

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of November 3

Note: The OFA office and OFA Friendship Centers are closed on Tuesday, November 4th, in observance of Election Day. For information on this year's elections in Dutchess County, visit the [county Board of Elections website](#).

At the Office for the Aging, we've seen our share of conflict between older adults and their caregivers, who are often adult children. Stop us if you've heard lines like these before:

Dad's 96 and won't stop driving. He's a menace!

My son thinks I can't walk three blocks to the post office. Nonsense. I've been doing it for 85 years!

It's a matter of what Penn State University gerontologist Dr. Allison Heid calls "mismatched goals." The adult child's wish for their parent to be safe bumps up against the older adult's wish to be independent.

In one 2015 study, Dr. Heid interviewed 189 adult children and their parents, and found that 77 percent of the adult children reported at least some stubborn behavior by their parents.

As for the parents in the study, two thirds also described themselves as stubborn.

Following up on those findings with another study in 2018, Dr. Heid and a team of researchers asked 192 middle-aged children to spend a week tracking interactions with their parents. 31 percent of adult children reported "insistent" behaviors. Another 17 percent reported "risky" behaviors - and 11 percent reported both.

Does It Have To Be This Way?

The short answer: maybe not. OFA can offer a few ideas for both sides of this seemingly eternal dispute. Below are some strategies that are more likely to lead from mismatched goals to a solution that all parties can accept.

Strategy 1: Try On Each Other's Shoes

There's three things on each side of the discussion that need to be brought into harmony in this discussion: what we need, what we want, and what's most likely to be good for us.

For caregivers: Remember that older parents are used to being in charge of households. It's what they've been doing for decades. Even if they agree that it's time to step back and let younger hands do the heavier lifting, they still want to feel useful. You can facilitate this. If they can't remain standing long enough to take part in traditional Thanksgiving meal prep, for example, set up an area where they can do prep work while seated.

For older adults: We've heard stubbornness described as "grief with its heels dug in." Any of us can become so concerned with clinging to what was that it's

hard to see what can be. Hard, but not impossible. Start by telling your caregivers what's on your mind, but have a plan before you talk. Ask yourself: What do you want? What do you fear? What do you and your caregivers need to do together?

Strategy 2: Bring In A Neutral Third Party

Dad keeps picking up the phone for those scam callers, no matter how often we tell him not to.

It's a significant change for an older person to unlearn a habit, especially one that's rooted in good manners like answering phone calls. If they brush off your concerns, perhaps they'll listen to an authority figure from local law enforcement.

Strategy 3: It's A Process, Not One Talk

These are not the kind of discussions that can get everything squared away between courses at Thanksgiving dinner. Concentrate on the here and now

first, paying attention without judgment. Even if only a small part of the issues are addressed, that's still progress. Remember that stubbornness we mentioned earlier? It can be reframed as persistence in the pursuit of a mutually beneficial goal.

Strategy 4: Watch For Opportunities

An older adult may balk at "having strangers in the house" to help them out, but temporary help after a hospitalization or illness can give an older adult a chance to get used to having assistance at home.

One great example of this kind of trusted help is OFA's Home Delivered Meals program. OFA can provide nutritious meals after conducting an in-home needs assessment for an older adult who needs short-term or long-term assistance with meals. See **dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition** for more information on OFA's Nutrition Services options.

Strategy 5: We All Go Through This

If we're lucky. Just as our ancestors were caregivers once, so will those who are caregivers now become the cared-for. The caregivers' kids will grow up, and in another 20 years or so they'll be the ones in the kitchen, wondering aloud what to do about their aging parents.

And we might be the stubborn ones - although, with good planning, that won't occur as often.

UPDATED “SNAP” NEWS AND DUTCHESS FOOD PANTRY LIST

As of Friday, October 31st, when this issue of “Aging News” was sent, the federal government shutdown had not yet been resolved. Regarding the potential suspension SNAP benefits as of November 1st, [the most recent available list of food pantries in Dutchess County is available here](#).

OFA HOMEBOUND FLU/COVID VACCINATIONS, NOW THROUGH EARLY DECEMBER

For the homebound older population of Dutchess County, doing the day-to-day tasks that most of us take for granted can be an insurmountable challenge. Using essential services like healthcare comes with the difficulty of getting to a medical office and back. It's no easy task for homebound individuals to get the periodic vaccinations they need. That's why the Office for the Aging is bringing back its annual Homebound Vaccination program for homebound Dutchess County residents over age 60, available now through mid-December.

Influenza is generally seasonal, but COVID-19 is year-round. Homebound individuals can contact OFA at **ofa@dutchessny.gov** or **845-486-2555**, and our staff will arrange for in-home vaccinations for COVID-19 and/or influenza.

OFA AT HOSPICE VETERANS BREAKFAST (Thu 11/6 – NEW VENUE)

Dutchess and Ulster County veterans are invited, along with one guest, to the 2025 annual Hudson Valley Hospice Veterans Breakfast, at 9:00am on Thursday, November 6th.

Note: The venue for the breakfast has been changed to the DoubleTree by Hilton Poughkeepsie, 40 Civic Center Plaza (former Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel).

[Use this link to RSVP](#) by Saturday, November 1st, call 845-240-7605, or email johnsonr@hvhospice.org.

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

National Family Caregivers Month is a time to:

- Raise awareness of the important role family caregivers play in our healthcare system.
- Educate communities about the challenges caregivers face and the support they need.
- Connect caregivers with trusted resources that make their journey a little easier.
- Honor caregivers for their commitment, resilience, and love.

Many of us are caregivers, even if we don't recognize ourselves as such. For more information on OFA caregiver services, visit

dutchessny.gov/ofacaregiver, where you can find information that may be new to you about support for caregivers.

Other news:

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino released her [2026 executive budget](#) earlier this week, including information on plans for OFA services in the upcoming year.

Over 80? [You'll soon have a lot of company on this planet.](#)

The thing about walkers is that...[maybe they just need a makeover](#) and more people who need them will use them.

Looking for home security tech that's aging-friendly? [This review might help.](#)

What's "[the finger model](#)" and what does it have to do with aging well?

Let's say your trusted car has given you 34 years of faithful service. Still, all good things do come to an end, and now it's time to part ways. How to bid farewell? [Drop a \(nearly\) 2000-pound pumpkin on it, naturally.](#)

This week's birthdays:

10/31: Filmmaker [Peter Jackson](#) (64)

11/1: Golfer [Gary Player](#) (90)

11/2: Singer-songwriter [k.d. lang](#) (64)

11/3: Former Giants quarterback [Phil Simms](#) (70)

11/4: Singer/songwriter [Delbert McClinton](#) (85)

11/5: Singer/songwriter [Art Garfunkel](#) (84)

11/6: Actress [Sally Field](#) (79)

And here's a Bad Joke to close out this week's edition:

What did one eye say to the other?

Between you and me, something smells.