



United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

## Ministry Module

Ministry Modules are intended for use with the Leader's Guide. Appendices and Resources referenced in modules can be found within the Guide.

# *Sandwich Generation Ministry*



This Mission Module is provided through a Partnership with United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay of Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin and Caregiving Ministries, a division of FamilyCare

---

Caregiving  
Ministries



United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

## Ministry Module

Ministry Modules are intended for use with the Leader's Guide. Appendices and Resources referenced in modules can be found within the Guide.

### Purpose

The mission of the Sandwich Generation Ministry is to provide a support and information for those caring for an aging loved one and children under the age of 21. It seeks to provide counsel and support for the challenges and uncertainties that affect this special group.

### Goals and Objectives

- To offer accurate information through readings, classes and speakers on issues relevant to those sandwiched between caring for a younger and an older generation.
- To promote support and encouragement for sandwiched congregants.

### Parameters and Limitations

This ministry does not:

- Provide medical advice or legal information for decision making.
- Substitute direction from attorneys, financial advisors, or medical professionals.

This ministry does:

- Suggest tools, information, and professional experience to assist sandwiched adults in day to day care for older loved ones and children.
- Offer a safe supportive environment to encourage continued emotional and spiritual growth for adults caring for children and adults.



United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

## Ministry Module

Ministry Modules are intended for use with the Leader's Guide. Appendices and Resources referenced in modules can be found within the Guide.

### Suggested Process for this Ministry:

1. Educate the church as to what the Sandwich Generation Ministry is and how it can benefit the health of the congregation's mature members.
2. Inform the congregation what can and cannot be expected from the Sandwich Generation Ministry.
3. Survey the church for people who are willing and able to work in this ministry (see Appendix A).
4. Provide training to explain the process of this ministry.
5. With skills learned from the general volunteer training, the volunteer will locate resources, written and spoken, to present to ministry participants at monthly meetings.
6. The volunteer will interview potential speakers and determine what content they may present, what is needed for presentation, and schedule presentation meeting times.
7. The volunteer will educate the members as to what the sandwich generation is, and what issues are most likely important to sandwiched congregants.
8. The volunteer coordinator will schedule and act as a leader in any Sandwiched Generation support group meetings.
9. Develop a list of community resources and add to the resources listed in this guide.
10. Volunteers will follow up with their participants to determine what further resources or information would be valuable to sandwiched congregants.
11. Schedule meetings for volunteers to provide training and offer opportunity for discussion of issues.
12. Periodically evaluate the ministry. (See Evaluation tool, Administrative Guide)



United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

## Ministry Module

Ministry Modules are intended for use with the Leader's Guide. Appendices and Resources referenced in modules can be found within the Guide.

## Resources

Each group using this program will develop a list of basic community resources and referrals in the locale. The list of resources should include:

- Community Services
- Local Agencies on Aging
- Public Health Department
- Professional American Dietetic Association
- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association
- Alzheimer's Association
- Local Hospice Organizations
- Local Social Services (social workers can do presentations)
- Local gerontologists and gerontology nurses
- Parrish nurse



United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

## Ministry Module

Ministry Modules are intended for use with the Leader's Guide. Appendices and Resources referenced in modules can be found within the Guide.

These are some suggestions for Meeting Topics and Speakers:

- **Physiological and Psychological Aspects of Aging**  
Understand what to look for, who to call for help...and when
- **End of Life Issues from A Physician's Perspective**  
Hear issues families face from a physician's perspective
- **Spirituality at the End of Life's Journey**  
Learn how one might deal with spiritual issues at the end of one's earthly journey
- **What's Next for Mom or Dad**  
A social worker speaks on independence issues and assessing the needs of an aging parent for healthy and safe living
- **What Happens Next?**  
A Guide To Making the Transition to Long Term Care
- **Caregiving From A Distance**  
Strategies for long-distance care giving: situations that arise; getting organized; identifying your informal network; paperwork you can expect to handle; dealing with other family members; resources; the Caregiver Bill of Rights
- **Dealing with Guilt and Frustration**  
How to constructively handle frustration; how to deal with unresolved guilt
- **The Task of Caregiving: Catastrophe or Celebration**  
Caregiving/Caretaking: What's the difference
- **The Saving Graces of Caregiving: Humor**  
What the experts tell us about spirituality; inspirational reading; tips on self-care; becoming proactive; problem-solving tools you can use.
- **Balancing Kids and Aging Parents: Finding Spiritual Sustenance in a Chaotic World**  
Acquire tools for improving serenity and peace
- **Boomer Dinner**  
Serve fun dinner classics for baby boomers, such as PB& J or bologna on Wonder Bread, Kool-Aid and Twinkies, followed by games, a speaker, or a play such as "The Wonder Bread Years."
- **Grandparenting While Caring for Aging Generation**  
Balancing the needs of four generations.
- **When Mom Can't Remember Who I Am— Alzheimer's Association Presentation**  
Caregiving for those with Dementia and its special challenges.

Caregiving  
Ministries



United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

## Ministry Module

Ministry Modules are intended for use with the Leader's Guide. Appendices and Resources referenced in modules can be found within the Guide.

Here are some tips for the Sandwich Generation caregivers that may help better manage their caregiving responsibilities:

- **Ask your employer about flextime options.**
- **Make time for you and your spouse to spend together.**
- **Make the most out of time spent with children.** Find ways to connect with them. Encourage them to express their ideas and opinions.
- **Get other family members involved in caregiving.** Have a family meeting and present a list of all your responsibilities. Ask them to be responsible for a few of these tasks. Explain the tasks completely, making sure that others understand the desired end results. Relax your expectations a little!
- **Communication is important.** Encourage children and elders to communicate with each other.
- **Seek assistance.** Call your community resources such as your local Area Agency on Aging; check benefits by checking with the National Council On Aging who can tell you which state, local and federal benefits your elderly loved one is eligible for. Contact your church, your local adult day service and local home health and companion agencies. The Internet is a valuable tool for finding these local resources.
- **Get information on your elders' affairs.** Talk to your elders about the financial plans they have made in the event that they become incapacitated. Ask if they have long-term care insurance. Make sure they have: 1) a durable power of attorney authorizing someone to sign checks, pay bills and make financial decisions on their behalf; 2) a durable power of attorney for health care which authorizes someone to make medical decisions and 3) a living will outlining their wishes if life-sustaining medical care is necessary. Consult an elder law attorney.
- **Take care of yourself.** Most caregivers put their own needs last. Remember that your well-being is a vital part of your role as a caregiver. Exercise, have regular medical check-ups and remember to have fun.
- **Seek out a caregiver support group.** Support groups offer a place to share emotions and experiences, to get and give advice and to exchange experiences with other caregivers.
- **Remember that you are not alone and that information and assistance is available.** Contact the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging at (800) 677-1116 or visit [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov) or the National Council on Aging.

*The Sandwich Generation*

*Help for a generation squeezed between the physical and emotional needs of their children and elderly loved ones.*

*by: Karen Hawthorn*

*The Westerly Sun*

*(Created: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 10:55 AM EST)*

Caregiving  
Ministries



United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

## Ministry Module

Ministry Modules are intended for use with the Leader's Guide. Appendices and Resources referenced in modules can be found within the Guide.

### Caregivers and Stress

In today's fast-paced and ever-connected world, stress has become a fact of life. Stress can cause people to feel overwhelmed or pushed to the limit. The American Psychological Association's 2007 "Stress in America" poll found that one-third of people in the U.S. report experiencing extreme levels of stress. In addition, nearly one-in-five report that they are experiencing high levels of stress 15 or more days per month. While low to moderate levels of stress can be good for you when managed in healthy ways, extreme stress takes both an emotional and physical toll on the individual.

Caregivers are more susceptible to high stress as they try to balance caring for loved ones, work, and today's fast paced lifestyle. With the consequences of poorly managed stress ranging from fatigue to heart disease and obesity, it is important to know how to recognize high stress levels and take action to handle it in healthy ways. Being able to control stress is a learned behavior, and stress can be effectively managed by taking small steps toward changing unhealthy behaviors.

APA offers the following tips on how to manage your stress:

**Understand how you experience stress.** Everyone experiences stress differently. How do you know when you are stressed? How are your thoughts or behaviors different from times when you do not feel stressed?

**Identify your sources of stress.** What events or situations trigger stressful feelings? Are they related to your children, family, health, financial decisions, work, relationships or something else?

**Learn your own stress signals.** People experience stress in different ways. You may have a hard time concentrating or making decisions, feel angry, irritable or out of control, or experience headaches, muscle tension or a lack of energy. Gauge your stress signals.

**Recognize how you deal with stress.** Determine if you are using unhealthy behaviors (such as smoking, drinking alcohol and over/under eating) to cope. Is this a routine behavior, or is it specific to certain events or situations? Do you make unhealthy choices as a result of feeling rushed and overwhelmed?

**Find healthy ways to manage stress.** Consider healthy, stress-reducing activities such as meditation, exercising or talking things out with friends or family. Keep in mind that unhealthy behaviors develop over time and can be difficult to change. Don't take on too much at once. Focus on changing only one behavior at a time.

**Take care of yourself.** Eat right, get enough sleep, drink plenty of water and engage in regular physical activity. Ensure you have a healthy mind and body through activities like yoga, taking a short walk, going to the gym or playing sports that will enhance both your physical and mental health. Take regular vacations or other breaks from work. No matter how hectic life gets, make time for yourself — even if it's just simple things like reading a good book or listening to your favorite music.

**Reach out for support.** Accepting help from supportive friends and family can improve your ability to manage stress. If you continue to feel overwhelmed by stress, you may want to talk to a psychologist, who can help you better manage stress and change unhealthy behaviors.

*Source: The American Psychological Association*

