



# A Helping Hand

For Those Caring for Loved Ones.

Find Articles, Tips, and Tools for Caregivers at  
[aarp.org/caregiving](http://aarp.org/caregiving)



Caring for a loved one can be a rewarding experience, but it can also be challenging. No one is ever completely prepared for the job, especially since caregiving is often a long-term responsibility that may become more difficult over time.

*Do you spend several hours per week or more helping a loved one with daily living – housework, driving, grocery shopping, medical care, or financial responsibilities?*

*Do you sometimes put the needs of your loved one in front of your own?*

*Are you overwhelmed with the responsibilities of caring for a loved one in your busy life?*

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, chances are you could use help. Only those who care for others know what it’s really like to care for others; that’s why AARP provides information and resources to help you better care for yourself and the ones you love.



# The 5 Steps

## STEP #1

Start the  
Conversation  
About...

## STEP #2

Form Your  
Team of...

## STEP #3

Make a  
Plan that  
Includes...

## STEP #4

Find Support  
Among...

## STEP #5

Care for  
Yourself by...

# Every Caregiver Should Take

- **Healthcare** – including medications and the names of physicians. Download AARP's Rx app at [www.aarp.org/rxapp](http://www.aarp.org/rxapp) to help manage your loved one's medications more easily.
- **Finances** – be sure to approach money matters with respect and care.
- **Housing** – does your loved one want to stay at home or move in with family?

*You may be wary of initiating a conversation with your loved one about sensitive topics, but sooner is better. Having a plan will help you be more prepared during a crisis.*

- **Family members** – even those who live out-of-town can find ways to pitch in.
- **Friends** – friends and neighbors are often eager to lend their support.
- **Community members and faith networks** – reach out to anyone who may be able to help.

*Caregivers should be creative about enlisting support. Even younger members of a family can contribute in special ways.*

- **Input from your entire care team** – including your loved one.
- **Each individual's responsibilities** – be sure to specify when each task is to be completed.
- **A system for communicating with your team** – use email, online communities or whatever works best for you.

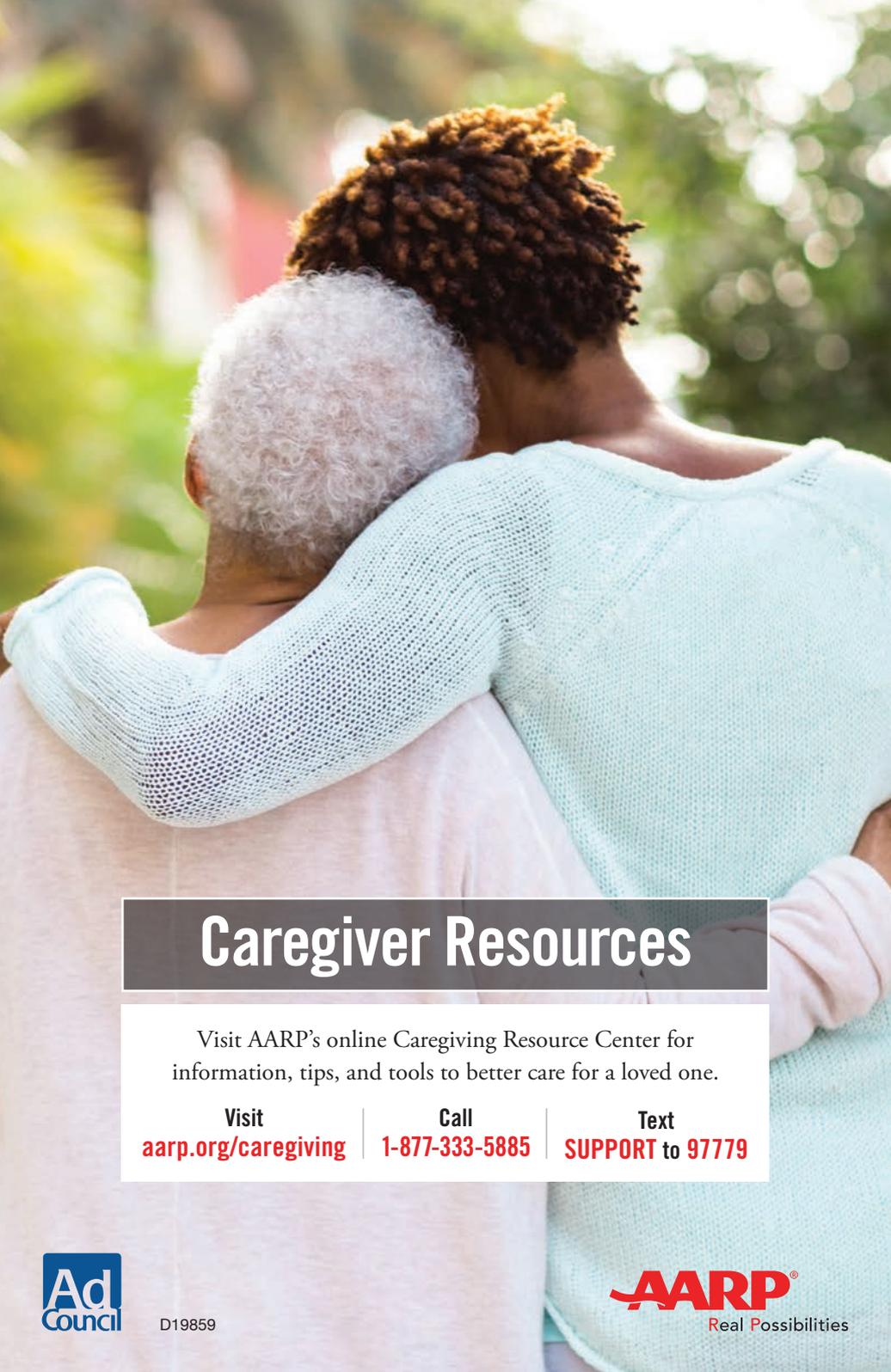
*Consider developing your caregiving plan into an electronic calendar of tasks that is accessible to each member of the caregiving team with AARP's Caregiving app at [www.aarp.org/caregivingapp](http://www.aarp.org/caregivingapp).*

- **Community resources** – such as meal delivery, transportation, and adult daycare services.
- **Professional counseling** – discussing the challenges of caregiving may be therapeutic.
- **Hired home care services** – even part-time or occasional help can make a big difference.

*Caregivers, you're not alone. According to AARP Public Policy Institute's 2015 "Valuing the Invaluable" report, there are about 40 million unpaid family caregivers of 18+ adults in the U.S. Visit [aarp.org/caregiving](http://aarp.org/caregiving) and click on the Care Provider Locator to find resources in your area.*

- **Looking into workplace benefits** – many employers offer support for caregivers via flextime or alternative schedules.
- **Making time for exercise, nutrition, and sleep** – caring for yourself helps you better care for others.
- **Joining caregiver support groups** – for information, insight, and support.

*Being an effective caregiver means asking for help when you need it. By taking time to care for your own needs, you're less likely to feel worn out by your caregiving responsibilities.*



# Caregiver Resources

Visit AARP's online Caregiving Resource Center for information, tips, and tools to better care for a loved one.

Visit  
[aarp.org/caregiving](http://aarp.org/caregiving)

Call  
**1-877-333-5885**

Text  
**SUPPORT to 97779**