

Family Caregiving in Oneida: The Oneida Helping Oneida Study



Photo by Dennis King, Oneida WI

The Oneida Helping Oneida Family Caregiving Study (OHO) was conducted in 2021 to learn about family caregiving in the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. Family caregivers (also called “informal caregivers”) provide care for family or friends who need assistance. They are not professionals and are usually unpaid.

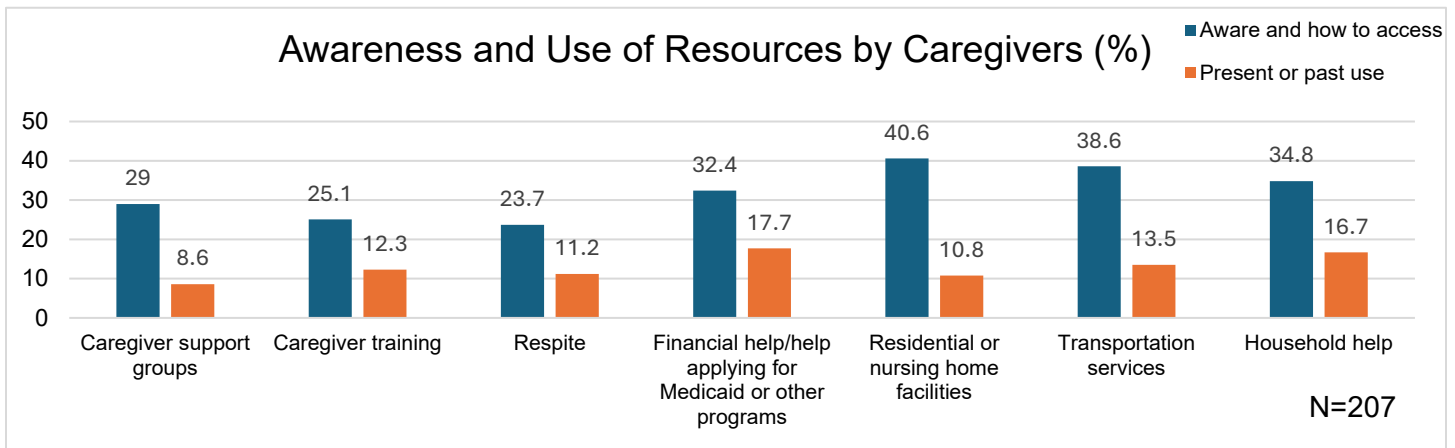
Compared to many other racial/ethnic groups, being a family caregiver for an Elder is more common in Indigenous communities. Being a

family caregiver can be very time-consuming and demanding, especially when caring for an Elder with memory loss or dementia. Using educational, support, and respite services has been shown to help by decreasing caregiver stress and improving health and quality of life for the Elder. However, the use of such services by family caregivers tends to be low.

“I’ve never even thought that there would be resources available...in the next few years I will step in and take over the majority of the care for my parents. I would definitely utilize resources so that I am able to do the best I can and maintain a positive healthy relationship with my parents and myself.”

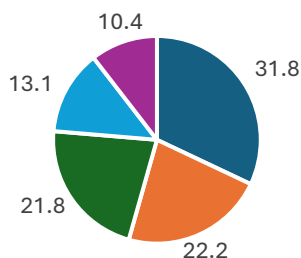
The OHO Study included 481 respondents from the Oneida community, 207 (43%) of whom were currently providing care to an adult family member or friend. Of the 274 respondents who were non-caregivers, 44.6% personally knew an enrolled Oneida Tribal member (and 11.2% knew a non-enrolled descendant) who was providing assistance to an Elder.

One finding of the OHO Study is below. It highlights the **awareness** of and **use** of *seven key resources* to support family in caring for a loved one:



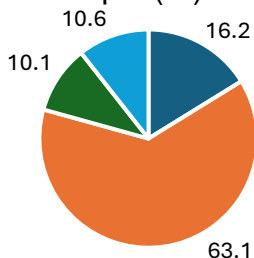
“How many caregivers do we have here in Oneida? Some people don't consider themselves a caregiver, as they think it's their duty to help their parents...we just automatically take care of them, as that's the cultural belief. They take care of their own.”

Where our sample lives (%)



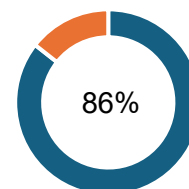
- Within reservation boundaries
- Brown or Outagamie counties
- Milwaukee, WI area
- Elsewhere in WI
- Outside of WI

Who are the Caregivers in our sample (%)?

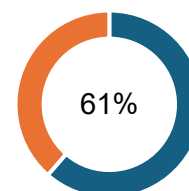


- Spouse/Partner
- Adult child/Grandchild/Niece or nephew
- Sibling/Cousin
- Friend/neighbor/other

Caregivers caring for an Elder



Caregivers caring for someone with memory issues



Findings from the OHO Study and from previous research with Native caregivers highlight the critical importance of *increasing community awareness about helpful resources* and of *working to ensure that the services offered are aligned with a community's culture, traditions, and values*. We hope the results of this research will be helpful to the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin in making decisions about programs, policies, and outreach to the community. The 2022 National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers contains more information and expert recommendations on family caregiving in the U.S.

“It's hard to ask for help. And when help arrives it is so appreciated.”

Quotes are from OHO survey respondents.

Additional Resources:

- National Indian Council on Aging, caregiving resource page: <https://www.nicoa.org/elder-resources/elder-health/native-caregiving/>
- National Resource Center on Native American Aging: <https://www.nrcnaa.org/>
- WI Aging and Disability Resource Centers: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm>

Sponsored by the Oneida Alzheimer's Disease Community Advisory Board and approved through Oneida BC resolution. The OHO Community Report is available via QR code or at <https://uwmadison.box.com/v/OHO-Report-2024>

