



TOO  
**CLOSE**  
FOR  
**COMFORT?**



## Executive Summary: U.S. Survey Results

### Introduction

Independent research conducted by the Boomer Project on behalf of Home Instead Senior Care sheds new light on the significant and growing population of family caregivers who are choosing to live with the parent, stepparent or older relative for whom they are providing care.

The study finds that 43 percent of family caregivers are part of this growing demographic of multigenerational households. Several factors are driving this trend, including economic pressures and the need for emotional support.

The research findings presented in this Executive Summary have prompted Home Instead Senior Care to launch a public education campaign to help families navigate the emotional, financial, and home comfort and safety issues that can arise from intergenerational living. For access to the many resources available through this campaign visit [www.makewayformom.com](http://www.makewayformom.com).

## The Peaks and Valleys of Close Quarters Caregiving

- Family caregivers who live with the senior for whom they are caring spend much more time providing care than do other caregivers. On average, these caregivers devote 39.4 hours per week to caregiving responsibilities, compared with 15.5 hours per week for all other family caregivers.
- Caregivers in multigenerational households care for their seniors longer. In these households where the senior lives with the caregiver, the length of care averages 5.3 years, compared with 4.5 years for other caregivers.
- The average age of family caregivers who share a home with the senior for whom they are providing care is 52. Twenty-eight percent of these family caregivers have children under the age of 18 in their households.
- Of all caregiver groups studied, caregivers who live with their seniors have the lowest quality of life scores, which take into consideration such things as physical and mental health, financial situation, and social life. Only 38 percent of these caregivers rate their quality of life as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, compared with 53 percent of caregivers who care for seniors who live on their own.
- Likewise, caregivers who have their senior living with them rate their overall happiness lower than most other caregivers. For example, 41 percent of caregivers who share their homes rate their happiness as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, compared with 59 percent of caregivers whose parents live independently in their own homes.
- Family caregivers who live with their seniors say the best thing about being a caregiver is providing the best care possible (30 percent) and that caregiving provides them with a sense of accomplishment (27 percent).
- Family caregivers in multigenerational households strongly agree that the experience is rewarding (47 percent) and that caring for their relative has brought them closer (40 percent).
- The worst part about being a caregiver for 41 percent of family caregivers who live with their seniors is that these caregivers feel like they have no time for themselves or their friends. More than one in 10 of these family caregivers (13 percent) said the worst thing is watching the health of a loved one decline.
- More than one-third of caregivers who live with the senior for whom they are caring strongly agree that caring for their relative has been stressful. Of all family caregivers surveyed, 72 percent of those who said they live too close to their loved ones rated their stress as a 5 on a scale of 5.

# Responsibilities, Challenges and Motivations

- Living under the same roof requires caregivers to help their seniors in many ways. More than three-fourths of these caregivers help with groceries and other errands; transportation; meal preparation; and emotional support. Nearly half (46 percent) provide financial support to their seniors.
- Family caregivers who live with their parents are much more likely than other caregivers to provide all of the care themselves. Almost half of these caregivers (48 percent) say no one else helps provide care compared with 32 percent of caregivers whose parents live in their own homes independently.
- Family caregivers who live with their seniors say caregivers face many challenges when it comes to providing care. More than half of these caregivers named seven significant caregiving challenges. The biggest challenges are (percentage refers to number who named it a significant issue):
  - ~ Helping seniors maintain their independence (59 percent)
  - ~ Ensuring seniors get the support they need to live at home (59 percent)
  - ~ Helping them manage physician and healthcare visits (55 percent)
  - ~ Helping them maintain their house (55 percent)
  - ~ Helping them stay physically active (54 percent)
  - ~ Helping them keep track of prescriptions (53 percent)
  - ~ Helping them eat a healthy diet (51 percent)
- Declining health is prevalent among the seniors who live with their family caregivers. For example, 65 percent of these seniors have an illness or condition that limits their ability to get around; 58 percent have one or more chronic conditions; and 27 percent have Alzheimer's disease or some other form of dementia. According to the caregivers, only 21 percent of these seniors are in overall good physical health.
- Helping care recipients maintain their health and well-being is a top priority for family caregivers who live in multigenerational households. These caregivers say it is "very much a priority" to make sure their loved ones get their medications (71 percent); receive quality medical care (70 percent); and eat properly (67 percent).
- Caregivers who live with the seniors for whom they are caring are compelled to provide care by a sense of love, duty and responsibility. Nearly two-thirds say they provide care because they want to be sure their relative gets the best care possible. Nearly half of these family caregivers said they would feel guilty if they didn't help out, and nearly one-third say they provide care themselves because no other care options are affordable.
- Four out of 10 caregivers (42 percent) who live with their seniors would like to change their caregiving situation either by relying more on professionals to provide care at home, or by relying more on other relatives.

## Survey Methodology

The Boomer Project ([www.boomerproject.com](http://www.boomerproject.com)) completed online interviews with 1,279 U.S. adult caregivers, ages 35-62, with a parent, stepparent or older relative for whom they or someone in their household provides care. Of the 1,279 family caregivers interviewed, 548 live with the senior receiving care.



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