



Family Caregiver Day: Key Messages

Use these key messages when discussing Family Caregiver Day with caregivers, clients, reporters or decision-makers in your community.

What is Family Caregiver Day?

- The Ontario Caregiver Coalition is celebrating Ontario's first annual Family Caregiver Day on April 4th.
- There are over 3 million unpaid caregivers in the province, providing support to loved ones facing illness, disability or challenges associated with aging.
- Family Caregiver Day is a chance to recognize, celebrate and bring awareness to the value of caregivers to Ontario's families, health care system, and economy.

Who are Ontario's caregivers?

- This year, the Ontario Caregiver Coalition is highlighting three generations of caregivers:
 - Young carers: Over 500,000 family caregivers in Ontario are between 15 and 24 years old. There are many caregivers who are even younger.
 - 'Sandwich' generation caregivers, who provide care for both their aging parents and their own children.
 - Elderly caregivers: Nearly 375,000 caregivers in Ontario are 65 years or older.

How can the provincial government support caregivers?

- Caregiving is not often recognized as separate from being a good friend, child, parent or spouse, but it is a distinct role with unique challenges and solutions.
- The Ontario Caregiver Coalition is asking the provincial government for the following supports:
 - An investment of \$20 million into **respite services**, over the next two years, which would give approximately 4,000 caregivers much-needed opportunities to rest and recharge, and also reduce pressure on the health care system.
 - A fully-funded **Ontario Dementia Strategy**, recognizing that individuals caring for someone with dementia provide 75% more care hours than other caregivers, and experience 20% more stress.
 - **Federal-provincial collaboration** to ensure that the Compassionate Care Benefit and up to 26 weeks of job-protected and EI-covered time is available to all caregivers.

How can the public participate in Family Caregiver Day?

- Everyone is invite to sign our digital thank-you card to Ontario's caregivers by visiting www.ontariocaregivercoalition.ca.
- You can also share messages of support using the hashtag **#thxcaregivers**.