

## Friends & Relationships = Vital Connections

Friends and relationships with others -- we all need them to feel connected, to feel valued, to feel like we matter. A new research project between Lifespan and the University of Rochester will connect adult volunteers (age 55 or older) to older adults who are screened by designated UR primary care physicians as people who could benefit from a weekly phone call or visit by a friend.

The "Senior Connection" project hopes to prove that the connection to a volunteer "friend" helps older adults feel less isolated and less depressed, while also providing a beneficial impact for the volunteer.



*Want to volunteer for The Senior Connection? This flexible volunteer opportunity requires just a few phone calls and two in-person visits a month to an older adult. Partial mileage reimbursement will be offered, as well as the opportunity to take free classes about aging/gerontology. To learn more about becoming a companion in The Senior Connection, call Katie at 244-8400, ext. 152.*

### Our Take on the Best of...

Best blog about aging & longer life:

[THE NEW OLD AGE](http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/)

<http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/>

Best books about eldercare:

*So Far Away*, a booklet available from the

National Institute on Aging

download or order a free copy online at

<http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/LongDistanceCaregiving/>

*Caregivers Compass* by Holly Whittelsey Whiteside

*Talking to Alzheimer's* by Claudia Strauss

*Creating Moments of Joy* by Jolene Brackey

## Health & Wellness

### Lifespan & YMCA join forces at the new Maplewood YMCA!

This January, Lifespan will open a new older adults' center within the rebuilt/refurbished Maplewood YMCA located on Driving Park Avenue.

The center will offer fitness, social, recreational and educational activities in addition to a healthy lunch Monday - Friday.

The "Y" will reopen on Tuesday, January 18, 2011.

Come and see us!

The preliminary findings of a first-of-its-kind study of elder abuse in New York State point to a dramatic gap between the incidence rate of elder abuse reported by older residents in the survey and the number of cases referred to and served by formal elder abuse service systems. Lifespan announced the results of the statewide study at an invitation-only Summit on elder abuse held in mid-November in Albany.

The New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study was the result of a unique collaboration by research partners including Lifespan, Cornell Weill Medical College, and the New York City Department for the Aging.

The research, developed and implemented, over three years, included telephone interviews with a representative sample of 4,156 residents ages 60 and older. The older adults surveyed had the ability to answer the phone and to respond to questions which screened for dementia. The average age of respondents was 74.

Additionally, researchers surveyed adult protective services, law enforcement, prosecutors' offices, victim services agencies, domestic violence programs and aging service providers to learn the number of reported incidents during a single calendar year (2008).

### 260,000 Victims.

The study found a total incidence rate of 76 per 1,000 older residents of New York State for any form of elder abuse. Applying the rate to the general population of older New Yorkers, an estimated 260,000 older adults in the state were the victims of at least one form of elder abuse in one year. However, the survey of "documented cases" identified just 11,432 victims in all service systems in New York State in one year -- meaning for every known case, 23 were unknown.

### Financial Abuse Common.

The highest rate of elder abuse occurred for

## Lifespan Convenes NYS Summit on Elder Abuse

*First-ever statewide study finds much abuse is hidden from view & most is financial exploitation.*

major financial exploitation (theft of money or property, using items without permission, impersonation to get access, forcing or misleading to get items such as money, bank cards, accounts, power of attorney) with a rate of 41 per 1,000 surveyed.

The Summit brought together just over 100 experts in elder abuse and aging services, as well as nationally recognized speakers, to hear the results of the study and to formulate an updated set of priorities, an Action Agenda, for elder abuse services in New York State.

### Action Agenda.

The top Action Agenda recommendations emerging from the Summit focused on changing laws relating to elder abuse in New York, in particular those that deal with financial exploitation. The priority recommendations also emphasize the need for more uniform data collection about elder abuse across service systems in the state and for training and education programs to enhance identification of elder abuse among professionals and the general public. Lifespan manages the New York State Coalition on Elder Abuse which will take responsibility for implementing the Action Agenda.

The study was funded by the William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund, a program of New York State Office of Children and Family Services. The Summit was funded, in part, by a grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging, Department of Health and Human Services.

NEW YORK **Takes Action** AGAINST ELDER MISTREATMENT AND NEGLECT

**Target:  
Elder  
Abuse**

## I give to Lifespan because...



*"As a volunteer, I've seen first-hand the great work that Lifespan does in the community, and that is why I make a gift to the agency each year. I want to support an agency that is helping older adults. I worked with older adults throughout most of my career, volunteering at Lifespan feels like an extension of my career."*

John Matteson

*As a daughter of parents who are now in their mid-eighties, I am truly grateful to give to an organization that provides me with knowledge and guidance on the many questions that our family has as we embrace the experience of aging together.*

Diane Quinlisk



*"We are proud to support Lifespan for many years because of the difference this organization makes for our community's vulnerable elders. We'll continue giving to Lifespan because in light of recent state and local funding cuts to elder programs, donations are now more important than ever to those who Lifespan serves."*

Rachel Brody Bandyck & Dr. Bernard Brody

## I use Lifespan's services because...

*I have been helped more than once by Lifespan people, and they have been a God send to me!! We are lucky to have this organization to turn to for help!!*

Philip Gabriel

*I think you provide an EXCELLENT service to the community. I belong to RSVP, have attended evening seminars at your place, used your "brainpower" re: senior issues with an aging parent & also got contractor recommendations. Bless your role in my life!*

Anne Sprout

*I can't say enough about the positive aspects of Lifespan. It's been a lifesaver for me, and I don't know what I would have done without you and your wonderful staff! The support and training has been excellent.*

Sue Vlach

*This organization is greatly appreciated for older adults who need help with so much required paper work and somewhat confusing questions. Thank you.*

Carolyn Nally

**Would you like to receive this newsletter and other news via email?**

**Sign up on our website at [www.lifespan-roch.org](http://www.lifespan-roch.org)**

**(See the lower right corner of our home page for the sign-up box.)**

## Elderspeak & its Resemblance to Baby Talk

by Leanne Rorick, Lifespan Ombudsman Coordinator

“Hi there Bertha, how is my sweetie doing today?” “Honey, are you ready for your medicine?” “Good evening, young lady. Are you ready for bed?” These sound like examples of a mother talking to a child, right? Wrong. This is the way some people talk to older adults, and it has an uncanny resemblance to the way parents talk to toddlers.

Elderspeak is the term that refers to the language adjustment used when speaking to older adults. Characterized by the same high-pitched, sing-song language we use to speak to infants and toddlers, this overly caring or controlling language is a scrutinized topic among advocates and health professionals.

Aging does bring changes in hearing and eyesight, for example. Some aspects of elderspeak are well-intended, such as simplifying the length and complexity of phrases, paraphrasing and speaking at a slower rate – all of which can be helpful tools.

Many older adults however, find this language demoralizing and down-right rude. We hear elderspeak in nursing homes, hospitals and even banks and grocery stores which indicates that its use has more to do with stereotyping than with responding to actual behavior.

Researchers, such as Kristine Williams, associate professor at the University of Kansas School of Nursing, have studied the negative effects of elderspeak on older adults and on persons with Alzheimer's disease. She found that the use of elderspeak implies that the person is not competent and can diminish confidence in his or her abilities. Williams even found that the chances of an older adult being resistant to care doubles when the caregiver uses elderspeak. Because elderspeak often means exaggerating words, or posing statements as questions, it can

even decrease comprehension.

Dignity and respect are rights which should be afforded to us all. There are many positive, respectful ways to talk to our elders. Elderspeak is not one of them.

### Upcoming Workshops

#### Medicare 101

**Thursday, Feb. 17, 6:30 - 8:30 pm**

**Wednesday, March 16, 6:30 - 8:30 pm**

**Thursday, April 14, 1:30 - 3:30 pm**

**Location: Lifespan. Reservations required.**

**Call Judy at 244-8400 ext. 161.**

#### Volunteer Driving Training

**(Volunteer to drive older adults to medical appointments.)**

**Wednesday, February 2, 9 - noon**

**Wednesday, March 2, 9 - noon**

**Location: Lifespan. For information about this volunteer opportunity, call Sr. Anne at 244-8400, ext. 142.**

#### A Matter of Balance

**(Fall prevention classes.)**

**Thursdays, Jan. 20 - Mar. 3, 9 - 11 am. at the Maplewood YMCA.**

**Perinton Senior Center: Wednesdays, Feb. 2 - Mar. 23, 1 - 3 pm.**

**Registration required. Call each location.**

#### PlanIt!

**(An overview of retirement planning issues.**

**Everything you need to think about!)**

**Monday, January 10, 5:30-7:30 pm at Lifespan. Call Joanne Sims at 244-8400,**

**ext. 478 for more information/to register.**

### Get ready for a high energy luncheon!



*At the luncheon, we'll honor local older adults who are role models for their commitment to physical fitness/activity. Go to our website to nominate someone you know!*

**Richard Simmons will be the guest speaker at Lifespan's 15th Celebration of Aging on Thursday, March 17, 2011**

Yes, he's still rockin'! Richard Simmons, who weighed 268 lbs. upon graduating from high school, is still fighting America's fitness battle with unparalleled humor and enthusiasm. Simmons, now 63, vows to never give up and says that he will continue his crusade until it's time for him to teach classes at the pearly gates. His 50 fitness videos, which have sold over 20 million copies, pair lively music with rockin' routines and Simmons' humorous banter and encouragement. He is the author of nine books, including the New York Times Best Seller, "Never Say Diet."

Lifespan's Celebration of Aging highlights people who are role models for the second half of life. Tickets to Lifespan's Celebration of Aging are \$55pp. or \$500 for a table of ten. Call Kari Cameron at 244-8400, ext. 182.



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[www.lifespan-roch.org](http://www.lifespan-roch.org)

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### We make wishes come true, give peace of mind and provide value for our community.

Jack lives in an area nursing home where he receives good care. But what he misses most about life before the nursing home are quiet dinners with his wife, Marlene. That was the motivation behind a request to Lifespan's Golden Wishes Program.

Lifespan's Golden Wishes Program grants very simple wishes for nursing home residents -- to go shopping, to play golf, to see the Red Wings play baseball, to go fishing, to see a play, to go to Buffalo Bills training camp, even to see and touch a horse again.

#### Your gift to Lifespan will make wishes come true!

Lifespan fulfilled Jack's and Marlene's romantic date wish. We arranged for specialized transportation to the restaurant of their choice, paid for their meals and ensured they had privacy and time alone.



#### Your gift to Lifespan will give peace of mind!

Naomi, 89, called us in tears because the government mailed her a 127-page booklet about Medicare. She didn't understand it, or know what she was supposed to do. "I was overwhelmed and confused and called your number shown on the back cover of the 2009 Medicare book. You took the stress off my shoulders. Thank you."

#### Your gift to Lifespan creates value!

Following his wife's death from cancer, William, age 77, was in and out of the hospital with an alcohol addiction. His distraught daughter called Lifespan. We met with William, gained his trust, helped him through detoxification, and counseled him while he slowly regained his physical and emotional health. Instead of more hospitalizations paid for by Medicare, William is living in his apartment, driving again, spending time with his grandchildren and once again is enjoying life.

**Smiles, peace of mind, and value – a gift to Lifespan may just be the best gift you give this year!** You can donate by mail or securely on-line at [www.lifespan-roch.org](http://www.lifespan-roch.org).