



FamilyMeans

CAREGIVING & AGING

## What is Respite Care?

RESPITE CARE is temporary care provided by trained individuals that allows primary caregivers some relief from the responsibilities of caring for another.

Webster's dictionary defines respite as a "reprieve," a "temporary intermission of labor," and "interval of rest." For our purposes, we will define respite care as *providing in-home supervision and companionship, on a voluntary basis, that gives relief to the primary caregiver from the daily responsibilities of caring for the chronically ill or disabled family member.* A caregiver is someone who daily cares for a chronically ill or disabled family member in the home. A care receiver is the recipient of the care and may be a chronically ill or disabled child, adult or senior living in the home.

### Volunteer Respite Care

- Allows the individual to remain at home
- Supports the caregiver who wants to care for their relative at home
- Helps keep the costs of care down

### Volunteer Respite Care Provides the *Caregiver* with:

- Time for medical and dental appointments
- Time for errands and shopping
- Time for fun and relaxation
- Assurance that their loved one is secure in their absence.

### Volunteer Respite Care Provides the *Care receiver* with:

- Safe Supervision
- A friendly new face
- Companionship
- New activities and stimulation



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## The Role of the Caregiver

Did you know that caregivers provide about 80% of community care and that 70% of those are women? They normally provide 4-6 hours of care each day and provide care for an average of 4-5 years. Providing care can reward caregivers with feelings of love, affection, nurturing, and the satisfaction of providing care. However, it can also produce feelings of anger, powerlessness, guilt, sadness and loss. When a volunteer provides respite care, the caregiver can deal with negative feelings through the emotional support of having time for his or her own needs to be met.

Caregivers have to wear many hats when caring for their loved one at home. They take on numerous roles such as nurse, guardian, cook, companion and comforter, maid and laundry attendant, and liaison with professions (i.e., doctors, dentists, etc.). Add the role of administrator, chief financial officer and key decision-makers and it's no wonder that caregivers sometimes need a break.

Respite volunteers provide incredible relief for caregivers. They may be the only social contact for weeks for someone who is the sole caregiver. They help a caregiver feel that he/she is part of a group instead of alone. And, because the **FamilyMeans Caregiver Support** program is free, it is a service that does not add any financial concerns for the caregiver.

You could be the ONE to make a real difference in the lives of both the caregiver and the care receiver. One thing is certain; you will be appreciated and will be giving the best gift anyone can give to another--yourself.

## **Providing Regular Respite**

- Reduces stress in families
- Reduces risk of abuse and neglect
- Enhances family coping abilities
- Increases caregivers physical and mental wellbeing
- Reduces out-of-home placement
- Increases family social activities and interactions
- Prevents burn-out
- Promotes healthy families



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## THE RESPITE PROGRAM

FamilyMeans

1875 Northwestern Ave. S. Stillwater, MN 55082

651-439-4840

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### **TITLE:**

Respite Volunteer

### **JOB SUMMARY:**

The Respite Volunteer provides in-house companionship and informal care for a child, adult with a chronic illness or disability in order to give the primary caregiver a break or “respite” from the responsibilities of care giving.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Complete the orientation and initial training.
- Be part of a home visit which involves the Respite Program Social Worker, the caregiver, and the care receiver.
- Provide companionship and/or supervision for the receiver while the caregiver is away.
- Know the proper procedure in the event of an emergency.
- **Report volunteer hours to volunteer coordinator on a quarterly basis.**
- Report to the Volunteer Coordinator any changes that the caregiver or care receiver has made, and share concerns with the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

People-oriented, flexible, reliable, accepting, skilled listener, able to work with people with disabilities and the elderly and may need to assist physically. Volunteer will be able to choose the person that he\she prefers to work with.)

**TIME COMMITMENT:**

Suggested: 4-16 hours per month. Three-month commitment.

**LOCATION:**

At home of the client (other locations, per mutual agreement and Volunteer Coordinator's approval).

**RESPONSIBLE TO:**

Volunteer Coordinator

**TRAINING AND SUPPORT PROVIDED:**

- Mandatory training program.
- Ongoing volunteer support group and continuing education (quarterly).
- Quarterly telephone calls from Volunteer Coordinator. (Volunteer may call anytime.)
- Program staff available for consultation, problem solving, and support.

**BENEFITS:**

- Growth in proficiency in care giving.
- Training, supervision, coordination, and recognition provided by the agency.
- Letter of recommendation and documentation provided upon request.
- Opportunities for on-going support and training.

**CONTACT:**

Volunteer Coordinator, 651-439-4840