

TIMES DAILY BUSINESS REVIEW

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CARINGPLACE OF THE SHOALS TAKES CARE OF YOUR LOVED ONES, OFFERS RESPITE FOR YOUR FAMILY

Caringplace of the Shoals is dedicated to easing the load for families looking after loved ones with long-term memory loss.

The facility is a nonprofit organization operating an Adult Day Service (ADS) program for clients with memory loss due to Alzheimer's disease and other related disorders. Older adults who are frail or functionally impaired without memory loss are also welcome. As the only Adult Day Service in North Alabama, Caringplace offers families respite and a place where their loved ones can make friends and be active.

Nicole Fults of Caringplace said. "We are the only ADS in the nation to achieve Montessori Gold credentialing."

According to the Center for Applied Research in Dementia, Montessori-inspired communities offer "a transformative approach that guides care partners and leadership to instill respect, dignity, and equality as a way of life for themselves and their (clients)."

By using this type of dementia programming, Caringplace can provide a sense of belonging, help clients build friendships, and enhance the quality of life for those who otherwise might feel lonely, depressed, or isolated.

As part of the Montessori-inspired structure, Fults said, "we find things that they might have done in the past – their work, their home life, hobbies – and we try to bring those things back to them and give them a sense of belonging and community."

Fults said the typical day varies, but the center has many different offerings, such as a gospel music singing group, a games group, a group that reads newspapers,

coffee hour, and great food. Additionally, some folks are able to help with general maintenance tasks around the office, and they also have a garden.

"One of the last abilities that dementia patients lose is the ability to read, so we have a large screen to help them be able to read the song lyrics," Fults said. "Music is very important to people who are losing their memories as it can help bring them back for a time. We have a client who is completely nonverbal who will sing every song."

ADS allow seniors to continue living at home while participating in a day program from 4 to 40 hours a week. Economic studies show that ADS is the most cost-effective and flexible option compared to assisted living, nursing homes, or at-home care.

"The biggest piece of advice I can give as someone who has been through this with my mother is don't wait to bring them to Caringplace," Fults said. "Many people think their loved one will not want to go or won't enjoy it, but that's not true. Most times when they get into a routine, they do enjoy it and they make friends."

"My motto is let them try. You lose your loved one twice – first when they don't know who you are and again when they pass away."

"At Caringplace we find what motivates them and work with that to help bring them more quality of life in these difficult years."

In addition to their Adult Day Service, Caringplace offers a caregiver support group and a grief support group that meet on the second Monday of the month at 10 and 11 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church in Florence.

If you are interested in learning more, call Caringplace at 256-335-5245 or visit caringplaceshoals.org.

**Caringplace of the Shoals
216 Marengo Street, Suite I,
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256-335-5245**



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