

Connection



TENDER STEPS:
*Thank You for Helping the
Youngest Cope with Loss*



Providence

Community Health Foundation Napa Valley

SPRING
2025



“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”

—Coretta Scott King

I'd like to ask you to take a moment to think about someone in your life who's facing a health challenge. Perhaps they are battling cancer, just received an Alzheimer's diagnosis, are grieving the loss of a loved one, or are caring for someone with a severe illness. It could be your neighbor, a close friend, or a family member.

Now think about what you wish for them during this challenging time. What does their ideal care look like?

Envision a support system that surrounds them with the care they need—care that is compassionate, focused on their particular needs, and easy to navigate. Consider how that would make daily life easier at such a difficult time. We like to think of this as a “no wrong door” approach.

What is a “no wrong door” approach? Imagine you're entering a building with many different doors, and your goal is to find the right service or help you need. With a “no wrong door” approach, no matter which door you choose to enter, you'll be directed to the right place. It's like having a helpful guide at every entrance, making sure you get where you need to go without confusion or frustration.

This is the vision that we share with our community partners—donors like you who share your hard-earned dollars, volunteers like you who share your precious time and talent, partners like you who share your expertise and advocacy, and those of you who have entrusted us to care for you and your loved ones.

Your generosity empowers us to support our community this way—not only today, but also to evolve and grow to meet future needs. The new Connections Napa County program (right) is one example. We're collaborating with more than a dozen community partners to ensure that older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers receive the support they need to thrive in their own homes and in our community.

And more vital services are in the works. So on behalf of the Providence Community Health Foundation Napa Valley, thank you for being an integral part of our mission and our community.

With our deepest gratitude,

Will Marcencia
Board Chair
Providence Community Health Foundation Napa Valley

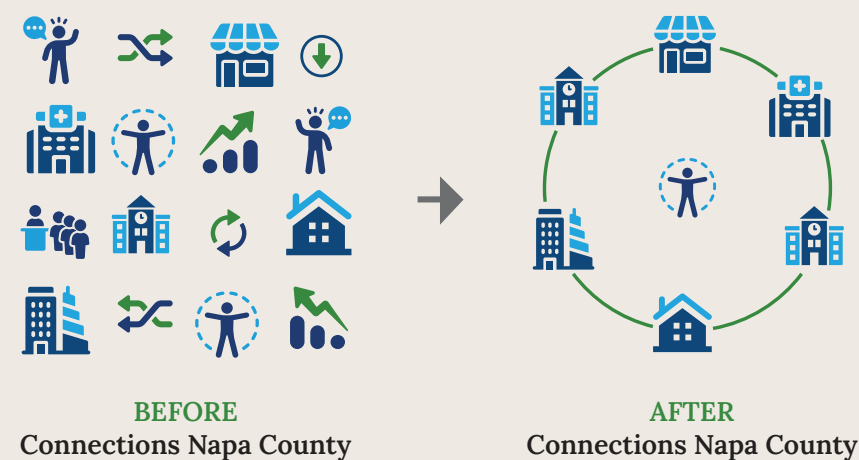
A NEW ONE-STOP HUB FOR NAPA COUNTY OLDER ADULTS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACCESS SERVICES.

Connections Napa County

Offered through a partnership among the Napa/Solano Area Agency on Aging, Disability Services & Legal Center, and Providence Community Health Napa Valley



Finding senior and disability resources...



To support the well-being and independence of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers, the new *Connections Napa County* offers a one-stop resource for accessing healthcare, housing, nutrition, transportation, and caregiver support services.

This collaborative effort brings together more than a dozen community organizations into a simplified, integrated support system to ensure people receive the support they need to thrive in our community.

In addition to an easy-to-access, comprehensive website of resources available in Napa County, professionals from the Information & Assistance team from Providence Community Health Napa Valley are available to guide residents and families in navigating the complex system of social services, coordinate urgent and critical needs, and assist with transitions between care settings.

connectionsnapavalley.org
707-253-4248



Scan to
learn more

The California Department of Aging and the Department of Rehabilitation has approved Connections Napa County as the emerging Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) for Napa County (one of only 25 ADRCs authorized across the state), and Connections Napa County aims to establish the full infrastructure and partnerships needed to become a dedicated ADRC by summer 2025.

THE CONNECTIONS NAPA COUNTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE INCLUDES:

Advisory Council on Aging (ACOA)
Kaiser Permanente – Napa
Mentis
Molly's Angels
Napa County Commission on Aging
Napa Valley Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD)
Napa County Health and Human Services Agency/
Comprehensive Services for Older Adults
Napa County Housing & Homeless Services
Napa Valley Support Services
North Bay Regional Center
Providence Queen of the Valley Medical Center
Puertas Abiertas
Senior Helpers
Up Valley Family Centers

Helping the Youngest Cope With Loss

Thank you to our donors for funding Tender Steps grief-support workshops for Napa County youth.



Gathering in a warm, welcoming meeting space at the Cope Family Center are three girls—ages 5, 9, and 10. Each has lost a close family member and is here for the first-ever Tender Steps grief-support workshop for children.

All three are tentative and nervous. One is clinging to her aunt. Grief counselor Yessenia Mendez assures them that this is a safe and confidential place, and as she introduces a teddy bear available to hold if anyone needs extra love, they begin to relax.

Each *Tender Steps* session is built around a theme, offers tools for coping with grief, and includes a related art project. Today's project is creating beaded memory bracelets. Each bead they pick represents a memory or milestone—such as a birthday—of their loved one. The two older children initially don't want to share their names or who they had lost, but as they work on their bracelets, they begin to open up to each other. One lost her mother, the other her father.

By the end of the hour, the two want the session to go on longer. They ask each other if they are coming to the next workshop and agree to meet at that session.

"In that one hour, they found a safe space to open up and realize they were not the only one going through this," says Yessenia. "As they left, all three told me they couldn't wait to come to the next meeting."

Children respond to grief differently from the way teens or adults do. They often lack the vocabulary to express their feelings. Changes in appetite, sleep disturbances, headaches, and stomach aches are common ways grief manifests in children, and some may regress into thumb sucking or bed wetting. Adults, especially if they are grieving themselves, can find it difficult to explain the concept of death in age-appropriate ways. They may not pick up on changes in behavior and moods of the child, so children dealing with grief may also experience isolation and depression.

For all of these reasons, Providence Community Health Napa Valley launched *Tender Steps*. This new program assists children—and by extension their loved ones—in navigating grief. It is free to children ages 5 to 10 who have suffered loss, no matter when the loss occurred. The program is for both English- and Spanish-speaking children. The series comprises six sessions, each with a different theme. Children may attend individual sessions or the entire series. Reservations are recommended, but drop-ins can attend as space permits.



For more information or to reserve a spot for an upcoming program, please contact Yessenia Mendez at 707-732-8627 or yessenia.mendez@providence.org



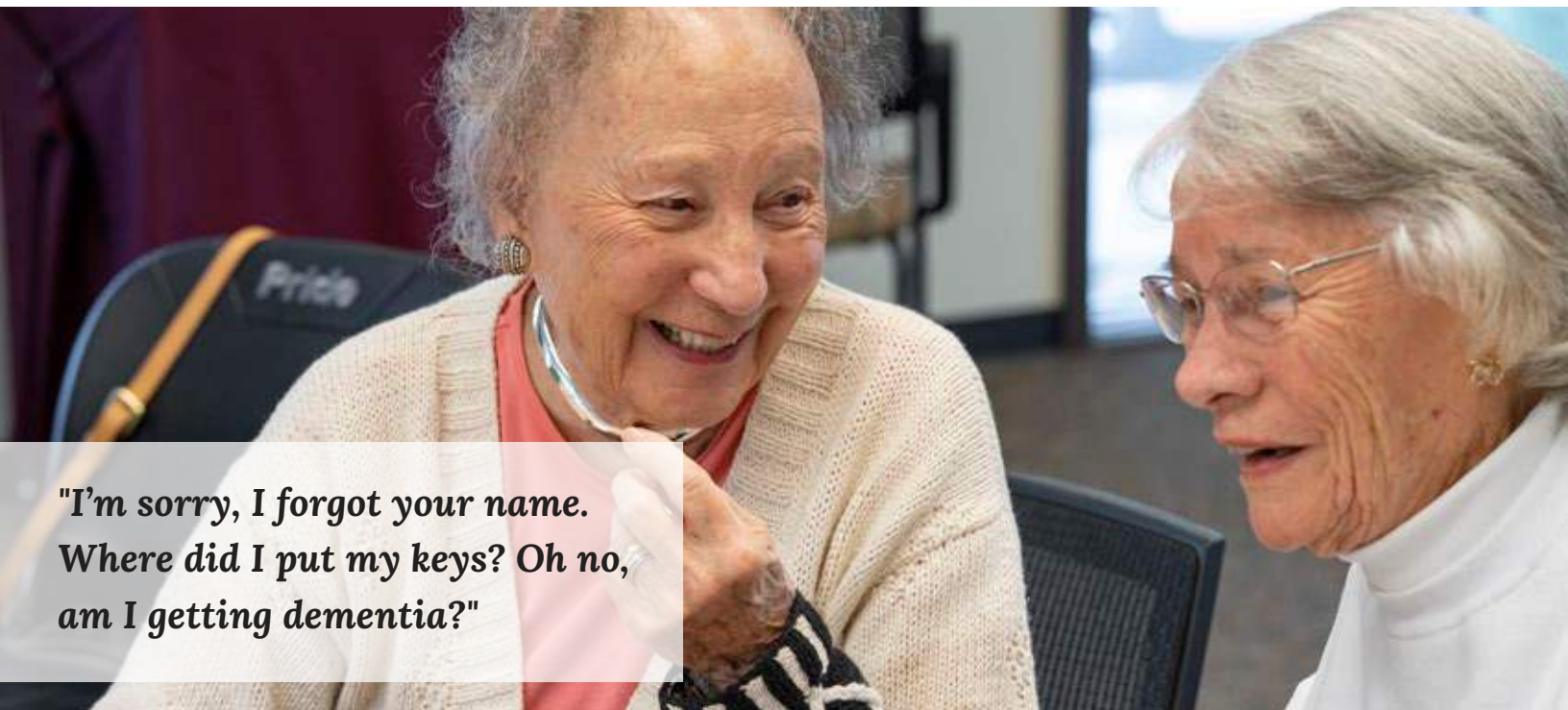
"The death of a parent or loved one at any age is hard, but for children it can be very confusing. We launched the Tender Steps grief workshop to create a safe place for them to explore and come to understand their feelings."

**—Cathern Kipsey, RN CHPN,
Clinical Service Manager**



Tender Steps is offered as a free community service made possible by donations to the Providence Community Health Foundation Napa Valley.

A New Way to Improve Your Brain Health: MasterMinds!



"I'm sorry, I forgot your name. Where did I put my keys? Oh no, am I getting dementia?"

It's like signing up for a personal trainer at the gym ... but it's for your brain, and it's free.

"Everybody worries about these kinds of memory lapses because dementia is a horrible disease," explains community educator Veronna Ladd, MHA, "but most of the time these sorts of changes are just part of normal aging."

Fortunately, scientific research confirms that there are ways to keep our brains functioning at the highest possible level as we grow older. So for those who don't have a cognitive function issue but want to maintain their highest cognitive functionality as they age, Community Health Napa Valley's Alzheimer's Resource Center now offers *MasterMinds!*

MasterMinds! is an evidence-based program based on the Total Brain Health model of leading cognitive wellness expert and author Dr. Cynthia Green. The model demonstrates the many reasons why socialization is key for maintaining brain health. "Socialization employs nimble thinking, logic, and problem-solving, and requires you to consider others' perspectives. Doing crossword and sudoku puzzles at home is good, but doesn't meet our social needs," says Veronna.

The six-week class covers the latest science on what it takes to boost short-term attention and memory and to promote long-term brain vitality. Each session includes activities that can be incorporated into a daily routine to help build cognitive fitness, as well as collaborative activities that boost everyday thinking skills and problem-solving.

"I equate *MasterMinds!* with going to the gym," says Veronna. "As we age, we don't go to the gym to get ready for a marathon—we go to keep in shape. And that's the same with *MasterMinds!* The cortexes of our brains perform different functions, and in this program we not only provide activities and exercises to work each of those cortexes, we cover the science behind each activity so participants can understand how it all works together. To keep building their strength, we provide activities participants can practice at home, which they love being able to do between sessions."

See page 10-11 for details on upcoming *MasterMinds!* sessions. This is an Alzheimer's Resource Center class.

"Dealing with an aging brain isn't always easy, but the good news is that we know more about how to keep our minds as high-functioning and healthy as possible. And there are ways to effectively address brain health that will support people at all levels of cognitive function." —Veronna Ladd

Community Brain Health classes are funded through participant class fees as well as donations given to the Providence Community Health Foundation Napa Valley.

NEED MORE HELP? TRY MIND BOOSTERS

"Now, if you mistakenly placed your car keys in the freezer, or if you've gone to the grocery store a million times and one day can't find your way back home, that's probably more than regular aging," says Veronna. "For those who have been identified with mild cognitive impairment or the beginning stage of dementia, we offer Mind Boosters weekly classes. Mind Boosters is also rooted in the Total Brain Health research of Dr. Cynthia Green, with the exercises and activities modified to meet the needs of the group," says Veronna.

A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE: Mind Boosters



Daniel Harder & Kathleen Patterson

"My neuropsychologist recommended Mind Boosters after conducting tests for memory issues I was having—primarily related to word memory," says Daniel Harder. "It turned out I don't have dementia, but two previous brain injuries had started to affect my memory, and stress further affected my word-finding ability and short-term memory."

"So I tried Mind Boosters and found it really helpful. The sessions cover practical tools to help with remembering, but I think the main benefit I've gained is more confidence to do things I had stopped doing because of difficulty finding words and maintaining a train of thought. I had stopped speaking up in public. Now I've become involved again with a few boards and

local civic groups. Mind Boosters has taught me to not beat myself up when I struggle with a word. I feel comfortable again in those environments.

"Mind Boosters has made a world of difference for Daniel," says Kathleen Patterson, Daniel's wife. "It not only has helped his memory, but has also allowed him to not be afraid to go out in the world and interact. He's happier and no longer embarrassed or defensive. Our youngest son recently said to him, 'You're laughing more now, and seem more sharp.' I'm just so thrilled we found this."



PREVENTING ELDER ABUSE IN NAPA COUNTY

Elder abuse prevention education is made possible through a grant from the Napa/Solano Area Agency on Aging.

Preventing elder abuse involves taking proactive steps. Here are some examples of how you can help :

- Regularly check in on older family members, friends, or neighbors
- Educate yourself on the signs of elder abuse
- Make sure older adults feel comfortable sharing concerns without fear of judgment
- Monitor caregivers to ensure they are respectful and compassionate
- Help older adults manage finances: set up automatic bill payments, review financial statements for unusual activity, etc.
- Ensure living spaces are safe and accessible
- Encourage participation in community programs for older adults
- If you suspect elder abuse, promptly report it to the authorities or Adult Protective Services

When we think of health and well-being risk factors for older adults, what often comes to mind are things like Alzheimer’s, heart disease, a stroke, or a bad fall.

But one of the least-recognized and most underreported risks is elder abuse.

According to the World Health Organization, nearly one in six older adults age 60 and older experience some form of abuse in their home or community.

Elder abuse can happen to any older adult, and it can come in the form of physical, emotional, or inancial abuse or neglect. The aggressor can be a caregiver, someone completely unknown, or even a family member.

As the population of older adults in Napa County grows, understanding and addressing the problem of elder abuse becomes increasingly crucial.

Our Information & Assistance (I&A) team provides education for caregivers, families, and community members on how to spot elder abuse and what steps to take if they suspect it is happening.

“Our primary role is to make people aware of what abuse looks like and how to report it. The cases we see typically involve neglect. If the abuse is financial or physical, we can connect clients with the services best able to help them,” says Information & Assistance Program Manager Tiffanie Walker, MSW.



If you have questions about elder abuse or would like Information & Assistance to do a presentation to your staff or civic organization, please contact us at:
707-253-4248
communityhealthnapavalley.org/elder-abuse



Scan to learn more



EXAMPLES OF ELDER ABUSE

- Physical abuse:** physical force that results in injury or death, misuse of medicines, chemicals, or restraints
- Neglect:** failure to provide nutrition, shelter, hygiene, clothing, medical care, and safety.
- Emotional abuse:** intentionally causing anguish by threatening, terrorizing, humiliating, isolating, or demeaning a person.
- Financial abuse:** using the person’s money or assets contrary to their wishes, needs or best interests, or for the abuser’s personal gain.

ONGOING COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

ALL PROGRAMS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

CAREGIVER & CARE PARTNER SUPPORT GROUP

Whether you have been caring for someone for years or are a new care partner, our support group can connect you with others in the same situation. Led by our medical social worker, each monthly session covers topics such as how to be an advocate, finding respite, dealing with frustration/burnout, asking for help, care recipient needs, and more. Sessions also provide clinical advice and guidance. Registration is required.

English Support Group

Second Tuesday of every month, 10:30 a.m. – noon
CrossWalk Community Church
2590 First Street, Napa
For more information or to register, contact Melissa Gerard at 707-815-6258 or melissa.gerard@providence.org

Grupo de Apoyo en español.

El tercer jueves de cada mes, de 17:00 a 19:00 h.
414 South Jefferson Street, Napa
Para más información o para inscribirse, contacte a Yolanda Padilla en yolanda.padilla@providence.org

MIND BOOSTERS

Mind Boosters is for those experiencing early stages of memory loss who want to be proactive in maintaining their brain health. Each session offers techniques to assist with memory enhancement, activities for mental stimulation, opportunities for socializing, tools and techniques to assist with daily living, physical activities and exercise, and support and encouragement. Registration is required.

Classes in English

In-person: Every Friday, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Providence Community Health Napa Valley
414 South Jefferson Street, Napa (\$30 per class)

Las clases en español

Todos los Jueves, noon – 1:30 p.m.
Innovations Community Center,
3281 Solano Avenue, Napa
Se requiere inscripción previa y una prueba de memoria.
Para inscribirse en este programa, comuníquese con Reina Monge: reina.monge@providence.org 707-732-1717.

TENDER STEPS GRIEF SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN

This new grief support program assists children, and by extension their loved ones, in navigating grief. It is free to children ages 5 to 10 who have suffered loss, no matter when the loss occurred. The program is for both English- and Spanish-speaking children. The series comprises six sessions, each with a different theme. Children may attend individual sessions or the entire series. Reservations are preferred, but drop-ins are permitted as space allows. See page 4-5 for more details.
For upcoming dates or to register, contact Yessenia Mendez at 707-732-8627 or yessenia.mendez@providence.org.

ADULT LOSS OF A PARENT SUPPORT GROUP EIGHT-WEEK GROUP

This support group, which is limited to eight people, includes grief education and open discussion. Each class builds on the previous class, so attending all eight sessions is highly recommended. Registration required.
Thursdays, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. Providence Community Health Napa Valley, 414 South Jefferson Street, Napa
For upcoming dates or to register, contact Xavia Hendriksz at 707-258-9080 or xavia.hendriksz1@providence.org.

THANK YOU! We are deeply grateful to all our donors and sponsors who support these important community programs.

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH LOSS EIGHT-WEEK GROUP

This eight-week, in-person group combines education about grief with support from members. Each class builds on the previous class, so attending all eight sessions is highly recommended. Registration required.
Wednesdays, July 9 to August 27, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.
Providence Community Health Napa Valley
414 South Jefferson Street, Napa
For registration or information, contact Xavia Hendriksz at 707-258-9080 or xavia.hendriksz1@providence.org.

MASTERMINDS! SIX-WEEK GROUP

This class is for those proactively seeking to maintain their brain health. It covers the latest science on what it takes to boost short-term attention and memory and to promote long-term brain vitality. Each session includes activities that can be incorporated into a daily routine to help build cognitive fitness, as well as activities that boost thinking skills and problem-solving. See page 6-7 for more details.
Wednesdays, April 30 to June 4, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Wednesdays, June 25 to July 30, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Wednesdays, August 20 to September 24, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Wednesdays, October 15 to November 19, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Rianda House, 1475 Main Street, St. Helena
For registration or information, contact Rianda House at 707-963-8555 or info@riandahouse.org.



For more information on any of our programs, please call 707-258-9080 or visit communityhealthnapavalley.org

Program Directory

Adult Day Health Napa Valley	707-258-9087
PACE	707-254-4159
Palliative Care Napa Valley	707-258-9080
Hospice Napa Valley	707-258-9080
Information & Assistance	707-253-4248
Foundation	707-254-4157

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS ANNUAL SPONSORS



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To change your mailing address or to opt out of future mailings,  
please contact the Foundation at 707-254-4157 or at chfnv@providence.org



**Good things often come in pairs...
like Volunteers**

When you volunteer with us, you become part of a caring community of friends dedicated to improving the lives of others.

Volunteers are needed to provide friendly visits, phone calls, and assist with activities in our PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) and Adult Day Health Program. These programs enhance the wellbeing of older adults faced with the challenges of chronic illness, Alzheimer's and dementia. Volunteers are also needed to support our La Bohème and Act Two stores in Saint Helena.

You'll have a rewarding experience and meet new people for just a few hours a week. Bring a friend and share your talents together!

**To learn how to volunteer with us,
contact Jennifer Thater at
707-231-0766 or
jennifer.thater@providence.org**