

2018 Wells Fargo Elder Needs Survey

**WELLS  
FARGO**

# Elder needs: the path to planning begins with a conversation

*Amid issues of loyalty, trust, independence, and dignity, it isn't always easy to say the first word.*

Investment and Insurance Products: NOT FDIC Insured ► NO Bank Guarantee ► MAY Lose Value

# What is there to talk about?

In our elder needs survey, we asked older Americans with investable assets of \$25,000 or more and a group just old enough to be their children for their feelings on important financial issues related to elder needs.

*We found some surprises, and we hope this research will help you begin conversations.*



# Elder issues and barriers to conversation

Older Americans say they are happy, healthy, and unlikely to need help as they age. But their children are less optimistic. Fortunately, most stand ready to lend a hand with key tasks.



## Lack of urgency

57%

OF PARENTS, EVEN AMONG THOSE 80-PLUS,

**don't talk** about later-life needs because they see no urgency.

87% OLDER AMERICANS

65% ADULT CHILDREN

87% of older Americans in our survey say their **emotional health** is fine, yet only 65% of adult children say this of their parents.

## Privacy



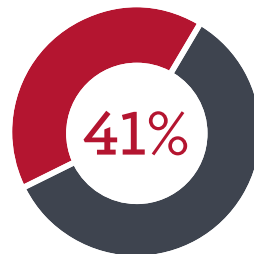
Seven out of ten older Americans and adult children in the survey agree that financial matters are **private and personal**.

ALMOST  
1/4

OF ADULT CHILDREN

cite **potential conflict** as the biggest barrier to talking with their parents about needs in later years.

## Money



of older Americans in the survey say nobody, except possibly their spouse, **knows how much money they have**.

ONLY

1 in 8

OLDER AMERICANS

in our survey thinks they will need **help managing their finances**, but nearly half (43%) of adult children think their parents will need it.

WHILE

3/4

OF CHILDREN

say they'd be **able to assist** with day-to-day finances, only 54% of parents would feel comfortable asking for help.

# “I wish we had talked about that”

Missing conversations mean many seniors have failed to put protections in place, leaving them vulnerable to financial abuse.



# A need to protect

## Contact

### One third

of older Americans say they have a trusted contact on file with their financial firm for protection against financial fraud. And many don't have these other protections in place:



Not signing documents without **another reviewing first**  
**(32% have in place)**



Check **credit report** at least yearly  
**(65%)**



Have **automatic bill pay** to reduce **check payments**  
**(46%)**



Have **direct deposit** so others can't cash checks  
**(80%)**

## Alert

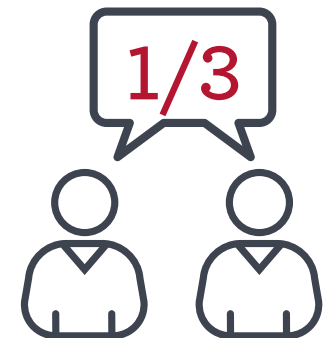


More than four out of five older Americans in the survey (88%) wanted financial institutions to alert them about unusual activity.

**39%** OLDER AMERICANS

**50%** ADULT CHILDREN

- 39% of older Americans and 50% of adult children **want education** to protect themselves from fraud and scams.



- One third of older Americans **haven't talked** with family members about later-life and end-of-life plans.

# Children want elders to plan, and elders feel better if they do



## 10,000 A DAY

The rate at which baby boomers are **turning 65**, a trajectory expected to continue until 2030.<sup>1</sup>



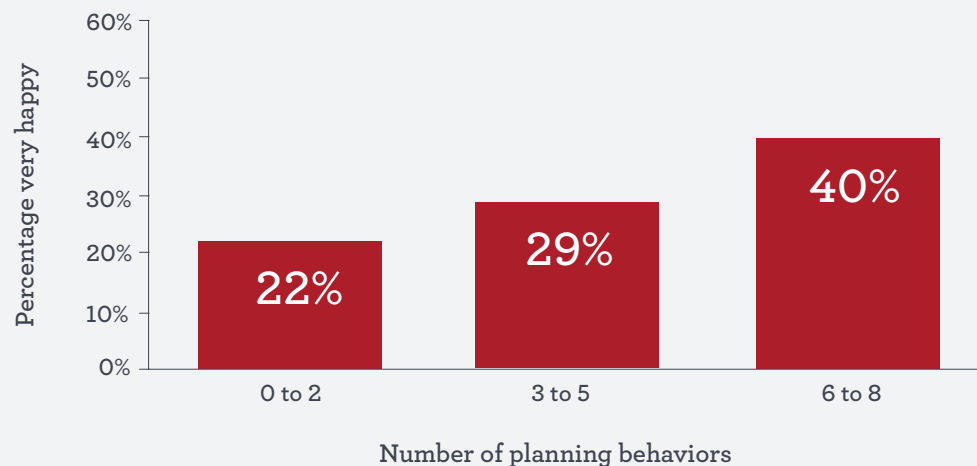
## 4 OUT OF 5

adult children in our survey **want their parents to plan** for old age so they won't have to intervene. But 35% of parents say too much planning gets in the way of enjoying life now.

## Happier with plans

Older Americans who have talked with their families and who have estate and planning documents in place **say they are happier**.

Happiness among older Americans, by number of planning behaviors



### Planning behaviors:

- ✓ Documents and passwords well organized
- ✓ Have discussed who will manage affairs with family
- ✓ Have discussed inheritance plans with family
- ✓ Have a will
- ✓ Have an advance healthcare directive
- ✓ Have a power of attorney (POA) for healthcare
- ✓ Have a POA for financial matters
- ✓ Have told family how much money there is

# Not talking? Someone else might be.



## LOOKING THE WRONG WAY

of elder financial crimes are committed by family members, friends, or trusted persons.<sup>2</sup> Yet most older Americans in our survey (68%) **think a stranger** is the most likely perpetrator.

## COMMON SCAMS



**Common family member scams** include misuse of powers of attorney or joint bank accounts and unauthorized withdrawals from ATMs or checking accounts.<sup>3</sup> Other common scams include identity theft, telephone fraud, and online phishing or spoofing.

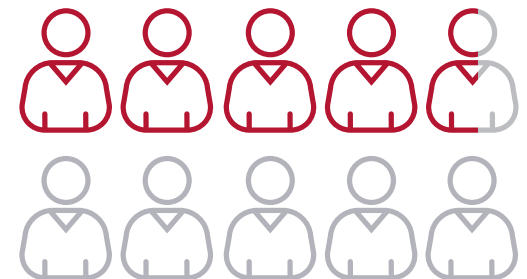
**NINE OUT OF TEN** older Americans in our survey feel they **have been contacted by scammers**, either by phone, in sales pitches, or in emails.



And though virtually all surveyed Americans and children (98%) agree that **older Americans are susceptible to scams**, only **ONE OUT OF TEN** older investors feel it could happen to them, though one in four say they worry about it.



**NEARLY HALF** of older Americans in our survey **know someone** who has been the victim of a scam, including many who say they have already been a victim.





## About Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo & Company (NYSE: WFC) is a diversified, community-based financial services company with \$1.9 trillion in assets. Wells Fargo's vision is to satisfy our customers' financial needs and help them succeed financially. Founded in 1852 and headquartered in San Francisco, Wells Fargo provides banking, investments, mortgage, and consumer and commercial finance through 8,200 locations, 13,000 ATMs, the internet (wellsfargo.com) and mobile banking, and has offices in 42 countries and territories to support customers who conduct business in the global economy. With approximately 265,000 team members, Wells Fargo serves one in three households in the United States. Wells Fargo & Company was ranked #25 on Fortune's 2017 rankings of America's largest corporations. News, insights, and perspectives from Wells Fargo are also available at Wells Fargo Stories.

## About the Survey

Versta Research conducted a national survey for Wells Fargo of 784 older Americans (ages 60+, with at least \$25,000 in investable assets) and a similar survey of 798 adult children (ages 45 to 59, with at least \$25,000 in investable assets) who communicate with a parent regularly. The two groups were sampled independently, each stratified by age, gender, race, ethnicity, region, and assets to ensure samples that reflect the full U.S. population of each group. The survey was conducted between February 26 and March 15, 2018.

## About Versta Research

Versta Research is a full-service market research firm, headquartered in Chicago, specializing in customized strategic market research and public opinion polling.

The survey was conducted between February 26 and March 15, 2018. Assuming no sample bias, the maximum margin of sampling error is +/- 4% for each group. Versta Research is a third-party research firm and is not affiliated with Wells Fargo or its affiliates.

1. United States Census Bureau, "An Aging Nation: The Older Population in the United States," 2014
2. Jewish Council for the Aging, National Center for Elder Abuse, "Who Commits Elder Financial Abuse and Why Isn't It Reported?" 2016
3. National Adult Protective Services Association, "Elder Financial Exploitation"

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