



INNOVATIONS IN CAREGIVER SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

PILOT SITE GRANTEE PROFILES

September 2025

AGE WELL

Colchester, Vermont

Website: <https://www.agewellvt.org/>

Project Manager: Sam Carleton

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Primary Project Focus Area

Respite Care

Secondary Focus Areas

Person-Centered Trauma-Informed Care

Whole Person Health

Project Description

Age Well is the designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for counties in Northwestern Vermont and a nationally recognized leader for innovative programs such as the Respite Squad Volunteer Program. Their pilot site will further innovation for family caregivers through two main activities: first, the program will aim to expand the number of Dementia Respite Grants offered to caregivers annually by 50%, providing access to crucial paid respite services. Second, Age Well will establish a Peer Respite Network, where "pods" of caregivers will offer each other vital peer-to-peer respite exchange. The respite network will be available to all caregivers receiving Caregiver Support from Age Well annually, including those supporting individuals with cognitive impairments that do not rise to the level of eligibility for respite funding. Age Well will focus on engaging with early-stage caregivers and connecting them with respite before the burden of caregiving becomes intense.

COUNCIL ON AGING IN UNION COUNTY

Monroe, North Carolina

Website: <https://coaunion.org/>

Project Manager: Andrew Friend

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Primary Project Focus Area

Emergency Response, Planning and Preparedness

Secondary Focus Area

Volunteer-Driven Programs

Project Description

The Council on Aging in Union County is a community-based organization with over 50 years of experience providing comprehensive services and supports to older adults, family caregivers, people with disabilities, and kinship caregivers. The pilot site funding will be used to expand the successful Seniors Living in Place Program (SLIP) — to better support family caregivers, particularly those caring for individuals with chronic illness, Alzheimer’s disease, or related dementias. Originally designed to prevent injury and promote aging in place through home modifications and education, the SLIP program is now being enhanced to meet the urgent, practical safety needs of caregivers, many of whom are aging themselves and at risk of physical injury and burnout. Beginning with a comprehensive in-home safety assessment, the volunteer-driven program addresses emergency response and preparedness by providing assistive technology such as Personal Emergency Response Systems, medical ID bracelets and Vial of Life, along with fire safety training. The program will also include caregiver-specific safety tools and devices. Trained volunteers will install grab bars, replace smoke detectors, build ramps, and install address signs. This program aims to address the environmental and physical demands of family caregiving by providing proactive safety checks, direct installation of preventive tools, and the integration of assistive technology such as caregiver alarms and cameras—all coordinated by trained staff and supported by a network of skilled volunteers.

Partners

1. Centralina Area Agency on Aging
2. American Red Cross of the Southern Piedmont
3. Union EMS
4. Local fire departments, churches and civic organizations

DIRECTION HOME OF EASTERN OHIO

Youngstown, OH

Website: <https://dheo.org/>

Project Manager: Christy Boone

Email Address: cboone@dheo.org

Primary Project Focus Area

Kinship Care

Secondary Focus Area

Respite Care

Project Description

Direction Home of Eastern Ohio is the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for eastern counties of Ohio. Their pilot site program aims to expand its impactful Kinship Care Summer Camp Program to Ashtabula County, addressing the unique needs of rural kinship families. Through strong partnerships with local camps, the program will provide kinship children with safe, enriching experiences that promote active living, social connection and emotional well-being. The program will also offer critical respite for caregivers, reducing stress and strengthening family stability. DHEO will partner with an accredited program to deliver a two-tiered approach: an overnight camp experience and a multi-week in length, day camp option. Both models are designed to provide a safe, supervised, and enriching environment where children can develop healthy habits, build friendships, and simply have fun, all while giving kinship caregivers the critical respite they rarely receive.

Partners

1. Ashtabula County Family YMCA

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

Elizabeth, New Jersey

Website: <https://jfscentralnj.org/>

Project Manager: Maria Mullen

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Primary Project Focus Area

Person-Centered Trauma-Informed Care

Secondary Focus Areas

Education, Counseling and Peer Supports

Respite Care

Project Description

Jewish Family Service of Central New Jersey is a seasoned community-based outpatient mental health agency. Their pilot program will enhance existing caregiver support for Holocaust Survivors and older adults with trauma histories through a trauma-informed, and family-centered model. The target population includes family caregivers of Holocaust Survivors and other older adults with histories of trauma. This initiative includes three key components: (1) monthly self-care sessions to reduce stress and improve coping; (2) quarterly educational workshops to strengthen caregiver knowledge and confidence; and (3) weekly respite care to ease caregiver burden. The program aims to promote emotional well-being, reduce caregiver exhaustion, and increase self-efficacy through a holistic and compassionate approach tailored to the unique needs of this population. This program is designed to meet the complex cultural, emotional, and socioeconomic needs of these caregivers through a trauma-informed, person- and family-centered lens.

PENINSULA AGENCY ON AGING

Newport News, Virginia
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Primary Project Focus Area

Education, Counseling and Peer Supports

Secondary Focus Area(s)

Respite Care
Whole Person Health

Project Description

Peninsula Agency on Aging is the Area Agency on Aging for Southeastern Counties in Virginia with a track record of designing innovative and scalable models including as a previous Community Care Corps (C3) grantee. Their pilot program, “WellCare Connections: Bridging the Caregiver Gap” is a holistic wellness program supporting unpaid caregivers of older adults. The program will prioritize caregivers experiencing high stress, isolation, or limited access to support. The initiative will provide caregiver peer support groups, stress-reduction activities, educational workshops, and direct connections to respite and mental health resources. This program innovates by shifting from traditional caregiver education to focusing on caregiver wellness and crisis support, offering emergency mental health counseling. The program will host support groups and monthly workshops, connect caregivers to services, and measure outcomes through surveys. By centering the caregiver, WellCare Connections will foster healthier aging for both caregivers and the older adults they support.

REGION IV AREA AGENCY ON AGING

St. Joseph, Michigan

Website: <https://areaagencyonaging.org/>

Project Manager: Amanda Drew

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Primary Project Focus Area

Future Care/Long-Term Services and Support

Secondary Focus Areas

Education, Counseling and Peer Supports

Person-Centered Trauma-Informed Care

Volunteer-Driven Programs

Project Description

Region IV Area Agency on Aging in Southwest Michigan will launch a pilot program to strengthen and support family and informal caregivers. The initiative includes: 1) a tailored educational series and interactive curriculum that will be delivered by trained volunteer and peer facilitators; 2) a practical Caregiver Binder to help caregivers organize essential information such as medical records, legal documents and contingency arrangements; 3) a feasibility study to assess usefulness of a “mobile support app” by evaluating user feedback on potential features such as appointment tracking, resource libraries, and peer support forums; and 4) building sustainable infrastructure for ongoing volunteer peer support training and recruitment. These services—delivered in-person and virtually—aim to reduce caregiver stress, boost confidence, and improve access to resources. Inclusive outreach and trained volunteers will ensure caregiver engagement. Aligned with grant focus areas, this innovative model introduces culturally responsive tools and technology-enabled support new to our agency and scalable across the Aging Network.

SOUTHEAST IDAHO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS – AREA V AGENCY ON AGING

Pocatello, Idaho

Website: <https://sicog.org/>

Project Manager: Mike Hirschi

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Primary Project Focus Area

Kinship Care

Secondary Focus Area(s)

Education, Counseling and Peer Supports

Whole Person Health

Project Description

The Southeast Idaho Council of Governments, Area V Agency on Aging, in partnership with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, will pilot the Kinship Care Program to support grandparents and extended family members raising children due to parental absence. The program will provide services including navigation assistance, caregiver training, legal support, peer support groups and intergenerational programming. Its goal is to strengthen family stability, preserve tribal identity, and reduce the need for non-tribal out-of-home placements. Key objectives include improving access to resources for kinship caregivers, increasing legal and financial support for caregivers, and fostering intergenerational connection through programming. The program aims to build a sustainable, tribal-led model that supports kinship families and promotes long-term caregiver and child well-being.

Partners

1. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

VALLEY PROGRAM FOR AGING SERVICES

Waynesboro, Virginia

Website: <https://vpas.info/>

Project Manager: Joyce Nussbaum

Email Address: joyce@vpas.info

Primary Project Focus Areas

Volunteer-Driven Programs

Secondary Focus Area(s)

Education, Counseling and Peer Supports

Respite Care

Whole Person Health

Project Description

Valley Program for Aging Services is the Area Agency on Aging for the in the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro region in Virginia. VPAS will launch “The Gathering Place” a new, innovative service model developed in collaboration with community partners. “The Gathering Place” will be a volunteer-driven program designed to provide care partners needed respite while providing persons living with dementia peer support and person-centered activities. The program aims to increase the ability to age in place, provide additional resource education and counseling as requested and provide an opportunity for those currently residing in assisted living to feel purpose by sharing their time and talents as volunteers. The Gathering Place is more than a volunteer respite program, it is a step toward redefining how communities support individuals living with dementia and their care partners. By combining structured support, peer engagement, education, and community collaboration, this model advances the art of living with dementia and moves the SAW area closer to becoming a truly dementia-friendly region.

Partners

1. Greater Augusta Coalition against Adult Abuse
2. Life Plan/Assisted Living Communities