

Lifespan Respite Care Program



Lifespan Respite Grantee Lead Agency: **Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS)**

Funding Period: September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2021

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Primary Goal: **Enhance and expand existing respite and support services to family caregivers of children and adults, while developing a policy framework to expand and strengthen Alabama’s current lifespan respite care initiatives.**

Key Performance Measures	Notable Achievements
<p>The extent to which the stated goal and objectives were reached was documented through increases in respite care options for caregivers of family members with a range of disabilities and diseases; process measures documenting the development and implementation of information resources; and increases in information use. Performance measures included: number of caregivers served; level of satisfaction; number of public education/outreach/advocacy efforts; amount of new information on caregiver resources available; and number of on-line users.</p>	<p>In addition to continuing and increasing respite, trainings, and educational workshops, Alabama’s Lifespan Respite team offered enhanced services to help address caregivers’ emotional, physical, and financial needs from the onset of the pandemic through virtual support groups, web-based training and tools, and individual phone or video conferencing “Care Chats.” The Alabama Lifespan Respite Coalition, in an updated white paper, proposed legislative recommendations to increase public policy awareness, and a legislative framework for strengthening Alabama’s lifespan respite care initiatives.</p>

Key Objectives, Activities and Outcomes	Coalition, ADRC and Community Partners
<p>Objective 1. Enhance respite opportunities for all family caregivers.</p> <p>The Alabama Universal Voucher Program was the primary means to increase respite opportunities, including opportunities for underserved caregivers. Alabama Respite consistently advocated to public, non-profit, faith-based, and corporate entities to partner in funding and expanding the program.</p> <p>Notable Performance Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During FY2020 alone, Alabama Respite facilitated delivery of 76,716 hours of self-directed respite to 1,896 family caregivers statewide. • The Universal Voucher program served 882 unduplicated family caregivers throughout this grant cycle. • An additional 300 family caregivers, who did not qualify for Medicaid, Alabama Cares/AAA, Veterans Administration, or other agency respite programs, received on average 42 hours of planned respite per year. • As a direct result of Alabama Respite’s efforts during the grant cycle, nine new contracts were implemented with AAA’s, creating enhanced respite opportunities for aging caregivers. 	<p>State and Community Partners</p> <p>Leading partners included Alabama Department of Human Resources, Alabama Department of Mental Health, Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities, AARP Alabama, Alabama Lifespan Respite Resource Network (Alabama Respite), a program of United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) of Huntsville and Tennessee Valley.</p> <p>State Respite Coalition/Organization Role</p> <p>Alabama Lifespan Respite Coalition members, a diverse group of stakeholders, are appointed by the Governor and rotated regularly, with the exception of state</p>

These new contracts reflect increases in the number of caregivers served within local communities and across the state.

- Start-up mini-grants supported expansion of respite day services and start-up funding for two Day Respite Programs annually.
- Alabama Respite staff collaborated with selected projects and committed community stakeholders to provide substantial guidance and assistance in all phases of their individual projects. Staff initiated electronic announcements of available respite day funding to over 3,000 contacts statewide.
- In response to the pandemic, Alabama Respite contracted with all 13 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to provide respite relief across the state, ensuring that caregivers of older adults and persons with chronic disabilities received a break from especially stressful caregiving responsibilities and circumstances.

Objective 2: Increase and expand existing support services to caregivers utilizing existing and expanded trainings and educational opportunities.

Notable Partnerships, Expansion Activities, and Performance Outcomes

- Educational and public awareness activities increased during the funding period.
 - From September, 2018 through February 2019, 56,500 contacts were made through phone, email, social media, and website visits.
- To inform the public about respite and caregivers, Alabama Respite conducted Lunch-n-Learns at local programs and agencies, and short trainings on topics including the importance of respite and caregiver wellness.
 - Lunch-n-learn trainings were delivered in 41 different settings during a six-month period, and a total of 16 workshops were conducted through the grant cycle.
- An array of well-attended caregiving opportunities were offered throughout the state including, for example: the *Helping Those Who Care* (HTWC) assistive technology training for caregivers of family members with age-related disabilities (this training provided respite vouchers that allowed caregivers to attend trainings); and multiple trainings on Covid-related topics such as mental health, quarantining routines, and technology use.
 - The HTWC goal for onsite statewide training sessions was set at 10. This goal was exceeded with a total of 17 onsite trainings conducted.
 - One hundred, forty-four sessions of technical assistance were conducted via phone, email, and virtually with an AT specialist.
- Respite related training focused on evidence-based and evidence-informed caregiver interventions, including Caregiver Stimulation Training, a hands-on awareness and education program. New partnerships were created with Jacksonville State University, Alabama A&M University, and University of North Alabama to conduct training for potential future caregivers and providers.
- Through these partnerships with programs and agencies, Alabama Respite in turn learned about local and program needs for emergency respite, educated agency “gatekeepers,” and facilitated referrals for needed services, thereby optimizing Objective 1, *enhancing respite opportunities*, in addition to increasing respite awareness.

agency representatives. Coalition members actively participate in Alabama Respite activities, including a subcommittee to assist in reviewing and updating respite provider listings for the interactive online provider database. The Coalition partners with the Caregiver Taskforce, ADSS, and Alabama Respite to support and coordinate opportunities for family caregivers to educate public policy makers and communities about the growing number of caregivers and the complex issues they face.

Aging and Disability Resource Center Role

Alabama’s ADRC makes respite information and support available by phone on an established toll free number. The toll-free number and related information is publicized and available through community service providers, case managers, hospital discharge planners, and other agencies working with ADSS and Alabama Respite. ADRC uses a Universal Intake Form and conducts a screening to identify benefits, services, and the need for additional caregiver assistance.

Objective 3: Strengthen advocacy and education to public officials and policymakers to encourage implementation of expanded HCBS policies to include caregivers and provide funding for formalized, sustainable respite and support services for caregivers.

Notable Partnerships, Activities, and Products

- Alabama Respite partnered with Respite Coalition members and the Alabama Department of Senior Services to launch a family caregiver and respite provider 10-year follow-up statewide online survey in order to learn about caregiver support services in the state. Data collected were used to inform and support additional projects and legislative work.
- An updated white paper entitled *Your Voice Matters—The Impact of Family Caregiving in Alabama* included up-to-date recommendations for state legislators.
 - Alabama Respite staff followed-up distribution of the white paper with personal phone calls to key legislators.
 - The white paper was available electronically, on the Alabama Lifespan Respite website, and in hard copy.
- Live community town hall forums pre-pandemic, and virtual meetings during the pandemic, were conducted to allow family caregivers to hear from state and federal leaders, to ask questions and receive answers, and to learn how to best care for their loved ones.

Program Flexibilities and Supports Introduced in Response to COVID-19

- Alabama Respite staff participated in demonstrating and creating new approaches to caregiver education opportunities and resources, including:
 - Short video tutorials on how to use the internet, how to complete a voucher application, and importance of maintaining routines during quarantine.
 - Series of pre-recorded and live-stream caregiver education and virtual BREAK events.
 - Collaborative partnership with the Colorado Respite Coalition for Facebook live presentations on mental health wellness.



For more information, contact ARCH at (703) 256-2084