

November

# Caregiver

2006

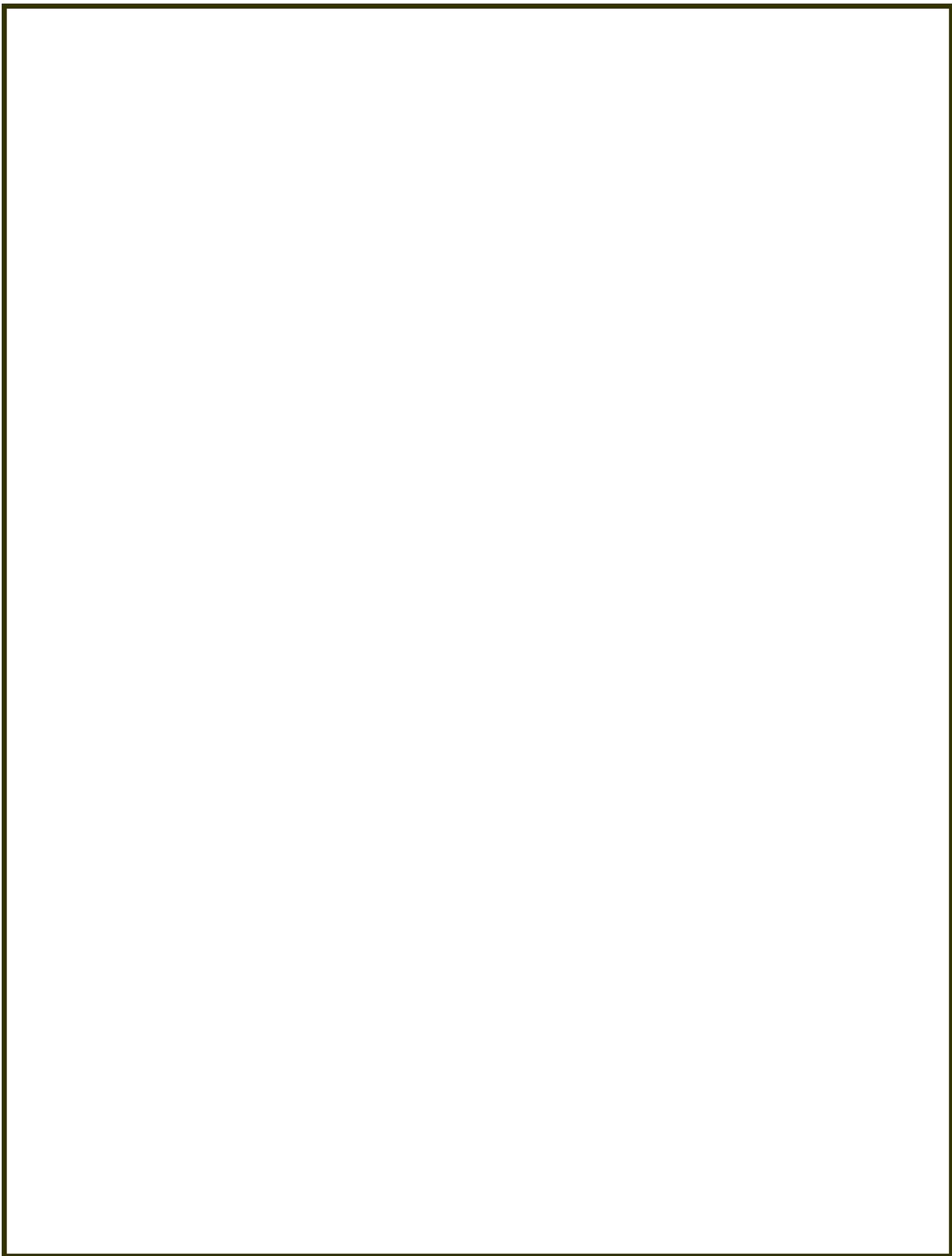
Advisory  
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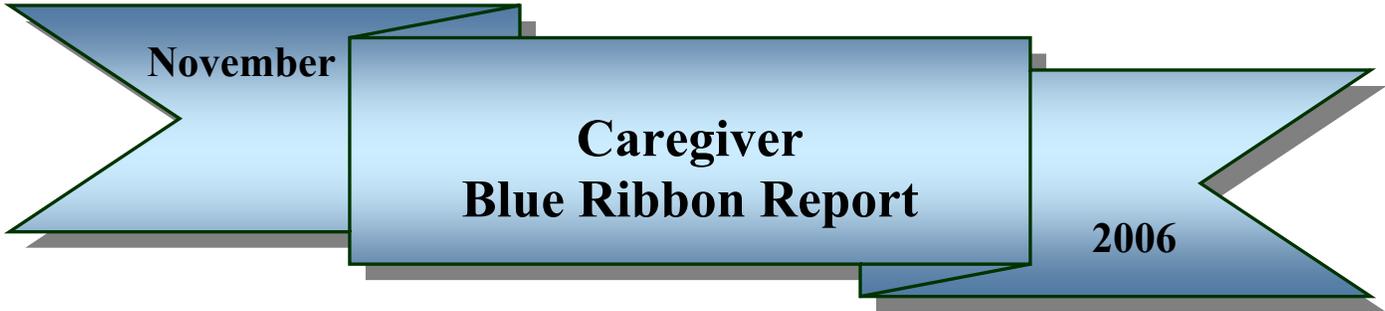
Blue Ribbon  
Report



*Riverside County Advisory Council on Aging  
Riverside County Office on Aging*







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## History of the National Family Caregiver Support Program

In November 2000, the President signed into law H.R. 782, the "Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000," with the inclusion of the authorization for the **National Family Caregiver Support Program** (NFCSP). The Program is intended to help spouses, adult children, and others who are struggling to care for their frail older loved ones who are ill or disabled. Studies have shown that caregiving can take a huge emotional, physical, and financial toll on families. The NFCSP is administered nationwide through the Statewide Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). Each AAA has some flexibility to design a program to meet the needs of the local region. Program services for family caregivers, include but are not limited to, information and assistance, training, counseling and support and respite opportunities. These important components are meant to meet the complex and diverse care needs of the family caregiver.



**Riverside County Office on Aging** and **Advisory Council on Aging** identified "Caregivers" as one of its priority areas in its 2005-2009 Strategic Plan, "Strength in Aging" (referenced document can be accessed at [www.rcaging.org](http://www.rcaging.org)). As such, the Advisory Council on Aging convened a Caregiver Standing Committee to coordinate with the Riverside County Office on Aging in its efforts to meet the established Caregiver Goal and related Objectives. The Office on Aging and the Advisory Council on Aging's Caregiver Standing Committee support the NFCSP by providing assistance and support to family caregivers of older adults with a comprehensive in-house care management program, targeted educational programs, information and assistance through the HelpLink information line, and short-term temporary respite opportunities which allow caregivers to take breaks from their often stressful daily caregiving responsibilities. In addition, the Office on Aging contracts specific caregiver services through community organizations. Collaboration with other agencies is a priority to broaden the outreach effort and to create a community based infrastructure of support for family caregivers.



## Quick Facts on Family Caregiving

- ◆ **Nearly 25% of all American adults** currently **provide daily companionship or assistance** to a parent or relative. (Source: Harris Interactive Study for Home Instead Senior Care – 2003)
- ◆ The **typical family caregiver is a 46-year-old woman** with at least some college experience who provides more than 20 hours of care each week to her mother. **Many belong to the growing “sandwich generation,”** caring for young families at the same time they are for their parents. (Source: Caregiving in the U.S., National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, April 2004)
- ◆ Nearly **one in five caregivers (17%) provide more than 40 hours of care per week** to a loved one. (Source: Caregiving in the U.S., National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, April 2004)
- ◆ The **average lifetime loss in total wealth for caregivers** who are forced to leave their jobs, reduce working hours or refuse promotions is more than **\$650,000** (includes wages, benefits, pensions and social security). (Source: NAC and AARP 1997)
- ◆ The most frequently reported **unmet needs of family caregivers** are finding **time for themselves (35%), managing emotional and physical stress (29%),** and **balancing work and family responsibilities (29%).** (Source: Caregiving in the U.S., National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, April 2004)



## Caregiver Needs Assessment of Riverside County Employees

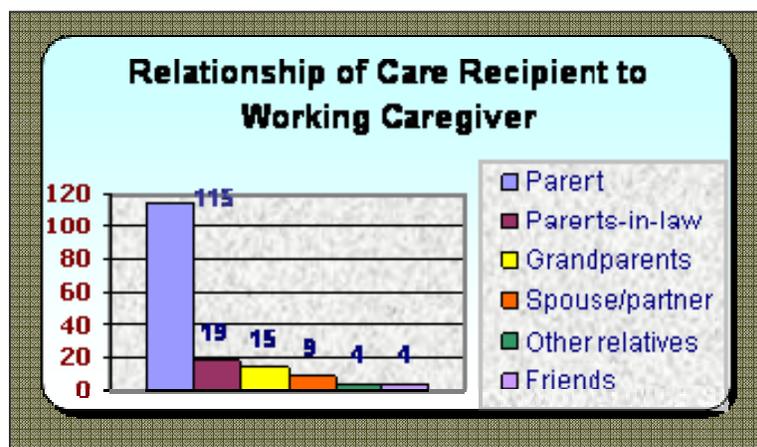
In **2003** the **Riverside County Office on Aging** and the **Riverside County Department of Human Resources** conducted a needs assessment, titled "Providing Assistance to Older Adults and Grandchildren: Caregiver Needs Assessment of Riverside County Employees," to study the issues and needs **of working caregivers**. Independent consultants, with specialized knowledge in gerontology and practical experience working with family caregivers, performed the study using a questionnaire distributed by e-mail and standard mail. **Three hundred and fifty-six (356) questionnaires** were received and **used** in this study. Following are some of the key highlights identified in the 2003 study:

▶ **Over 50%** of the respondents **identified themselves as working caregivers**.

▶ **77%** reported that they were **providing care or assistance to an older adult (age 60+)** while 10% were providing care for at least one child under 18 years old that was not their own.

▶ Of those who indicated they were not actively caring for a family member yet, **48% responded that they expected to be providing care for an older adult in the next 5 years**.

▶ **Most** of those caring for older adults **reported caring for parents or in-laws**.



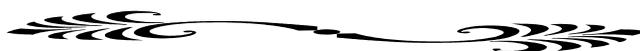
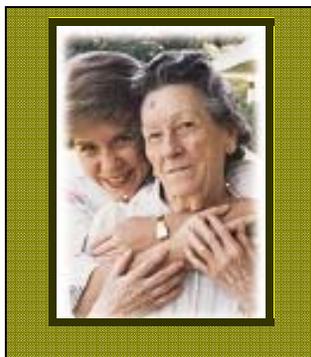
▶ The **majority of the persons requiring assistance** were **females, over 80** years of age, while most of the self-identified caregivers were also female between 40-59 years old, Euro-American, with an undergraduate degree.

▶ **Working caregivers** of older adults **experience** a variety of caregiving related and work related problems. In the 2003 study, **physical strain** or **fatigue, feeling overwhelmed,** and **interference with work** were the major caregiver problems identified.

▶ **Locating needed services, understanding governmental programs,** and finding out about **legal options** were among the types of **information and resources identified as being needed.**

Several recommendations for further investigation and action were proposed in the Final Report of the 2003 study. Following are a few of those recommendations:

- Develop an Educational Awareness Campaign with linkages to the Employee Assistance Program and Riverside County Department of Human Resources.
- Expand ongoing employee wellness program.
- Increase the resource data base of community services to include internet-based information.



# National Working Caregivers Initiative

The adoption of the National Working Caregivers Initiative (see snapshot below) by the Riverside County Office on Aging addresses the 2003 Caregiver study recommendations.



**Riverside County  
Caregivers  
Library**

[www.rcaging-caregiverslibrary.org](http://www.rcaging-caregiverslibrary.org)

## National Working Caregiver Initiative



**AMERICAN  
BUSINESS Cares**

Balancing organizational  
and human needs related  
to working caregivers

**Purpose**

Bring attention and focus to the issues and costs of caregivers in the workplace and identify and provide solutions to reduce the financial and social costs to employers and their employees who are family caregivers.

**Objectives**

- Help employers understand and quantify the issues, impacts, and costs associated with an aging workforce and population, and the mushrooming numbers of working family caregivers.
- Identify and provide resources to help employers of all sizes address these workplace issues and reduce associated costs.
- Provide substantial assistance to working caregivers and those for whom they provide care.

Employers care about their workers and about their bottom lines. The National Caregivers Library and the American Business Cares program provide resources to help both employers and employees.

Caregiving responsibilities negatively affect morale, productivity, and costs. And, as a result of family caregiving responsibilities, a tremendous amount of talent, loyalty, and institutional knowledge leaves the workforce every day - either temporarily or full time.

Employers all across the country are beginning to better understand the demands on working caregivers – and how those demands impact the organization. They are committed to providing cost effective assistance to their employees to create win-win situations for the organization, the working caregiver and the care recipient. This *Working Caregivers Handbook* is one example.

Below are a few brief statistics on how this rapidly growing issue impacts employers and their employees.

**Recruitment, Retention and Training Issues**

At any given time, more than 20% of the workforce is dealing with a caregiving situation.

- 33% of caregivers decrease the number of hours they work
- 29% quit their job or retire early
- 22% take a leave of absence
- 20% change their job status or go part-time

**Lost Productivity**

- 53% of caregivers admit that their job performance is negatively affected
- 84% make caregiving related phone calls during business hours
- 68% arrive late or leave early
- 67% take time off from work during the day

**Increased Healthcare Cost**

Even when employees are caring for someone not covered by their employers health plan, that employer's healthcare cost can go up. Here are examples of reasons why.

- 75% of working caregivers report an adverse affect on their own health
- 50% report 8 additional visits per year to a health care provider (for themselves) as a result of their caregiving responsibilities
- 22% report a significant impact on their own health

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For more information regarding the Caregiver Initiative,  
please go to [www.rcaging-caregiverslibrary.org](http://www.rcaging-caregiverslibrary.org)

The national initiative was locally re-named the **Caregiver in the Workplace Initiative**. With an outreach plan to communicate to both employers and employees the issues and costs of caregivers in the workplace, collaborative efforts can be forged to address the company's needs within their human resource departments. The development of an education campaign through employee assistance programs, with resources and information pertinent to the identified needs of the working caregiver, could positively affect the morale of the working caregiver and influence the worker to plan ahead and be better prepared. Access to web based resources for both the employer and employee can be a beneficial method to address the immediate needs of the working caregiver and may financially impact the bottom line of the employer, through reduced absenteeism and increased productivity.



## Caregiver Forum: “Visions of a Changing Workforce”

The **Visions of a Changing Workforce** forum was convened in November 2005 by the Advisory Council on Aging Caregivers Standing Committee and the Office on Aging in coordination with a committee of local volunteer Ambassadors to the Caregiver in the Workplace Initiative (individuals with knowledge and experience in working directly with the caregiver community) and sponsorship from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). The Forum, held in conjunction with National Family Caregiver Month, focused on the National Working Caregivers Initiative. The Forum attendance totaled approximately 70 individuals and included representation from human resource specialists and personnel from local universities, medical establishments, and municipalities.

### Primary Objectives of the Forum

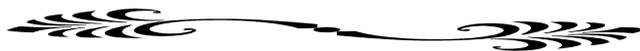
- To educate employers as to the issues, impact, and cost associated with an aging workforce and population; and
- To assist in identifying resources that may assist employers in addressing workplace issues and associated costs.

### Forum Presentations

- Keynote presenter Ronald Moore, founder and creator of FamilyCare America, Inc. a national resource for caregivers, provided an overview of the Aging of America and its implications on the business community.
- A panel comprised of working caregivers, a human resource director and an author of the 2003 Riverside County Caregiver study offered insight on the challenges facing the working caregiver, as well as provided a human resources perspective of caregivers as employees.
- A demonstration of the local Network of Care resource website for seniors [www.riverside.networkofcare.org](http://www.riverside.networkofcare.org) was provided and the newly adopted Caregivers Library website [www.rcaging-caregiverslibrary.org](http://www.rcaging-caregiverslibrary.org) was unveiled.

## Forum Outcomes

- Attendees were informed about the present and impending issues facing working caregivers.
- In addition to being provided with information about the Network of Care website and the Caregivers Library website, all attendees received a handbook, "Employer/Employee Tool for the Working Caregiver." The handbook provides a wealth of information, including sample checklists and worksheets found on the Caregivers Library website and published by Family Care America, Inc. (2005). Attendees also received a binder published by AARP that includes fact sheets covering many caregiver-related topics, such as financial, legal, and end-of-life issues.
- As a result of the Forum, the educational component of the Caregivers in the Workplace Initiative expanded into the development and implementation of a Lunch and Learn program. Office on Aging staff, with the aide of volunteer Ambassadors, have convened the Lunch and Learn program at various sites for the benefit of Riverside County employees and non-county employees. It is anticipated that as the program gains broader awareness among the business community, it will be expanded to meet the needs.



## Recommendations and Next Steps

### Advocacy

- Advocate for recognition of working caregivers at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Advocate for recognition of employers who establish work-life policies and an eldercare component to their benefits package.
- Advocate with federal, state, and local officials and key community stakeholders to expand information and assistance and care management services for caregivers of seniors or adults with disabilities.

### Coordination

- Continue coordination efforts with local volunteer Ambassadors to the Caregiver in the Workplace Initiative in order to enhance/expand the Lunch and Learn program.
- Coordinate with human resource departments to best serve working caregivers by providing information through the Lunch and Learn program, benefit/information fairs, and web-based resources.

### Education

- Educate the community regarding the importance of the Caregiver in the Workplace Initiative.
- Develop and implement an awareness campaign to educate employers on the impact of caregivers in the workforce, with practical suggestions on how they can support the eldercare needs of their employees through the adoption of policies, expansion of benefits, and provision of services.
- Outreach to employers through business associations to communicate the need, as well as the benefits, of providing flexibility for employees with caregiving responsibilities.

## **Advisory Council on Aging Caregiver Standing Committee**

Erwin Fromm, Chair and Member of Advisory Council on Aging  
Mary Blankenship, Former Chair and former Member of Advisory Council on Aging

### **Advisory Council on Aging Members**

Mark Moran, Advisory Council Chair  
Barbara Affolter  
Betty Rogers

### **Community Participation**

Volunteer Ambassadors to the  
Caregiver in the Workplace Initiative Lunch and Learn Program:

Teri Abelar, Chief Executive Officer, Aging Solutions Inc.  
Cyndi Fiello, MSW, Inland Empire Geriatric, Care Management  
Stephen Geist, Regional Director, Alzheimer's Association  
Jo Kemp, Regional Director, Alzheimer's Association  
Dr. Christopher Lindfelt, Regional Director, Alzheimer's Association  
Dr. Rebecca Martinez, D.P.A., Gerontologist, Health & Senior Services Consultants  
Barbara Matthews, Director of Community Education, Hospice of the Valley  
Janet Meservy, President / CEO, Seniors Helping Seniors  
Cherie Villeneuve, MSW, Inland Empire Geriatric Care Management

### **Office on Aging Staff**

Renee Dar-Khan  
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Della Johnson  
Donna Pierce  
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**To learn more about the  
Riverside County Office on Aging,  
please call: 1(800) 510-2020 or (951) 867-3800  
or visit our Web Site: [www.rcaging.org](http://www.rcaging.org)**

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