



Breakrooms that Raise and Engage Faith Communities and Volunteers to Re-Launch Respite Now as Part of a Statewide Coalition

Toy Pilot

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2025 NATIONAL LIFESPAN RESPITE CONFERENCE
April 2, 2025

South Carolina
Respite
Coalition

Agenda

Overview

- Acknowledgements
- Learning Objectives
- Background
 - What is a Respite Breakroom
 - Program Goals
- Getting Started
- Successes, Challenges, COVID-19
 - Faith-community model
 - Community model
- Relaunch Respite Breakroom Now
- Discussion/Questions

Acknowledgements

Breakroom Site Leaders and Volunteers

- Mt. Nebo AME – Awendaw SC - Rural
- St. Phillip AME Church – Eastover, SC - Rural
- St. John AME Church, Cottageville - Rural
- Brown Chapel AME Church, Columbia, SC
- Heyward AME Church, Gaston, Rural
- Mt. Seal United Methodist Church, Hemingway - Rural

SC Department on Aging

- Jenny Andrews
Family Caregiver Programs Manager
- Jennifer Brewton
Caregiver and Alzheimer's Resource Division Director

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Learning Objectives

1. Learners will become familiar with, and be able to describe, the Respite Breakroom Volunteer and Faith-Based Model.
2. Learners will understand the challenges impacting Respite Breakrooms during the post Covid and be able to discuss strategies to rebuild and expand this model to Raise and engage faith communities to Re-launch Respite now.
3. Learners will provide feedback and identify ways to Raise and Engage local faith and community-based respite programs, like Breakrooms, to be integral partners to support caregivers and loved ones through information and training to Launch Respite Now.

Background

- **South Carolina Respite Coalition**
 - Established in 1999; Incorporated in 2001
 - Support by 40 Agencies and organizations
 - Only statewide organization in SC focused on respite for caregivers across the lifespan
 - Mission - To expand quality respite opportunities in South Carolina throughout the lifespan for South Carolina families who have a member with special needs.
- **Central theme to all Lifespan Respite Grants is:**
“Expanding and building partnerships across the state and across the lifespan.”
- **Both SCRC and SCDOA historically worked with the faith community**
- **Breakrooms were a natural fit**

What is a Respite Breakroom?

- Community-based on-site respite model provided in natural settings - faith centers, senior centers, community recreation centers
- Dedicated physical space – safe, comfortable and engaging
- Unique to the community – No 2 Breakrooms are the same
- Provides activities and socialization opportunities for care receivers
- Socialization and help to expand “circles of support” for caregivers
- Information on resources for caregivers
- Staffed mostly by volunteers
- One faith group or in partnership with others faith groups in the community

Breakroom Program Goals

- Develop a **model** of faith and community-based respite care
- Engage Faith-Community as **partners** in respite and caregiver support
- Increase **natural** respite opportunities for caregivers
- Teach caregivers about community-based **resources** and building **circles of support**





Getting Started

- Outreach & recruiting for Success
- Request for Proposal Mini-grant process

Outreach

- Direct to faith groups with interest in people with special needs
 - Previous contacts – SCDOA Faith activities, SCRC Faith Community Conference
- Grant training for faith groups
- Conferences and meetings
- Organizational newsletters
- Word of Mouth and Referrals

Mini-Grants

- Application
 - Project Description
 - Objectives
 - Performance indicators – measures of success
 - Budget and budget narrative
- Requires thought and planning
 - Assessments of potential caregivers and care receivers – who to serve
 - How to recruit, train and manage volunteers
 - What physical space is available

Breakroom Framework

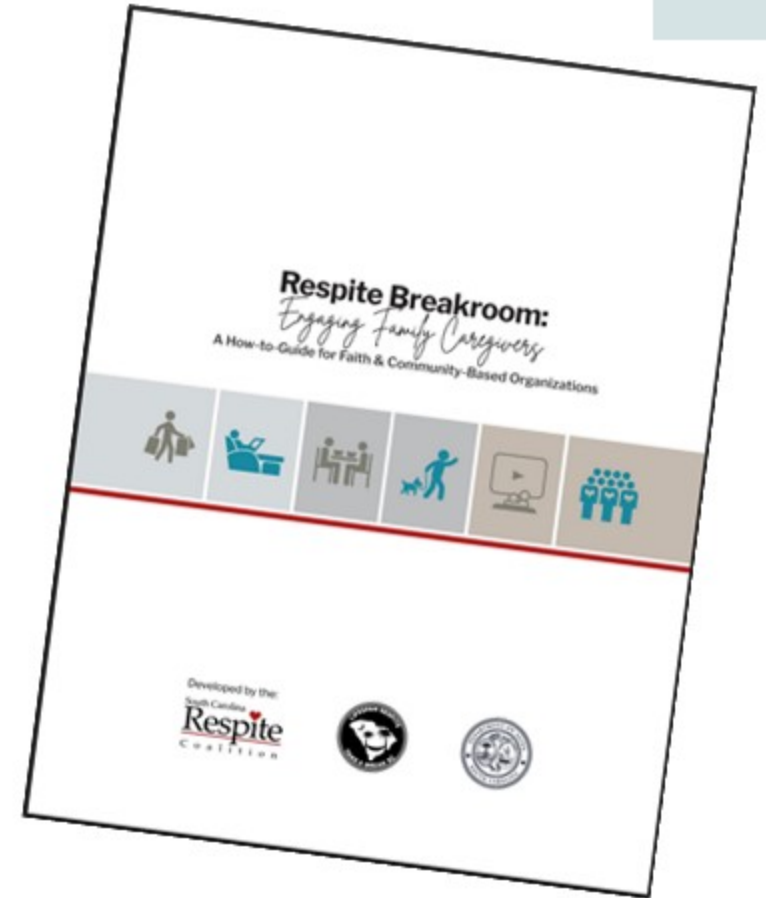
- Selecting Breakroom Partners
 - Capacity and capability
 - Geographically across state
 - Demographics
 - Targeting families caring for people across the lifespan
- Key Elements
 - Church leadership buy-in
 - Breakroom leadership team
 - Funding
 - Adequate/Safe room
 - Staffing (Prof & Volunteers)
 - Recruiting participants
 - Engaging activities

Breakroom Framework (cont)

- Reporting and Evaluation Requirements
 - Regular activity reports
 - Number served
 - Challenges and successes
 - Listening sessions - Lessons learned
 - Evaluation–
 - Caregiver feedback and outcomes
 - Care receiver feedback and outcomes

Faith-Based Breakrooms

- “How-to” Guide
 - Key Elements and Standards
 - Recommendations based on lessons learned
 - Professional supports included
 - SC OT Assoc = Recommended Appropriate Activities
 - Social Work = Caregiver Considerations
 - Builder Assoc = Physical space safety products, strategies
- Volunteer Training
 - National Respite Care Provider Training – Free and online
 - Disability
 - Family Caregiver training



Get the How-To-Guide

[screspitecoalition.org/
programs-services/breakrooms/](https://screspitecoalition.org/programs-services/breakrooms/)



Current Breakrooms

Geographical distribution

- 5 of 6 in rural areas

Population Served

- Older Adults, Alzheimers
- Children and Adults across the Lifespan
- Members only
- Broader Community

Services provided

- Sundays only
- Two session per week

Single vs. Collaboration



Successes and Challenges

Early Lessons Learned

Successes

- 3 of 5 opened for respite prior to COVID
- Eager volunteers – Strong desire to serve
- Family caregiver support
- Leadership identified early
- Partnerships enhance sustainability

Challenges

- Size– Availability of care receivers, caregivers, volunteers
- Denomination decision-making structure – buy-in & support
- Identifying leadership – One visionary vs. team
- Volunteer skills, education, training
- Recruiting participants
- Identifying activities
- Sustainability

Impact of COVID-19

- Stopped In-person activities in March 2020
- Alternate activities during COVID
 - Volunteers provided “check-ins” with family caregivers
 - Phone caregiver support networks
- SCRC/SCDOA organized virtual trainings for staff/volunteers
 - Dementia Dialogues with the University of South Carolina
 - Understanding Alzheimers Disease and providing care
- Breakrooms serving as a place for caregivers/care receivers to utilize while getting their vaccine
- Two Breakrooms reopened in 2021.
- Two Breakrooms struggled to recruit new participants since former participants passed away during COVID.

The Community Model

- Neutral Location – Senior Centers, Teen Centers, Medical Ministries, County Recreation Centers
 - Improve access
 - Centralized
- Community Supported
 - Increase volunteering
 - Expand partnerships
 - Enhance program/participation

Lessons Learned



- Although interested, harder to develop as a voluntary model
- Require more start-up funding
- Require more assistance and strategic planning



Relaunching Respite Breakrooms Now!

Future Directions and Next Steps

Focus on Faith Communities

- Continue to reach out to individual faith groups
- Work with leadership – United Methodist Church of SC

Expansion to new locations

- 6 by year end
- 4 waiting to begin
 - Union Baptist Church in Bamberg SC
 - McGregor Presbyterian Church in Lexington SC
 - Mt. Moriah AME Church in Swansea SC
 - James Chapel AME Church in Lugoff SC
- 3-4 each year

Expand Partnerships

- Sororities and Fraternities – Collegiate & Alumni

Integrate into statewide coalition

- Engage in Regional Advisory Councils
- Engage in Regional Resource Fairs

Broaden Funding

- Foundations
- Promote through other mini-grant programs (ARCC)
- List of small grants to Breakrooms



Discussion and Questions

Thank You

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