



deep in the 'heart of home care

State Legislative Session what was accomplished?

LEGISLATIVE SESSION FOR THE 2009-2011 BIENNIUM

Well, it's over – at least for those of us in the health care field. It appears the legislature will be headed back to Austin to finish what they didn't get done - minor matters like the Department of Transportation – but overall this was a good legislative session for the CLASS program. Currently funded at just fewer than 4,000 slots, we will see 1,890 more CLASS participants added during the next two years. This is the third legislative session in which the number of program openings has increased. It was four short years ago that the CLASS program had about 1600 participants and was limited to certain areas of the state. CLASS is now offered state wide, and the size of the program will have almost quadrupled by 2011.

The legislature also increased the size of the HCS program by 5,000 slots. Some of those slots are specifically aimed at reducing the number of residents in state facilities. The CBA and MDCP programs were increased by 861 and 341 openings respectively.

**If you will need help
evacuating during a
hurricane, please
register now!**



For a complete summary of health related legislation Google: 2009 legislative session Texas. Or go to:

www.txddc.state.tx.us/public_policy/wrap09.asp

Oh – and in case you were wondering what else the legislature had time to consider: The World Championship BBQ Goat Cook-off is now the Texas State Goat Barbecue Championship Cook-off. There were 143 legislators who voted in favor, with none opposed. If you want to attend, the cook-off will be held in Brady, Texas on September 4 and 5 (Labor Day weekend) and you can find additional details at:

www.bradytx.com/7659091_75200.htm.

Register Today before the storm is on its way!

If you need help evacuating from your home in the event of a hurricane, then it is time to register with 2-1-1. 2-1-1 is a state informational service that also provides transportation assistance to people with disabilities or who are unable to evacuate themselves during a hurricane. Simply call 2-1-1 today and register yourself. Then, if you ever need to evacuate, you can dial 2-1-1 again and receive help.

When you call, an Information and Referral Specialist will ask for your information. Be prepared with your: name, address, phone number, contact info (name, address, relationship), any pet or service animal info and any special medical needs you have. If you have any questions about this service, please go to:

<https://www.211texas.org/211/hurricane/alert.do>

Save your life – call 211 in advance to register for a ride.

Coping With Caregiving

when to say when

CARE, TX April 1, 2009

This is Part Three in a series of articles dealing with the stresses that come along with caregiving. In the last article we discussed the need to have realistic goals and expectations. In this article we will address the need to find and establish your limits as a caregiver.

For many of us, saying no to a loved one who needs help is next to impossible. But, this inability to establish limits can be detrimental to your stress levels as a caregiver. Ever heard the saying, “Fences make great neighbors.” People need their own space and time. This is especially true when your life revolves around another person. Learning how to set limits and boundaries is not only good for you, but, as with most of our stress management techniques covered, it is good for your loved one. A relaxed you is a better caregiver.

Unfortunately, there is no simple way to know when it is time to set a boundary or limit. As a caregiver you must learn to rely on and trust your “gut” feeling. Some signs that you might need to set some limits to your caregiving are continuous irritability, fatigue, and difficulty making decisions.

But, what does ‘establishing your limits’ mean? This depends on you. To find out your limits you must be completely honest with yourself. Caregiving can be demanding and stressful. It can bring out the best and worst in a person. In order to avoid the worst of you coming out, you must first accept that you have needs and those needs are as important as the care receiver’s needs. So, what do you need? Sundays off? No phone calls during work hours? These are limits that you are putting on what you will do and how far you will go...and these are not bad things. Remember, you cannot provide quality care if you do not care for yourself.

Decide on your boundaries and discuss them with your family and attendants. Communicating your limits is key to others respecting them. Have a family meeting, write them down and keep them on the fridge. Saying “no” does not have to be harsh. A simple “I’m sorry, but I cannot fill in the blank” is perfectly acceptable.

The hardest part of placing limits is combating the guilt that caregivers commonly feel. The thought of “I’m not doing enough” is a dangerous thing. You can become angry with yourself and your loved one. When you are



feeling guilty, do not try to deny it. Guilt is a natural emotion. We all want to be the best, and we all fall short. Recognize your guilt. Point at the monster and say, “I see you...you little rat.” Then, try to find out the cause of the guilt. Sometimes, guilt comes and goes with our moods. Cloudy one day, sunny the next. Sometimes, guilt is caused by an underlying emotion like resentment for how your loved one’s disability changed your life. Maybe, you have an unmet need. Try to find the reason and address it.

But, whatever you do, do not allow guilt to make you go past the borders you set for yourself. Knowing when you are going beyond your limits is often difficult to identify. Just like knowing that it is time to set them. But the signs are similar; you become irritable, angry, indecisive, and even ill.

It has been said that caregiving is a marathon and not a sprint. You have to identify techniques to not only care for your loved one but also to balance the demands of caregiving with the other parts of your life. Doing this will make you more productive, have more energy, and know yourself better. You are not being selfish when you set limits. You are taking care of yourself, which takes care of your loved one.

DADS Workshop

positive behavior management

The Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) is hosting a 1.5 day workshop for nurses, caregivers and professionals who work with individuals who have intellectual disabilities and engage in challenging behaviors. It is sponsored by the DADS Center for Policy and Innovation, Quality Assurance and Improvement unit.

Working with individuals with intellectual disabilities can be both a rewarding and challenging job. In many cases, individuals may engage in challenging behavior that creates barriers to establishing meaningful relationships and skill acquisition.

Discover "Why Problem Behavior Occurs (and why it is important to know the answer)" as Dr. Richard Smith, University of North Texas, and instructors from the Behavior Analysis Resource Center help participants learn evidence-based best practice prevention and management techniques to support positive behavior.

A Client Letter

what dan thinks about CLASS

Before I was offered the CLASS program, I spent most of my time just trying to get through the day. I had some help from friends and roommates, but still, the basics of daily living, like laundry, meal fixings, dressing, and hygienic care were difficult for me. The help I had had in college was gone, and so came the challenge.

About 2 years after college, the CLASS program was offered to me. And at first, I thought it might interfere with what inde-

July 30-31, 2009

Lufkin Pitser Garrison Civic Center
601 North Second Street
Lufkin, TX 75901
(936) 633-0279

August 6-7, 2009

The Embassy Suites Dallas-Frisco Hotel
7600 John Q. Hammons Drive
Frisco, TX 75034
(972) 712-7200

To register and for more information go to:
<http://qmweb.dads.state.tx.us/registration/pbm2/>



pendence I had at the time. How wrong could I have been? After settling into the program, I found I could focus on a career rather than on my disability. By this I mean that, after I found the right attendants and schedule that works for me, I was able to pursue my personal and professional goals. It seemed then, because of the CLASS program, that managing the details associated with my disability is something that did not and still does not take over my day. I now, several years later, have a life, full of family, friends, a home, and a good job.

I encourage anyone who is on the CLASS program to use it as a resource; to divert your focus from your disability and toward pursuing your dreams and goals. It's a wonderful opportunity to have the CLASS program available to you. It is even better to turn that opportunity into a reality of independence and self-determination. That was the true intent of the CLASS program's architects.

Dan Gadbury

"I now have a life full of family, friends, a home, and a good job."



The Announcements

CARE, TX July 1, 2009

Save a Tree! read us online

If you would like to receive this publication via email instead of a paper edition, please email us at caretx@dsswtx.org. Also, you may find all of our past newsletters online at www.dsswtx.org/caretx.

Attendant of the Year nominations due

We are still accepting nominations for our Attendant of the Year award. If you feel you have an extraordinary attendant, please mail or email us with the reasons why. Tell us the story of your attendant and why they are so wonderful and your attendant could win a prize worth over \$250. Runner-Ups will also receive a gift.

We want to
hear from
you!



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