

# We Help Families Overcome Challenges

**EVERY FAMILY FACES CHALLENGES AND TOUGH TIMES.**

Some of these challenges could be finances, relationships, or unexpected family transitions. The good news is that families can bounce back from these challenges and become even stronger. The Human Development & Relationships Institute helps by giving families the tools they need to thrive at every stage of life.



**Human Development & Relationships Institute**  
DIVISION OF EXTENSION  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

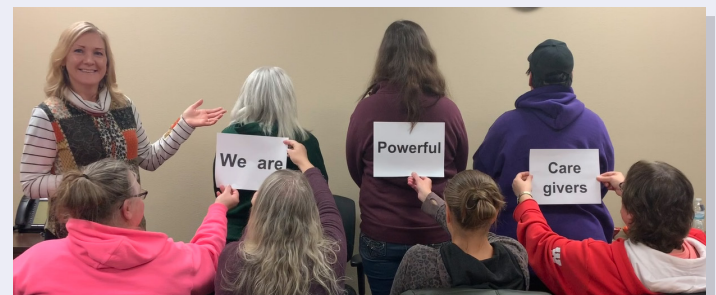


## Caregiver Support

Educators work with **caregivers** who have a close personal relationship with and offer support to older individuals or children with long-term health issues or disabilities. Educators host semi-structured group settings to increase caregivers' peer support and learn from experts to help them navigate challenges they may face. Over 80 percent of participating caregivers who completed an evaluation tried new ways to manage stress or managed stress better than before. Additionally, caregivers attended support groups and reported feeling more hopeful.

**77%**

FELT MORE HOPEFUL



*“I feel more capable as a caregiver and have a more positive attitude as I now understand I have to take care of myself – mentally, physically, and spiritually.” [Caregiving Program Evaluation]*

## Rent Smart

**Rent Smart** equips individuals with the knowledge and skills needed for successful housing experiences. Between 2020 and 2023, nearly 650 participants completed an evaluation. Over 80 percent of participants believed that Rent Smart would definitely help them obtain housing. Additionally, 80 percent strongly agreed that they understood the importance of building a positive relationship with their landlord. This is a significant increase compared to the 34 percent who felt the same way before the program.

### How Rent Smart impacts renters six months after the program



**Nine out of 10** participants who moved reported finding housing that is safer, more affordable, and of better quality than what they had before participating in the program.



**Over two-thirds** of participants were able to resolve problems in their rental unit (e.g., getting their landlord to fix something in the unit).



**80%** who were not previously paying rent on time now do so after completing the program.

## Planning AHEAD

*Planning AHEAD* is a unique comprehensive curriculum focused on end-of-life planning that is designed for people of all ages. Ninety-nine percent of participants who completed an evaluation felt they had gained necessary knowledge to carry out their end-of-life planning. Additionally, 89 percent reported feeling more confident about discussing these matters with their loved ones.



“ Sometimes it is good to get a little nudge in the right direction. We tend to think there is plenty of time. This program emphasized that it is never too early to plan ahead.”  
[Planning AHEAD Participant]

### Four- to six-month follow-up with Planning AHEAD participants



**69%** of participants said that they communicated at least one aspect of their end-of-life wishes with someone.



**68%** of participants indicated that they followed through with gathering documentation for planning or had completed documents on end-of-life planning.



Prior to the series only **16%** of participants were in an active or maintenance stage of end-of-life planning, and **60%** indicated that they were in one of those stages after completing the series.

“ Thinking about ways to reframe negative thoughts into something more positive was a helpful reminder. Getting affirmation that what I’m trying to do is worth it for my kids, and just not feeling so alone in the co-parenting struggles was helpful too.”

[Parents Forever Evaluation]

## Parents Forever Co-Parenting Program

*Parents Forever* is designed for parents and caregivers who are going through divorce, are already divorced, or are in the process of separating (even if they were never married). Before Parents Forever, less than one-third of participants who completed an evaluation felt that they and their co-parent were handling co-parenting issues very well or extremely well. After completing the class, 93 percent of participants felt more prepared to guide their child through challenges related to divorce or separation, 93 percent learned new ways to strengthen their child’s support network, and 91 percent learned a new way to manage conflict with their co-parent.

### Parents Forever six-month follow-up survey results



**74%**, or approximately three out of four participants, reported that a conversation that normally would have become a conflict did **not** escalate into a conflict.



**85%** said they tried to collaborate more with their co-parent to make choices in the best interest of their child.



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