

Caregiver's Corner

How Some Of The Toughest Guys On The Planet Can Get Help Caring For The Ones They Love

(NAPSA)—Taking care of a family member who is aging or ill can be tough—but you don't have to do it alone. Just ask actor Danny Trejo, who stars in a new PSA (public service advertisements) campaign supporting male caregivers.

"I've helped care for a friend of mine who had cancer, so I know how hard it can be," explained Trejo.

The Facts: Men Are Providing Care, Too

Men represent 40 percent of the more than 40 million unpaid family caregivers in the U.S., representing 16 million sons, husbands and friends caring for an adult loved one in need.

Men are doing more than just managing finances or running errands. Sixty-three percent of male caregivers are the primary caregiver for their loved one, according to AARP, the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans age 50 and older. Many of these male caregivers help their loved ones with personal care such as eating, bathing and dressing, as well as medical and nursing tasks. More than half find it difficult to help loved ones with these intimate care needs and feel unprepared.

To help family caregivers, AARP and the Ad Council launched the Caregiver Assistance Campaign, directing people to free caregiving resources at aarp.org/caregiving. The latest PSAs are specifically targeted to men, because they are less likely to see themselves as caregivers or to reach out for help.

Celebrating the inner strength of caregivers, the TV ads feature Danny Trejo, an actor known for his "tough guy" persona. While Trejo performs feats of strength and daring, a caregiver performs acts of care for his father, such as preparing dinner and helping him shave. In a twist, Trejo praises the caregiver as "the toughest guy on the planet." The PSAs feature the tagline "caregiving is tougher than tough" and remind caregivers that they can find help and support.



As men continue to take on caregiving roles, they are looking for practical information and support tailored to their needs.

"Caring for someone else is one of the toughest jobs there is," said Danny Trejo. "There's no shame in getting some help if that's what you need to stay strong."

Tips for Caregivers

The majority of caregivers (60 percent) juggle their caregiving responsibilities with a full- or part-time job, and that percentage is even higher for men. Juggling work and caregiving responsibilities can be highly stressful, putting caregivers at risk for depression, anxiety, and heart disease. A few quick tips to help caregivers in this role include:

- Falling victim to a scam could be a sign that a loved one needs support. Help them sort mail and throw out obvious scam threats.
- Create a daily caregiving checklist and check off items daily. You'll stay on-task and communicate more easily with others involved in your loved one's care.
- To ease stress and save time, do caregiving prep like selecting clothes or preparing food and medicines the night before.
- Caregiving brings many challenges but also many joys. Take time to savor the joyful, rewarding moments.

Learn More

For free caregiving resources, including practical Care Guides tailored to specific topics and challenges, visit www.aarp.org/caregiving or call (877) 333-5885.