Wisconsin Aging | Advocacy | Network

Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging

GET READY TO ADVOCATE

Falls Prevention Programs

AGENDA

- About WAAN
- Falls Prevention issue brief
- Advocate Story
- Advocacy Tools
- Call to Action
- Next Steps
- Questions?

About
WAAN

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) is a is a collaboration of organizations and individuals working to shape public policy and improve the quality of life for older people.

We advocate for all older adults by educating the community and policy makers on particular issues impacting older adults; mobilizing people on priority issues; and advocating for change.



About WIHA

The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA) works to improve the health and well-being of all people as we age.

We work with statewide and local partners to develop health education curriculums and resources, provide training to program facilitators, and coordinate statewide healthy aging coalitions and initiatives.



Falls Free Wisconsin

A public health approach to falls prevention.

•Address root causes of falls.
•Support and promote programs & practices that reduce falls risk.
•Raise awareness and instill a belief that falls are preventable.
•Provide evidence-based falls prevention education and resources to community members and professionals.

Falls Free® Wisconsin

The Issue Brief



WAAN Advocacy
Wisconsin Aging | Advocacy | Network

Reducing Falls Among Older Wisconsinites
STATE ISSUE BRIEF

608-228-7253 · emily.petersen@gwaar.org
gwaar.org/waan · @WAAN.ACTION

Preserving Independence, Reducing Costs, Improving Quality of Life

The Scope and Cost of Older Adult Falls:

Scope: Aging is a lifelong process that connects us all. Today, one in four Wisconsinites is age 60 or older—and by 2040, it will be one in three. Now is the time to invest in systems that promote health, connection, and independence throughout our lives—strengthening the foundation for well-being in every community.

Research has demonstrated that **no matter our age, we can learn and carry out effective strategies to increase resilience, therefore reducing our risk of falls and improving our quality of life.** Preventing falls is one way we can collectively make a significant positive impact in our communities. Falls are the

WAAN's position:
To support the Falls Free Wisconsin Center – a falls prevention center of excellence supporting programming and local initiatives, we request a $450,000/year annual budget appropriation to:

1) raise awareness of the incidence and cost of older adult falls,
2) help older adults, their families and caregivers identify and reduce falls risk due to the multiple causes of falls,
3) reduce the burden of falls and provides resources to emergency services and health systems, and
4) deliver evidence-based prevention education and interventions across the state.

1. **Our position**: Support programming and local initiatives through the Falls Free Wisconsin Center with an appropriation of $450,000/year.
2. Funding would raise awareness of the resources available to increase falls resiliency.
3. Help older adults, their families and caregivers identify and reduce falls risk.
4. Reduce burden of falls and provide resources to emergency services and health systems.
5. Deliver evidence-based prevention education and interventions across the state.

https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009015

MEET OUR ADVOCATE

Welcome Patricia Boge, an advocate from LaCrosse County! Patt had a fall, then her Doctor connected her with a falls prevention program. She is now a volunteer with Emplify Health and helps to facilitate the Stepping On falls prevention program in her community. Patt will share more of her story and the importance of falls prevention programming.

ADVOCACY TOOLS

Together, our issue brief and your story create a powerful story to share with legislators. Here is how you can deliver the most impact when advocating:

- Before your meeting, spend time refining and clarifying your story and why this issue is important to you.
- Highlight the ask/position from the issue brief, but otherwise keep it short and sweet! Bring a paper copy to hand off.
- Spend the majority of your time sharing your personal story.
- Clearly make the connection between your story and the ask: “After completing Stepping On, I identified risks in my home and fixed them so I could be safer. Increased funding can ensure everyone has access to these programs and prevention resources.”
- Always send a follow-up! That’s where you can highlight facts and data that you didn’t get to in your meeting.

DO'S AND DON'TS

Do:

- Introduce yourself and where you live.
- Explain your background with the issue and if you've met to discuss it before.
- Ask for what you want! What is your desired outcome or policy solution?
- Share your personal story. Why does this matter to you?
- Pick 2-3 facts from the issue brief to highlight that are most compelling.

Don't:

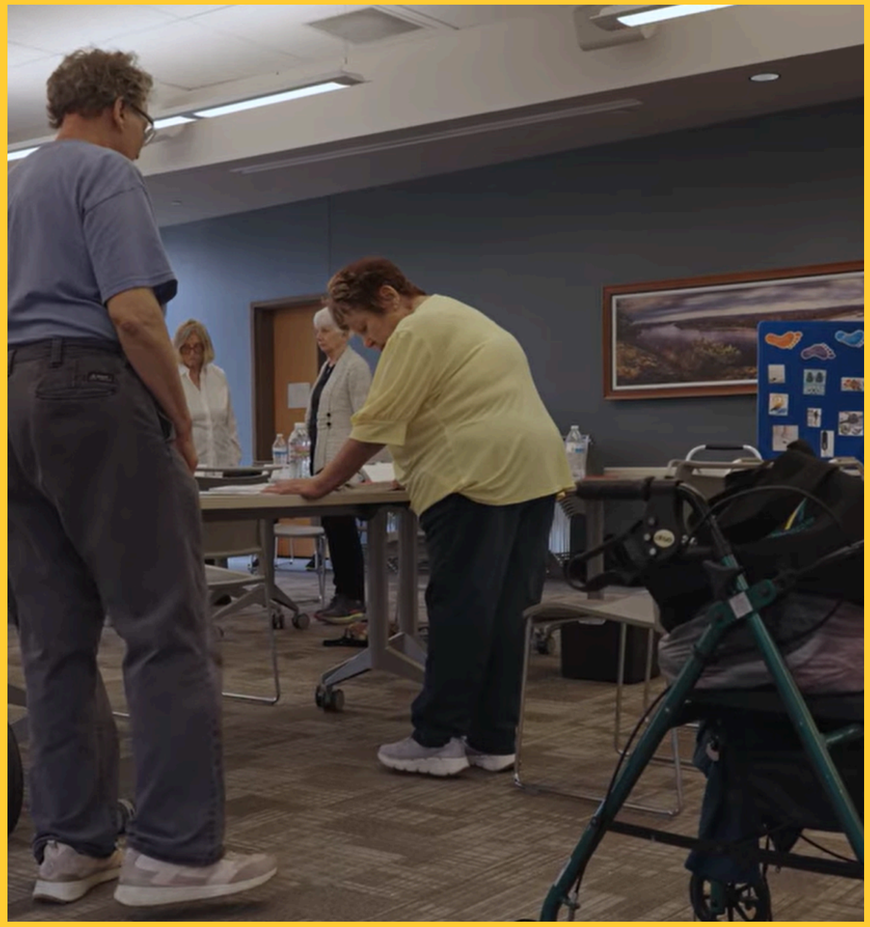
- Read directly from the issue brief or read the whole issue brief. Leave a copy behind for the office to read later.
- Focus on explaining all details or history of a topic. If they want more information, they will ask.
- Leave without providing your contact information.

Call to ACTION

Our position: $450,000/year in state funds to support programming and local initiatives for falls prevention.

Falls Free Wisconsin and falls prevention programming can provide:

- reduced costs associated with falls
- reduction of injury and disability associated with falls
- increased public awareness of prevention resources
- support to local communities and healthcare partners



“I got so much out of it. Knowledge of how to communicate with health care providers about health. Knowledge of how to get more active, and workouts at home, which has improved my physical and mental health. I gained a community, friends, and people that I get to help.”
Jan S, Past Participant and Peer Facilitator of Stepping On

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9Bi3j7HeVM

Next Steps

- Vote on or by November 3!
- Advocacy 101 trainings coming November & December 2026
- Join us for Aging Advocacy Day-Tuesday, May 11, 2027
- Schedule an introductory meeting with your new legislators after the election



QUESTIONS?

Contact us

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WAAN

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Online Resources

Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN)

Falls Free Wisconsin