Social connections support caregivers to:

- **Balance work and care**
  - Collectively, annual productivity losses to employers are enormous: 9.7 million days of absenteeism, 256 million fewer hours of paid work, and the loss of 557,698 skilled employees.⁶

- **Learn from each other’s lived experiences**
  - Peer support increased caregivers’ coping skills, competence, confidence, and decreased their feelings of burden and loneliness.²

- **Maintain social well-being**
  - Caregiving can strain relationships.³

- **Achieve their educational potential**
  - Education is adversely affected for 1 in 5 young caregivers enrolled in school, often resulting in poor performance and lower than anticipated educational outcomes.⁴

- **Care for themselves**
  - Caregiving is time consuming, with 1 in 10 spending 30+ hours/week, thereby, limiting their personal time.⁵

Technology connects carers

- Caregivers are likely to use technology for social functions⁶:
  - 63% connect socially with other caregivers
  - 62% follow social media or social networking
  - 59% access emotional or mental health support
  - 52% contribute to or view inspirational stories

- Technologies to balance care, work and learning⁶:
  - Virtual classrooms
  - Communication and messaging technologies
  - Calendar and scheduling apps

- 70% of employers believe that assistive technologies have the potential to help their employees fulfill their dual roles as an employee and as a family/friend caregiver.¹

Many older workers are as well-versed in the use of information and communication technologies as younger workers, with nearly 50% scoring at moderate or proficient levels.⁷

A CARER (also referred to as caregiver or family caregiver) is a person who takes on an unpaid caring role for someone who needs help because of a physical or cognitive condition, an injury or a chronic life-limiting illness.

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Connective Carers is a campaign to raise awareness of carers’ needs, and the importance of connecting and accessing support earlier rather than later in their care journeys. Social connections are about fostering connections with:

- **OTHER CARERS**
  - so they can share their experiences and benefit from each other’s expertise.

- **EMPLOYERS AND SCHOOLS**
  - so they can maintain balance in their caregiving duties and career/educational pursuits.

- **A SOCIAL NETWORK**
  - so they can have a personal life and a support system to lean on.

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Learn more on how AGE-WELL is supporting caregivers through research and technology: http://agewell-nce.ca/research/research-themes-and-projects/workpackage-2

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