



## Celebrating Caregivers

The same month we gather with family to enjoy our Thanksgiving feast and give thanks, we also celebrate the blessing of family caregivers. Since 1994 November has been designated as National Family Caregivers'

### Caregiving Facts

- 65.7 million caregivers, 29% of the U.S. adult population, provide care to someone who is ill, disabled or aged.
- 43.5 million care for someone 50+ years of age.
- Caregiver services were valued at \$450 billion a year and unpaid caregivers will likely continue to be the largest source of long-term care services in the U.S.
- The aging population of 65+ will more than double between the years 2000-2030, increasing to 71.5 million from 35.1 millions in 2000
- 50% of all caregivers 18 and over are employed full time outside of their caregiver role.

Month. *"Family members who unselfishly provide support, encouragement, and assistance with daily living activities are quite deserving of recognition,"* said Mary Doepke, RN, Owner of Home Helpers of Hinsdale. Family caregivers provide much needed help for loved ones facing limitations due to aging, illness or injury. The economic value of the hands-on assistance they provide is estimated at \$450 billion each year.

*"Caregiving is increasingly important as more Americans reach advanced age and are increasingly prone to disease and age-related limitations,"* Doepke added. There are an estimated 65 million family caregivers, however, due to the personal and private nature of health challenges and limitations, many people who provide care and assistance do so without their friends knowing. Additionally, employed caregivers often choose not to reveal their caregiving role for fear of scrutiny and consequences if caregiving concerns consume time and

attention that may affect their work performance.

Caregiving is often associated with activities such as providing assistance with dressing, personal hygiene, meals, medication reminders, paying bills, transportation, and helping around the house with cleaning and laundry. However, caregiving encompasses much more. Caregivers often serve as advisors to and advocates for their loved ones. They may coordinate care plans and manage physician visits and medication. Additionally, companionship and encouragement are often the most treasured value of a family caregiver.

Family caregivers often struggle to balance family, work, life and caregiving, so consider ways you can be supportive. There are many ways to show you care, whether sharing words of encouragement, treating someone to a cup of coffee, movie or night out, sharing a home cooked meal, or helping with errands or transportation.

*When you hear the word caregiving, what are five things that come to mind?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

While no one ever said caregiving would be easy, at Home Helpers we believe it should be rewarding. We encourage family caregivers to consider how they can make the most of the precious time they spend with their loved one. As the saying goes, “Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery and today is a gift, that’s why it’s called the present.” There are hands-on tasks that must get done however; they may be better left to professional caregivers like Home Helpers so family can spend time in conversation and other meaningful interaction.

Despite the best intentions, caregiving can become overwhelming and stressful, so we offer these words of wisdom. *I’ve Learned* is attributed to Andy Rooney of *60 Minutes*, he is quoted as saying:

- That being kind is more important than being right.
- That I can always send positive thoughts to someone when I don't have the strength to help him in some other way.
- That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.
- That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.
- The universe wasn’t created in a day. What makes me think I can accomplish this in one day?
- That to ignore the facts does not change the facts.
- That I can't choose how I feel, but I can choose what I do about it.

We applaud the efforts and commitment of family caregivers. At Home Helpers our mission is *Making Life Easier*<sup>SM</sup> for care recipients and family caregivers. We strive to be extended family when family can’t be there. We often supplement the care provided by family and can create a customized care plan to fit the needs of your family. If you are a caregiver or know someone who is, give us a call, we may be able to help. You can also visit our website, [www.MaryAndMikeCare.com](http://www.MaryAndMikeCare.com) for valuable caregiver tips & resources.

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**HOME HELPERS** – *Making Life Easier*. Home Helpers offers comprehensive home care, personal care\* and companionship services similar to the care and support often provided by family members. Our flexible care plans are tailored to fit our clients’ specific needs and budgets. Compassionate Care is a bi-monthly newsletter produced by Home Helpers. We hope you found this edition to be informative and helpful.

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\*Personal care provided as permitted by state law. Each office is independently owned and operated. Services may vary at each individual office location. Check with your local Home Helpers office for available services. Home Helpers does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of religion, race, sex, color, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age or sexual preference in connection with employment or acceptance, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities.