



## Louisiana Lifespan RESPITE COALITION

### Background

In 2006, President Bush signed the Lifespan Respite Care Act into law (P.L. 109-442). The Lifespan Respite Care Program (LRCP) provides grants to state agencies to maximize existing resources and ensure that respite is available and accessible to family caregivers by establishing or enhancing statewide respite systems. DHH received a small three-year planning grant of \$200,000 in 2010 to coordinate the coalition through the Aging Disability Resource Centers of Louisiana/LouisianaAnswers.com.

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## LOUISIANA LIFESPAN RESPITE: WHO, WHAT, WHY, WHERE AND HOW?

### Family Caregivers: Their Own Words

- Caregivers report having difficulty finding time for one's self (35%), managing emotional and physical stress (29%), and balancing work and family responsibilities (29%) (NAC, 2004).
- About 73% of surveyed caregivers said praying helps them cope with caregiving stress, 61% said that they talk with or seek advice from friends or relatives, and 44% read about caregiving in books or other materials (NAC, 2004).
- Half (53%) of caregivers who said their health had gotten worse due to caregiving also said the decline in their health has affected their ability to provide care (NAC, 2006).
- 30 percent of caregivers said they need help keeping the person they care for safe, and 27 percent would like to find easy activities to do with the person they care for (NAC, 2004)
- Caregivers said they do not go to the doctor because they put their family's needs first (67% said that is a major reason), or they put the care recipient's needs over their own (57%). More than half (51%) said they do not have time to take care of themselves and almost half (49%) said they are too tired to do so (NAC, 2004).

### Benefits of Respite

- Improves family caregiver physical and emotional health;
- Improves overall family well-being and stability;
- Improves marriages, sibling and other family relationships;
- Reduces absenteeism at work;
- Gives care recipient a break, too!

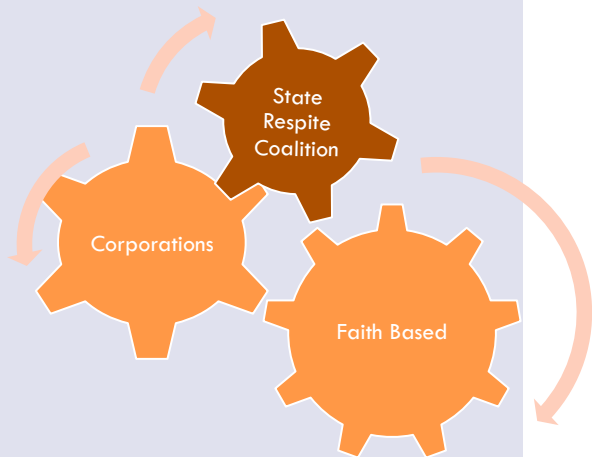
### Why do we use the word "lifespan" in talking about respite?

LIFESPAN means we are seeking to build coordinated SYSTEMS of accessible, community-based respite services for all family caregivers regardless of age or the special need of the loved one.

A system of respite care depends on partnerships of corporations, faith based community, providers of services to those with illness, respite providers, government leaders: all who become part of the Lifespan Respite Coalition.

### Status of Louisiana Lifespan Respite

- LouisianaAnswers.com is the centralized resource for family caregivers
- A Louisiana Lifespan Respite Coalition is coordinated by the State Office of Aging Services with the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs
- There are approximately 900 respite providers in Louisiana, not nearly enough to address the long waiting list of families requesting services
- Volunteers are needed to train family caregivers



## The average Louisiana Family Caregiver is a middle-aged working woman carrying for her aged parent at home.

How this impacts the workplace:

- 87% report arriving late, leaving early or taking time off during the day
- 41% report taking a leave of absence
- 37% report going from full-time to part-time or giving up work entirely
- 14% turned down promotions
- 15% lost job benefits

### Productivity in the Workplace Statistics

- Almost 1/5 of workplace are family caregivers
- Productivity loss (2004) is estimated at \$34 billion for full-time caregiver employees
- Average loss per full-time employed caregiver is \$2,100

### What can corporations do?

- Survey and assess worker status and needs re care-giving
- Develop work place policies that benefit family caregivers State Respite Coalition i.e., flex-time, telecommuting, referral to supportive services, wellness programs
- Develop in-house respite resources
- Contribute to Louisiana Lifespan Respite “Time Bank”
- Join the Louisiana Lifespan Respite Coalition

### What is the Louisiana Family Caregiver Time Bank?

Corporate partners of the Louisiana Lifespan Respite Coalition underwrite the cost of technology to construct a Time Bank and/or family caregiver registry

Employers ask employees to contribute annual leave to the time bank, for themselves and co-workers

Convert employee annual leave donations into funds for time bank

Contribute a donation or matching funds to Louisiana Lifespan Respite “Time Bank”

### The Bottom Line

Adequate funding for family caregiver support will provide an excellent return on investment.

Providing better supports for family caregivers is essential to the well-being of our health care system, our workplace, and our economy.

For more information contact the Louisiana Lifespan Respite Coalition:

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