/
Access Independence, Inc.	Counties: Page, Shenandoah, Warren, Clarke, & Frederick City: Winchester	324 Hope Drive Winchester, Virginia 22601 Phone: (540) 662-4452 Fax: (540) 662-4474 E-mail: askai@accessindependence.org	accessindependence.org/
Endeppence Center of Northern Virginia	Counties: Arlington, Fairfax, & Loudoun Cities: Alexandria, Fairfax, & Falls Church	2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 250 Courthouse Plaza II Arlington, Virginia 22201 Phone: (703) 525-3553 Fax: (703) 525-3585 E-mail: info@ecnv.org	ecnv.org
Independence Empowerment Center	Counties: Prince William & Fauquier Cities: Manassas & Manassas Park	8409 Dorsey Circle, Suite 101 Manassas, VA 20110 Phone: (703) 257-5400 Fax: (703) 257-5043 E-mail: info@ieccil.org	

CILs	Areas Served	Contact Information	Website
Independence Resource Center	Counties: Nelson, Albemarle, Louisa, Fluvanna, & Greene City: Charlottesville	815 Cherry Avenue Charlottesville, VA 22903-3448 Phone: (434) 971-9629 Fax: (434) 971-8242 E-mail: tvandever@lumos.net	charlottesvilleirc.org
Lynchburg Area Center for Independent Living	Counties: Bedford, Amherst, Campbell, & Appomattox Cities: Bedford & Lynchburg	500 Alleghany Avenue, Ste. 520 Lynchburg, VA 24501 Phone: (434) 528-4972 Fax: (434) 528-4976 E-mail: LACIL@lacil.org	LACIL.org
Disability Rights & Resource Center	Counties: Franklin, Henry, Patrick, Pittsylvania Cities: Danville, Martinsville	300-B Pell Avenue Rocky Mount, VA. 24151 Phone: (540) 482-0752 Fax: (540) 482-0640 E-mail: info@drrcva.org	drrcva.org/
Resources for Independent Living, Inc.	Counties: Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, & Powhatan City: Richmond	4009 Fitzhugh Avenue Richmond, Virginia 23230 Phone: (804) 353-6583 Fax: (804) 358-5606 E-mail: info@RIL-VA.org	ril-va.org
disAbility Resource Center	Counties: Roanoke, Craig, Botetourt, & Allegany Cities: Salem, Roanoke, & Covington	409 Progress Street Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401 Phone: (540) 342-1231 Fax: (540) 342-9505 E-mail: drc@cildrc.org	cildrc.org
Loudoun Endependence Center Satellite		215 Depot Ct, Suite #203 Leesburg, VA 20175 Phone: (703) 342-7651 Fax: (703) 485-7381 E-mail: lend@ecnv.org	ecnv.org/ aboutlend
Middle Peninsula Satellite Center for Independent Living	Counties: Richmond, Essex, Middlesex, Mathews, King & Queen, King William, & Gloucester	c/o Peninsula Center for Independent Living 2021-A Cunningham Drive, Suite 2 Hampton, VA 23666 Phone: (757) 827-8800 Fax: (757) 827-0655 E-mail: info@drrcva.org	hvacil.org/
Crater District Satellite CIL	Counties: Dinwiddie, Sussex, Greensville, Surry, & Prince George Cities: Petersburg, Hopewell, Emporia, & Colonial Heights	1845 A Fort Mahone Street Petersburg, VA 23805-2403 Phone: (804) 862-9338 Fax: (804) 862-6177 E-mail: info@ril-va.org	ril-va.org
Eastern Shore Center for Independent Living	Counties: Accomack & Northampton	Colonial Square Shopping Center 36282 Lankford Highway, Suite 13-D Belle Haven, VA 23306 Phone: (757) 414-0080 Fax: (757) 414-0205 E-mail: info@vaescil.org	vaescil.org/

CILs	Areas Served	Contact Information	Website
Independence Center, Inc.	Counties: Southampton & Isle of Wight Cities: Franklin, Suffolk, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, & Norfolk	6300 E. Virginia Beach Boulevard Norfolk, VA 23502 Phone: (757) 461-7527 Fax: (757) 455-8223 E-mail: ecinorf@independence.org	independence.org
Peninsula Center for Independent Living	Counties: James City & York Cities: Williamsburg, Newport News, Hampton, & Poquoson	2021-A Cunningham Drive, Suite 2 Hampton, VA 23666 Phone: (757) 827-8800 Fax: (757) 827-0655 E-mail: iepcil@hvacil.org	hvacil.org/

DRIVING RESOURCES

Program	Contact Information	Program
Alert Driver Training of Vinton Driver Improvement Program	2102 Hardy Road Vinton, VA 24179 Phone: (540) 890-0347	- defensive driving techniques - review new traffic laws - bookwork - on-the-road training
Driving Assessment And Education CJW Medical Center Comprehensive Outpatient Therapy	Chippenham Campus 7101 Jahnke Road Richmond, VA 23225 Phone: (804) 267-6725	- on-the-road driving evaluations and instructions - both simulated and actual driving settings
Hampton VA Medical Center Rehabilitation Medical Service	Hampton VAMC Hampton, VA 23667 Phone: (757) 222-9961 ext. 2202	- on-the-road evaluations - van evaluations - high-tech equipment evaluations - on-the-road training
Riverside Rehabilitation Institute	120 Kings Way # 2550 Williamsburg, VA 23185 Phone: (757) 928-8040	- on-the-road evaluations - van evaluations - high-tech equipment evaluations
Hunter Holms McGuire VA Medical Center Rehabilitation Medicine Services	1201 Broad Rock Road Richmond, VA 23249 Phone: (804) 675 -5000	- on-the-road evaluations - van evaluations - high-tech equipment evaluations - on-the-road training
Lampshire Driving School	17997 Dumfries Shopping Plaza Dumfries, VA 22026 Phone: (703) 221-0222	- on-the-road evaluations - on-the-road training
National Rehabilitation Hospital	102 Irving Street, NW Washington, DC 20010 Phone: (703) 288-8260	- on-the-road training (has left foot accelerator and steering devices; will train with hand controls in individual's personal vehicle; works with Mount Vernon Hospital.
Roanoke Medical	4508 Starkey Road Roanoke, VA 24018 Phone: (540) 725-8725	- on-the-road training - on-the-road evaluations
Sentara Therapy Center	Attn: Front Desk Fort Norfolk Plaza Medical Building 301 Riverview Ave, Suite 202 Norfolk, VA 23507 Phone: (757) 252-9420	- Requires physician referral - evaluation of vision - driving knowledge - driving ability assessed - cognitive-motor skills tested
Winchester Rehabilitation Center	333 W Cork Street # 230 Winchester, VA 22601 Phone: (540) 536-5113	- on-the road training - on-the-road evaluations
Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center	Occupational Therapy Dept. 243 Woodrow Wilson Avenue Fishersville, VA 22939 Phone: (540) 332-7117	- on-the-road evaluations - van evaluations - high-tech equipment evaluations - on-the-road training - bookwork

HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Agency	Contact Information	Website
Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services	1610 Forest Avenue, Suite 100 Richmond, VA 23229 Nationwide Toll-Free: 1-800-552-3402 Richmond area: (804) 662-9333 Fax: (804) 662-9354 E-mail: aging@dars.virginia.gov	vda.virginia.gov
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired	397 Azalea Avenue Richmond, VA 23227-3623 Toll-Free (in Virginia only): 1-800-622-2155 Phone: (804) 371-3151 (Voice/TTY)	vdbvi.org
Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	1602 Rolling Hills Drive, Suite 203 Richmond, VA 23229-5012 Toll-Free: 1-800-552-7917 (Voice/TTY) Phone: (804) 662-9502 (Voice/TTY)	vddhh.org
Office of Protection and Advocacy Serving Persons with Disabilities	1910 Byrd Street, Suite 5 Richmond, VA 23230 Toll-Free in VA: 1-800-592-3962 Phone: (804) 225-2042	vopa.state.va.us
Department of Health	109 Governor Street Richmond, Virginia 23219 Phone: (804) 864-7000 Fax: (804) 862-7022	vdh.virginia.gov
Department of Health Professions	9960 Mayland Drive Suite 300 Richmond, VA 23233-1461 Phone: (804) 367-4400 Complaints (Toll-Free) 1-800-533-1560	dhp.virginia.gov
Department of Medical Assistance Services	600 East Broad Street Richmond, VA 23219 Phone: (804) 786-7933 TDD (Toll-Free): 1-800-343-7933	dmas.virginia.gov
Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services	1220 Bank Street Richmond, VA 23219 Phone: (804) 371-8977 (Voice/TDD) Phone: (804) 786-3921 Fax: (804) 371-6638	bdhs.virginia.gov/#
Department of Social Services	801 E. Main Street Richmond, VA 23219 Phone: (804) 726-7000 (Main Agency) Phone: (800) 552-3431 (SNAP Hotline) E-mail: citizen.services@dss.virginia.gov	dss.virginia.gov/

COMMUNITY SERVICE BOARDS

CSB	Counties Served	Website Link
Alexandria Community Services Board	City of Alexandria	alexandriava.gov/CSB
Alleghany Highlands Community Services Board	Alleghany, Covington, Clifton Forge, Iron Gate	ahcsb.org
Arlington County CSB	Arlington	health.arlingtonva.us/behavioral-healthcare/
Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare	Botetourt, Craig, Roanoke, Roanoke City, Salem	brbh.org
Chesapeake Integrated Behavioral	City of Cheapeake	cityofchesapeake.net/page2085.aspx
Chesterfield Community Services Board	Chesterfield	chesterfield.gov/878/Mental-Health-Support-Services
Colonial Behavioral Health	James City, York, Poquoson, Williamsburg	colonialbehavioralhealth.org
Crossroads	Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, Prince Edward	crossroadscsb.org
Cumberland Mountain	Buchanan, Russell, Tazewell	cmcsb.com/
Danville-Pittsylvania	Pittsylvania, City of Danville	dpcs.org
Dickenson County	Dickenson	dcbhs.com
District 19	Dinwiddie, Greensville, Prince George, Surry, Sussex, Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell, Petersburg	d19csb.com
Eastern Shore CSB	Accomack, Northhampton	escsb.org
Fairfax-Falls Church CSB	Fairfax, City of Falls Church, City of Fairfax	fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board/#gsc.tab=0
Goochland-Powhatan	Goochland, Powhatan	gpcsb.org
Hampton-Newport News CSB	City of Hampton, City of Newport-News	hnnscsb.org
Hanover County CSB	Hanover	hanovercounty.gov/358/Community-Services-Board
Harrisonburg-Rockingham CSB	Rockingham, City of Harrisonburg	hrscsb.org
Henrico Area Mental Health and Developmental Services	Henrico, New Kent, Charles City	henrico.us/mhds
Highlands CSB	Washington, City of Bristol	highlandscsb.org
Horizon Behavioral Health	Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell, City of Lynchburg	horizonbh.org

COMMUNITY SERVICE BOARDS CONTINUED

Loudoun County Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services	Loudoun	loudoun.gov/index.aspx?NID=121
Middle Peninsula-Northern Neck CSB	Essex, Gloucester, King & Queen, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, Westmoreland.	mpnnscsb.org
Mount Rogers Community Services	Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, City of Galax	mtrogerscsb.com
New River Valley Community Services	Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, City of Radford	nrvc.org
Norfolk CSB	City of Norfolk	norfolk.gov/index.aspx?NID=996
Northwestern CSB	Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, Warren, City of Winchester	nwcsb.com
Piedmont CSB	Franklin, Henry, Patrick, City of Martinsville	piedmontcsb.org
Planning District One Behavioral Health Services	Lee, Scott, Wise, City of Norton	pd1bhs.org
Portsmouth Behavioral Healthcare Services	Portsmouth	portsmouthva.gov/149/Behavioral-Healthcare
Prince William County CSB	Prince William, City of Manassas Park, City of Manassas	pwcgov.org/government/dept/cs/Pages/default.aspx
Rappahannock Area CSB	Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, City of Fredericksburg	rappahannockareacs.org
Rappahannock-Rapidan CSB	Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange, Rappahannock	rrcsb.org
Region Ten CSB	Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Nelson, City of Charlottesville	regionten.org
Richmond Behavioral Health Authority	City of Richmond	rbha.org
Rockbridge Area CSB	Bath County, Rockbridge County, City of Buena Vista, City of Lexington	racs.org
Southside Behavioral Health	Brunswick, Halifax, Mecklenburg	sscsb.org
Valley Community Services Board	Augusta, Highland, City of Staunton, City of Waynesboro	myvalleycsb.org
Virginia Beach Human Services	City of Virginia Beach	vb.gov/government/departments/human-services/Pages/default.aspx
Western Tidewater CSB	Isle of Wight, Southampton, City of Franklin, City of Suffolk	wtcsb.org

INTERNET RESOURCES

Website	Useful For	Link
Service Locators		
VirginiaNavigator	A family of websites that connects you with all sorts of resources close to you! These sites allow you to search for services by zip code, city or county to locate service providers near you.	virginiannavigator.org
disAbilityNavigator	The best way to find disability services in Virginia, including personal assistance, accessible housing, benefits and more.	disabilitynavigator.org
Eldercare Locator	Website run by the U.S. Administration on Aging which connects you to services for older adults and their families.	eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx
SeniorNavigator	The trusted guide to healthy aging in Virginia. Search for housing options, transportation programs, caregiving resources, and other services for seniors.	seniornavigator.org
VeteransNavigator	Helps Virginia veterans and their families navigate post-military life with resources related to benefits assistance, health care, employment training and more.	virginiannavigator.org
Virginia Office for Aging Services (OAS)	Connects you with resources in the state of Virginia.	vda.virginia.gov
VDA Find Your Local Virginia AAA	Allows you to learn which local Area Agency on Aging you should contact.	vda.virginia.gov/findservicesintro.htm
Find Your Local Virginia Department of Social Services	Allows you to learn which local Social Services you should contact.	dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi
Caregiving		
Aging Together	Works to develop programs and services that make sense at the local level.	agingtogether.org
AARP Family Caregiving	Has valuable information about handling medical issues, health records and advance directives, home safety, financial and legal issues, caregiver life balance and much more.	aarp.org/caregiving

Website	Useful For	Link
Caregiver Action Network	Allows you to connect anonymously with other family caregivers in the Care Community to receive encouragement and advice.	caregiveraction.org/join
Beard Center on Aging	Programs focus on community education and outreach involving students and faculty with older individuals of Central Virginia.	
Riverside Caregiver Commons	Programs for caregivers in the Commonwealth of Virginia to include counseling and education.	riversideonline.com/cealh/services/caregiver-commons.cfm
Full Circle of Care	Online PDF book about mental health and caregiving.	caregiving.org/circleofcare
VA Caregiver Support	Provides resources, education and support to caregivers of Veterans.	caregiver.va.gov
Family Caregiver Alliance	Services include assessment, care planning, direct care skills, wellness programs, respite services, and legal/financial consultation vouchers.	caregiver.org
National Family Caregiver Support Program	Provides grants to states and territories to fund various supports that help family and informal caregivers care for older adults in their homes for as long as possible.	acl.gov/programs/support-caregivers/national-family-caregiver-support-program
Caregiver Action Network	A non-profit organization providing education, peer support, and resources to family caregivers across the country free of charge	caregiveraction.org
Abuse & Neglect		
National Center on Elder Abuse	Provides education on elder abuse and neglect.	ncea.acl.gov
Virginians Against Domestic Violence	Get information on the Virginia coalition to end domestic violence and links to available resources for domestic violence victims.	nrd.gov/resource/detail/15099032/Virginians+Against+Domestic+Violence
Virginia Adult Protective Services (APS)	Allows you to figure out which local APS agency to report abuse and neglect to.	dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi

Website	Useful For	Link
Aging Education/Resources		
Administration for Community Living (ACL)	Provides information about ACL and the services and programs they offer.	acl.gov/about-acl/administration-aging
American Geriatrics Society	Provides education on geriatrics and older adults.	americangeriatrics.org
National Council on the Aging (NCOA)	Discovering community programs and services, getting online help, and learning about advocacy issues.	ncoa.org
National Institute on Aging	Offers information about the science of healthy aging, and Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's disease-related dementia.	nia.nih.gov
Virginia AARP	Find your local AARP chapter and get connected to resources.	states.aarp.org/virginia
Alzheimer's Disease & Dementia		
AlzPossible - Virginia's New Virtual Center on Alzheimer's Disease	Serves as a virtual center for providing training and resources for professionals about Alzheimer's Disease and dementia in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	alzpossible.org
Alzheimer's Association (National Chapter)	Provides education, awareness, and support related to Alzheimer's Disease.	alz.org
Alzheimer's Disease Education & Referral Center	Serves as an educational resource about Alzheimer's Disease and dementia.	nia.nih.gov/health/about-adear-center
DARS Dementia Services	Provides information about dementia and Alzheimer's as well as connects you to services in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	vda.virginia.gov/dementia.htm
Insight Memory Care Clinic	A memory clinic located in Northern Virginia that provides specialized care, support, and education for persons with Alzheimer's and dementia.	insightmcc.org/welcome.html
No Wrong Door	A free service that helps you find the local resources you need in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	211virginia.org/consumer/index.php

Website	Useful For	Link
VCU Medical Center Aging Brain Center	Provides training, education, and resources related to abuse in later life, dementia, Geriatric Education, and Lifelong Learning.	vcoa.chp.vcu.edu
Autism Services and Supports		
Autism Speaks	Educational resources on autism as well as connections with services and supports.	autismspeaks.org
Autism Society	Find autism related resources	ascv.org/resources/resource-directory
DARS Autism Services	Get connected with vocational training for persons with autism	autismspeaks.org
Individual and Family Support Program	Get counseling on waived services for persons with developmental disabilities.	dbhds.virginia.gov/developmental-services/ifsp
Brain Injury Services		
Brain Injury Association of Virginia	Provides access to Neuro-Resource Facilitation, Support Groups, and Camp Bruce McCoy (an overnight camp experience) for persons with a brain injury.	biav.net/services
Brain Injury Connections of the Shenandoah Valley	provides adult and pediatric case management, Community Support Services (life skills training), and Support Groups for individuals with brain injury.	bicsv.org
Brain Injury Services, Inc.	provides adult and pediatric case management and operates a clubhouse program in Alexandria (ADAPT).	braininjurysvcs.org
Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia	provides adult and pediatric case management, Community Support Services (life skills training), and a unique telesupport program known as the Community Living Connection (CLiC) for survivors of brain injury.	bisswva.org
Community Brain Injury Services, Inc.	provides adult case management and operates two clubhouse programs - The Mill House in Richmond and Denbigh House in Newport News.	communitybraininjury.org

Website	Useful For	Link
Eggleston Services, Inc.	provides adult case management and operates a clubhouse (Beacon House) in Virginia Beach.	egglestonservices.org
No Limits Eastern Shore	provides adult case management and operates No Limits day program.	nolimitseasternshore.com
The Bridgeline	provides adult case management and operates a clubhouse The BridgeLine in Charlottesville.	thebridgeline.org
Virginia Supportive Housing	provides case management for residents of two community homes for people with brain injury: Independence House in the Fulton Hill community, and Bliley Manor in Southside Richmond.	virginiassupportivehousing.org
Cooling & Heating Assistance		
Dominion Virginia Power's FanCare & EnergyShare Programs	Helps qualified customers pay energy bills for any type of heating and cooling source.	dominionenergy.com/virginia/billing/billing-options-and-assistance/energyshare
Senior Cool Care	Sponsored by Dominion Energy and administered by DARS that helps low-income older citizens in Virginia keep cool during summer months	vda.virginia.gov/seniorcoolcare.htm
Virginia Department of Social Services' Energy Assistance Programs	Helps eligible low-income households offset expenses associated with heating and/or cooling their home.	dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea/index.cgi
Commonwealth of Virginia		
Commonwealth Calendar	Allows you to search for events in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	virginia.org/directory/Events
State Agency List	List of state agencies in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	virginia.gov/agencies
Virginia Governor	The website for the governor of Virginia.	governor.virginia.gov

Website	Useful For	Link
Virginia Regional Directory	Provides access a categorized list of organizations that are located in Virginia.	regionaldirectory.us/virginia.htm
Disability Resources		
disAbility Navigator	The best way to find disability services in Virginia, including personal assistance, accessible housing, benefits and more.	disabilitynavigator.org
Centers for Independent Living (CILS)	Non-residential places of action and coalition designed and operated by people with disabilities. Promotes leadership and independence as well as works with local communities to remove barriers to independence.	vadars.org/cbs/cils.htm
DARS Traumatic Brain Injury Services	Serves as a point of contact for internal and external customers seeking general or agency-specific information about brain injury resources.	vadars.org/cbs/biscis.htm
PAS Program	Program which assist an individual with a disability to perform activities of daily living and other every day activities.	vadars.org/cbs/pas.htm
Supported Decision Making	Provides information related to FAQ's on Supported Decision Making.	aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/faq_about_supported_decision_making.pdf
Driving - Mature Driver Safety		
Virginia GrandDriver Program	Provides information about Virginia GrandDriver Program.	granddriver.net
Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles' Mature Driver Safety	Provides information about mature driver safety.	dmv.virginia.gov/safety/#programs/mature/index.asp
Demographics		
Virginia Department of Health's Center for Health Statistics	Developed to provide a convenient access point for health-related data for Virginia.	vdh.virginia.gov/data
U.S. Bureau of the Census	Provides data related to the U.S. Census.	census.gov

Website	Useful For	Link
U.S. Center for Health Statistics	Provides statistical information that will guide actions and policies to improve the health of the American people.	cdc.gov/nchs/index.htm
Emergency Response		
Virginia Department of Emergency Management	Gives information about emergency preparedness in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	vaemergency.gov
Virginia Department of Health's Emergency Preparedness & Response Programs	Provides information about emergency preparedness and how to effectively respond to an emergency that impacts public health in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	vdh.virginia.gov/central-virginia/emergency-preparedness-response-epr
National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)	Provides information about fire safety.	nfpa.org
Falls Prevention		
Centers for Disease Control STEADI	Provides tools and materials that help identify patients at low, moderate, and high risk for a fall; identify modifiable risk factors; and offer effective interventions.	cdc.gov/steady
DARS Falls Prevention	Information about Falls Prevention programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	vda.virginia.gov/vaFallsprevention.htm
National Council on Aging	Provides education on Falls prevention.	ncoa.org/FallsPrevention
National Institute on Aging	Provides information and resources on exercise and healthy aging.	nia.nih.gov/health/exercise-physical-activity
Fraud		
Better Business Bureau	Provides information about the quality of a company before you do business with it.	bbb.org
Virginia Attorney General's Office	Website for the Virginia Attorney General.	oag.state.va.us

Website	Useful For	Link
Virginia Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation	Agency which issues professional credentials, licenses, certificates or registrations.	dpor.virginia.gov
Federal Government Agencies		
U.S. Administration on Aging (AOA)	Principal agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services designated to carry out the provisions of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA)	acl.gov/about-acl/administration-aging
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission	Agency charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death associated with the use of the thousands of types of consumer products	cpsc.gov
U.S. Center for Disease Control & Prevention	Principle public health agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.	cdc.gov
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	Agency which enhances and protect the health and well-being of all Americans.	hhs.gov
U.S. Social Security Administration	Agency responsible for administering programs such as medicare, retirement, supplemental security income, and disability benefits.	ssa.gov
U.S. Veterans Affairs Department	Agency responsible for veteran health-care and veteran benefits.	va.gov
Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren		
AARP Guide for GrandFamilies	Connects you to tips, tools and resources. Also connects you to services and supports you need to take care of yourself and your family.	aarp.org/relationships/friends-family/info-08-2011/grandfamilies-guide-getting-started.html
Brookdale Foundation	Provides information about the Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) which provides extensive services, primarily to relative caregivers caring for children outside the foster care system.	brookdalefoundation.org
Generations United Database	Connects you to intergenerational programs in your area.	gu.org/ig-program-database

Website	Useful For	Link
Grand Living the Ageless Life	Provides information and education on raising grandchildren. Includes information on school, ADHD, and other issues effecting children.	grandmagazine.com/ournews/you-and-your-grandkids/grandparents-raising-grandchildren-2
Home Care		
Homecare Online - the National Association for Home Care	Provides education on homecare as well as information about services and resources in your area.	nahc.org
National Private Duty [Homecare] Association (NPDA)	Assists you in finding a home health-care provider in your area.	privatedutyhomecare.org
Hospice Care		
Medicare's Hospice Benefits	Provides information on the medicare hospice care program.	medicare.gov/coverage/hospice-care
Virginia Association for Hospices	Provides education on hospice for professionals and caregivers.	virginiahospices.org
Housing		
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Information for Seniors	Assists you in finding information related to affordable senior housing.	hud.gov/topics/information_for_senior_citizens
Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development	Provides a list of all housing programs in the state of Virginia.	dhcd.virginia.gov/all-programs
Insurance		
Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) for Federal Employees	Provides information about the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP).	opm.gov/insure/ltc
Affordable Care Act Marketplace	Allows you to enroll in ACA healthcare plans, change plans, and see what you are eligible for in terms of insurance.	healthcare.gov
National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) "Get Smart About Insurance"	Provides information on FAQ's related to healthcare reform.	content.naic.org/index_health_reform_faq.htm

Website	Useful For	Link
Legal Issues & Services		
American Bar Association's (ABA's) "Find Legal Help.org"	Helps you find legal help in your area.	abanet.org/legalservices/findlegalhelp/home.html
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	Agency responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, transgender status, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.	eeoc.gov
National Center on Poverty Law	Advocacy group that works to build a future free from racism, poverty, and the interlocking systems designed to keep those inequities alive.	povertylaw.org
VaLegalaid.org	Assists you in finding legal help in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	valegalaid.org/find-legal-help
Virginia Legal Aid Society	Assists Virginian's in getting legal help related to various topics such as elder law, medicaid access, special education, and guardianship.	vlas.org
Virginia Poverty Law Center	Breaks down systemic barriers that keep low-income Virginians in the cycle of poverty through advocacy, education, and litigation.	vplc.org
Long-Term Care		
Help Guide	A comprehensive, easy to use directory of nursing homes, assisted and independent living facilities, Alzheimer's care facilities and continuing care retirement communities.	helpguide.org/articles/alzheimers-dementia-aging/senior-housing.htm
Virginia Department of Social Services Assisted Living Facility	Provides information on assisted living facilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	dss.virginia.gov/facility/alf.cgi
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program		
Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman	Ombudsmen advocate for older persons receiving long term care services, whether the care is provided in a nursing home or assisted living facility, or through community-based services to assist persons still living at home.	elderrightsva.org

Website	Useful For	Link
Medicare		
Official U.S. Government Site for Medicare	General website which provides information about Medicare.	medicare.gov
Medicare Rights Center	Provides education and counseling on medicare.	medicarerights.org
Virginia Insurance Counseling & Assistance Program (VICAP)	Connects you to the VICAP insurance counseling program that is available for Virginians.	vda.virginia.gov/vicap.htm
Medicaid		
Cover Virginia	Provides detailed information about medicaid services in Virginia.	coverva.org/medic-aid/#home.
The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services	General website which provides information about medicaid.	cms.gov
Medication		
AARP Prescription Discounts	Gives access to prescription drugs at a discounted price.	aarppharmacy.com
Generic Drugs: The Unadvertised Brand	Provides information about how to save money on medications.	theunadvertisedbrand.com
Health Assistance Partnership (HAP)	Counsels and educates Medicare beneficiaries so we can make informed health care decisions	hapnetwork.org
Medicare Drug Discount Card Guide	Provides information about drug cards such as eligibility, how to use them, and where to use them.	payingforseniorcare.com/pharmaceutical-assistance/drug-cards
The Medicine Program	Nationwide program that helps people of all ages who cannot afford their prescription medication	themedicineprogram.com
U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Generic Drug Information	Gives information of generic drugs.	fda.gov/drugs/buying-using-medicine-safely/generic-drugs

Website	Useful For	Link
Mental Health		
Mental Health America	The nation's leading community-based nonprofit dedicated to addressing the needs of those living with mental illness and promoting the overall mental health of all.	mhanational.org
National Alliance on Mental Illness - Virginia	Provides education, support, information, training, and resources, and engage in systems change policy advocacy.	namivirginia.org
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance	Provides hope, help, support, and education to improve the lives of people who have mood disorders.	dbsalliance.org
Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAAA)	Provides education about the disorders and helps people find treatment, resources, and support.	adaa.org
SAMHSA's National Helpline	The agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance behavioral health.	samhsa.gov
Nursing Homes		
Medicare's Nursing Home Comparison page	Nursing Home Compare has detailed information about every Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing home in the country.	medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare/search.html?
Virginia Health Care Association	Allows you to find nursing homes in your area.	vhca.org/locator
Virginia Health Information	Allows you to find nursings homes in your area.	vhi.org/Nursing/default.asp
Nutrition		
DARS Nutrition Services	Get connected to nutrition programs in your area such as home-delivered meals and congregate meals.	vda.virginia.gov/nutrition.htm
healthfinder®	Provides information and education on proper nutrition.	health.gov/myhealthfinder/topics/everyday-healthy-living/nutrition
Nutrition.gov	Offers credible information to help you make healthful eating choices.	Nutrition.gov
U.S. Food and Drug Administration	Agency which regulates food, drugs, medical devices, vaccines, and more.	www.fda.gov

Website	Useful For	Link
Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Tech	Assists you in finding a local cooperative extension program near you.	ext.vt.edu/offices.html
Olmstead Plan for Virginia		
Olmstead in Virginia	Provides information about the Olmstead plan in the Commonwealth of Virginia.	olmsteadva.com
Socialization Programs for Older Adults		
Lifelong Learning Institute in Chesterfield	A member-supported organization designed to meet the educational and social enrichment needs of adults age 50 and “better.”	vcoa.chp.vcu.edu/programs/life-long-learning-institute
Senior Center Directory	List of senior centers in Virginia	seniorcenterdirectory.com/virginia
Taxes		
AARP Foundation Tax Aid	Helps you find online and in-person options for getting help with your taxes.	aarp.org/money/taxes/info-2018/aarp-tax-help-fd.html
IRS	The official website with information about taxes.	irs.gov



To learn more about services and programs available to older Virginians and their families, or to learn how to contact your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA), contact the Virginia Department for the Aging and Rehabilitative Services using the information provided below.

Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services
Office for Aging Services
1610 Forest Avenue, Suite 100, Richmond, VA 23229
Toll-Free: 1-800-552-3402 (Nationwide Voice/TTY)
Phone: (804) 662-9333
E-mail: aginginfo@dars.virginia.gov
Web Site: vda.virginia.gov

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**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING
AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES**