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THE PARENT CONNECT

The Parent Connect is a FREE opportunity for parents and caregivers. Join us via Zoom to learn about resources and gain parenting skills that promote children's growth and learning. Each session, an Extension educator will highlight a different skill and lead a conversation about how parents can guide their children.

Fall 2021 Schedule
 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Sept. 30 (Thurs) Human Kind. Be Both.
 Oct. 7 (Thurs) Mindfulness
 Oct. 14 (Thurs) I Make a Difference
 Nov. 9 (Tues) What Am I Good At?
 Nov. 16 (Tues) Solving Problems with Other People

*****REGISTRATION REQUIRED*****
<https://forms.gle/x3qvY2Z1u13rrnSA7>

Some 35 million Americans are caring for an older loved one, are you one of them?

Are you currently caring for an older loved one? Or, do you feel it's time to start getting more involved with the care or support of a loved one? If so, you may be looking for free resources to help you help your loved one live their best life as they get older, check out the Agefully Tool for Family Caregivers. Agefully is an online evidence-based tool for family caregivers developed by nurses at UW-Madison in the School of Nursing's Center for Aging Research and Education with input from real families. Agefully provides you with a number of assessments, articles and plans that help you work with your loved one and other family members to determine what resources will best fit your loved one's needs to help them thrive.

Agefully gives you access to free guidance and support on the following topics:

- *Driving
- *Home Safety
- *Finances
- *Family Dynamics
- *Caregiving Skills
- *Health

Go to the [Agefully website](https://agefully.me/#/home) - <https://agefully.me/#/home> - to get started.

If you have any questions about how to connect with a local Family Caregiver group, contact your county [Extension Office](#), [County or Tribal Aging Unit](#) or [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#). For additional questions, contact Life Span Program Manager, Sara Richie, at sara.richie@wisc.edu.

Family Financing: The Importance of Communicating During Financial Hardship

When faced with financial hardship, many individuals attempt to hide their emotions in order to shield their family from the increased burden. However, what may begin with good intentions often creates even more hardship on the family. Parents under high amounts of stress may be less engaged with their children or react more harshly over small things. Peggy Olive, a Financial Capability Specialist from the University of Wisconsin, says, "It is important to remember that children sense the tension in the family and may feel less secure, but don't know what to do about it". Problems in the home only adds more stress to an already stressful situation. What can be done to bring stability to the family?

The solution depends on creating open channels of communication within the family.

Regular family money meetings can help divide the stress of the financial burden into more manageable challenges. Open communication between older children and parents can help determine collaborative solutions to managing the family finances. Additionally, young children could be educated on the differences between wants and needs, and how family financial decisions are made. Family meetings may need to become more frequent during times of financial stress and other hardships. These meetings can be used to set attainable family goals and determine alternate activities for cutting back on spending. Finding inexpensive alternatives to family activities can help keep the brunt of the hard times from falling on any individual. With the collaborative support and effort of the whole family, financial hardships will not seem insurmountable, and the situation will become less stressful for all involved.

For more information on communicating during financial difficulties, including tips for conducting family money meetings, please go to: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/toughtimes/talking-with-family-managing-stress/talking-with-your-family-about-financial-difficulties/>

FOUR CO-PARENTING STRATEGIES

Build Strong Relationships

Relationships with friends and helping organizations can provide practical assistance, emotional support, and connection to a larger community.

Share Pains & Joys

Children should talk about strong feelings. Consider using "emotion coaching." This teaches children to understand emotions by noticing/naming their feelings, and discussing the behaviors that express those feelings.

Communicate Honestly

Communication that is direct, clear, and consistent helps all family members understand the difficulties the family is facing. Promote statements that start with "I" rather than statements that start with "you," such as "I feel hurt when my thoughts aren't acknowledged" rather than "you never listen."

Be Flexible

Resilient families have a flexible structure that they can modify to fit their needs and challenges over time rather than holding a rigid conception of family roles and rules..



LEARN MORE:
[HTTPS://BLOGS.EXTENSION.WISC.EDU/CO-PARENTING/CONTENTRESOURCES/COMMON-TIES NEWSLETTERS/](https://blogs.extension.wisc.edu/co-parenting/contentresources/common-ties-newsletters/)

Co-Parenting Classes

The goals of the program are to:

- Eliminate parental conflict in front of children.
- Keep the children out of parents' issues.
- Provide children with access to both parents.
- Put the best interests of the children first.

For more information, contact Renee Koenig, at renee.koenig@wisc.edu.

Upcoming Workshops

Call 920-388-7137 or email renee.koenig@wisc.edu for a workshop schedule.

- ◆ Aging Mastery Program
- ◆ Caring For Children Who Have Experienced Trauma
- ◆ Coping With Stress on the Family Farm
- ◆ Family Money Matters
- ◆ Mental Health First Aid
- ◆ Positive Co-Parenting
- ◆ Powerful Tools for Caregivers of Children With Special Health Needs
- ◆ Youth Risky Behaviors and What You Can Do