



December 2020 SFAP

Care for Caregivers

Caregivers can be spouses, partners, adult children, parents, teachers, friends, or neighbors. Whatever your relationship with the person you're caring for, it's important that you add the title *caregiver* to the list of things you are. Without identifying yourself as a caregiver, you may not seek resources to help you sustain that role.

During these times of virtual learning and remote work environments, caregiving roles may sneak up on you. Our families are more confined and therefore must be more interdependent; OR you may be the 'closest' to oversee care for those in need but isolated elsewhere. As a caregiver you play other roles as well. You may be employed full or part-time. You may be raising children, home schooling, and have other family commitments. Adding caregiving to that list can easily lead to frustration and exhaustion. You might need to navigate social service systems, call doctors while you're at work, advocate for the care receiver, and take care of their day-to-day needs, while expecting to maintain everything else you've otherwise managed. Please know, this is not necessarily reasonable, nor can it be sustainable.

Taking Care of You

- **Learn to say 'no' to things you cannot do** – or could do later, balancing it with your time, energy and other commitments.
- **Learn to accept help from others, even ask for help** – a meal once a week or help with household chores could even help someone else feel they are contributing.
- **Learn more about condition/s and care protocols** – information, support and potential respite resources are available.
- **Be compassionate and patient with yourself** – set realistic expectations with time and energy.
- **Know that you have a right to all your emotions** -- consider calling your EAP for additional support.

This might be a good time to consider reaching out. We offer virtual counseling and work/life resources that may assist with negotiating the roles and responsibilities with which caregivers are charged.

Below is a reminder of some related Work-Life Services within the Student and Family Assistance Program (800-236-3231).

Child Care and Parenting

Work-Life Specialists will:

- Assess family needs and preferences
- Explain the available childcare options
- Provide verified referrals to day care centers, local family care providers, before and after school care, summer programs, and other related services

For those with parenting questions, Work-Life Services offers information and consultation on child development, parenting and family issues.

Elder Care / Dependent Care

Work-Life Specialists provide help with dependent adults of all ages who have an illness, a physical or mental disability. Specialists will:

- Assess needs of the elder / adult
- Share information on evaluating providers, programs, policies and an array of care giving topics
- Consult on health, legal and financial concerns
- Provide verified referrals to local providers, including in-home and community care, residential facilities, respite care, transportation, support groups and other related services