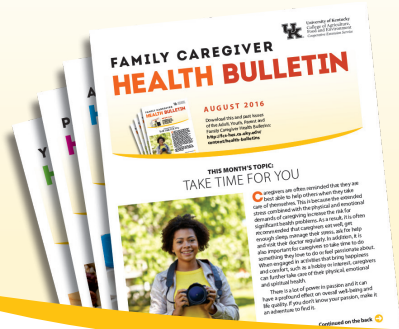


# FAMILY CAREGIVER HEALTH BULLETIN



**APRIL 2018**

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<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CAN HELP CAREGIVERS TOO



**W**hether you care for a child with a disability or an older adult who is frail or sick, caregiving can challenge a person's physical, emotional and financial well-being. While caregiving can be a rewarding position, disability and illness can also create stress, anxiety, anger, sadness and depression.

With children living with disabilities, for example, it is not uncommon for parental caregivers to feel depressed when their child does not meet the same milestones as other children and normative events such as birthdays, graduations and marriage may cause sadness or guilt.

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## Caregivers should join therapy or discussion groups with people who understand the situation of caring for a child or older adult.



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Adult children caring for aging parents often put their parents' needs ahead of their own. As a result, adult children neglect their own health, putting them at greater risk for chronic diseases, depression, stress and alcohol abuse.

Occupational therapists help children and adults improve cognitive, physical, sensory and motor skills. They help people improve their self-esteem and live as safely and as independently as possible in their own homes and communities. But occupational therapists can also support caregivers and help caregivers maintain their own lifestyle without compromising the needs of others.

### Occupational therapists:

- Recognize and help meet both patient and caregiver needs
- Encourage caregivers to express their feelings
- Help caregivers find coping strategies, including embracing a healthy lifestyle
- Educate caregivers on current research, conditions and intervention techniques

Caregivers are not alone. Caregivers should join therapy or discussion groups with similar people who understand the situation of caring for a child or older adult. Caregivers should ask

*“Occupational therapy is the only profession that helps people across the lifespan to do the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of daily activities (occupations). Occupational therapy practitioners enable people of all ages to live life to its fullest by helping them promote health, and prevent — or live better with — injury, illness, or disability.”*

The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.

for and accept help. Caregivers should also share the responsibility of caregiving with others.

#### REFERENCE:

The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (2017). What is Occupational Therapy. Retrieved Feb. 16, 2018 from <https://www.aota.org/Conference-Events/OTMonth/what-is-OT.aspx>

**FAMILY CAREGIVER  
HEALTH BULLETIN**

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