

Supporting Millennials Providing Care for an Older Adult - Caregiving Teaching Strategy

Overview of Teaching Strategy

The unique experience of the millennial family caregiver is a dynamic and complex occurrence. The millennial caregiver provides critical support for an older adult with acute, chronic, or terminal illness while navigating the developmental stages of young adulthood. Caregiving for the millennial comes at a time in their development when they are typically focused on establishing their independence and unique identity. The level of commitment related to millennial caregiving may be a barrier to starting a career, living on one's own, buying a house, or starting a family. The situation of caregiving for millennials is usually unexpected, and the emotional impact of role change and loss may further alter the course of setting a trajectory for the future.

This teaching strategy focuses on developing conceptual awareness of the multiple challenges facing the millennial caregiver. This awareness will prepare the student to identify and support the educational, emotional, and resource needs for the millennial caregiver of an older adult with acute, chronic, or terminal illness.

Download All Files for This Teaching Strategy

- [David Sanchez caregiving situation](#)
- [Characteristics of Millennial Family Caregivers concept map](#)
- [FILL IN - Characteristics of Millennial Family Caregivers concept map](#)

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Describe the unique characteristics of the millennial family caregiver
- Discuss social isolation experienced by millennial caregivers
- Construct a concept map for millennial caregiver characteristics

Learner Prework

Read the Spotlight report from the AARP Public Policy Institute by Brendon Flinn - [Millennials: The Emerging Generation of Family Caregivers](#).

Read [David Sánchez' caregiving situation](#).

Read [Characteristics of Millennial Caregivers concept map](#).

Suggested Learning Activities

1. Within the framework provided by the UC Davis Interprofessional Family Caregiving Competency first two domains, consider these questions regarding David's caregiving situation. This strategy will offer students an opportunity to reflect on millennial caregiver identity and assessment considerations.

Domain One – The nature of millennial family caregiving

Read AARP's [1 in 4 Family Caregivers Is a Millennial](#).

1. Is David's situation unique?
2. What young adult developmental stages may David be deferring?
3. Do you think David feels as though he has a choice to be a caregiver?
4. Do younger caregivers tend to consider themselves to be caregivers?
5. What should be considered when identifying a caregiving team?

Domain Two – Assessment of the millennial caregiver

Read [Home Alone: Revisited](#) – Focus on "Finding # 3" regarding the social isolation of caregivers.

1. How would you assess social isolation of millennials?
2. Are younger caregivers reporting more social isolation?

3. Read the [Lubben Social Network Scale \(LSNS-6\)](#). This social isolation measure is a validated scale offering a set of social isolation indicators for assessment.
4. How do you think David's network would rate on this scale?
5. Discuss rationales for your assessment.
6. Consider the impact of keeping Davis's caregiving situation from friends on his social isolation score.

In 2017 Nomad Films released a documentary, *Much Too Young*, co-directed by Christopher Wynn & Russell Gienapp on TVO in Canada.

Listen to the 12-minute recorded interview titled [Young adults caring for parents with dementia sacrifice their freedom and youth](#). The producers discuss the film and present vignettes of young caregivers caring for parents with dementia.

1. Think about the personality characteristics demonstrated by the young caregivers.
 2. How does this inform your assessment of David's situation?
 3. Should your assessment of the millennial caregiving experience include potential loss and grief?
2. Consider David's caregiving situation and fill in the [FILL IN – Characteristics of Millennial Caregivers concept map](#).

The Characteristics of Millennial Caregiver concept map provides an opportunity to use the information in the Spotlight report from the AARP Public Policy Institute by Brendon Flinn (*Millennials: The Emerging Generation of Family Caregivers*) as a visual organization of concepts for class discussion. Or, the report can be used by students to fill in characteristic details.

Suggested Reading

Goldstein, N. E., Concato, J., Fried, T. R., Kasl, S. V., Johnson-Hurzeler, R., & Bradley, E. H. (2004). Factors associated with caregiver burden among caregivers of terminally ill patients with cancer. *Journal of Palliative Care*, 20(1), 38-43.

Hou, P. Y., Lai, C. K., Chung, C. S., Sham, A. K., & Yeung, C. L. (2016). Young adults' experiences of their parents caring for a relative with dementia. *Geriatrics & Gerontology International*, 16(7), 873-879. doi:10.1111/ggi.12559

[PBS News Hour](#) (2019, January 16). Why more millennials are becoming caregivers.

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