

White Paper

Generational Impacts on Employee Caregivers

Results from a survey conducted in partnership with Employee Benefit News (EBN) reveal that younger generations are already running into career barriers due to caregiving for a child, spouse, or parent.

✧ Homethrive

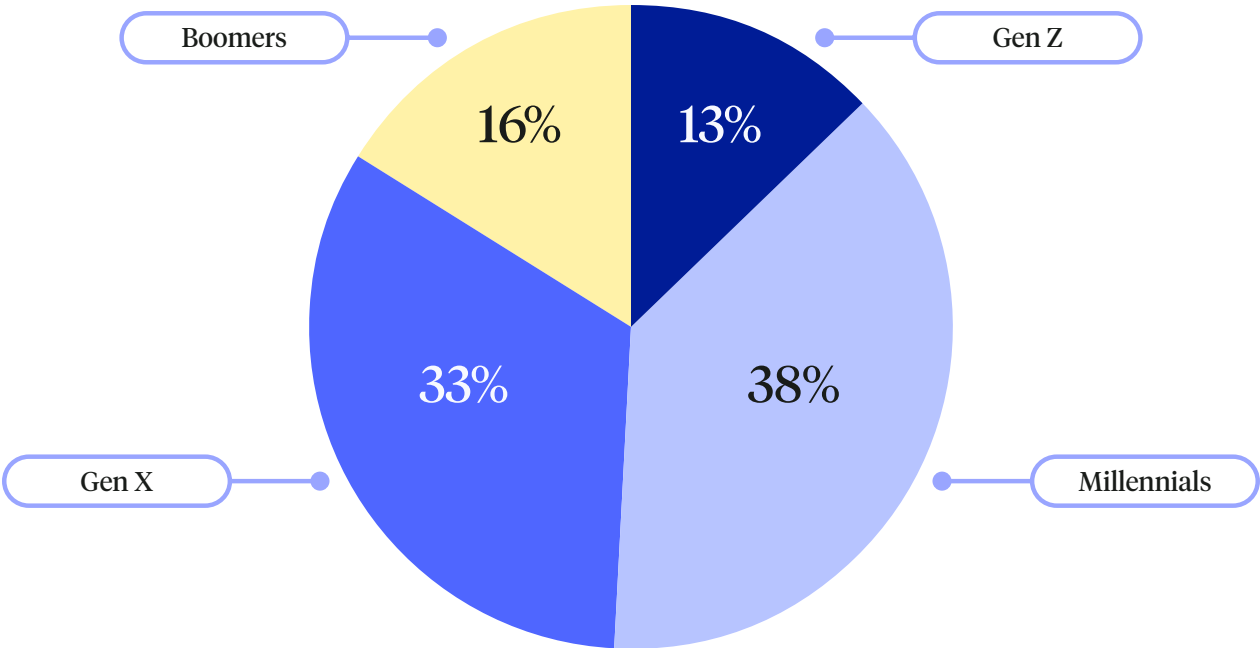


Research Overview



In August and September of 2025, Employee Benefit News, an Arizent brand, conducted research sponsored by Homethrive. To qualify, respondents needed to work full or part time and have someone in their life who depends on them for care. Among those surveyed, 504 respondents qualified, working full or part time and caring for another individual or individuals.

As far as ages surveyed, respondents ranged from Gen Z to Boomers, with the breakdown as follows.



Many questions and responses were also categorized by age, providing Homethrive with fresh data on the latest generational opinions on caregiving, and how caregiving responsibilities affect each group accordingly.

Homethrive Analysis

After careful review of the data presented, Homethrive reached the following conclusion: younger generations are already contending with career interruptions due to caregiving. For the purposes of this report, “younger generations” include Millennials and Gen Z, which made up 51% of the total qualified respondents.

Established generations, including Boomers and Gen X, either maintain more stable career positions, or else are approaching retirement age. This allows them to either afford more care for their loved ones, or else leave their careers to care for them without long-lasting consequences for the future of their careers.

However, for Millennials and Gen Z, who are still working to define their roles and expertise in the market, caregiving can take a toll on which professional development or advancement opportunities they take, or how long they are able to stay at a job at all.

The following generational analysis was conducted by Homethrive using the data from the survey.



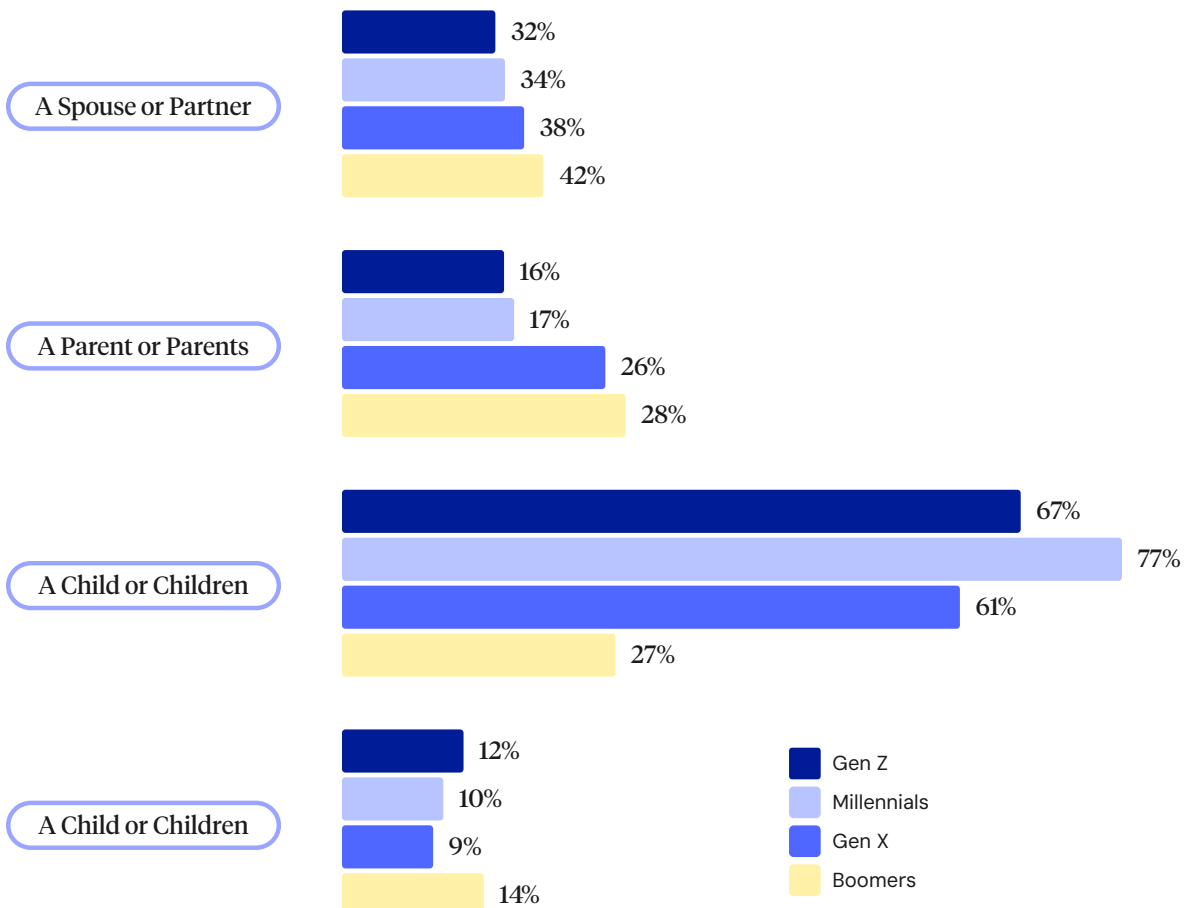
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Boomers

Boomers (61–79 years) are at the age where their children are grown up and out of the house. This leaves them alone with their significant other or partner, who is statistically more likely to develop a diagnosis that is common in older adults, such as dementia or heart disease. Because of this, these caregivers may end up navigating the healthcare (and Medicare) system on behalf of their significant other. In addition to caring for their spouses, Boomers are more likely than any other generation to care for their aging parents, and navigate similar aging and healthcare challenges in that arena.



Who Respondents are Caring For



Because of these factors, Boomers currently consider in-home care to be the most helpful support that can be provided, followed closely by financial support.¹

Caregiving remains the number two reason why individuals leave the workplace. Already secured in their careers or else approaching retirement age, Boomers are most likely to leave the workforce altogether when it becomes apparent that caregiving has become too overwhelming to balance with work.²

For the most part, Boomers expect their own caregiving responsibilities to ramp up in the following years, likely due to the needs of their aging parents and spouses.

Results indicate that 66% of Boomers expect their caregiving responsibilities to become more intensive in the following years.

Considering that the majority of their caregiving duties are focused on older adults dealing with aging, chronic illness, or other health concerns, according to the data, it is no surprise that they do not enjoy their caregiving tasks as much as their counterparts, who are all primarily fulfilling the role of parent caregiver.

Gen X

Gen X (45–60 years) are at the age where they may still be caring for their child or children, although they are also only a few percentage points short of Boomers when it comes to caring for their parents or spouses. Perhaps more than any other, this generation straddles the line between caregiving for children and caregiving for older adults according to their age range.

Half of the Gen X respondents claimed that flexibility of work schedules and location of their jobs were the most helpful benefits to them as caregivers, along with more financial support to ease the burden of care. While Boomers may be getting ready to leave their careers, Gen X workers are typically in their solidified role and advancing at the top of their career path. Possibly due to this and their various caregiving responsibilities, this group also states that completing legal documents is their least favorite caregiving chore.



¹According to the survey, 38% of Boomers indicated that more access to in-home care would be useful, and 36% of Boomers indicated that financial support to ease the burden of care would be useful.

²According to the results, 23% of Boomers considered leaving the workforce altogether in the past year to accommodate caregiving responsibilities, which was a larger percentage than any other generation.

Millennials

Millennials (29–44 years) are currently the most likely of all the generations to be caring for their child or children. Approximately 77% of Millennials surveyed indicate that they care for a child, which was the largest percentage of all of the generations. They too dislike completing legal documents and claim that a flexible schedule and work location would benefit them the most if offered by an employer.

Millennials worry more than older generations that caregiving will impact their work, and 45% of survey respondents in this age range claim that caregiving has already had a negative impact on their work performance.

Used to a culture of [job hopping over corporate loyalty](#), over half of those surveyed are more likely to change jobs if the right role opened up for them than their older cohorts.

However, Millennials are also most likely of all the generations to decline work travel opportunities or reduce working hours (from full to part-time) in order to accommodate for their caregiving responsibilities.³

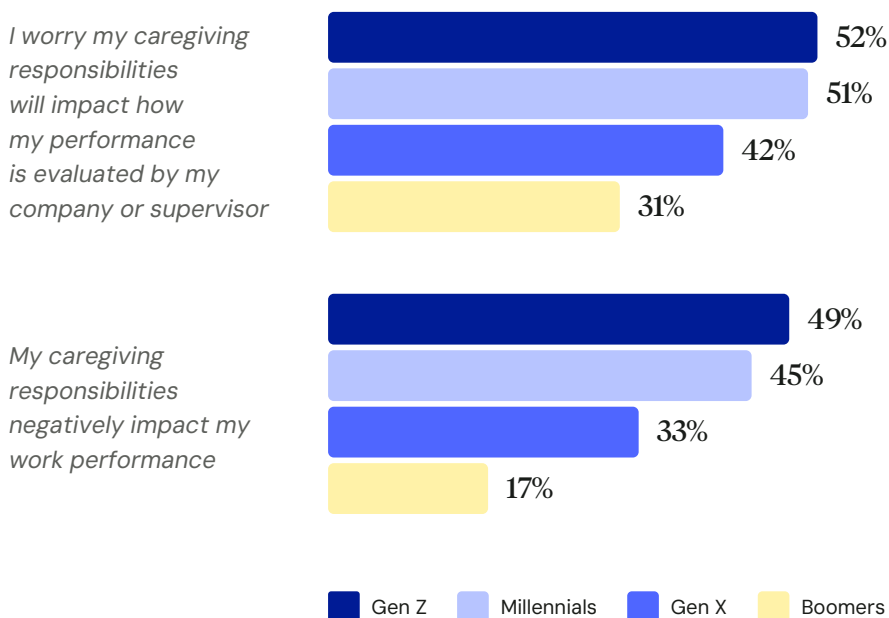


³ Among Millennials, 19% said that they declined work travel opportunities or conferences in order to caregive, and 21% stated that they reduced their working hours from full to part-time.

Gen Z

Gen Z (13–28 years) is also primarily caring for children at this time.⁴ Considering this generation has had the shortest amount of time to save funds, it is not surprising that their least favorite chore is organizing finances. However, due likely in part to financial assistance from other family members, this generation is also the least likely to want financial assistance from their employer specifically to ease the burden of care. Instead, they too believe more flexible schedules and locations when it comes to job roles will help them from a caregiving perspective.

Gen Z are the most likely of any generation to be concerned that caregiving will impact their work or think that caregiving has already had a negative impact on their work performance. However, the majority of them, like Millennials, are willing to change jobs if the right role opens up for them.



More so than any other generation, Gen Z employees are most likely to not pursue a professional development opportunity, not pursue a promotion or role shift that would advance their career, and to decline a professional development opportunity for their caregiving responsibilities.⁵

⁴Of the Gen Z respondents to the survey, 67% claimed to be the caregiver for a child.

⁵Of the Gen Z respondents, 21% did not pursue a professional development opportunity, 21% did not pursue a promotion or role shift that would have advanced their careers, and 14% declined a professional development opportunity in the past year due to their caregiving responsibilities.

Conclusions

Supporting employee career development requires more than offering opportunities to travel, attend conferences, or partake in training. A true comprehensive strategy involves seeing each employee as more than an individual, but as a larger series of relationships that can at times require just as much logistical work as a full-time job.

Regardless of age, the caregivers surveyed report that their at-home responsibilities lead to increased stress, reduced sleep and exercise, and heightened financial strain. These common side-effects of caregiving are part of the reason why Millennials and Gen Z are already meeting barriers that will affect the rest of their careers.

Ways organizations can support



Flexibility

Allowing for flexible scheduling and hybrid or remote options gives caregivers the time and space they need to provide care for their loved ones without sacrificing their work.



Communication

When caregivers understand what support exists, they can make informed decisions that will ultimately benefit both themselves and the organization.



Caregiving benefits

Benefits like Homethrive can provide assistance with transportation, hospital navigation, Medicare, child care, backup care, and loss support, reducing the work and worry of caregiving.



Company culture

By encouraging leaders to utilize existing caregiving benefits and building a community of support by offering ERGs, organizations can lead by example.

For more information, visit www.homethrive.com