



*A Bi-Monthly Newsletter for
Family Caregivers*

Sauk County ADRC:

(608)355-3289

www.co.sauk.wi.us/adrc

f @adrcsauk

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER MONTH!

National Family Caregiver Month is a time to recognize the contributions family caregivers make each and every day for the loved one(s) they care for. Family caregivers are some of the most resilient people I know! So, I applaud you for doing what you do, each day without pause. Know that you have permission to take care of yourself too!

Make this November a month to remember.
Make it a month for you!

Sincerely,

*Marina Wittmann
Aging Program Coordinator
Caregiver Support Program Coordinator*



**THE ADRC IS
CLOSED ON
NOV 24-25
DEC 23, 26, 30**

WHAT'S INSIDE:

**CAREGIVER BOOT CAMP
INFO & REGISTRATION**

DEAR KURT

**PARKINSON'S
SYMPOSIUM**

GRANDPA & LUCY PLAY

**SUPPORT GROUP AND
EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES**

ADRC PRESENTS THE 4TH ANNUAL

CAREGIVER BOOT CAMP

A PROGRAM FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Lunch &
"Survival
Kit"
Provided!

Caregiver Boot Camp is a FREE educational "survival" program for families coping with Alzheimer's Disease & other dementias. The following topics will be covered: What is Dementia?, Dementia Live Experience, Effective Communication, Caring for the Caregiver, and MORE!

12TH
NOVEMBER

REEDSBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY

370 Vine Street, Reedsburg, WI 53959

9:00AM
to
2:30PM

Special Guest from the:

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

Registration Required and Appreciated:

 ADRC: (608)355-3289

 marina.wittmann@saukcountywi.gov



CLIMB Theatre PRESENTS

Grandpa and Lucy

A Story About Love & Dementia



See it Live!

November 17, 2022 at 3:30 p.m.

Grand Avenue Elementary

225 Grand Ave, Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

**For more information, visit
<https://tinyurl.com/grandpaandlucy tour>**

Free and
open to
the public!



SYNOPSIS

Grandpa, Lucy, & Lucy's older sister Edie are a family that plays together, until...things started to change. Things forgotten, things lost...and found. Hide and seek has changed. A story of resilience. But some adjustments are harder than others. Grandpa's story, Lucy & Edie's story. A Story of Love & Dementia.



ABOUT THE SHOW

Inspired by a children's book written by a high school student, CLIMB Theatre's stage adaptation of *Grandpa and Lucy, Grandpa and Lucy: A Story about Love & Dementia*, connects an intergenerational audience from kids to elders.

Brought to you by:



Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance

Online (🖱️) and In-Person (👤) Programs



Understanding Behavior Changes: Understand reasons why behavior changes occur and get problem-solving tips to help prevent and cope with them.

Tuesday, November 8 | 1:00 - 3:00PM

Register and attend here: <https://bit.ly/Behavior-Changes-Nov8>



Our Aging Brains: Meeting the Changes and Challenges: Learn what is normal for our brains as we age, how memories work, and what we can do if we are concerned about ourselves or others. Light lunch provided. Tours will be available.

Tuesday, November 15 | 11:00AM - 12:30PM @ Oak Park Place (OPP) in Baraboo

Register by 11/8, Call OPP (608)355-4111 or email sdavenport@oakparkplace.com

Contact Janet Wiegel: (608)697-2838 or janet.wiegel@alz.wisc.org



Making the Decision about Facility Care: Review items to consider when moving.

Tuesday, November 22 | 1:00 - 3:00PM

Register and attend here: <https://bit.ly/Facility-Care-Nov22>



Legal and Financial Planning Seminar

Monday, November 28 | 5:00 - 6:30PM

Register and attend here: <https://bit.ly/Legal-and-Financial-Nov28>



Making Holidays Meaningful: Holidays can be difficult. Learn how to keep cheer during the holiday season and savor them too.

Tuesday, November 29 | 1:00 - 2:30PM

Register and attend here: https://bit.ly/Holidays_Meaningful



Safety at Home for People with Dementia: Learn how to create a safe environment for your loved one at home.

Thursday, December 1 | 10:00 - 11:30AM

Register and attend here: <https://bit.ly/Safety-at-Home-Dec1>

For other programs, visit the
ADAW website:
www.alz.wisc.org/program-calendar

Janet Wiegel
Dementia Outreach Specialist
janet.wiegel@alz.wisc.org
(608)697-2838



Caregiver Support Meetings Around Sauk County

General Family Caregiver Groups

- **First Congregational Church** in Baraboo, 2nd Monday @ 2pm | Contact Mary Larson, 254-7002
 - **VA Clinic*** in Baraboo, 3rd Monday @ 1:30pm | Contact Meghann Schmitt, 256-1901 ext. 12308
- *caregiver of enrolled veteran or enrolled veteran who is a caregiver

Parkinson's Specific Groups

- **First Congregational Church** in Baraboo, 3rd Monday @ 2pm | Contact Sylvia Kriegl, 356-7096

Dementia Specific Groups

- **Maplewood** in Sauk City, 4th Tuesday @ 3pm | Contact Theresa Grimes, 643-3383
- **Virtual Morning Coffee Connect**, Every Monday @ 10am | Contact Pam Kulberg, 548-3954
- **Reedsburg Library**, 3rd Wednesday @ 12pm | Contact Janet Wiegel, 697-2838
- **Spring Green Library**, 4th Monday @ 1pm | Contact Janet Wiegel, 697-2838

Huntington's Disease Specific Groups

- **Monk's Restaurant** in Sun Prairie, 3rd Saturday @ 10:30am | Contact Deb Zwickey, 414-257-9499
- *All are welcome - those with HD, family and friends
- **Virtual Huntington's Disease Group**, 3rd Tuesday @ 6:30pm | Contact Deb Zwickey, 414-257-9499, dzwickey@hdsa.org

Memory Cafe's

A safe space where caregivers and loved ones with dementia can socialize, listen to music, and have fun!

- **Sauk Prairie Community Center**, 3rd Thursday @ 9:30am | Contact Janet Wiegel, 697-2838
- **Fusch Community Center**, 2nd Friday @ 10am | Contact Janet Wiegel, 697-2838
- **Reach Out Lodi**, 4th Friday @ 1pm | Contact rkearney@alzwissc.org
- **Woodman Senior Center, Richland Center**, 4th Thursday @ 10am | Contact heather.moore@alzwissc.org

Alzheimer's Association Virtual Statewide Groups | call 800-272-3900 to register

- **For Persons Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment**, 2nd Wednesday @ 10am
- **Family Caregivers for Loved One with Dementia Living at a Facility**, every other Friday @ 10am
- **Family Caregivers for Loved One with Frontotemporal Degeneration**, 3rd Wednesday @ 6pm
- **Family Caregivers for Loved One with Dementia in the Early Stages**, 4th Tuesday @ 10am
- **Grief & Bereavement Group** | contact Shai Wise 414-775-7578

Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance: www.alzwissc.org | Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org/wi

ADRC Support for Caregivers

- Powerful Tools for Caregivers, Caregiver Lending Library, Respite Funding and more available!
- Contact Marina Wittmann at the ADRC: marina.wittmann@saukcountywi.gov | ADRC (608)355-3289



Dear Kurt,

Kurt Goeckermann

Dementia Care

Specialist



Dear Kurt,

With holidays coming up, how can I get my loved one to participate in holiday gatherings without them getting upset or agitated?

Sincerely, Getting Ready for the Holidays!

Dear Getting Ready for the Holidays!,

The holidays are a time of connecting with friends and family. We want all our family members to enjoy that connection. AND THEY CAN! Our friends and loved ones with a diagnosis of dementia can almost always be involved with some simple adaptations.

People with dementia have increasing difficulty making sense of our often chaotic world. Holiday gatherings, while fun, also can be noisy and bustling. Music or the football game may be playing, multiple conversations may be going on, people may be playing games, children may be laughing (or screaming). Often attending are people they have known their whole lives, but there are also new babies or significant others they have never met. All fun, but chaotic. How do we adapt to give people with dementia the best chance to enjoy these times?

Flexibility is the key. In all cases we do not want to assume that our loved one can't do something. We want to give them the chance to function at the highest level possible. In early stages of dementia, there may be no need for extensive pre-emptive planning. We may just need someone checking in, assisting with a reminder or cue to someone's name, prompting if there is a struggle with a question, monitoring how the person is feeling and being a helpful, reassuring presence.

Later in the progression of dementia, it may become necessary to be more proactive. Perhaps a person can be assigned to unobtrusively be with the individual. They can assist with names and difficulty answering questions (although it is important to give them plenty of chance to respond on their own). They can monitor for anxiety or need for the bathroom. They can make sure the individual is not overwhelmed with large groups of multiple people, perhaps that they are usually only in conversation with one or two people at a time. They can help utilize quieter areas of the gathering if available. It can be helpful, though not necessary, if several people can share this role. It may be more enjoyable for the person with dementia and give the caregivers a chance to enjoy the gathering on their own terms.

If all is going well, that is wonderful. But, frequently an individual with dementia can fatigue and become overwhelmed. This can occur at any point, be it 20 minutes or 4 hours. Each person is an individual and their personality will impact their responses just as those without dementia. If a specific interaction causes anxiety, it may be possible, with an attentive caregiver, to alter the situation and proceed with enjoying the party.

If, however, this happens twice or the person is persistently asking to leave, it is almost always wise to accommodate them, not try to convince them to stay. Someone should be prepared to assist the person to go home or to a familiar place with less stimuli. Whatever enjoyable time they spent at the event should be looked at as a positive outcome.

Another consideration may be time of day for the event. Many people with dementia experience “Sundowning”. This is often evidenced by increased anxiety and confusion later in the day. If there is an option to hold the event earlier, or at least not late at night, that may be preferable.

Later in dementia progression further adaptations may be needed. The person may not be able to understand the event at all, have physical issues that make attendance difficult or a combination of both. If they are in a facility, it will be important to coordinate and perhaps get the opinion of the caregivers there. It may become necessary to have those gathering come to them, be it in a familiar home setting or facility. As with earlier stages, the time expectations should be flexible.

Families often experience guilt or disappointment if their loved one has to leave a gathering early or cannot attend at all. While natural, could we replace this feeling with a sense of accomplishment and teamwork? If the person with dementia enjoyed the hour they spent with friends and family, and we avoided any prolonged issues or anxiety, isn't that a win? Even if things went awry can we realize that we did our best, can learn, and move on to the next gathering. In caring for someone with dementia we need to learn from our mistakes and celebrate our small victories. Holidays gatherings, with that approach, can be enjoyable for all.

Sincerely, Kurt

**Submit to Dear Kurt:
kurt.goeckermann@saukcountywi.gov**



LEARN HOW TO

KEEP YOUR LOVED ONE HAPPY AND HEALTHY AT HOME

INCLUDING BRAIN HEALTH, SAFETY & INJURY PREVENTION AND PERSONAL CARE

- Improve confidence and reduce stress by learning care skills.
- Helpful tips available in print, audio, video, eLearning and more.
- Login to the website on any computer, tablet or smartphone - no app required!

“ And that fact that you can do a module in five minutes is great!

- JERRY, 65,
CARING FOR HIS WIFE WITH ALZHEIMER'S

Register Now!

Marina Wittmann
marina.wittmann@saukcountywi.gov
ADRC (608)355-3289

Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers

Eligibility Criteria Fact Sheet



The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) offers enhanced clinical support for Family Caregivers of eligible Veterans.



Veteran Eligibility Requirements:

A Veteran or Service member may be eligible for a Family Caregiver if all of the following requirements are met:

- 1** The individual is either:
 - A Veteran; or
 - A member of the Armed Forces undergoing a medical discharge from the Armed Forces.
- 2** The individual has a serious injury (including serious illness) incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service.
 - For purposes of PCAFC, serious injury means any service-connected disability that: (1) Is rated at 70 percent or more by VA; or (2) Is combined with any other service-connected disability or disabilities, and a combined rating of 70 percent or more is assigned by VA.
- 3** The individual is in need of in-person personal care services for a minimum of six (6) continuous months based on any one of the following:
 - An inability to perform an activity of daily living;
 - A need for supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological or other impairment or injury; or
 - A need for regular or extensive instruction or supervision without which the ability of the Veteran to function in daily life would be seriously impaired.
- 4** It is in the best interest of the individual to participate in the program.
- 5** Personal care services that would be provided by the Family Caregiver will not be simultaneously and regularly provided by or through another individual or entity.
- 6** The individual receives care at home or will do so if VA designates a Family Caregiver.
- 7** The individual receives ongoing care from a Primary Care Team or will do so if VA designates a Family Caregiver.



To apply online, visit

<https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/comprehensive-assistance-for-family-caregivers>

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



Family Caregiver Eligibility Requirements

A Family Caregiver must:

- 1 Be at least 18 years of age.
- 2 Be either:
 - The eligible Veteran's spouse, son, daughter, parent, stepfamily member, or extended family member; or
 - Someone who lives with the eligible Veteran full-time or will do so if designated as a Family Caregiver.
- 3 Be initially assessed by VA as being able to complete caregiver education and training.
- 4 Complete caregiver training and demonstrate the ability to carry out the specific personal care services, core competencies, and additional care requirements.

In addition, there must be no determination by VA of abuse or neglect of the eligible Veteran by the caregiver.



Stipend Levels:

The amount of the monthly stipend the Primary Family Caregiver is eligible to receive, is determined based on information gathered during VA's evaluation of the Veteran's personal care needs.

Level One: The Primary Family Caregiver's monthly stipend is calculated by multiplying the monthly stipend rate [Office of Personnel Management (OPM) General Schedule (GS) Annual Rate for grade 4, step 1, based on the locality pay area in which the eligible Veteran resides] divided by 12 multiplied by 0.625.

- For example, the GS rate at grade 4, step 1, in Dallas, Texas, for 2022 was \$34,916 annually.
- Thus, the monthly stipend amount for a Primary Family Caregiver of an eligible Veteran in Dallas, Texas, at this rate (\$34,916, divided by 12 multiplied by 0.625) was approximately \$1,818.54 in 2022.

Level Two: If VA determines the eligible Veteran meets the definition of "unable to self-sustain in the community" for the purposes of PCAFC, the designated Primary Family Caregiver's monthly stipend is calculated by multiplying the monthly stipend rate (OPM GS Annual Rate for grade 4, step 1, based on the locality pay area in which the eligible Veteran resides) divided by 12 multiplied by 1.00.

- For example, the GS rate at grade 4, step 1, in Dallas, Texas, for 2022 was \$34,916 annually.
- The 2022 monthly stipend amount for a Primary Family Caregiver of an eligible Veteran in Dallas, Texas, at this rate (\$34,916, divided by 12 multiplied by 1.00) was approximately \$2,909.67

Veterans and caregivers can find their local CSP Team by:



Calling the VA Caregiver Support Line **1-855-260-3274**
(Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET; Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm ET) Toll free



Using the CSP Teams locator at
www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New_CSC_Page.asp

To apply online, visit

<https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/comprehensive-assistance-for-family-caregivers>



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS FOR ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Article by: Alzheimer's Association (alz.org)

Researchers believe there isn't a single cause of Alzheimer's disease. It likely develops from multiple factors, such as genetics, lifestyle and environment. Scientists have identified factors that increase the risk of Alzheimer's. While some risk factors — age, family history and heredity — can't be changed, emerging evidence suggests there may be other factors we can influence.

Age

The greatest known risk factor for Alzheimer's and other dementias is increasing age, but these disorders are not a normal part of aging. While age increases risk, it is not a direct cause of Alzheimer's. Most individuals with the disease are 65 and older. After age 65, the risk of Alzheimer's doubles every five years. After age 85, the risk reaches nearly one-third.

Family History

Another strong risk factor is family history. Those who have a parent, brother or sister with Alzheimer's are more likely to develop the disease. The risk increases if more than one family member has the illness. When diseases tend to run in families, either heredity (genetics), environmental factors, or both, may play a role.

Genetics (Heredity)

Scientists know genes are involved in Alzheimer's. Two categories of genes influence whether a person develops a disease: risk genes and deterministic genes. Alzheimer's genes have been found in both categories. It is estimated that less than 1% of Alzheimer's cases are caused by deterministic genes (genes that cause a disease, rather than increase the risk of developing a disease).

Other Risk Factors

While age, family history and heredity are all risk factors we can't change, research is beginning to reveal clues about other risk factors we may be able to influence through general lifestyle and wellness choices and effective management of other health conditions.

Head injury: There is a link between head injury and future risk of dementia. Protect your brain by buckling your seat belt, wearing your helmet when participating in sports, and “fall-proofing” your home.

Heart-head connection: Some of the strongest evidence links brain health to heart health. This connection makes sense, because the brain is nourished by one of the body's richest networks of blood vessels, and the heart is responsible for pumping blood through these blood vessels to the brain.

The risk of developing Alzheimer's or vascular dementia appears to be increased by many conditions that damage the heart and blood vessels. These include heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Work with your doctor to monitor your heart health and treat any problems that arise. Continued...

Studies of donated brain tissue provide additional evidence for the heart-head connection. These studies suggest that plaques and tangles are more likely to cause Alzheimer's symptoms if strokes or damage to the brain's blood vessels are also present.

Overall healthy aging: One promising line of research suggests that strategies for overall healthy aging may help keep the brain healthy and may even reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's and other dementias. These measures include eating a healthy diet, staying socially active, avoiding tobacco and excess alcohol, and exercising both the body and mind.

Latinos and African-Americans at risk

Research shows that older Latinos are about one-and-a-half times as likely as older whites to have Alzheimer's and other dementias, while older African-Americans are about twice as likely to have the disease as older whites. The reason for these differences is not well understood, but researchers believe that higher rates of vascular disease in these groups may also put them at greater risk for developing Alzheimer's.

10 Ways to Love Your Brain

Article from Alzheimer's Association (alz.org)

Break a Sweat - engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates your heart rate and increases blood flow to the brain and body.

Hit the Books - Formal education in any stage of life will help reduce your risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

Butt Out - evidence shows that smoking increases risk of cognitive decline. Quitting smoking can reduce that risk to levels comparable to those who have not smoked.

Follow Your Heart - Evidence shows that risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke — obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes — negatively impact your cognitive health.

Heads Up - Brain injury can raise your risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seat belt, use a helmet when playing contact sports or riding a bike, and take steps to prevent falls.

Fuel up Right - Eat a healthy and balanced diet that is lower in fat and higher in vegetables and fruit to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline. Certain diets, including Mediterranean, may contribute to risk reduction.

Catch Some Zzz's - Not getting enough sleep due to conditions like insomnia or sleep apnea may result in problems with memory and thinking.

Take Care of Your Mental Health - Some studies link a history of depression with increased risk of cognitive decline, so seek medical treatment if you have symptoms of depression, anxiety or other mental health concerns. Also, try to manage stress.

alzheimer's  association®

Buddy Up - Staying socially engaged may support brain health. Pursue social activities that are meaningful to you. Find ways to be part of your local community — if you love animals, consider volunteering at a local shelter.

Stump Yourself - Challenge and activate your mind. Build a piece of furniture. Complete a jigsaw puzzle. Do something artistic. Play games, such as bridge, that make you think strategically. Challenging your mind may have short and long-term benefits for your brain.

Take 5!

TODAY'S QUOTE



Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.

~Anne Lamott



Solution on Page 12

		7						
1				5				
5		3						
							7	
	5		7	4		6	1	
		6	1				3	
3			8		5			
	4			2		1		
8			3	1		5	6	

Sudoku Rules:

Fill in the blanks so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 grids contain one instance of each of the numbers 1 through 9.

Word Search: Find and circle all the Fall words hidden in the puzzle!

G	L	E	R	O	S	E	G	N	A	R	O	R	S
G	N	I	V	I	G	S	K	N	A	H	T	T	N
O	A	N	O	V	E	M	B	E	R	N	F	S	Q
N	H	S	E	A	S	O	N	C	L	N	N	E	C
W	A	H	E	A	P	P	L	E	R	S	P	V	H
O	L	P	N	O	S	Q	N	O	I	U	I	R	E
L	L	C	O	R	Q	E	C	K	H	L	U	A	S
L	O	A	C	E	U	A	D	A	L	U	R	H	T
E	W	C	E	S	I	O	C	T	O	B	E	R	N
Y	E	I	N	Q	R	N	L	E	S	L	C	V	U
O	E	D	I	U	R	A	E	W	L	O	C	C	T
R	N	E	P	A	E	S	A	A	O	S	L	K	S
E	C	R	E	S	L	P	F	L	C	B	E	U	O
R	C	I	A	H	M	C	N	I	K	P	M	U	P

- CHESTNUTS
- ACORN
- OCTOBER
- NOVEMBER
- PUMPKIN
- SEASON
- APPLE
- CIDER
- THANKSGIVING
- HALLOWEEN
- HARVEST
- COOL
- SQUASH
- YELLOW
- ORANGE
- SQUIRREL
- PINE CONE
- LEAF
- FALL

Take care of your body, it's the only one you have to live.

~Jim Rohn

2022 WI APDA Parkinson's Symposium November 2 & 3



Madison Marriot West at 1313 John Q Hammons Dr, Middleton, WI 53562

November 2 Events



**Special
Care Partner Support
Group facilitated by 2
Neurology Social
Workers and Dave
Iverson**
10:00 a.m.
La Crosse Room



**Empowerment Dance
Presentation &
Interactive Class**
**Let Lisa lead you into
joy with dance.**
1:00 p.m.
Green Bay & Milwaukee Rooms



**WI APDA
Symposium Social**
**Come join us for
appetizers, drinks
and music.**
4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
La Crosse Room

November 3 Symposium speaker lineup:

Doors open at 8:00. Session begin at 8:45 and run until 2:30. Lunch is included.



Dave Iverson
Author, Producer,
Documentarian,
Broadcast Journalist
Keynote
"TBA"



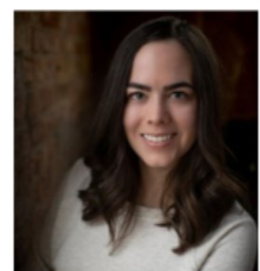
Dr. Kathleen Shannon
Chair, Department of
Neurology at UW School of
Medicine and Public Health
"The Gastrointestinal Tract
and Parkinson's Disease."



Dr. Su-Chun Zhang
Steenbok Professor of
Behavioral & Neural
Sciences
"Cell Transplantation
Therapy for PD."



Dr. Kristen Pickett
Asst. Professor in the
Department of
Kinesiology at UW
Madison
"Meaningful Movement
Matters"



Marie Severson
MS, CCC-SLP, CBIS
"Improve and Maintain
Your Speech, Swallowing
and Thinking Skills"

**All events are free but you must register ahead of time at
www.apdaparkinson.org/wi**

For Grandparents and Relative Caregivers

Helping Children Cope with Loss

Article from: Coalition for Children, Youth & Families & the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

As foster or adoptive parents, you do your best to nurture the children in your care, knowing they have experienced loss that affects them deeply. Understanding loss and how it shapes children allows you to do a better job of parenting them in a way that promotes their healing.

Whether it was as an infant or as a 10-year-old, the child you're caring for has been separated from their parent or primary caregiver and has experienced loss from that separation. They may have also experienced loss during the events that led to their removal from home. The loss may have been traumatic. What is trauma exactly? Trauma is "an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial, lasting damage to the psychological development of a person" (Wordnik). When loss is traumatic, it has a lasting effect on a child's development and on their entire framework for interacting with the world.

You may have noticed that the children in your care respond to life's challenges differently than children who have not experienced significant loss. For example, perhaps the child explodes at the slightest frustration, or is defiant to an extreme degree. Maybe he tells untruths even when there is nothing to gain by doing so. We know these actions aren't good coping behaviors, and they often cause more pain for both the child and for those caring for them. In cases such as these, and others you may have already noted, the child is reacting to the world around them from a place of fear. The child feels an overwhelming need to fight (explode), freeze (be defiant), or flee (tell untruths). These are strong emotions that come from a powerful, primitive part of the brain and, because of that, these feelings are difficult for a child to manage.

You can help the child in your care manage their emotions and heal from their loss. A child's brain can actually change as they learn to manage their emotions and develop healthier coping behaviors. Through our parenting, we know that, rather than reacting to the behaviors that kids who have experienced loss often exhibit, it's important to create an environment that is: • Calm • Safe • Consistent • Positive • Present

By consciously working to be present with the child in your care and actively promoting a home environment that is non-threatening, you are helping to create a safe space. Kids experiencing intense fear are kids who cannot problem-solve or cope. Creating this safe space will help the child bring their feelings under control (emotional regulation) and to a place of calm. Helping a child feel safe and regulated is a good first step in helping the child heal from loss. Because all children are different and unique, guiding the child in your care toward emotional regulation will vary from child to child. There will be differences in personality and temperament. Also, keep in mind the developmental stage that the child that you are caring for is in, as you think about preparing them for challenges in the future.

Infants: Are you caring for a baby? Learning to depend on a trustworthy and caring parent is an infant's main developmental task. Because caregiving is crucial to a baby's very survival, any disruption in this relationship, such as being removed from home, can cause developmental problems. Foster parents know that being consistently and warmly responsive to the baby's needs is the most effective way to help the infant in their care heal.

If a baby has experienced loss, such as moving to a new foster home, you might help the infant heal by keeping consistent the baby's routines, as well as by responding quickly and calmly to the infant's stress. You want to do everything possible to enhance the infant's feelings of safety. If possible, encourage a series of visits to your home that get incrementally longer. This will help a baby adjust to the new sights, smells, and sounds of their new parents. ...Continued

Preschoolers: The preschooler in your home may be a “magical thinker,” and this may mean the child believes their thoughts, feelings, or actions caused their loss. This child will probably not share their magical thinking, so you may want to monitor their behavior or participate in play therapy. Time is not a clear concept for them, so consider that fact when a preschooler is about to experience loss.

For example, if the preschooler in your care has “lost” a sibling in care to a move or reunification, you may need to assure the child, more than once, that the loss was not due to any thinking or actions on the part of the child. Also, emotional regulation is tough for all kids this age, so be prepared to do lots of calming and comforting after the loss occurs.

School-aged children: Kids aged six to 11 do understand cause and effect, as well as time. The school-aged child in your care has the ability to understand the circumstances surrounding a loss. In this situation, you may want to be straightforward about what happened, as well as why the change happened.

Maybe the child in your care is not being reunified. While you may understand the positives associated with this, the child will likely have feelings of loss around their relationship with their family, neighborhood, school, pets, and countless other relationships. Check in with the child--give them opportunities to think about and verbalize their feelings about the loss. Remember that traumatized kids may still need help in identifying their emotions. It may help to recognize that their fear and feelings of loss may create some difficult, or acting out, behaviors.

Adolescents: If you have a teen in your care you are watching him or her beginning to form their identity and move toward independence. As a parent, you can expect some resistance and separation. Despite this, teens need your support, encouragement, and guidance as much as ever.

To help a teen cope with loss, give them as much of a choice as possible in how to respond. They may need your advice on what choices are available. Many adolescents in care have not been given a lot of autonomy in decision -making; as a parent, you may want to provide extra support in this area. Imagine the teen in your care having applied to, and been rejected for, numerous jobs. The rejection this young person feels may mirror the loss they experienced when placed in care. As a parent, you can affirm and validate the youth’s feelings of loss. You can also then assist the youth in problem-solving and making decisions about how to proceed and not give up.

Remember that loss may cause the child in your care to stall or regress in their areas of development. It may be good for you to know whether the child in your care is developmentally the same as their chronological age. The professionals working with the child may have done assessments that have determined if the child has some developmental challenges. Your own observations will also be crucial in determining where kids are on the continuum and helpful to you as you parent.

If the child in your home is seeing a therapist or other professional, ensure they know the child has experienced loss, and the nature of the loss. They can incorporate the information into their sessions as appropriate. They may also be able to offer you some tips on parenting the child through this time.

As a foster or adoptive parent, you provide the healing thread running through all of these means of helping the child in your care heal from loss. With you as the trauma-informed, perceptive, nurturing parent you already are, children have a better chance of coping with and overcoming loss. Children are resilient. They can and do survive significant loss all the time. The piece that you provide is that necessary connection to a loving adult. By being sensitive and aware of the challenges traumatized kids face, you increase the odds that a child who faces loss will not only survive, but thrive.

The Wisconsin Foster Care & Adoption Center Our Resource Center

A valuable guide to any new or current foster family, families considering adopting a child whom they are currently fostering, relative and kinship families, and foster care licensing staff.

www.wifostercareandadoption.org



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9	2	7	4	3	1	8	5	6
1	8	4	6	5	9	3	2	7
5	6	3	2	7	8	9	4	1
4	3	1	5	9	6	2	7	8
2	5	8	7	4	3	6	1	9
7	9	6	1	8	2	4	3	5
3	1	2	8	6	5	7	9	4
6	4	5	9	2	7	1	8	3
8	7	9	3	1	4	5	6	2

Solution for Sudoku

**FALL
SELF-CARE**

Bingo

DRANK A SEASONAL DRINK	DID A CUCUMBER EYE MASK	SEASONAL RETAIL THERAPY	STARTED A NEW TRADITION	PRACTICED SELF-COMPASSION
PROCESSED MY FEELINGS	PLAYED WITH MY PET	TOOK A SOCIAL MEDIA BREAK	CUDDLE SESSION WITH FAMILY	WROTE IN MY JOURNAL
CAUGHT UP WITH FRIENDS	COOKED A HEALTHY SEASONAL MEAL	Free	SAT WITH NEGATIVE THOUGHTS WITHOUT JUDGMENT	DECLUTTERED AND REDECORATED FOR THE FALL
PULLED OUT A WARM SWEATER	YOGA	DRANK WATER	GOT 8 HOURS OF SLEEP	WENT ON A HIKE
TOOK A BATH	WALKED OUTSIDE	TOOK A MINDFUL BREAK	COMPLIMENTED SOMEONE	TOOK A MENTAL HEALTH DAY