Nebraska Caregiver/Respite Coalition

Start-Up Process
- The Nebraska Respite Coalition was formed in 1998 to advocate for and create state legislation that was championed by Senator Dennis Byars to establish a Statewide Lifespan Respite Network.
- The legislation was passed in November 1999, and in May 2000 the Nebraska Respite Network was funded by the state legislature. The Department of Health and Human Services was charged with administering the program to serve family caregivers across the lifespan and state.
- The Respite Coalition continued to operate as a separate, independent entity from the Department of Health and Human Services and became solely self-supporting in October 1999.
- In 2001, local Respite/Caregiver Coalitions were created across the state.

Structure
- No formalized structure.
- Since the six Nebraska Respite Network Coordinators perform many of the tasks undertaken by other State Respite Coalitions, the members of the NE Caregiver/Respite Coalition concentrate their efforts on continuing to educate and promote the importance of family caregivers and their need for supportive services, including respite, to the state legislators.
- The National Respite Coalition often works in collaboration with the Nebraska Caregiver Coalition, which was formed in 2004.

Funding
- Funding for the Coalition is raised through donations and grants to cover the cost of events.
- The Nebraska Respite Network receives funding through state funds and community grants.

Membership
- Membership consists of representatives from for-profit, not-for-profit, and governmental organizations serving people with special needs from across the lifespan, as well as family caregivers.

Meetings and Communication
- Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month.
- Communication is through emails and teleconferencing. Nebraska is a large rural state with different services and needs. The Nebraska Caregiver/Respite Coalition brings representatives from across the state together to find common ground.

Major Activities
- In 2001, the coalition successfully advocated for passage of LB 692 to establish stipend funding for families through the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Subsidy Program.
- In 2001, Annual November Caregiver Awareness Activities begin:
  - Coalition members delivered cookies and information about families in need of services to our legislators.
  - Coalition organized Caregiver Celebration luncheon at the Governor’s Mansion and proclamation signings by the Governor recognizing November as awareness month for Family Caregivers, Respite, In-home...
Care, Alzheimer’s disease, Hospice and Palliative Care.

- In 2004, NE Respite Coalition actively participated in “And Thou Shalt Honor” nationally televised PBS special including excerpts from the Caregiving Town Hall meeting filmed in Kearney, NE.
- In 2006, co-sponsored National Respite Conference in Omaha.
- In 2007, Coalition initiated annual informational luncheons for State Senators at the Capitol to inform legislators and their staff of the importance of family caregivers providing long-term care and their need for services.

- In 2008, NETV Special, “Caring for Your Parents,” resulted in training opportunities across the state for family caregivers and professionals.
- Panels of professionals, in collaboration with the Coalition, provide community resources to the participants at the statewide events.

Documents/Resources Available
- Original bylaws
- 2010 strategic plan

State Contact Information

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