



Helping People Stay Comfortable as the Seasons Change

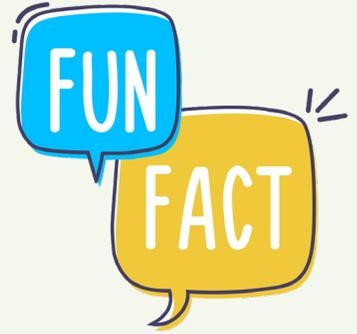
As spring arrives, many people begin to feel the effects of seasonal allergies. For caregivers, this can be a challenging time. The people you support may not always have the words to explain what feels wrong. You are often the first one to notice the small signs that something is off. That quiet awareness is one of the many ways caregivers make a real difference.

Allergies can show up in different ways. Some people rub their eyes or nose. Others become more tired or restless. A person who usually sleeps well may start waking up more often. Someone who communicates through gestures or routines may seem frustrated or uncomfortable. Caregivers learn these patterns over time and can spot changes that others might miss.

There are simple steps that can help. Keeping windows closed on high pollen days, washing hands and face after being outside, and cleaning air filters can bring relief. If symptoms continue, a health care provider can help find safe options.

“To care for another person is to help write a chapter in their story.”

– Fred Rogers (Mister Rogers)



National Nutrition Month

Most people eat better when meals feel predictable and calm. Studies show it can improve blood flow and reduce stress, something caregivers bring to clients every day.

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Even small increases in hydration can improve energy and focus. A single extra glass of water a day can support clearer thinking, better balance, and a more stable mood.

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Eating with another person improves wellbeing. Shared meals have been shown to reduce loneliness, support healthier food choices, and create a sense of connection that lasts long after the meal is over.



Seeing Strengths and Supporting Independence

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. It is a time to recognize the many people who live with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the caregivers who support them. Caregivers are often the steady hands and calm voices behind the scenes. They help someone communicate their choices and move through the world with dignity and confidence.

Caregivers play a major role in supporting independence. Sometimes it is helping a person choose what to wear, assisting with meal preparation or practicing a new skill. These small moments matter. They build confidence and help people stay connected to their identity and goals. This month is about honoring strengths and abilities. It is also about recognizing caregivers who show up every day and make a real difference.



The Next Generation of Home Care Aides

Across Washington, more high school students are beginning their careers in care through the High School Home Care Aide Training Program. Students take state-approved classes, learn practical skills, and get hands-on experience in the classroom before they graduate. Many join because they want meaningful work and enjoy helping people in their communities.

By the time they finish the program, students understand the importance of patience, communication, and building trust. Some even graduate ready to step into paid roles with confidence.

This growing program is building a strong future workforce and showing young people that care is meaningful work with real purpose. They are learning early what so many already know. Care makes a difference. Learn more at [DSHS's website](#).



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DSHS Transportation Pilot Reaches Full Enrollment

Caregiving jobs remain in high demand across Washington, and transportation continues to be a barrier for caregivers. DSHS and Consumer Direct Care Network Washington launched a Transportation Pilot using Lyft.

The pilot reached its full enrollment of 60 participants this month, and evaluation will soon begin. Discussions are underway about next step needs, including funding options, ride data, cost trends, and outcomes related to hours worked, retention, and wellbeing. The survey team will soon begin collecting feedback from caregivers and clients. The next phase will generate insights that can shape future planning for caregiver support.



Have a great strategy or personal experience to share?

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