

News Column for Week of January 4, 2021

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Program to be Offered to Support Family Caregivers

A couple of months ago I wrote an article on supporting family caregivers. You might remember that I mentioned family caregivers, often referred to as informal caregivers, provide 90% of the long-term care offered in America. The value of the unpaid care they provide runs into the hundreds of billions of dollars.

Caregivers frequently experience the need to ‘do it all’. ‘Doing it all,’ from the caregiver’s perspective, may not include caring for themselves so they can thrive, and not just survive during their caregiving experience.

The Southwind Extension District is joining the Wildcat Extension District and also Sedgwick County Extension in offering Powerful Tools for Caregivers. This educational program is designed to support family caregivers in taking better care of themselves while caring for a relative or a friend. The program can benefit participants who are helping a parent, spouse, child, friend or someone who lives at home, in a nursing home, or across the country.

The 6-session course will be offered virtually on Thursdays, January 14 – February 18, 2021, from 1:30-3:00 p.m. A \$5.00 registration fee covers the postage for sending out the Caregiver Helpbook. The helpbook includes topics on: Hiring in-home help, helping memory impaired elders, making legal, financial, and care decisions, understanding depression, and making decisions about driving.

Caregiver tools provided as part of the sessions include: Helping the caregiver reduce stress; communicating effectively; encouraging ways for the caregiver to take care of themselves; reducing caregiver guilt, anger and depression; helping the caregiver to relax; making tough decisions; setting goals and problem solving.

Register online by going to <https://bit.ly/tools4care> or call the Yates Center Southwind office at 620-625-8620. Class size will be limited. Registering early will allow staff to help participants be able to participate virtually and to receive the Caregiver Helpbook prior to sessions beginning.

The program is being offered at a reduced cost thanks to partial funding by the K-State Research and Extension Adult Development and Aging Program Focus Team and the Community Foundation of Southeast Kansas.

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