

# News Release

## **This Older Californians Month, Start the Conversation with Your Family to Connect with California's Aging Resources**

*Enhanced Aging Resource Guide from the California Department of Aging Connects Older Adults, Adults with Disabilities, and Family Caregivers with a Variety of Resources Available in the State*

**SACRAMENTO** – Governor Newsom [proclaimed](#) May as Older Californians Month and this year's theme of connection highlights the importance that social engagement and meaningful relationships have on our health and well-being. In support, the California Department of Aging (CDA) launched the ["Start the Conversation" campaign](#) to encourage and support connections, helping older adults, adults with disabilities, family caregivers, and loved ones connect with the wide variety of aging services offered in California. The [enhanced Aging in California Resource Guide](#), in print and online this month, provides Californians a starting point to connect with information and support.

"Older Californians offer so much to our state, and California offers a variety of resources to support this growing population," said **CDA Director Susan DeMarois**. "The theme of connection is an excellent reminder for us all to reach out and connect with the older adults in our lives. Maintaining social connections benefits everyone by supporting health and well-being, avoiding social isolation and loneliness, and much more."

"There is an undeniable connection between the health of older adults, the resources California and our local partners provide, and the support of families, friends, and caregivers," said **California Health and Human Services Agency Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly**. "May is also Mental Health Awareness Month, and the combination with Older Californians Month reinforces how important support and connection are, especially for our older Californians, to help them continue leading healthy, happy lives."

**WHY CONNECTION IS CRITICAL:** Starting the conversation goes beyond just planning logistics. Social isolation and loneliness are associated with higher risks for health problems like heart disease, depression, and cognitive decline. Talking openly with your loved ones about your aging preferences and concerns is a powerful way to strengthen your connection. These conversations can pave the way for a more supported and collaborative aging experience.

**WHAT CALIFORNIA'S AGING RESOURCE GUIDE OFFERS:** California's free online Aging Resource Guide shares information about a variety of programs and services available to older adults, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers. California provides a range of programs, services, and resources to support older adults, but they aren't all widely known. Some highlights from the guide include:

- Health Insurance Counseling – Volunteer counselors provide free, personalized, and confidential information about various types of insurance.
- Caregiver Support – Information, counseling, and respite are available to help family members who provide care for older loved ones.
- Information on Elder Abuse – Learn about common types of abuse, signs to watch for, and how to report abuse to local authorities and the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.
- Reducing Social Isolation – The free Friendship Line is available 24 hours a day to support those who may need a friendly conversation: 888-670-1360.

**START THE CONVERSATION:** California's Aging Resource Guide is available at [aging.ca.gov/aging\\_resources](https://aging.ca.gov/aging_resources).

**BIGGER PICTURE:** California's population continues to change, and older adults will make up an increasing percentage of the population. The number of Californians over the age of 60 is expected to grow to 10.3 million people by the year 2030, making up one-quarter of the state's population. This is not a challenge, but rather an opportunity. California's Master Plan for Aging (MPA) is the state's 10-year blueprint to prepare for a larger, more diverse, and older population. Learn more about the [MPA](#) and follow the progress of more than 200 active initiatives with the [MPA Implementation Tracker](#).

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