



Surviving the Sandwich Generation Years

According to a 2013 report by the Pew Research Center, nearly half of all adults aged 40-59 are considered to be part of the "sandwich generation": taking care of both aging parents and teenagers or young adults. If you or someone you know is a "sandwich," below is a checklist of helpful tips for each generation of your family. With expertise in both Elder Law and Estate Planning, I am uniquely positioned to help families cope with the challenges of taking care of multiple generations. I spend a great deal of my time counseling families and helping them find the resources they need to better manage their finances and improve their quality of life.

For your children: Parenting teens and young adults is always a challenge. The good news is, they typically grow up! Here are some important considerations for parents:

- Most parents find out too late they cannot make medical or legal decisions in the case of an emergency for their children aged 18 or older. ALL parents should have a **Durable Power of Attorney** and **Medical Power of Attorney** in place for each young adult. Call NOW to get these documents in place before school starts--we can turn them around in a few days.
- Does your college-bound child know **how to access healthcare**? Review with them what to do in case a medical or dental emergency arises. Too often, young adults ignore a potentially dangerous illness because they are away from home and the family doctor.
- If your child aged 18-26 is on your insurance plan, do they have a current **insurance card** in his/her wallet?
- Does your student know what to do in case they **lose their ID**, passport, insurance card, credit cards, etc? Take time now to scan and upload valuable documents into a secure Internet file storage site that can be accessed by family members from anywhere.

For your parents: Far too often, we help families in crisis situations that could have been easily avoided with some advance planning. Unfortunately, we see the results of the "do-nothing" approach in our practice every day. If you or your parents are over 50, you also owe it to your loved ones to talk honestly about end-of-life issues. A great resource we like is www.talk-early-talk-often.com. This website gives you conversation starters and a comprehensive list of topics and other resources. Our office also has a comprehensive **Life Planning Checklist Form** you can use to guide the discussion. I would be happy to answer any general questions about this at no charge. Here are a few of the basics your parents should have in place:

- Up-to-date will
- Advance directives, such as a Medical and Durable Power of Attorney
- List of locations and descriptions of valuables and financial accounts for the spouse or heirs
- Decisions about assisted living or nursing home accommodations BEFORE it is needed
- Key end-of-life decisions, such as a Medical "Do Not Resuscitate" Directive and burial instructions

For you: Because so many people are counting on you for emotional and/or financial support, it is doubly important that you have an estate plan. Here are a few of the basics you should have in place:

- Up-to-date will
- List of locations and descriptions of valuables and accounts for the spouse or heirs
- Powers of Attorney for you and your spouse
- Adequate life insurance—I can help you evaluate and plan for your current and future needs
- Long-term care plan in place—much more affordable when you are in your 40s!