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Four Respite Services Selected as Innovative and Exemplary in National Search

Washington, D.C., February 3, 2025 —The ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center is pleased to announce that four respite services from across the country were recognized with the highest level of distinction -- *Innovative and Exemplary*. Each respite service met a [stringent set of criteria](#) and all have outstanding programs that address the needs of family caregivers of children, adults and/or older adult family members. Having met the criteria, respite services selected as Innovative and Exemplary received an honorarium for their achievements, and will be recognized at the 2025 National Lifespan Respite Conference in April in Huntsville, AL.

The four Innovative and Exemplary Respite Services are:

- **Duet: Partners in Health & Aging Kinship Care Services**, Phoenix, AZ
- **Neighbor Network of Northern Nevada's Community Care Program**, Reno, NV
- **Pause for Parents, Play for Kids**, Liberty Township, OH
- **Sumner Senior Volunteers**, Tennessee Caregiver Coalition, Nashville, TN

In addition, three services, **OK ABLE Tech: Respite Kits Program**, Stillwater, OK, **Share the Care**, Winter Park, FL, and **Stepping Up Again, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**, Lawrence, MA, were recognized as *Rising Stars*. Rising Stars have demonstrated a person and family-centered approach, but have not yet met all criteria for Innovative or Exemplary practice.

Respite is the most frequently requested support service among the nation's 53 million family caregivers, yet 86% do not receive respite services, despite the proven benefits to caregivers and care recipients. Respite for these families can help reduce caregiver stress, improve caregiver and family health and well-being, help avoid more costly out-of-home placements, and may even help to reduce the likelihood of abuse or neglect.

By recognizing high quality respite services across the country, ARCH hopes to encourage the study, expansion, and replication of such services.

For more detailed information about each program and the selection process, see the attached and the ARCH [website](#).

ARCH extends sincere appreciation to the selection committee: Jed Johnson, MBA, MSW, retired Managing Director, Aging Services, CARF International; Melinda Perez-Porter, Director, The Relatives As Parents Program (RAPP), The Brookdale Foundation Group; and Cheryl Dinnell and Susan Janko Summers, PhD, ARCH Consultants.

The ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center (ARCH), national in scope, is a program of Families and Communities Rising in Durham, NC. ARCH assists and promotes the development of quality respite and crisis care programs; helps families locate respite and crisis care services in their communities; and serves as a strong voice for respite in all forums. The ARCH National Respite Network includes three initiatives: the [National Respite Locator](#) aids families in locating respite providers in their community; the [National Respite Coalition](#), which is the policy division of ARCH, advocates for preservation and promotion of respite in policy and programs at federal, state, and local levels; and the [Lifespan Respite Technical Assistance and Resource Center](#) provides respite training and technical assistance to [Lifespan Respite grantees and State Respite Coalitions](#), ARCH's membership, and the general public.

Visit archrespite.org or call (703) 256-2084 for more information.

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2025 Respite Services Selected by the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center for National Recognition

To read more about the selection criteria, visit the ARCH [website](#).

2025 Innovative and Exemplary Respite Services

Duet: Partners in Health & Aging – Kinship Care Services, located in Phoenix, Arizona, provided 7,600 hours of respite to 144 grandfamilies during the past year. Kinship Care services were created at Duet in 1995 when staff members noticed that a growing number of seniors stopped attending programs because they had new responsibilities raising their grandchildren. After researching several respite models, Kinship Care Services chose a flexible voucher service model within a personalized, family-focused approach, allowing the program to tailor support to each caregiver's unique needs and preferences. In addition to receiving respite funds, grandfamilies participate in shared respite opportunities through intergenerational social outings. Highly valued by grandfamilies, 1500 shared respite hours were provided during the past year. Coaching on time use, monitoring of family needs for clothing, housing, assistance in applying for benefits, and financial support for grandchildren's activities, such as school sports, complement respite services. Resources to support this program are diversified and include local business support. A Grandparents Advisory Board works actively at all program levels — day-to-day operations; peer mentoring; special work committees; and advice to the Board for strategic planning. Website: <https://duetaz.org>

Neighbor Network of Northern Nevada's Community Care Program, serving 12 counties in Northern Nevada, was established five years ago. Guided by a human-centered design approach for creating a community village model, this program serves more than 170 adults over the age of 18 who have conditions related to aging and disability, including intellectual disabilities and dementia. The program model includes five or more hours of respite care weekly, in the home and community, at no cost to families, provided by trained Community Care Partners. Case management is provided using person-centered planning that supports the development of trusting caregiver-program relationships, allows programs to understand and configure services according to individual family needs, and provides time for caregivers to identify as caregivers and understand how respite may benefit them and their families. Care recipients receive services that are individually tailored, matching their preferences and needs, and are experienced as meaningful to them. Services include social and recreational opportunities, personal care, and transportation. Workforce recruitment and retention, including tribal and bilingual partners, are program priorities and are supported through competitive wages, flexible scheduling, and benefits including health insurance, gas stipends, and retirement investment.. Website: <https://neighbornv.org/what-we-do/community-care/respite-care/>

Pause for Parents, Play for Kids, located in Liberty Township, Ohio, was established ten years ago in response to local planning data showing that 100% of parents of children with disabilities in the community reported feeling isolated with a decreased support system. This center-based, drop-off respite model was piloted in a church setting and has grown to serve 1700 children and caregivers, fostering caregivers' resilience, physical and mental health, positive social connections and a sense of belonging, and joy while making sure their children receive developmentally appropriate and trauma informed individualized program curriculum. Sibling workshops are offered by the program, and although the program is not religiously based overall, an in-church ministry service works to make Sunday School meaningful to children with developmental and learning differences while their caregivers attend worship services. The program created a comprehensive and user-friendly program manual that, as of December 2024, is being used to support replication at a second program site. Training activities to support the 600 active volunteers working in this program are comprehensive and thoughtful, and are seen as essential to the program's mission. Website: <https://pauseforparents.org>

Sumner Senior Volunteer Program, based in Nashville, Tennessee, replicates Tennessee's AmeriCorps-funded Senior Companion Program, and provides four or more hours of in-home or virtual respite per week to more than 30 families. For those families opting for virtual respite (about half of those served), tablets or Chromebooks and training and support in their use are provided to caregivers. Most caregivers participating in this program had previously received vouchers through the Tennessee Voucher Program but desired a higher respite dose, more consistently scheduled respite, and/or had difficulty locating a respite provider. This volunteer-provider program aims to reduce caregiver stress, improve family relationships, and enhance caregivers' ability to care for their loved ones. Person- and family-centered planning, followed by volunteer-coaching in time use, and continuing check-ins with caregivers help to assure that services continue to meet family needs. The program is currently engaging in strategic planning to identify opportunities for increased caregiver-to-caregiver support. Volunteers work up to 40 hours weekly, and although recruitment has been challenging, once on-board, 100% of the 17 volunteers have continued with the program. Website: <https://tncaregiver.org>

2025 Rising Stars

OK ABLE Tech: Respite Kits Program at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma works with Oklahoma Human Services and with the Oklahoma Lifespan Respite Care Program to provide Respite Kits containing assistive technology (AT). AT Respite Kits are designed to provide short-term respite by supporting caregivers' and care recipients' needs and preferences in three areas: Sensory, Daily Living, and Safety. The AT Respite Kits were designed for caregivers to have an increased opportunity to take breaks, engage in self-care, and pursue other interests. AT kits are loaned out on a short-term basis for approximately two months with individual consultation offered to families by Oklahoma ABLE Tech staff. Once a loan is complete, respite kits are returned and loaned to other caregivers in need. In addition to individual consultations, ABLE Tech offers public awareness, education and training, online resources, community outreach, and newsletters and social media to inform and support family caregivers and organizations that serve them. Each year, Oklahoma ABLE Tech reaches thousands of individuals in the community with disabilities or limited mobility in Oklahoma to perform tasks independently, reducing the amount of assistance they receive from caregivers. Last year alone, ABLE Tech provided a short-term loan of assistive technology to 615 family members, guardians, or authorized representatives in the community setting. Website: <https://www.okabletech.org/core-programs/device-loan-program/respite-kits/>.

Share the Care™, located in Winter Park, Florida, has offered an array of respite, case management, and behavioral health services and supports to caregivers of adults 18-years and older with a variety of disabilities and conditions over the past 38 years. Share the Care™ serves approximately 1500 families each year. Their respite service model includes four-hours of daily respite in center-based or in-home settings. Short-term, overnight respite is also available to support families experiencing difficult life circumstances. Respite and related services are individually tailored through ongoing connections between case management staff and caregivers, and services evolve according to families' changing preferences and needs. Post-Covid organizational change has resulted in a strong behavioral health program for caregivers including in-person and virtual supports. Staff retention is a priority and supported through competitive wages and medical and retirement benefits. Share the Care™ boasts both long-term and stable leadership in program and board administration, and sustainability is enhanced through diversified resources, community support, and strategic planning. Website: <https://helpforcaregivers.org>

Stepping Up Again, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, located in Lawrence, Massachusetts, is a recent program within AgeSpan's Family Caregiver Support Program. AgeSpan is a fifty-year-old agency serving older adults. Stepping Up Again, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren has operated year-round for three years, and serves 35 grandfamilies of 50+ grandchildren from birth through 22-years. Their service model features scholarships and

stipends to support flexibility and service options, as well as transportation to remove barriers to service access, expanding the existing 12-month basic respite services previously offered by AgeSpan. In addition to increasing the number of respite options for families, Stepping Up Again, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren works to increase the number of grandfamilies served through targeted outreach, including underserved populations. As part of a person- and family-centered service approach, social determinants of health are assessed for each grandfamily, and program staff help families obtain programs and services in addition to respite that help address nutrition, housing, transportation, benefit enrollment, and safety according to family needs and priorities. Valid and reliable measures of caregiver wellness, including measures of caregiver stress and caregiver strain, are part of ongoing program evaluation.

Website: <https://agespan.org>

