

Sandwich Generation

Quick Reference Guide & Checklist



Quick Reference Overview

Key Concepts You Need to Know

Three Types of Sandwich Generation Caregivers:

- ✦ **Traditional:** Caring for children and parents
- ✦ **Club Sandwich:** Caring for children, parents, and grandparents
- ✦ **Open-Faced:** Adult children have returned home while also caring for parents

Most Important Things to Know Upfront:

- ✦ You're not alone — millions face this challenge
- ✦ Professional support is available and beneficial
- ✦ Self-care isn't selfish. It's essential for sustainable caregiving
- ✦ Planning ahead prevents crisis management

Warning Signs to Watch For (In Yourself)

Physical Warning Signs:

- ✦ Chronic fatigue or exhaustion
- ✦ Frequent headaches or body aches
- ✦ Getting sick more often than usual
- ✦ Changes in appetite or sleep patterns

Emotional Warning Signs:

- ✦ Feeling overwhelmed or "stretched too thin"
- ✦ Increased irritability with family members
- ✦ Guilt about not doing enough for anyone
- ✦ Loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed



What is the Sandwich Generation?

It refers to adults (typically ages 40-65) who are simultaneously caring for their own children and aging parents or elderly relatives.

Types of Professional Care Available:

- ✦ **Companion Care:** Social interaction, light assistance, transportation
- ✦ **Personal Care:** Help with bathing, dressing, medication reminders
- ✦ **Respite Care:** Temporary relief for family caregivers (hours to days)
- ✦ **Live-in Care:** 24-hour assistance in the home
- ✦ **Adult Day Programs:** Daytime care while family caregivers work

Financial Warning Signs:

- ✦ Difficulty keeping up with bills because of caregiving expenses
- ✦ Dipping into retirement savings for current care costs
- ✦ Unable to plan for your own future needs

Relationship Warning Signs:

- ✦ Tension in marriage or partnership
- ✦ Less quality time with each family member
- ✦ Feeling isolated from friends and social activities

Action Checklist

Step-by-Step Getting Started Checklist

Assessment Phase

- Complete needs assessments for children, parents and possibly grandparents
- Document current health conditions and medications
- Identify each family member's specific care requirements
- Map out your current time and financial resources

Planning Phase

- Create written care plans with clear goals
- Establish emergency protocols and contact lists
- Research local support services and resources
- Explore employer benefits such as:
 - ✦ Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
 - ✦ Flexible schedules
 - ✦ Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)

Support Network Building

- Identify family members who can share responsibilities
- Connect with other sandwich generation caregivers
- Research professional care services in your area
- Join relevant support groups (online or in-person)

Self-Care Implementation

- Schedule regular personal time (non-negotiable)
- Maintain your own medical appointments
- Create boundaries around work and caregiving time
- Develop stress management techniques that work for you



Essential Questions to Ask

For Parent and/or Grandparent Care:

- ✦ What Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) need assistance?
- ✦ What safety modifications does the home need?
- ✦ How will we handle medical emergencies?
- ✦ What are the long-term care preferences and plans?
- ✦ What financial resources are available for care?

For Your Children:

- ✦ What support do they need during this transition?
- ✦ How can we maintain quality family time?
- ✦ What activities or responsibilities can they take on?
- ✦ How are they coping with changes in family dynamics?

For Professional Care Services:

- ✦ What services do you provide?
- ✦ How do you screen and train caregivers?
- ✦ What is your process for quality assurance?
- ✦ How do you handle emergencies or schedule changes?
- ✦ What are the costs and payment options?

For Long-Distance Care Management:

- ✦ What local service providers can you build relationships with?
- ✦ How will you coordinate care when you can't be physically present?
- ✦ What technology can help you monitor well-being remotely?
- ✦ Who can serve as your local point person for emergencies?
- ✦ How will you handle guilt about not being physically available?

What to Look for in Professional Care

Quality Indicators to Look for:

- ✦ Licensed, bonded, and insured
- ✦ Comprehensive background checks conducted annually
- ✦ Ongoing training programs for caregivers
- ✦ Regular quality assurance visits
- ✦ Clear communication protocols
- ✦ Flexible scheduling options
- ✦ Experience with your specific care needs



Resources & Planning

Contact Planning Worksheet

Parent's/Grandparent's Healthcare Team

Primary Care Physician:

Specialists:

Pharmacy:

Insurance:

Children's Key Contacts

School/College:

Healthcare Providers:

Emergency Contacts:

Support Network

Family Members Available to Help:

Friends/Neighbors:

Support Group:

Professional Care Services

Home Care Agency:

Care Manager:

Respite Care Provider:



Next Steps Guidance

Immediate Actions (This Week):

1. Complete the family assessment checklist above
2. Research three professional care agencies in your area
3. Have honest conversations with family members about needs and expectations
4. Schedule a consultation with at least one care provider

Short-term Planning (Next Month):

1. Develop written care plans for parents
2. Establish emergency procedures and communication protocols

3. Explore employer benefits and family leave options

4. Set up regular family meetings to assess and adjust plans

Long-term Considerations (Next 3-6 Months):

1. Review and update legal documents (wills, power of attorney)
2. Explore long-term care insurance options
3. Create financial plans that account for ongoing care costs
4. Establish sustainable routines that include self-care

When to Seek Professional Help

When to Seek Professional Care Services:

- ✦ You're unable to provide adequate supervision or assistance
- ✦ Family conflicts arise over caregiving responsibilities
- ✦ Your own health or relationships are suffering
- ✦ Safety concerns develop that you cannot address alone
- ✦ The care needs exceed your available time or skills

When to Seek Additional Support:

- ✦ You feel persistently overwhelmed or depressed
- ✦ Family relationships are becoming strained
- ✦ Work performance is declining because of caregiving stress
- ✦ You're neglecting your own health and well-being



Professional Resources Available

Homewatch CareGivers Services:

- ✦ Companion Care
- ✦ Personal Care Assistance
- ✦ Respite Care
- ✦ Family Caregiver Support
- ✦ Care Management Services
- ✦ Transportation Services

Contact Homewatch CareGivers®:

- ✦ Website:
homewatchcaregivers.com
- ✦ Find your local office for personalized support
- ✦ Available 24/7 for consultations and care at 1 (888-404-5191)

Additional Resources:

- ✦ AARP Caregiving Resource Center:
aarp.org/caregiving
- ✦ National Alliance for Caregiving:
caregiver.org

Remember: Being a sandwich generation caregiver is challenging, but you don't have to navigate it alone. Professional support can help you provide excellent care while maintaining your own well-being and family relationships.



✦ Find your local office:

www.homewatchcaregivers.com/locations

✦ Call our national line:

1 (888) 404-5191

✦ Schedule online:

www.homewatchcaregivers.com/contact-us