

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)[View this email in your browser](#)

## February Newsletter

Welcome to the monthly newsletter of **A/Z Health & Elder Law** where we share tips and information on relevant topics focused on estate planning, elder law services, and life care planning.

We invite you to [contact](#) our office at (630) 510-3213 for additional information or to schedule a consultation for assistance with your planning needs.

[Visit Our Website](#)



**Presents:**  
**AMERICAN HEART MONTH & CARDIOVASCULAR CARE**

**February 16th:**  
**12-1pm CST**

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

American Heart Month and Valentine's Day are in February. As these two hearts beat as one, we'll give you the skinny on why American Heart Month is important. As the number one killer of Americans, heart disease is a slow-moving epidemic that affects almost everyone.

Join us as we work to raise awareness for heart disease.

[Register Now](#)

---

## **Join The Conversation!**

**Elected officials, aging network providers, local partners, & concerned citizens are invited to participate in a virtual community discussion about current issues facing Illinois older adults, caregivers & families.**

# Advocacy Collaborative

*The Longevity AGEnda*  
**Engage. Empower. Advocate.**

**JOIN US FOR ONE OR BOTH SESSIONS**

**Monday, February 28 | 10:00 - 11:30 AM**  
**DuPage, Kane, Lake & McHenry Counties**

**Monday, March 7 | 10:00 - 11:30 AM**  
**Grundy, Kankakee, Kendall & Will Counties**

Both sessions will be held virtually via Zoom  
Zoom link will be emailed after registering

**Questions? Call AgeGuide at (800) 528-2000**

**Please share these events with your  
friends, neighbors and colleagues**



RSVP by clicking the appropriate date(s) below

Feb 28th

March 7th

---

**Healthy Aging and Family Connection**



**One cannot overstate the importance of family presence in a senior's life.** The family creates a consistent social network and connecting that directly impacts the senior's overall quality of life. Prioritizing family relationships provides continuity as senior experiences change in their social network. Friends may change, become ill and unavailable, or even pass away, but family is multi-generational and, as such, has an enduring presence of an aging family member. The stability of family relations, even with the ups and downs of disputes, is a familiar source of social and emotional grounding, as well as practical help. A study by the United Health Group reports more than half of older Americans will cite faith or spirituality, and a loving family as the top reasons they have a positive outlook. That positive outlook brings tremendous benefits to a senior's health and well-being.

Sadly, not all seniors have the benefit of a nuclear family or close extended family. Yet, these connections were deemed more important than financial resources, according to most participants in the United Health Group survey. Aging seniors who integrate into their family system are more prone to live healthier and longer lives than those seniors who remain isolated from the family. Even in the case of those seniors living with later stages of dementia, family contact can reduce disease symptoms and may stave off faster mental decline. How is it that family brings about higher rates of longevity?

Family contact helps to maintain a senior's immune system. Family social

The seniority immune system can also become more adaptive and robust due to low-level exposure to a variety of pathogens when interacting with their family in person. Social seniors, even those in non-family settings, often have stronger immune systems because of human contact.

Other techniques to improve an aging immune system include nutritional supplements or vitamins along with a healthy, nutrient-rich diet. Also, regular exercise, maintaining vaccinations, reducing stress, restful sleep, proper hydration, washing hands, and a positive outlook can all boost a senior's immune system. When a senior has an actively involved family, many of these health systems are put into play, especially the positive outlook. Having a family who cares about and cares for their elder members reduces feelings of depression, which feeds the cycle of optimism, improving overall health.

A higher level of cognitive functioning is linked to a family connection, as well. Brain health acquires benefits from being happy and socially engaged in activities that challenge memory and thinking skills. Human interaction goes beyond the more repetitive brain teaser challenges and puzzles because the social dynamic is fluid and unpredictable. A senior must engage all of their senses when responding while being in a family group. Holiday meals, birthday celebrations, family reunions, and many other typical family activities are good brain work for an aging family member. According to a study published in the Public Library of Science, elderly and even middle-aged adults who maintain active social circles appear to be at a lower risk of developing dementia. A family system is the ultimate pre-made social connection. "This finding could feed into strategies to reduce everyone's risk of developing dementia, adding yet another reason to promote connected communities and find ways to reduce isolation and loneliness," said the study's lead author, Andrew Sommerlad, Ph.D., of University College London.

Family roles shift throughout time. Parents who used to care for their children now experience an evolving family structure and the inevitability of their mortal decline. When the roles of parenting reverse, it brings challenges for all involved. Financial support is often needed when a parent is in declining health, and the ability of family members to contribute such help to the senior offers great relief and helps to reduce stress. Even if a family system is unable to provide financial support, emotional support does wonders for the aging process of a family member. Positive conversations and interactions can

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

Not all seniors have a family who can play an active role in their life. However, with extra effort, relationships can be forged that will be mutually beneficial, especially in the digital age of social media. While friendships oftentimes never replace an actual biological family, the adage that "friends are the family you give yourself" rings true and can create lasting and meaningful connections.

All of these connections are really about feeling loved. The benefits of being grounded in love, and what that brings to a person is profound. What if you never felt alone? What if you always felt loved? What if you could live your life knowing that someone was always in your corner, still there for you? The answer is the same to all of these questions – you would have a better chance at living your best life physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Strengthen family connections and friendship relations. Modern technology has made it easier than ever to be a part of someone's life. Text, email, video chat, and social media platforms provide interaction when it is not possible to physically be with a family member. However, do not overlook the more traditional methods of contact, which include personal visits, a phone call, and a handwritten letter or a card sent via snail mail. While these "old school" methods may not seem relevant to younger generations, they are particularly meaningful to a senior.

Every connection can make a difference. A close family can learn, share, and grow together. Outcomes from these shared experiences benefit all members, but in particular, the older family members. Younger generations are also gaining an invaluable lesson. The digital world is reconfiguring human experiences electronically and is leaving many people wanting of human connection.

**If you would like to discuss ways we can help, please contact our office at (630) 510-3213, please don't hesitate to reach out.**



[Subscribe](#)

[Past Issues](#)

[Translate](#) ▼

---

**A/Z Health & Elder Law, LLC**

3030 Warrenville Road

Suite 411

Lisle, IL 60532

(630) 510-3213

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

---

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)  
AZ Health & Elder Law · 3030 Warrenville Rd Ste 411 · Lisle, IL 60532-3710 · USA

