

OMBUDS BULLETIN

January 2023

Volume 6

“The sooner growing older is stripped of reflexive dread, the better equipped we are to benefit from the countless ways in which it can enrich us.”

– Ashton Applewhite - This Chair Rocks

I’m a bud, you’re a bud, we’re Ombuds!

A QUARTERLY BULLETIN PUBLISHED THROUGH THE LOUISIANA LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

A NOTE FROM THE STATE LTCO OFFICE

Our Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsmen are recognized among the country’s most professional, committed, and hard-working ombudsmen. Every day the LTC ombuds positively impacted many lives by visiting, listening, being with residents at their care plan meetings, attending resident council meetings, helping form family councils, and being present at exit surveys. Ombuds help give a voice to residents to help resolve issues with missing personal items, cold food, poor care, and sometimes abuse.

This past year saw an increase in residents who received involuntary discharges; the ombuds and our OLAP attorney were there to help the residents. The ombud is somebody the resident can call on. And facilities recognize that ombuds help them support their residents.

You might be a small group, but you are a mighty force!



Thank you all.

Rosa Walton
State Ombudsman

KUDOS!



This year marks another year of dedicated services for our team of 28, but I would like to recognize this quarter’s anniversary dates for:

- Chris DeCuir** (Volunteer), New Orleans, 2/9/2017
- Laurie Holland** (Volunteer), New Orleans, 2/9/2017
- Will Percy** (Volunteer), New Orleans, 2/1/2021
- Beverly Parker**, Shreveport, 3/19/2020

In 2022 eight new ombudsmen joined the LTCOP Team:

- Rose Waguespack**, Alexandria
- Nanette Burch**, Lafayette
- Toya Guillory**, Lake Charles
- Elizabeth Moore**, Shreveport
- Beverly Jones** (Volunteer) Shreveport
- Savva Ivakin** (Volunteer) New Orleans
- Gary Boye** (Volunteer) New Orleans
- Mary Jane Ciccarello** (Volunteer) New Orleans
- Brianna Smith** (Volunteer) New Orleans

Welcome Back

- Vickie Castay** (Volunteer) New Orleans
- Sean Hughes** (Volunteer) New Orleans

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

An Om what? Bud who?

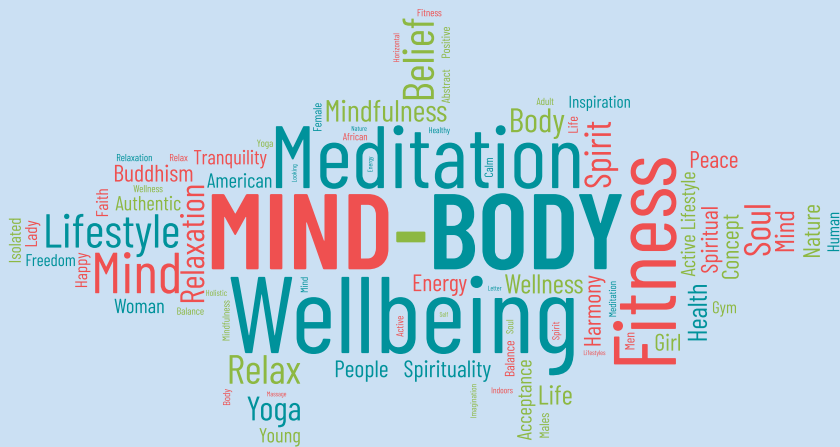
When we introduce ourselves, haven’t we heard that often from residents, staff, and the community? Ombudsman, Ombudsperson, Ombud? The term varies in states and organizations. Steadily the word “ombudsman” is being supplanted with ombudsperson or now more frequently with ombud. This term seems friendly, easy to say, and easier to remember. The Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program will always be as titled; however, it is up to each individual to use the most comfortable term. It is each individual’s choice.



WELL-BEING TIPS: MIND-BODY CONNECTION

The mind-body connection refers to the idea that our mental and emotional states directly impact our physical health. This connection has been recognized by various cultures and belief systems for centuries and is now supported by a growing body of scientific research.

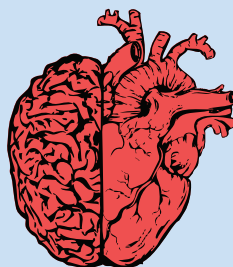
One way the mind and body are connected is through the nervous system. Our thoughts and emotions can trigger the release of hormones and neurotransmitters that affect various systems in the body. For example, stress or anxiety can cause the release of the hormone cortisol, which can negatively affect the immune system, digestion, and other bodily functions. Conversely, feelings of relaxation and calm can promote the release of hormones that promote healing and overall well-being.



The mind-body connection also involves our thoughts and emotions' role in manifesting physical symptoms and diseases. Research has shown that people who experience chronic stress or negative emotions are more prone to developing conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer. On the other hand, people who have a positive outlook and practice techniques such as meditation and mindfulness have been found to have lower rates of these conditions.

The mind-body connection also plays a role in the effectiveness of certain types of treatment, such as psychotherapy and acupuncture. Psychotherapy can help individuals identify and address negative thought patterns and emotions that may be contributing to physical symptoms, while acupuncture and other forms of holistic medicine can help to restore balance and promote healing within the body.

Overall, the mind-body connection highlights the importance of caring for our mental, emotional, and physical health. By paying attention to our thoughts and emotions and seeking healthy ways to manage them, we can improve our overall well-being and quality of life.



We turn not older with years, but newer every day.

-Emily Dickinson-

LOL

What's the difference between a hippo and a zippo?

One is really heavy, and the other is a little lighter

Hear about the new restaurant called Karma?

There's no menu - you get what you deserve.

Laughter has many physiological benefits that can improve physical and mental health. Laughter can reduce stress and improve mood. When we laugh, our body releases endorphins, chemicals that act as natural painkillers and mood elevators. Laughter can also help reduce stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. This can help to lower blood pressure, improve immune function, and reduce the risk of developing stress-related illnesses such as heart disease and depression. In addition to these stress-reducing effects, laughter can also have many physical benefits. It can help to improve cardiovascular health by increasing blood flow and oxygenation to the body's tissues. Laughter has also been shown to stimulate the production of antibodies and T-cells, which are essential for fighting off infection and illness.



Laughter can improve respiratory function by increasing airflow to the lungs and helping clear out mucus and other irritants. This can be particularly beneficial for individuals with asthma or other respiratory conditions.

And laughter has also been shown to have many cognitive benefits. It can improve memory and cognitive function and has been linked to increased creativity and problem-solving ability. The capacity to laugh freely and regularly has so much power to heal and revitalize that it's a fantastic resource for overcoming issues, improving relationships, and promoting physical and mental health.

So make it a point to laugh out loud often!

NATIONAL CENTER ON LAW & ELDER RIGHTS ADDRESSES AGEISM

Promoting and protecting elder rights is critically important in the face of pervasive ageism in society. Ageism threatens justice and personal choice and even contributes to poor health outcomes. Ageism and other forms of structural discrimination also hurt older adults with intersecting marginalized identities, like older adults of color and older women. Person-directed approaches and collective action to advance equity can lead to better conditions and outcomes for everyone.

Contact NCLER to learn more about ending ageism and engaging in work that preserves the rights and dignity of older adults. <https://ncler.acl.gov/>

WHAT IS AGEISM? Ageism is discrimination or prejudice based on a person's age. It can manifest in negative attitudes or behaviors towards individuals or groups of people because of their age, often resulting in unfair treatment or exclusion. Ageism can affect people of all ages, but it is often directed towards older individuals and can be a form of discrimination that is particularly harmful and difficult to combat.

DID YOU KNOW? Research suggests that people who exhibit ageist attitudes, or negative stereotypes and prejudices towards older individuals, may be at increased risk for cognitive impairment. One study found that older adults who held ageist attitudes performed worse on cognitive tasks, such as memory and problem-solving than those who did not. Another study found that older adults who endorsed ageist beliefs had a faster decline in cognitive functioning over time. These findings suggest that ageist attitudes may negatively affect cognitive health and that addressing and reducing ageist beliefs may be an important strategy for maintaining cognitive function in older age.

BOOK REVIEW: *This Chair Rocks* by Ashton Applewhite

This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism is a powerful and thought-provoking book that challenges the negative stereotypes and biases associated with aging. Drawing on scientific research and personal experience, the author, Ashton Applewhite, encourages readers to embrace their aging process and fight against ageism in society. Through storytelling, humor, and analysis, ***This Chair Rocks*** offers a fresh perspective on aging and inspires readers to embrace their journey through the later stages of life. Ultimately, this book is a call to action for individuals of all ages to work toward creating a more age-inclusive society.

WHAT CAN OMBUDS DO TO MITIGATE AGEISM AGAINST NURSING HOME RESIDENTS?

As Long-term care ombuds, we are advocates who protect residents' rights in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. We can play an essential role in fighting ageism against older residents in these settings by promoting a culture of respect and dignity for all residents, regardless of their age. This can include:

- ▶ Educating staff and management about the negative impacts of ageism and the importance of treating all residents with respect and dignity.
- ▶ Advocating for policies and practices that support the rights and well-being of older residents, including those related to age-appropriate care and activities.
- ▶ Promoting the involvement of older residents in decision-making processes and encouraging their participation in activities and events within the facility.
- ▶ Encouraging positive relationships between residents of different ages and supporting intergenerational programming and activities within the facility.

COFFEE & CASES

Ombuds attending each monthly Coffee & Cases receive 1.5 hours of in-service training credit. By participating in all Coffee & Cases, ombuds can receive their 18 hours of credit needed annually.



Mark your calendars for the first Monday of each month

9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

On the first Monday of each month, ombuds across the state come together virtually to discuss cases and get input from each other. Some months, we have special guests.

Be sure to add 1.5 hours of State-sponsored in-service training in LORS each month.

LOUISIANA LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDS

Louisiana Ombuds advocate for 35,000 residents in 400 nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

ALEXANDRIA REGION, Cenla AAA

Coordinator: Carolyn Smith
Ombud: Rose Waguespack

BATON ROUGE REGION, Capital AAA

Coordinator: Peggy Essick
Ombuds: Mavis Lee, Anne Miller, Alrina Ponville, Glenda Teagle

LAFAYETTE REGION, Cajun AAA

Coordinator: Dana Adams
Ombud: Nanette Burch

LAKE CHARLES REGION, Calcasieu COA

Coordinator: Charles Campbell
Ombud: Toya Guillory

MONROE REGION, Cenla AAA

Coordinator: Anna Horne
Ombud: La'Trichelle "Lockie" Chisley

NEW ORLEANS REGION, Capital AAA

Coordinator: Tanya Hayes
Ombuds: Barbara Soniat, Beverly Gianna
Volunteer Ombuds: Christine DeCuir, Cecile Gordon, Will Percy, Laurie Holland, Gary Boye, Savva Ivakin, Vickie Castay, Mary Jane Ciccarello, Sean Hughes

SHREVEPORT REGION, Caddo COA

Coordinator: Casandra Cesare
Ombuds: Beverly Parker, Elizabeth Moore, Rachelle Linnear
Volunteer Ombud: Beverly Jones

RECRUIT A VOLUNTEER

Research shows that volunteering has many biological and psychosocial benefits:

- Helps stay physically and mentally active
- Reduces stress
- Make new friends and contacts
- Increases social and relationship skills
- Adds job skills
- Increases self-esteem and life-satisfaction
- Increases the level of happiness
- It's Fun!

WHERE DO I FIND VOLUNTEERS?

In nursing homes | visiting family and friends

In neighborhoods | people we know

In the community | through public speaking and media interviews

The Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program offers many volunteer opportunities for people within the state. Volunteer-certified ombuds positions are needed, but there are other opportunities to serve, such as a photographer, contributor to this newsletter and other communication vehicles, and tech-savvy volunteers willing to teach residents how to email, text, and Zoom. Bring your ideas and talent to the table and apply to volunteer!

Click on these links for information on how residents in one Louisiana nursing home volunteer to help their fellow residents.

<https://healthcarejournalno.com/sites/default/files/journal/fb/HJNO-2022-sep-oct/10/index.html>

<https://youtu.be/1A6fLusNFc>

Applying to volunteer is easy, quick, and simple: Click Here:

<https://tinyurl.com/LTCOVolunteerApplication>

HAVE A QUESTION OR COMMENT?

What's happening in your region?

Email: StateOmbudsman@la.gov

Call: (504) 782-6640

goea.la.gov/ombudsman