

ProActive Caring e-News



March 2021

ProActive Caring programming to focus on Transitions in 2021

We are delighted to share that the Center on Aging and Disability Policy at Mount Saint Mary College has received a one-year *COVID Response Small Grant* from the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council to offer additional support for families as children and young adults with disabilities continue to face unusual challenges.



Among other things, the grant will enable the program to extend the ProActive Caring School Exchange webcasts to a new area — Transitions — and create tools and resources for families as they help their children identify opportunities for self-directed growth, expand social opportunities, and enhance the skills needed for living independently. The new series of webcasts will be called *The School & Home Transition Exchange*. The grant will also enable our key partner, Parent Network of Western New York (PNWNY), to offer programs with a mindfulness focus for individuals ages 14-26 with disabilities and their families.

School & Home Transition Exchange to Launch March 11 at new evening time

The webcasts of the ProActive Caring Program's *School & Home Transition Exchange* will be held from 7-7:45 p.m. every other Thursday starting March 11. They will be complemented by a mindfulness stress reduction series offered

Upcoming School & Home Transition Exchange topics

The following topics will be covered in the weeks ahead:

March 11: "Planning in a Time of Uncertainty: Re-Imagining Transitions during the COVID-19 Pandemic from a Mindfulness-Based Perspective"

March 25: "Keeping Your Calm: Interacting in the Home in a Mindful Way"

by Parent Network of Western New York (PNWNY) at the same time on alternate weeks.

The *ProActive Caring School & Home Transition Exchange* has been scheduled in the early evening this year in response to input from members of the program's Advisory Council who indicated that parents and caregivers who want to interact rather than watch the recorded programs would find it easier to do so in the early evening.

April 8: "Stepping Out of Your Comfort Zone: Putting Your Best Foot Forward in a Stress-Free Way"

April 22: "Getting Ready to Learn: Mindful Transitioning to a School Environment"

About the Program Facilitators

ProActive Caring School & Home Transition Exchange webcasts will be moderated by Dr. Larry Force, Director of the Center on Aging and Disability Policy at Mount Saint Mary College, and facilitated by Peggy Pisano and Lisa Nathan, along with invited guests.



Lisa Nathan became a facilitator for the ProActive Caring Program three years ago. ProActive Caring "ticked all the boxes" for her: being a caregiver, having a child with an intellectual disability, and mindfulness and stress reduction. "There is a lot of support for our children when they are young," she said, "but less as they reach adulthood." The fact that ProActive Caring supports families for children's entire lifespans resonated with her and felt reassuring. Lisa began meditating while caring simultaneously for her husband, who had early-onset Alzheimer's, her elderly mother, and her three children.



Peggy Pisano has been a school psychologist for over 25 years, with an additional certification in school administration. She worked often with students transitioning from high school to life beyond school, whether to college, the work force, the armed services, or vocational settings. Her goals for the *ProActive Caring School & Home Transition Exchange* center on helping students and parents understand the process of leaving school and working on future plans, while reducing levels of stress and anxiety.

How to participate

To streamline communication from the ProActive Caring Program, we are asking people who are interested in taking part in the *ProActive Caring School & Home Transition Exchange* to register for these free programs. Rather than sending weekly videoconference links to everyone on our mailing list, we will send a link only to those who have indicated their intent to join us. To register, please provide your name and email by clicking on the button below. You can register once and receive the link for all the events.

[Click here to register](#)

Mindfulness Stress Reduction Series

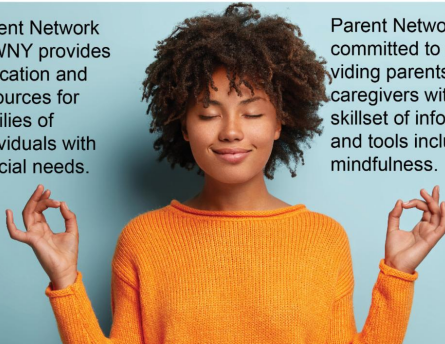
Alternating with the *ProActive Caring School & Home Transition Exchange*, a mindfulness stress reduction series — *Got Stress? We Can Help!* — will be offered by Parent Network of Western New York (PNWNY) from 7-7:45 p.m. beginning Thursday, March 18. It will continue every other Thursday through Sept. 30.

Got Stress? We Can Help! provides an opportunity for parents, caregivers, and youth with disabilities to meet virtually with other families and learn about mindfulness strategies and other techniques to reduce stress. All are welcome, and there are no fees to participate. You can register once and receive the link to sign in for all events.

To register for *Got Stress? We Can Help!* or for more information, [click here](#), call PNWNY at 716.332.4170 or email info@parentnetworkwny.org. Sessions will be held March 18; April 1, 15, and 29; May 13 and 27, June 10 and 24; July 8 and 22; Aug. 5 and 19; and Sept. 2, 16, and 30.



Parent Network of WNY provides education and resources for families of individuals with special needs.



Parent Network is committed to providing parents and caregivers with a rich skillset of information and tools including mindfulness.



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Developmental
Disabilities
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[Proactive Caring Digital Resource Center](#)