

For Immediate Release
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In Our Small World, Caring is Strong

No one wants to get older, yet it happens. “[That’s Life](#)” crooned Frank Sinatra in his hit song. Since we are all on a journey with the same destination, perhaps now is a good time to reach out to a parent, uncle, aunt or someone you know who is old, disabled, or both. Staying in touch can make a tremendous difference in the world for someone living alone or at a skilled nursing care center.

As your local long term care professionals are about to celebrate the annual “[National Nursing Home Week](#),” May 8 to 14, 2016, and May is [Older Americans Month](#), this is an excellent time to get in touch and refresh a relationship.

According to the American Health Care Association (AHCA), which founded the special week in 1967, the theme this year is “*It’s a Small World, with a Big Heart*” has two parts:

- It partially commemorates the [New York World’s Fair](#) of 1964 – 1965 and two songs from that era: Disney’s “[It’s a Small World After All](#)” and the New Seekers’ “[I’d Like to Teach the World to Sing](#).”
- “...*with a Big Heart*” symbolizes staff embracing the resident as a person and offering individualized care, social interaction, and a compassionate heart.

For visitors, the music component of the theme reminds everyone that reliving events and listening to favorite tunes helps older adults reminisce – think of it this way, an 80-year-old today was a strapping 29 in 1964. When visiting a skilled nursing care center, plan to bring a family photo album, scrapbook, news clippings or other item that recalls yesteryear for the resident.

Family Caregiving

Family caregiving can quickly become overwhelming for the caregiver, especially when cognitive decline is a factor. The time may come when conditions necessitate transitioning a spouse, parent, or other relative to the safety of a skilled nursing care center for 24-hour care and supervision. It is best to start planning early, especially in the financial area.

Transitions can be stressful for anyone, including older adults – suddenly they have to deal with unfamiliar people and situations. Families can mitigate the stress by being inclusive and taking the prospective resident on tours of several care settings. Also, include them in meetings that relate to their new home and care planning. Always treat them as adults.

With *National Nursing Home Week* just around the corner, now is a good time to tour and see that skilled nursing care centers are, indeed, small worlds operating at the pace of older adults, i.e. residents. Expect to like what you see because today's care centers, clinical practices, and staff capabilities have advanced since the 1960s.

The following sources will help you through the transition process.

- . www.nyshfa.org -- Free information on care centers and aging.
- . www.CareConversations.org -- A national web site with free information and a directory of care centers.
- . Individual skilled nursing care centers – Check the web pages of the care centers you are considering.
- . U.S. News & World Report -- Online list of the top 50 nursing homes.
- . State government -- Departments of health offer consumer information.
- . Federal government -- [Web site](#) compares care centers nationwide.
- . Licensed professionals – Estate/and financial planners and attorneys sponsor consumer seminars.
- . Medical professionals and the clergy – Tend to be knowledgeable about local care centers.
- . Friends and relatives – If they've had direct experience with a care center, they can usually offer recommendations.

Sincerely,

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The New York State Health Facilities Association/New York State Center for Assisted Living (NYSHFA/NYSCAL) is a member-driven association of providers of long term care services, caring for individuals of all ages in proprietary, not-for-profit, and government-sponsored skilled nursing, post-acute, rehab, adult care and assisted living communities across the state of New York. NYSHFA/NYSCAL is dedicated to assisting its members in achieving excellence in the provision of efficient and effective quality long term care services through leadership, professional development and active involvement in the shaping of public policy.