

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Stuck in the Middle With You: Practical Tips for the Sandwich Generation

Americans are raising children while simultaneously caring for aging parents:

- 1 in every 8 adults between the ages of 40 and 60 fall into the category of sandwich generation caregivers (National institute on Aging, 2012).
- American families provide **80 to 90%** of all in-home long-term care services for their aging family members; disabled adult children and other loved ones.
- The population of individuals 65 and older is expected to double over the next 15 years (National institute on Aging, 2012).
- By the year 2020 Middle-aged women will spend more years with parents over 65 than with children under age 18 (Novak, 2014).

If you find that you fall into this category, your EAP can help by providing you with caregiver support, practical tools, articles, and advice on caring for others while remembering the importance of caring for yourself.

Here are some other caregiver tips to help sandwich generation caregivers along the way:

Host a Family Meeting- Use this time to discuss caregiving tasks that need to be accomplished each day or week, divide roles and set mutual expectations.

Increase Communication Across Generations- Encourage children and elders to communicate with one another.

Visit your EAP Online Portal- Your dedicated EAP online portal offers valuable caregiving information. There, you can access resources to help you find care facilities, such as your local Area Agency on Aging, a hospital social worker, a physician or church.

Practice Self Care- taking time to care for yourself is probably the number one thing you can do. You must care for yourself if you want to continue to care for your loved one.

- Even if it is only for a few minutes, take time every day to “check-in” with yourself. Enjoy this time reading, exercising, or listening to music.

Most importantly, Listen to Your Body - If your body is telling you to slow down, or that something is not right, seek medical advice.

Contact Your EAP Directly - They can assist you with finding appropriate care facilities, coordinate medical services, and offer you guidance on financial, legal, spiritual and emotional concerns.

Contact your EAP today! They can help you manage the needs of your aging parents and adult children without getting *squeezed* by sandwich generation problems.

Sources: http://www.caregiver.com/articles/print/sandwich_generation.htm

National Elder Locator/Area Agencies on Aging 1-800-677-1116 2.

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Florida Elder Locator/Florida Area Agencies on Aging 1-800-963-5337

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging http://www.n4a.org

Potential:

1. **Practice self-care –** make time for yourself
2. **Setting boundaries –** especially with the kids that want everything, and the elder parent or relative that want everything.
3. **Delegate –** accept that fact that you cannot do everything yourself.
4. **Mandatory first stop: Eldercare locator**This site, sponsored by the U.S. Administration on Aging, links you to the agency on aging closest to your parents' home; that office, in turn, directs you to a mother lode of local senior services. Also check out the Caregiver Resource Room (click first on Resources on the home page) for links to many caregiver tip sheets, including two focusing on finances.eldercare.gov