

Sandwich Generation: Are you Caught in the Middle?

Besides your own financial needs, are you also responsible for the care and support of dependent children and elderly family members? If so, you are part of the “Sandwich Generation.” Balancing your retirement needs with rising education and health care costs for your family can be difficult. Here are some tips to help you provide a more secure financial future for yourself and those you care about.



Your children

Your children watch and learn from you. Have an open conversation about the importance of financial planning. Help them develop good money management skills.

A good education is a goal most parents have for their children. Sometimes, parents will resort to using their retirement nest egg to finance the high costs of postsecondary education. However, your children may be able to take advantage of other resources such as education savings plans, scholarships, grants, money from part-time jobs, and loans.

Checklist – Children

- Teach your children about basic financial concepts. Be a model for responsible money management.
- Consider the impact of using your retirement savings for your children’s education.
- Talk to your children about ways to save and pay for their education.
- Set financial ground rules and expectations if adult children move back home.

You

As you near retirement, you may feel pressured to make hasty investment decisions in an attempt to make up for an insufficient nest egg. You may end up taking on more risk than you’re comfortable with. Before you invest, take some time to understand the investment and the risks associated with it. Make sure it fits with your financial goals.

Many people turn to a financial adviser for help. An adviser can help you set goals, build a financial plan, choose investments, track your progress and make adjustments when needed. You can also look to an adviser for answers to your questions about investment products and strategies.

Checklist – You

- Organize your financial records, including brokerage statements, bank records and insurance documents. You will need this information to build a plan.
- Create a realistic budget and control your debt.
- Start retirement planning early. Review your investments in relation to your financial goals and risk tolerance. Make any necessary adjustments.
- Evaluate your investment knowledge and experience. Consider working with a financial adviser if you want expert guidance.
- Contact your local securities regulator to find out if your financial adviser is registered to sell investments or provide advice.
- Learn about common investment scams and how to protect yourself.





Your parents

Many elderly family members want to remain financially independent. But if they haven't adequately planned for their health care and other financial needs, they may need your support.

Keep in mind that talking about finances can be a sensitive topic for many people. Initiate a discussion about their financial situation in a calm and respectful way. It may be a good idea to obtain the financial information you may need to act on their behalf in advance, rather than later in a crisis situation. Learn how to spot and avoid investment fraud. Teach your family about the warning signs. Scam artists often target seniors because they may have accumulated wealth and assets.

Checklist – Parents

- Speak to elderly family members about their finances.
- Have current copies of their estate planning documents.
- Know the location of assets (insurance documents, retirement plans and other investments).
- Know their advisers and sources of information (accountants, financial planners, family members). Be on the lookout for signs of financial abuse.
- Be aware of, and help family members avoid, investment frauds and scams.

Helpful resources

Read these brochures and find other helpful investing information in the Investor Tools section at www.securities-administrators.ca

- Investments 101 – a primer for youth
- Investment planning worksheet
- Working with a financial adviser
- Scam artists pursue adults over 50

Contact your local regulator

Securities regulators oversee Canada's capital markets and the advisers who sell and manage securities traded in those markets. You can contact your local securities regulator to check the registration of an individual or firm, and to find out if they have a record of any disciplinary actions.

For information on how to contact your local securities regulator, visit the Canadian Securities Administrators website at www.securities-administrators.ca.

