ALABAMA LIFESPAN RESPITE
alabamarespite.org

Helping Those Who Care

1-866-RESTALA
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Presented by UCP Huntsville’s Alabama Respite program and supported by the Alabama Department of Senior Services and TARCOG.

Alabama Respite presents Helping Those Who Care, a family caregiver education opportunity. This program introduces aging caregivers in North Alabama to simple technology solutions to:

Promote care recipient independence.

Allow care recipients to stay in the home longer.

Provide an enhanced quality of life for the aging caregiver and care recipient.
What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

Assistive Technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals. Assistive technology helps people who have difficulty speaking, typing, writing, remembering, pointing, seeing, hearing, learning, walking, and many other daily living obstacles. Different disabilities require different assistive technologies.

Why is AT important to caregivers?

Caregivers have a difficult job! Caregivers deal with stress, burnout, frustration, exhaustion, fatigue, chronic injury, and so much more on a DAILY basis. AT can provide more independence to the care-recipient, resulting in a form of respite for the caregiver.
What is Respite?

Respite care is temporary short-term relief. The primary purpose of respite is to give relief to families and caregivers from the extraordinary and intensive demands of providing ongoing care in the home. Occasional relief supports family stability and well-being.
Let’s Brainstorm!

1. What daily activities do you or your loved one struggle with?

2. What tasks could you or your loved one continue to perform if you had an assistive device to help you?

What type of Assistive Technology is right for you?

- Do you or your loved one have vision impairment?
- Do you or your loved one have hearing impairment?
- Do you or your loved one have a difficult time with self-feeding and/or drinking?
- Do you or your loved one have a difficult time remembering things?
- Do you or your loved one have the ability to dress yourself?
- Do you or loved one have other barriers that keep you from living independently?
**Helping Those Who Care**, a pilot program supported by the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG) and Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS), began in 2017 as a regional training program in North Alabama specifically for caregivers of care recipients with age-related disabilities (Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, arthritis, stroke, Parkinson’s disease, low vision, hearing impairment, etc.) to understand, obtain, and use assistive technology to reduce caregiver dependency and burnout, as well as gain access to community supports.

Simple assistive technology solutions introduced through **Helping Those Who Care** may aid care recipients with age-related disabilities to remain in their home with their families longer (preventing relocation or premature out-of-home placement), reduce stress and potential for injuries, provide an enhanced quality of life, and increase self-esteem by providing tools that promote independence and self-sufficiency for activities of daily living. Furthermore, caregivers of individuals with age-related disabilities will better understand how to access and obtain caregiver and consumer resources and services.

This toolkit is intended to guide agencies in replicating **Helping Those Who Care** training and share related resources. For more information, contact Alabama Respite staff at 256–859–4900 or tracyc@ucphuntsville.org.
**Lighted Stand Magnifier**

**Category:** (1) Blind/Low Vision

**To assist with:** Low vision.

**How it works:** Lit surface magnifies 3x and can be used handheld, using the sling around the user’s neck, or standing with retractable legs.

**View a quick demonstration:** https://youtu.be/XYP5jl3NRuo

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).
https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=181002

**Purchasing information:** $10-$20 from Amazon, Wal-Mart, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.

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**iBill Talking Money Identifier**

**Category:** (1) Blind/Low Vision

**To assist with:** Blindness, low vision.

**How it works:** The iBill Talking Money Identifier gives you a quick, easy, reliable way to identify the bills you use to pay, as well as the change you receive, in stores, restaurants, or anywhere you go. Simply insert the end of the paper currency into the slot, press the button, and iBill announces the dollar amount in a female voice.

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).
https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=159358

**Purchasing information:** Free from the U.S. Department of the Treasury
https://home.treasury.gov/
Talking Rx Bottle

Category: (1) Blind/Low Vision  (4) Reminders/Memory Aids

To assist with: Low vision, seniors.

How it works: A simple, effective solution that provides audible guidance in taking medications. The device attaches to common-sized prescription bottles and contains a memo recorder that allows a physician, pharmacist, caregiver, family member or patient to record necessary information about the medication.

Basic loan info: Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=156006

Purchasing information: $10-$25 from Amazon, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.

Motion Sensor Light

Category: (1) Blind/Low Vision

To assist with: Low vision (helps with night-time orientation, such as lighting a path to the restroom).

How it works: Sticks with adhesive backing to a wall, door, baseboard, etc. Automatically lights up as you pass by.

Basic loan info: Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=156002

Purchasing information: Price varies based on size/quantity from Amazon, Wal-Mart, Target, and other retailers.
Amplified/Picture Phone

Category: (1) Blind/Low Vision (2) Deaf/Hard of Hearing (4) Reminders/Memory Aid

To assist with: Hearing loss, memory loss, low vision.

How it works: Landline phone with amplified sound, large buttons, and photo recognition speed dial.

Basic loan info: Available for loan for 30 days from STAR (waiting list if item isn't immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=116019

Purchasing information: $50 and up from Amazon, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.

ClearCaptions Phone

Category: (2) Deaf/Hard of Hearing

To assist with: Any form of hearing loss.

How it works: ClearCaptions is a free phone captioning service that provides near real-time call captions of phone conversations for anyone hard-of-hearing or with any form of hearing loss. Similar to captioned television, ClearCaptions allows for you to read real-time written call captions of what callers say on our revolutionary home phone, your mobile device, or your computer.

Eligibility: This free captioning service is provided by ClearCaptions and paid through a fund administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for anyone hard-of-hearing or with any form of hearing loss.

Visit https://www.clearcaptions.com/sign-me-up to see if you qualify for this free device and service.
Serene Central Alert System

**Category:** (2) Deaf/Hard of Hearing

**To assist with:** Hearing loss.

**How it works:** All-in-one alerting system designed to notify user of alarm clock, doorbell, and telephone activity in their home with the Central Alert Audio Alarm Sensor capable of detecting activated smoke detector activity bundled with the package. Alerts via built-in flashing strobe, loud and adjustable alarm, and powerful bed shaker. Strobe, audible and vibrating alerts may be set to any combination according to user preferences.

Wide selection of accessories (sold separately) expand the system with additional alerts based on user needs including baby crying, cell phone ringing, motion detection, NOAA, SOS Emergency Help, and much more

**Online demonstration:** https://youtu.be/AYEYnojxENM

**Purchasing information:** $180 and up from Amazon, Oaktree Products, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.

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Mirafone

**Category:** (2) Deaf/Hard of Hearing

**To assist with:** Hearing loss.

**How it works:** This landline phone features bone conduction technology to bypass the outer ear and stimulate the auditory nerve. Also features a flasher to notify when ringing.

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn't immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=150374

**Purchasing information:** $40 from Amazon.
Liftware

**Category:** (3) Eating and Drinking

**To assist with:** Hand tremors associated with Essential Tremor, Parkinson’s disease, or other motion disorders.

**How it works:** Gyroscopic technology allows eating utensil to remain stable, reduce shaking, and reduce frustration when eating. Rechargeable battery with fork and spoon attachments.

**View a demonstration:** [https://youtu.be/Yn8VDA_I6b8](https://youtu.be/Yn8VDA_I6b8)

**Purchasing information:** Starter kit is $195 from [https://www.liftware.com](https://www.liftware.com)

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5 in 1 Easy Open

**Category:** (3) Eating and Drinking

**To assist with:** Hand weakness, loss of grip strength, muscle weakness, and arthritis.

**How it works:** Universal jar, bottle, and pull-top can opener.

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).


**Purchasing information:** $8 and up from Amazon, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.
Gyrobowls

Category: (3) Eating and Drinking

To assist with: Individuals with poor fine motor control, involuntary movements/tremors.

How it works: Gyroscopic technology allows bowl to remain stable, keeping food from spilling out even when moved.

Basic loan info: This item is currently for demonstration purposes only.

View a quick demonstration: https://youtu.be/ta6eijnZ1IRA

Purchase from: $7-$11 from Amazon.com, Wal-Mart, Target, As Seen On TV, and other online retailers.

Inner Lip Plate

Category: (3) Eating and Drinking

To assist with: Children, the elderly, those with limited muscle control, and individuals with the use of only one hand.

How it works: The deep inner lip keeps food from sliding off the plate. The user brings the fork or spoon to the edge of the plate and pushes the food onto the utensil.

Basic loan info: Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=155148

Purchasing information: $8-$12 from Amazon, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.
Reminder Rosie

**Category:** (4) Reminders/Memory Aid

**To assist with:** The elderly, those with dementia, Alzheimer’s, or general memory loss, and those with vision impairments.

**How it works:** Record personal reminders to keep loved ones and care recipients on task. An example, set daily at a specific time, could be “Good morning, Dad! It’s time to take 1 blue pill and 2 yellow pills.” The reminder can be turned off by touching the clock or by saying, “Reminder off.”

**View a demonstration here:** https://youtu.be/OWbaibufQAc

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available). https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=168799

**Purchasing information:** $80-$100 from Amazon and Maxi Aids.

Watchminder

**Category:** (4) Reminders/Memory Aid

**To assist with:** Medication reminders, behavior modification and self-monitoring related to aging, AD/HD, autism spectrum disorders, and learning disabilities.

**How it works:** The WatchMinder is a simple wristwatch that can easily be programmed to set up discreet vibrating reminders throughout one’s day.

**View a quick demonstration:** https://youtu.be/E5D0mO11v1U

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn't immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=175812

**Purchase from:** $69 from Watchminder.com.
Med-E-Lert Automatic Pill Dispenser

Category: (4) Reminders/Memory Aid

To assist with: Medication management

How it works: This fully automatic, controlled pill dispenser holds medication dosages for up to 2 weeks and dispenses the right pills at the right times. Features audible and visual signals, and a long duration buzzer that sounds until pills are removed (up to 30 minutes).

Purchasing information: $70-$80 from MaxiAids, Walmart and Amazon

Tile Mate

Category: (4) Reminders/Memory Aid

To assist with: Keeping track of important items, including keys, phone, wallet, and bags.

How it works: Attach the Tile Mate Bluetooth tracker to important items that might easily be misplaced. Open the app to quickly track and find misplaced items on a map using GPS, or tap the tile to make your phone ring.

Purchasing information: $20-$40 from thetileapp.com, Amazon and Best Buy
Button Hook

**Category:** (5) Dressing Aids

**To assist with:** Arthritis, loss of dexterity, and poor fine motor skills.

**How it works:** The button aid allows you to button your shirt/blouse if you have limited dexterity in your fingers or hands. This model also features a zipper hook for easy access to the zipper pulls.

**View a quick demonstration:** [https://youtu.be/jahwB1eUCmY](https://youtu.be/jahwB1eUCmY)

**Purchasing information:** $8 and up from Amazon, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.

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Hands-Free Hairdryer Holder

**Category:** (5) Dressing Aids

**To assist with:** Loss of motor control, muscle weakness, poor grip strength.

**How it works:** Mounted holder allows hands-free hair drying.

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=183954

**Purchasing information:** $10-$25 from Amazon and other online retailers.
Easy Laces

**Category:** (5) Dressing Aids

**To assist with:** Arthritis, loss of dexterity, and poor fine motor skills.

**How it works:** Turn your favorite lace-up shoes into slip-ons. Stretchable laces lock with adjustable plastic fastener. Use on any size shoe. No special dexterity is needed; fastens with one hand with no need to tie a knot.

**Purchasing information:**

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Dressing Stick

**Category:** (5) Dressing Aids

**To assist with:** Limited range of movement, difficulty bending.

**How it works:** Assists with dressing and undressing independently. Suitable for individuals who have difficulty bending, limited range of movement, or use of just one arm or hand. Plastic-coated, combination hook/pusher for assisting in putting on shirts and jackets, pulling up slacks or skirts, or removing socks. Small hook on opposite end for pulling zippers and shoelace loops.

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn't immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=175051

**Purchasing information:** $10-$20 from Amazon, Vive Health, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.
Automatic Toothpaste Dispenser

**Category:** (6) Independent Living

**To assist with:** Tremors, loss of motor control, muscle weakness, poor grip strength.

**How it works:** Toothpaste tube is screwed into the top of the dispenser and dispenses toothpaste when a lever is gently pushed.

**View a quick demonstration of this item:** [https://youtu.be/JM636qSt_2o](https://youtu.be/JM636qSt_2o)

**Purchasing information:** $6 and up from Amazon, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.

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EazyHold

**Category:** (6) Independent Living

**To assist with:** Loss of grip strength.

**How it works:** The flexible universal cuffs attach securely to get a grip on handles of utensils, tools, toys and more. This adaptable assistive device is made of soft, flexible food-grade silicone, hypoallergenic and latex free. View a quick demonstration: [https://youtu.be/ktE50fi1ZBs](https://youtu.be/ktE50fi1ZBs)

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn't immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=161652

**Purchasing information:** $15 and up per pack from [https://eazyhold.com](https://eazyhold.com) and Amazon.
Telestik

**Category:** (6) Independent Living

**To assist with:** Limited mobility and strength, particularly in arms/legs.

**How it works:** Uses a washable adhesive pad, powerful magnet, and hooks on an extendable, telescoping stick that picks up lightweight objects. Requires minimal hand/grip strength, and no trigger.

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=154913

**Purchasing information:** $10-$25 from Amazon, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.

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Playing Card Holders

**Category:** (6) Independent Living

**To assist with:** Those with arthritis, poor fine motor function, or low dexterity.

**How it works:** Either hand-held or on a table, via the built-in stand, to hold cards during play.

**Basic loan info:** Available for loan from STAR for 30 days (waiting list if item isn’t immediately available).

https://al.at4all.com/Items/ItemDetails.aspx?ItemID=175134

**Purchasing information:** $4 and up from Amazon, Target, Independent Living Aids, Maxi Aids, and other online retailers.
Caregiver Apps

**Alzheimer’s Caregiver Buddy:** [http://www.alzheimers-illinois.org/cbuddy/](http://www.alzheimers-illinois.org/cbuddy/)
Caregiver Buddy is a quick and easy way for caregivers to get in-the-moment tips and tricks while caring for someone with memory loss.
Apple Store, Amazon Apps, and Google Play—Free

The Alzheimer’s and Other Dementias Daily Companion app offers immediate advice with over 500 searchable tips and practical solutions to help deal with behaviors and situations related to Alzheimer’s and other dementias.
Apple Store and Google Play—Free

**CareZone:** [https://carezone.com/home](https://carezone.com/home)
A comprehensive app for managing overall caregiving duties, including coordination of friends and family, health care record keeping and scheduling with a shareable calendar.
Apple Store and Google Play—Free

**CaringBridge:** [https://www.caringbridge.org](https://www.caringbridge.org)
CaringBridge connects you with the support of friends and family when it’s needed most. CaringBridge for iPhone/iPad makes it simple: create a website, visit a friend’s page, add updates or encouraging notes, and share your story.
Apple Store—Free

**Caring Village:** [https://www.caringvillage.com](https://www.caringvillage.com)
Designed to enable family caregivers to create “villages” among friends and relatives via a secure messaging system to help coordinate the specifics of a loved one’s care. Caring Village users can create customizable care plans for their loved ones plus personalized to-do lists. The app’s features also include a centralized calendar, document storage, a place to list medications and a wellness journal that allows you to share entries with the rest of your “village.”
Apple Store and Google Play—Free

**eCare21:** [https://ecare21.com](https://ecare21.com)
Provides round-the-clock patient monitoring through wireless and wearable devices (such as a smart watch, Bluetooth, or FitBit device). You can track the wearer’s glucose, heart rate, activity, medication, weight, calorie intake and sleep. You, your loved one, other family members and doctors can access this useful information no matter where they live or work.
Apple Store and Google Play—Free
Caregiver Apps

**First Aid by American Red Cross**: [http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/mobile-apps](http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/mobile-apps)
Accidents happen. The official American Red Cross First Aid app puts expert advice for everyday emergencies in your hand. Get the app and be prepared for what life brings. With videos, interactive quizzes and simple step-by-step advice it’s never been easier to know first aid.
Apple Store and Google Play—Free

**Lotsa Helping Hands**: [http://lotsahelpinghands.com](http://lotsahelpinghands.com)
A caregiving app that helps you create a community of care around your loved one. You can invite family, friends, volunteers, and care aides to join and then manage everything from sitters and errands to appointments and family gatherings using an interactive calendar.
Apple Store—Free

**Medisafe**: [https://medisafe.com](https://medisafe.com)
Medisafe is unique in that it’s not only a medication reminder but also educates people about their condition and the medicines they’re taking. Medisafe can help to remind, track progress, and will even find coupons and other incentives. Medisafe is designed for users of any age, for caregivers involved in medication monitoring, and is also beneficial for physicians who want to connect with their patients through the Medisafe app.
Apple Store and Google Play—Free

**Pacifica**: [http://www.thinkpacifica.com](http://www.thinkpacifica.com)
To best care for someone else, caregivers need to take care of themselves. Pacifica is a mindfulness app that aids in relief of anxiety, depression and stress. Users can track their moods and health, while also keeping track of moments during the day that trigger mood shifts.
Apple Store and Google Play—Free

**Pain Scale**: [https://www.painscale.com](https://www.painscale.com)
A free suite of pain management tools to help chronic pain patients.
Apple Store and Google Play—Free

**Symple**: [https://www.sympleapp.com](https://www.sympleapp.com)
An easy way to keep track of your loved one’s symptoms like anxiety, fatigue and pain over long periods of time. The app allows you track up to 10 individual symptoms and features an interactive graph and spreadsheet that a caregiver can use independently, or send to a doctor for evaluation.
Apple Store—Free
Ready to give AT a try?

Try assistive technology (AT) items before you buy via STAR, Alabama’s Assistive Technology Resource online!

- Visit al.at4all.com
- Select “My Account”
- Select “Click here to request a NEW Alabama At4all account”
- Add Personal/Account Info: Name, Address, Email, etc.
- Complete the Agreement Terms
- Select “Create Account”
- Start browsing: Select “Items”
- Under Program, select T.A.S.C. of UCP
- To search for free **durable medical equipment, select Waste Not Program
- Select an item to learn more
- Select “Request Loan” if you are interested in trying an item
- AT Items are available for loan to Alabama residents for a 30-day trial
- You will receive an email with loan details from tasc@ucphuntsville.org
Ready to buy Daily Livings Aids/AT items?

- Look for the “As Seen on TV” section at Wal-Mart, Target, Dollar General and other retailers.

- Ask the pharmacist if your retailer or pharmacy has a Daily Living Aids section.

- Contact local medical equipment sales/rental stores and ask about Daily Living Aids.

- Search Amazon.com.

- Search specialized vendors online, including SportAid.com, The Ability Superstore, RehabMart, Life Solutions Plus, ArthritisSupplies.com, and more. (Don’t forget to request a catalog!)

- While most daily living items are relatively inexpensive, finance assistance for high-tech AT and durable medical equipment is available through the Southern Disability Foundation and STAR. Contact Kate Wallace at 334-293-7008 or kate.wallace@rehab.alabama.gov for more information.

- Find free AT training online at StarTraining.org.

- Have questions? Need help? Call us at 256-859-4900!

To request AT items offline, call 256-859-4900 (STAR at UCP Huntsville) or email tasc@ucphuntsville.org.

**Durable medical equipment (new and refurbished) is available for free to Alabama residents.**

To request free durable medical equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, hospital beds, and more), visit al.at4all.com to find the Alabama reuse center nearest you.