Role of Adult Siblings as Caregivers

Center for Persons With Disabilities

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cpd_blog

Recommended Citation

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Persons with Disabilities at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Blog Posts by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usu.edu.
ROLE OF ADULT SIBLINGS AS CAREGIVERS

November 3, 2011 by cpehrson

Disabilities impact the lives of all family members, not just the person with the disability. An estimated seven million children have siblings with disabilities, according to the Arc of the United States.

These children face many of the same challenges — and joys — as their parents, but they also face other problems. They often have extra responsibilities placed on them as they help their disabled sibling, and many times, their own needs may be overlooked by their often overburdened parents.

The role of siblings in the lives of people with disabilities is a unique one. It doesn’t stop when they leave home. Parents become elderly. Their sibling with a disability becomes an adult. Siblings know that someday the responsibility of their disabled sibling’s care will rest on them. This can be an overwhelming time for siblings.

In the words of adult sisters who have a brother with severe disabilities, “Now that we are all out of the house and Scott lives alone with Mom and Dad, we are still concerned about his needs and the challenge that he is for our parents. What does the future hold for him and for us, as his sisters? That’s hard to say at this time, but, we all want what’s best for him.”

To help meet these concerns, Utah Developmental Disabilities Council is helping to create a network for adult siblings of adults with disabilities—the Utah Adult Brothers and Sisters (UTABS). This online support and discussion group will be introduced at an afternoon session at the upcoming Caregiver Conference on November 9-10.