

# Lifespan Respite Care Program



Lifespan Respite Grantee Lead Agency: **Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS), Aging Services**

Funding Period: September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2025

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Primary Goal: **Enhance Oklahoma’s systems and capacities to deliver respite care and related services to family caregivers of adults or children with disabilities.**

Key Performance Measures	Notable Achievements
<p>OKDHS and partners collected both process and outcome data during the funding period, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uses and costs of vouchers for direct, emergency, and educational respite;</li> <li>• attendance of Coalition subcommittee meetings and accomplishments;</li> <li>• supports provided through person-centered counseling;</li> <li>• caregiver feedback on respite use, caregiving circumstances, and caregiver satisfaction; and</li> <li>• documentation and evaluation of conferences and informational and educational events.</li> </ul> <p>Responsive updates based on caregiver feedback and surveys inform continuous service and system improvements.</p>	<p>The Oklahoma Lifespan Respite Grant (2020–2025), led by OKDHS Aging Services, transformed the state’s caregiver support landscape by skillfully braiding Capacity Building Grant (CBG) resources from Oklahoma Health Care Authority, Community Catalyst “Amplifying the Power of Family Caregiver Voices” funding, and COVID relief funding. This coordinated investment delivered direct assistance to more than 1,000 unpaid caregivers and achieved an exceptional 100% satisfaction rate.</p> <p>The initiative also unified over 400 partners through the Oklahoma Caregiver Coalition, reducing fragmentation and creating a cohesive statewide network. Outreach impact was remarkable: conference participation surged from 437 attendees in 2022 to 1,259 in 2024—a 188% increase—with representation from 95% of Oklahoma counties, underscoring the program’s statewide relevance and demand.</p> <p>The enhanced OKCares.org resource hub now draws between 16,000 and 37,000 visitors per cycle, expanding access to trusted information and support. By pairing flexible respite vouchers with Person-Centered Options Counseling, Oklahoma has built a scalable, responsive infrastructure that strengthens families and safeguards the financial and emotional well-being of the state’s caregiving workforce.</p>

Key Objectives, Activities and Outcomes	Coalition, ADRC and Community Partners
<p><b>Objective 1. Increase awareness and outreach.</b></p> <p><b>Notable Partnerships, Products and Performance Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oklahoma Human Services’ (OKDHS) Oklahoma Caregiver Conference Planning Committee met regularly to plan annual Oklahoma Family Caregiver Conferences held virtually and in-person at five locations across the state in November to coincide with National Family Caregivers Month.</li> </ul>	<p><b>State and Community Partners</b></p> <p>Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) partners with Sooner Success (SS) to implement the Lifespan Respite Grant Voucher Program. This team intentionally aligned goals with</p>

- Highlights included a diverse panel of caregivers across the lifespan shared personal caregiving experiences via video interview; ABLE Tech (assistive technology) provided a virtual smart home tour; and Subject Matter Experts hosted virtual Q & A sessions on topics relevant to caregivers.
- Educational vouchers supported caregiver attendance, and attendance increased 69% percent from 2023 to 2024

### Objective 2: Build partnerships and engagement with family caregivers

#### Notable Partnerships, Products and Performance Outcomes

- OKDHS added the Caregiver Partnership Form directly to OKCares.org, improving caregiver access and engagement with the Oklahoma Caregiver Coalition.

### Objective 3: Strengthen services and supports.

#### Notable Partnerships, Products and Performance Outcomes

- Sooner Success (SS) distributed Lifespan Respite Vouchers valued at \$300 to Oklahoma family caregivers who did not qualify for other respite voucher programs.
  - During the reporting period, 1,076 caregivers benefitted from the respite vouchers.
  - In addition to respite vouchers, SS also helped family caregivers to connect with disability programs and local resources.
- One-time emergency vouchers for \$300 were issued to 58 full-time, unpaid caregivers facing urgent life circumstances such as surgery, hospitalization, or a death in the family.
- SS provided 142 educational vouchers (\$50 half-day/\$100 full-day) enabling caregivers to attend training events.

### Objective 4: Ensure financial and workplace security.

#### Notable Partnerships, Products and Performance Outcomes

- The LRG team provided essential employment and financial security support through two dedicated Person-Centered Options Counseling specialists. These specialists play a pivotal role in:
  - Navigating Complex Systems: Specialists assist caregivers in understanding an often-overwhelming landscape of services and supports, including eligibility criteria, application processes, and available options.
  - Identifying Affordable Solutions: Specialists connect caregivers with a network of community-based organizations that provide a variety of options beyond long-term care to address their specific needs.
  - Empowering Informed Decision-Making: Caregivers receive guidance tailored to their unique situations, enabling them to make informed and financially sustainable choices aligned with their loved one's needs.
  - Reducing Financial Strain: By accessing available resources and making informed decisions, caregivers can mitigate potential financial burden associated with caregiving, safeguard their own financial well-being and workplace stability.

the 2022 National Strategy Goals to Support Family Caregivers.

#### State Respite Coalition/Organization Role

Lifespan Respite grant staff continued to collaborate with and cultivate the Oklahoma Caregiver Coalition (OCC) by bringing together more than 400 statewide partners to serve and address the prioritized needs of caregivers. The OCC coordinates statewide respite programs and other essential resources to improve family caregivers' support. The Coalition met quarterly to discuss pressing issues affecting caregivers and worked to prevent or reduce service fragmentation and overlap. OCC partners served on one of nine subcommittees:

1. Advancement (fundraising, grant writing, marketing)
2. Advocacy (legislative and systems)
3. Respite (a temporary break from caregiving duties)
4. Grandparents and other Relatives Raising Children
5. Transportation
6. Psychosocial supports (mental health, counseling, support groups)
7. Legal and financial assistance (for caregivers)
8. Home safety/modifications/health care
9. Employer/Employee Engagement Initiative (meeting the needs of employed caregivers)

#### Aging and Disability Resource Center Role/No Wrong Door System Role

Oklahoma Aging and Disability Resource Center/No Wrong Door is a valued member of the OCC. They worked closely with the LR grantee to leverage grant funding from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) for COVID-19 Pandemic Response Critical Relief Funds.

**Objective 5: Expand data, research, and evidence-based practices.****Notable Partnerships, Products and Performance Outcomes**

- Sooner Success staff streamlined the voucher process through an online application with pre- and post- caregiver surveys.
  - Post-survey responses show that caregivers used respite for shopping/errands, recreation/leisure time, and doctors' appointments, and that care receivers benefitted primarily by having social interaction with others.
  - 94% of caregivers reported the respite program provided needed breaks from caregiving duties.
  - 66% of caregivers had no other family members to assist with caregiving.
  - 80% reported their caregiving abilities were affected by COVID.
  - 100% of caregivers were satisfied with the respite voucher program.



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