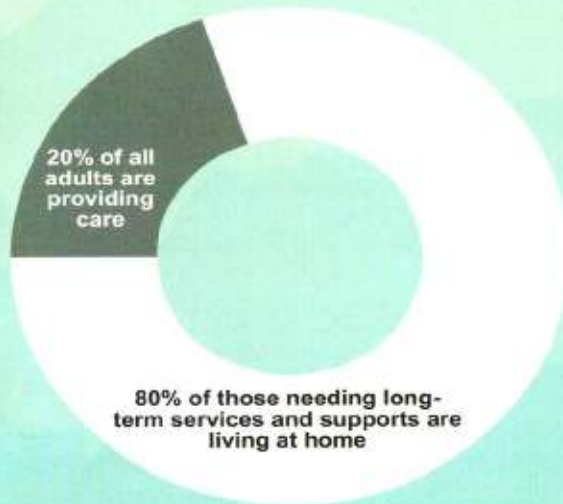


# North Carolina Lifespan Respite Strategic Plan: 2015 - 2020

## Family Caregiving in North Carolina



About one-fifth (20%) of the 7.6 million adults over 18 years of age in North Carolina (more than 1.5 million people) reported providing care or assistance in the previous month to a family member or friend with a long-term illness or disability, and 70% of these caregivers were women.

2011 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), U.S. Centers for Disease Control

## What is Respite Care?

Respite is planned or emergency care provided to a child or adult with special needs in order to provide temporary relief to family caregivers who are caring for that child or adult.

*Lifespan Respite Care Act definition PL 109-442*

Research shows that temporary relief (i.e., respite) from the ongoing care of a child or adult with special needs:

1. Improves family caregiver stress levels, which can enhance physical and emotional health;
2. Improves overall family well-being, family relationships and stability; and
3. Reduces hospital costs and helps avoid or delay more costly foster care, nursing home or other out-of-home placements.

## Faces of Respite in North Carolina



I have been caring for my 95-year-old mother for six and a half years. Caregiving is very stressful! I am grateful for friends and volunteers who provide me a break from this responsibility. ~ Joanna Stallard, caregiver to an elder parent



From 2009 through 2012, my husband and I adopted three children with complex medical and behavioral needs. We wish we could care for them entirely on our own, but that is simply not possible. I find that I feel less overwhelmed and frustrated when respite care is present in our life. Respite provides the gift of family and home for us. ~ Aimee Henderson, mother of three children with special needs



My 23 year old son was a resident of a skilled nursing facility for 2 years and I just had to bring him back home. I am very grateful and thankful for the wonderful caregivers who allow my husband and me a few hours to ourselves and other family to recharge our batteries.

~ Marianne Collins, mother of an adult with special needs



My wife and I have been married for 54 years and in 2011, she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. Respite through a day program allows me to fulfill my commitment to my wife to care for her. With respite, I can do this. Without it, I could not.

~ Al Vissers, husband of a wife with dementia



## Aim of the Lifespan Respite Project:

Create a coordinated system of accessible, community-based respite for all family caregivers, regardless of age or special need.

-  Expand and enhance respite services
-  Improve coordination and dissemination of services
-  Streamline access to programs
-  Fill gaps in service where necessary
-  Improve overall quality of respite services

## Top Barriers to Respite in North Carolina

1. Funding Limitations
2. Lack of Awareness
3. Policy and Practice Barriers

▶ These barriers were identified during the 2015 Lifespan Respite Survey and Strategic Planning Summit.

▶ Participants identified a need for a standard respite definition and brainstormed ideas for building awareness of respite with families, funders, legislators and the general public.

## Moving Forward Together - 2015 - 2020

### Recommendations and Action Steps

- 1 Create a sustainable, collaborative Lifespan Respite organizational structure.
- 2 Secure ongoing staffing for the North Carolina Respite Care Coalition.
- 3 Develop and implement an awareness and advocacy agenda.
- 4 Diversify funding for the North Carolina Respite Coalition and respite vouchers, using Lifespan Respite Grant funds as a base.
- 5 Work with key state agencies to systematically analyze and improve respite policies and processes.

For a copy of the full strategic plan and information about respite services in North Carolina, contact:

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NC Respite Care Coalition:  
[www.northcarolinarespitecarecoalition.org](http://www.northcarolinarespitecarecoalition.org)

