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Marketing Practices for Your *Volunteer Caregiving* Program

The following information was gathered from a research study on terminology associated with caregiving conducted by National Family Caregivers Association and National Alliance for Caregiving

- Many caregivers **do not identify** with the term “caregiver.” They prefer not to label their role, and felt strongly that the term “family caregiver” was more identifiable to who they are and what they do.
- Be careful about language that could be interpreted as an over promise. For example, suggesting that there is a readily accessible solution for everyone or suggesting that your program can help may be an overstatement. A better practice for organizations is state that you “can probably help.”
- Caregivers are extremely sensitive to language that appears in any way to admonish or criticize. Therefore, words such as “don’t” and “shouldn’t” are not well received words and should be avoided.
- Be mindful about the word “stress.” Many family caregivers may not be aware that their caregiving role is stressful and mentioning it can invoke stressful feelings, even when it is communicated in a reassuring way.
- Make sure language is inclusive of the various roles that caregivers occupy. “Family caring or caregiver” is a well received phrase. It gives definition and shape to what these caregivers do.
- Make sure that the non-profit message is prominent. This helps to alleviate confusion about whether a paid service provider is the program sponsor.
- The tone in your printed and media materials should be reassuring, comforting and empowering. Provide reassurance to family caregivers by assuring them that it is okay to feel the way they do. Also, provide new ideas about ways to seek support and help, and continue to highlight that it is in the interest of their loved ones if they seek help and support.
- Another strategy of marketing your program is through the use of church bulletins and workplace newsletters.