The Sandwich Generation: Parenting Children While Providing Elder Care

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FSAP ... finding solutions to life's challenges.
Workshop Objectives

➢ Define and understand the complexities of generation caregiving;

➢ Identify the stressors associated with “sandwich” caregiving;

➢ Discuss the personal and professional impact of multiple generation caregiving; and

➢ Identify strategies and resources to assist with dual-role caregiving.
The Sandwich Generation

Setting the Stage

• The term “Sandwich Generation” was used in the 1980s & was coined by Carol Abaya.

• In 2006, it was a term defined in most dictionaries.

• The use of this term has increased significantly over the last two decades.
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Setting the Stage (continued)

- The concept and terms have expanded:
  - Traditional Sandwich Generation
  - Club Sandwich
  - Open Face Sandwich
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Setting the Stage (continued)

• The number of “Sandwichers” has increased (almost 66 million).

• Public awareness has increased.

• July is “Sandwich Generation Month”
About Sandwich Generation Month

Sandwich Generation Month is an annual commemoration and celebration of the dedication, patience and caring of adults who are part of the sandwich generation – those caring for their children as well as their own aging parents.

The annual recognition of Sandwich Generation Month is every July, with organizations and communities throughout the United States holding events and activities to raise awareness and appreciation for the challenges and rewards of being a sandwich generation caregiver.
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Defining Characteristics of the Sandwich Generation?

• Primarily identified as “Baby Boomers” (age range 40 – 60’s).

• Individuals caring for children & the elderly (i.e., multigenerational families).

• Typically women are caregivers (75% women vs 25% men).
Defining Characteristics (continued)

- Most maintain a paying job & spend approximately 20 hours/week providing care for parent(s).
- Most identify common stressors (e.g., financial & emotional concerns).
- Information is wanted;
- Resources are needed.
In your view, what are the major complexities of multigenerational caregiving?
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Common Complexities:

• Understanding & responding to the needs/demands of both age groups.
  – The complexities of caring for someone who is older (e.g., medical, social, legal & financial concerns).
  – Raising a child under 18 and/or providing resources to a grown child.

• Balancing one’s time and resources.
Common Positive Factors:

- Examination and review of family values.
- The sharing of family history and current-day activities/celebrations.
- Increased family connectedness & family bonding.
- Less isolation of the elderly.
- Sharing of resources.
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What are some other positive factors related to multigenerational caregiving?
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What are the most common stressors associated with multigenerational caregiving?
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Common Stressors:

• Managing finances
• Providing basic care to others
• Providing emotional support to others
• Making tough decisions (e.g., about living arrangements)
• Balancing one’s time and lifestyle (i.e., time pressures)
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Common Stressors (cont.)

• Maintaining social support networks, friendships & extracurricular activities
• Dealing with your own emotions
• Responding to family & cultural expectations
• Managing demanding careers
• Delaying retirement
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Coping Strategies

• Define your specific situation & circumstances.
• Develop a holistic self-care plan that is realistic to implement.
• Set boundaries.
• Seek consultation & support with problem solving & decision making.
Coping Strategies (continued)

• Have regular family meetings to discuss and resolve issues.
• Plan strategies for dealing with parents’ losing their independence.
• Keep a journal.
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Coping Strategies (cont.)

• Ask for help (e.g., respite care, family, friends, etc.).
• Seek counseling and coaching services.
• Join support groups (e.g., a Sandwich Generation Support Group).
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Enhance Your Coping Strategies
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Develop an Action Plan
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Questions & Responses
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Resources

• The Faculty Staff Assistance Program
  (The Wellness Center at 404-727-WELL)

• Emory Work-Life Resource Center
  (404) 727-8000

• Jewish Family & Career Services
  (770) 677-9300