

The Sandwich Generation

If you're like many other caregivers, you're feeling pressured by the demands of doing everything at once—caring for your elderly relative at the same time you're trying to raise your young children. If so, you are part of the "Sandwich Generation," a term that refers to working adults who care for both young and old family members.

Increasingly, employers are recognizing the pressures faced by the Sandwich Generation. Many large companies have Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) to help their employees find and take advantage of resources in the community that can help them with their many duties. If you're feeling stressed out, try talking with representatives from your company's EAP to see if you can get some help.

If you work at home, or if your employer does not have an EAP, look to other community resources—such as your local Area Agency on Aging or childcare resource network—for information about and help with elder care and child care.

Here are a few tips for dealing with the pressures of being a member of the Sandwich Generation:

Don't Try to Do It All

You are not superman or superwoman; don't expect too much from yourself. Although you want to do the best that you can for both your children and your elder, it is completely natural that you place your own children and immediate family first on your list of priorities.

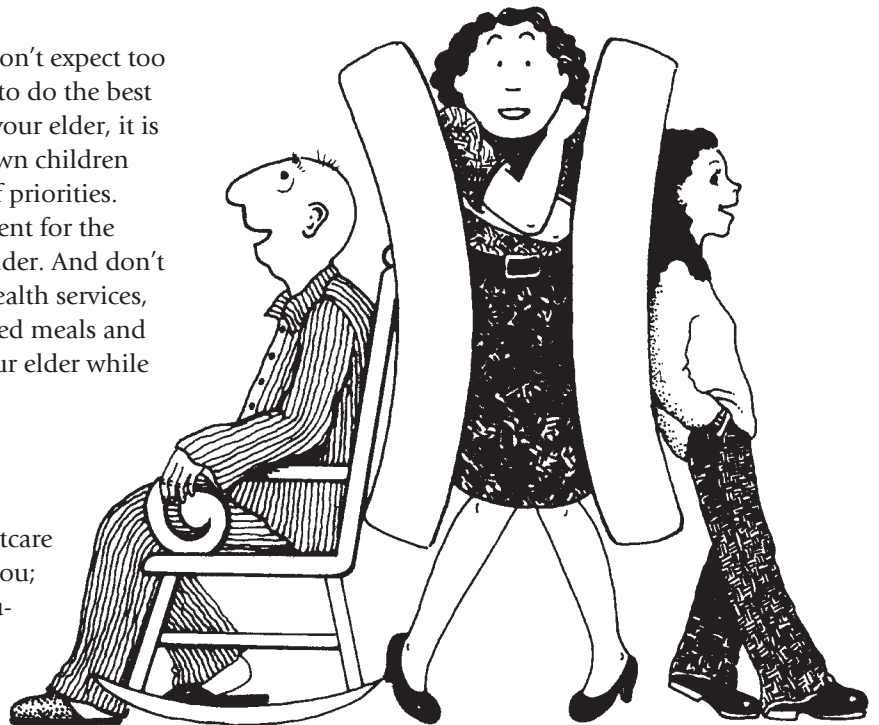
Don't compromise your role as a parent for the sake of your role as a caregiver for your elder. And don't be afraid to ask for help: look to home health services, nursing care, homemakers, home-delivered meals and other services to help you take care of your elder while also taking care of your own family.

Investigate Childcare/Adultcare Options

There are a wide variety of childcare/adultcare options that can help ease the strain on you; find out what is available in your community. Check with your local childcare resource network for referrals and information about home-based day-cares, larger daycare centers or nannies.

Flextime and Other Alternative Work Arrangements

In an effort to recruit and maintain quality employees, more employers are becoming open to telecommuting and alternative work hours. You may want to discuss your situation with your boss or human resources department to see if there is a way to arrange your work responsibilities around the mounting responsibilities you face at home.



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*—adults who care for
both young and old
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