

## **A Safer Naper --- Partnerships for a Safer Naper**

The Naperville Police Department recognizes the special needs of various populations within our community and actively looks for opportunities to improve their safety. This month, our Safer Naper campaign is focused on the partnerships we offer to families and groups to meet the unique needs of senior citizens, individuals with mental health disorders, and residents with disabilities or other special considerations.

### **Fastrack**

Our Fastrack Program combines “tried and true” radio technology with specially trained response team members to build an effective, life-saving program to locate high risk persons who have a history of wandering. A member of the department visits with the families to register participants and visits with them bi-monthly to maintain the equipment. This helps build positive relationships and trust between the police department and the people in the program before the need may arise for a rescue.

[Learn more](#)

### **Testimonial**

My daughter Jessica, and our family are so grateful for the Fastrack technology that the City of Naperville has provided for her. Jessica has a developmental disability and has on numerous occasions decided to leave our house without telling us.

The Fastrack ankle bracelet that Jessica wears at all times is radios base that would assist the Naperville police to track what area she is in and focus efforts to find her quickly if she were to wander off or be lost.

Several years ago, Jessica had darted off and even though we were nearby she ran and we didn't know where she was. We called the Naperville Police, they knew the situation because her information was already in the system, they arrived quickly and together we found her (she was safe and sitting in a corner).

The Fastrack bracelet is an invaluable tool that we rely on to assist us in keeping Jessica safe.

### **Caring Hands**

Our Caring Hands program allows residents to voluntarily provide Naperville's first responders with critical information about themselves or loved ones with developmental, cognitive, mental, medical and/or physical disabilities who may require special assistance during an emergency or non-emergency situation. Information provided could include methods of communication, sensory and medical issues as well as approach and de-escalation techniques.

[Learn more](#)

### **Testimonial 1**

The Caring Hands Program is a very beneficial program that provides information readily to first responders in response to emergency situations and other situations as they arise. It is a confidential way to get positive working strategies to responders dealing with individuals who have special needs. By volunteering to share information about your loved ones with the Police and Fire Departments in advance of an emergency, it gives maximum opportunity to have the best outcome when confronted with the unexpected. As with most good ideas, this program came about from lessons learned as the Police and Fire Department personnel deal with children and adults with communicative disorders and senior citizens dealing with memory and cognitive issues. With information such as nicknames and medical conditions, as an example, first responders can use this information to identify and establish rapport and trust with the individual, rendering aid safely and as needed. I strongly recommend and support this program and would be happy to address any concerns and questions you may have by contacting me.

### **Testimonial 2**

One year ago, my wife was diagnosed with dementia. Before I had a chance to fully realize the manifestations of this tragic diagnosis, my wife walked away from our home in the middle of the night. She was found by the Naperville police before I was aware that she had left. Based on a notification by a citizen, the police located her and returned her home unharmed. They handled the situation in a very compassionate and professional manner. I was informed of the Caring Hands Program and submitted a participant information form. Unfortunately, I needed the police department to help me on two additional occasions.

On one occasion, I had an almost immediate opportunity to get my first dose of the COVID vaccine. My wife said she was feeling ill and did not want to go with me. Previously, I had been able to leave her alone during the day for short periods of time without any incidents. Due to the short notice, I was not able to find someone stay with her. Unfortunately, while I was away she called 911 because she thought someone was in our home. The police responded quickly and were at our home when I returned. They were able to handle the situation in such a way that my wife's fears were lessened quickly. It actually turned out to be a positive experience for her as she thanked them for coming and later said she really liked them. I also appreciate the fact that the policemen did not blame me for not being attentive. I have placed security locks on the doors that she cannot open. On a few occasions my wife has threatened to call the police if I did not open the locks so she could leave to go to her real home. When I made a comment to the policemen about this, I was told to let her call and they would have a conversation with her. Fortunately, I have been able to defuse these situations without her calling the police.

One other incident involved a kind Naperville resident and the Plainfield police who worked with the Naperville police. After each of these incidents, I was contacted to find out how things were going. My family and I have developed many mechanisms to keep these incidents from occurring and they haven't for several months. I have a tremendous appreciation that the Naperville Caring Hands Program is

available and that public service persons like Jim Pacetti are available to help residents of Naperville who find themselves in this situation.

### **Senior Programs**

We also enjoy partnerships with various community organizations, like the city's Senior Task Force, the Naperville & Lisle Townships Triad, and AARP, to better meet the needs of Naperville's growing senior population.

#### **AARP Smart Driver Class**

Designed for drivers age 50 and older, Smart Driver helps mature drivers understand the normal effects of aging on driving and practical ways to compensate for those changes. While the NPD's offering of this course has been limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic, **classes will resume in early 2022.**

[Learn more](#)

#### **Senior Task Force**

The Senior Task Force, which was established at the direction of the 2014 Naperville City Council, is helping address the unique needs of Naperville's growing senior population. As of the most recent census figures in 2018, more than 17,000 Naperville residents were over the age of 65, which accounts for almost 12 percent of the City's population.

This group promotes coordination among existing senior service providers in the Naperville area; improves awareness among seniors of available resources to assist them; and develops recommendations to address service gaps related to transportation challenges, housing concerns and healthcare resources.

#### **Naperville Lisle Townships TRIAD**

The mission of Triad is to enhance the quality of life of all senior citizens in Naperville Township and Lisle Township. Triad empowers senior citizens to become more involved in community programs, including crime prevention programs, educational seminars, and implementing means to make the community a safer place for senior citizens.

On Friday, September 10, 2021 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 PM at the Naperville Municipal Center, 400 S. Eagle St the 2021 Healthy, Wealthy and Wise Senior Conference, presented by the Naperville & Lisle Townships TRIAD, in partnership with the City of Naperville, will take place. This year's event, designed for older adults, features two informative sessions.

Learn more For more information and to register please visit <https://naperville-lisle-triad.org>