

# Honoring National Family Caregivers Month

Insights

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In honor of [National Family Caregivers Month](#), HLB is acknowledging and appreciating family caregivers who support their loved ones with age-related conditions and chronically ill or disabled family members. The theme for 2024 is "I Care."

This November's goal is to: (1) Acknowledge and appreciate family caregivers; (2) Understand the difficulties of family caregivers; (3) Offer assistance to family caregivers; and (4) Support the well-being of family caregivers.

Every November, National Family Caregivers Month (NFCM) is celebrated to honor and support family caregivers who have dedicated themselves to helping family members with health conditions. It is a time to enlighten the nation that family caregivers also need support as they care for loved ones.

The [Caregiver Action Network \(CAN\)](#), a nonprofit organization, started the initiative in 1994 to bring awareness and provide resources to support family caregivers. The first NFCM was established by former President Bill Clinton in November 1997.

CAN's 2024 theme is "I Care, to highlight the importance of self-recognition and self-identity – key factors in caregivers' access to essential support."

This year, more than one in five (21.3 percent) Americans are family caregivers and most of them also have full-time jobs. Family caregiving can be joyous and rewarding at times but worrisome and exhausting at other times. Due to the increased stress of responsibility and care for others, family caregivers' well-being suffers, including mental and physical health issues as well as work and relationship problems. Many do not consider themselves caregivers and so they do not seek additional support for themselves.

The importance of self-identifying as a family caregiver is so that both the care recipient and the caregiver receive needed support. This includes self-identifying as a caregiver with the care recipient's health care providers, insurance companies, and case workers, as well as with the caregiver's health care providers, family, and friends.

Family caregivers that do not take care of themselves can also suffer from family caregiver burnout – a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion. While helping to care for aging parents, burnout can be caused by the stress of role reversal, isolation, and finance problems that become overwhelming to the family caregiver.

There are many ways to support family caregivers during NFCM "I Care" Month:

- Express your appreciation to family caregivers you know for their care and kindness.
- Offer to help the family caregivers you know. You can help by researching doctors and making appointments, grocery shopping and cooking, and visiting to give them a break. If you are a family caregiver, you can ask for help from other family and friends.
- If you are a family caregiver, practice self-compassion and self-care. Remember to treat yourself with the same care and kindness that you give to family members.
- You can also seek help from organizations that offer support and resources, such as the [Caregiver Action Network \(CAN\)](#), [American Association of Caregiving Youth \(AACY\)](#), and [Family Caregiver Alliance \(FCA\)](#).

We invite you to [celebrate National Family Caregivers month](#).