

# 2023 Drive For Inclusion

## REPORT CARD



---

**BRAUNABILITY'S ANNUAL REPORT** ON THE STATE OF INCLUSION  
FOR THE 20 MILLION AMERICANS WITH A MOBILITY DISABILITY  
AND THEIR CAREGIVERS.

## 2023 DFI Survey Focus:

# A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT CAREGIVING

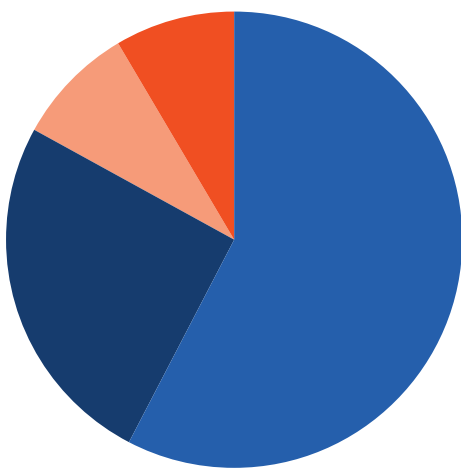
BraunAbility believes greater inclusion begins when the people who experience mobility disabilities – and their caregivers – are heard. This year we focused our Drive for Inclusion survey on The Driving Force members who are caregivers of someone with a mobility challenge.

Caregivers play a vital role in the lives of many people with mobility challenges. What we learned sheds an important light on the strain, the reward, and the absent support system for caregivers.

**caregiver** noun

care-giv·er 'ker-gi-vər 

: a person who provides direct care



**57.6%** of caregivers provide care for a child with a mobility disability

**25.4%** of caregivers provide care for a spouse with a mobility disability

**8.5%** of caregivers provide care for a parent with a mobility disability

**8.5%** of caregivers provide care for an extended family member or friend with a mobility disability

## A CAREGIVING CLOSE UP

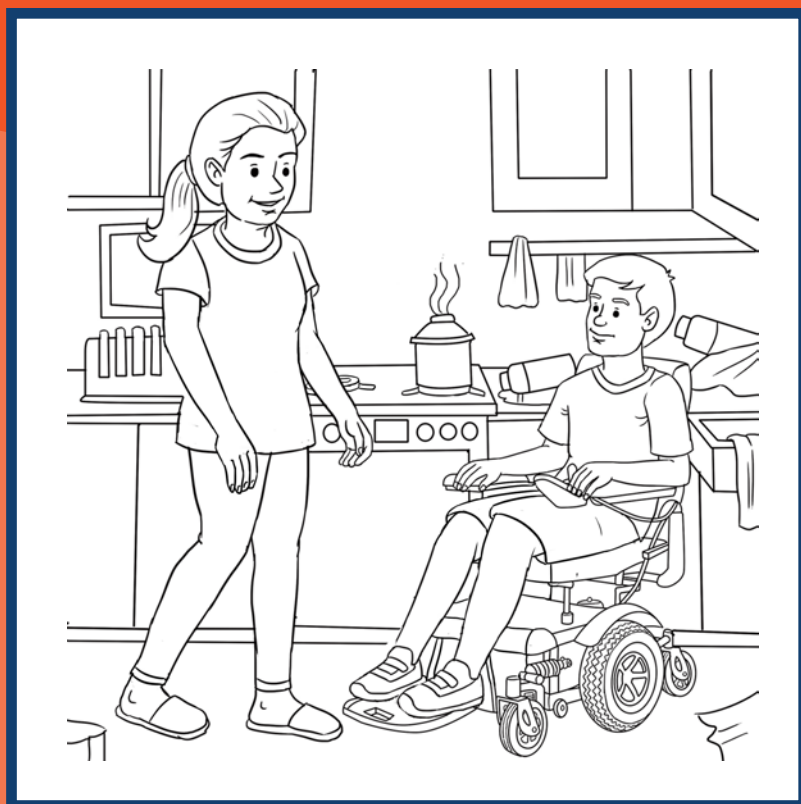
Caregiving is a complicated role – a balance of reward and stress that takes a toll on the overall wellbeing of the caretaker. Our survey respondents are feeling the stress, especially those whose responsibilities are ever-present. Below is a snapshot of who makes up our respondents – who they care for, how often, and whether or not they had a choice in the role as caregiver.

**88%** live with the person they care for

**74.6%** of caregivers have been providing care to people with mobility challenges for a decade or more

**73%** of caregivers do not feel they had a choice in taking on caregiving responsibilities

*“I think caregivers enjoy and love what they are doing but suffer from burnout and lack of self-care. We need to fill our own tanks to be available to help others.” - Andrea*



# THE CAREGIVING CRISIS: EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, AND FINANCIAL STRAINS OF CAREGIVING

Caregivers of people with mobility challenges are hurting, some literally. Many are facing a trifecta of stress. The overwhelming majority face emotional and physical strain from their caregiving, and over half can add financial burdens too, expressing a need for compensation and financial support from federal agencies.

**61%** of caregivers said caregiving has made their health worse

**88%** face emotional strain

**83%** face physical strain

**61%** face financial strain

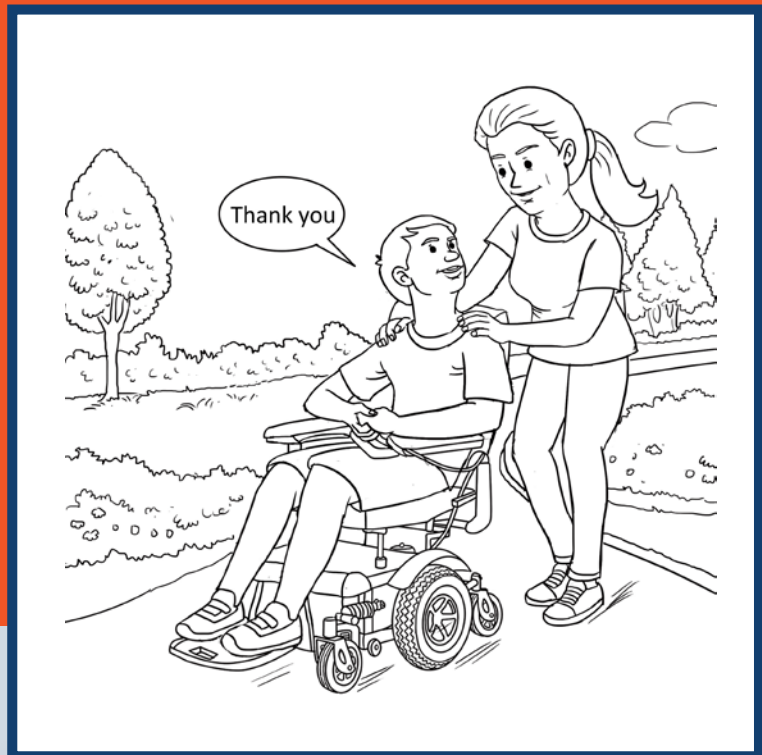
***“Every caregiver in the US needs to have their time compensated at a living wage or at least minimum wage in their area, as well as housing and medical stability.”- Marla***



# CONFLICTED FEELINGS AROUND CAREGIVING

While many caregivers feel loved and appreciated by those they care for, they simultaneously feel tired, stressed, and exhausted. Caregivers highlighted a greater need for appreciation from others, including family, friends, medical professionals and fellow caregivers.

*“Caregiving is exhausting; there are no breaks. But my son is always thankful and tells me he appreciates me.” - Misty*



**84.5%** of caregivers feel appreciated  
by the person they care for

**57.6%** of people said caregiving  
gives them a sense of purpose



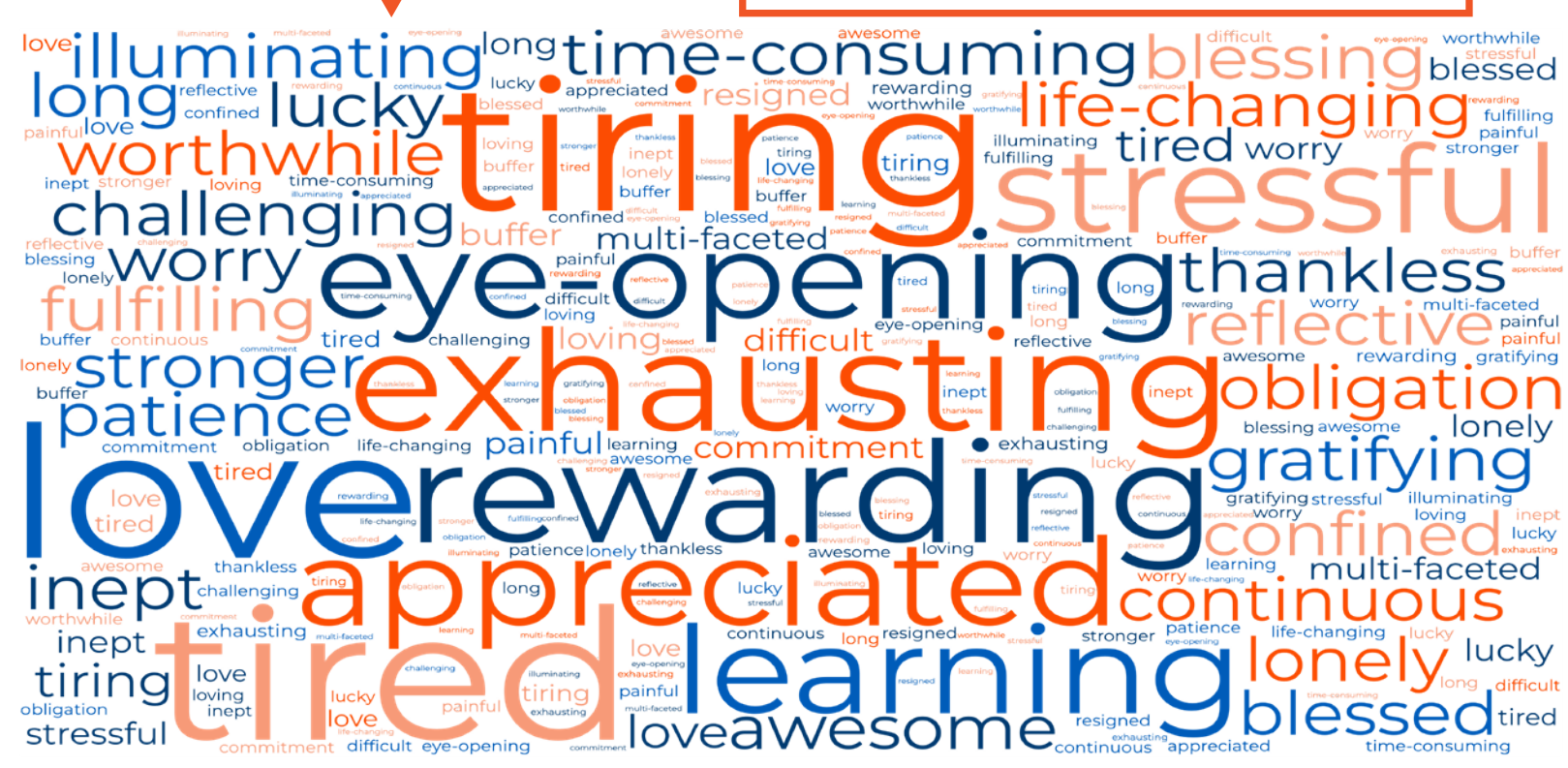
With over half of caregivers surveyed feeling burnt out and lonely, this year's survey shed light on a continuous need – care for our caregivers. A majority of caregivers struggle with burnout and loneliness, expressing needs for respite care, peer support, and time to pursue personal interests. They're in need of support to help lighten the load.

**51%** struggle  
with loneliness

I wish the rest of the family appreciated what I do.

I need some time to myself.

When will someone look out for my needs like I do for others?



# PERSPECTIVES FROM THE DRIVING FORCE



We adopted our daughter knowing she would need a wheelchair for life. She has Spina Bifida, and we chose her because so many had passed on her knowing her diagnosis. We knew she was worthy of being loved, and we have been blessed every day since! On top of Spina Bifida, she also has a mental disability which will have her living with us for the rest of her life.

Being that we chose her, and her diagnosis, it changes my perspective as a caregiver. I don't struggle with the grief many endure, but it is still a lot to carry. When you carry something well, people assume it's not heavy.

She's the greatest joy in our life [but], caring for her is a full-time job, and in our case, a lifelong job.

I am always the one doing her daily medical procedures, loading and unloading her into our van, and worrying about her. Most people don't see that. All the emotional, physical, and mental toll goes unseen or unappreciated. We would never ask for it, but a little acknowledgement, understanding, or support of our hard work could go a long way.

Tricia

Caregiving is lonely.

Caregiving takes my identity from me.

Caregiving isolates me.

Caregiving makes me invisible.

Caregiving without family, or created family, is so difficult.

Caregiving is a 24-hour job, along with a 40-hour work week.

Caregiving can take you down a horrible rabbit hole.

Caregiving did come naturally to me though, I am lucky to have her, and she is lucky to have me.

Caregiving is constant advocacy.

Lisa



#### OUR PLEDGE:

## Nothing About Us Without Us

To honor the continued support BraunAbility has received from The Driving Force, we've made a formal pledge to include the voices of The Driving Force in every innovation we bring to market – because inclusion must start with hearing from and understanding those whom it impacts the most.

#### WHO IS THE DRIVING FORCE?

The Driving Force is a group of disability inclusion advocates nearly 2,000 members strong. The community is open to anyone with a mobility challenge and their caregivers. BraunAbility's goal is to ensure voices within the mobility disability community are heard.



#### 2023 DRIVE FOR INCLUSION SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The research shared in this Report Card was gathered through the following methods:

- » An online survey of 61 Driving Force members who identify as caregivers. The overall margin of error for this study is +/- 3% at a 95% confidence level.



#DriveForInclusion | @BraunAbility

**BraunAbility.com**