

# Spotlight on Young Carers

Carers Week 12-18 June

## Young carers: Who are they?



### Who are young carers?

A young carer is someone **under 18** who regularly helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol.

### How many young carers are there?

- There are about **700,000 young carers in the UK**. (BBC 2010)
- That's about **1 in 12 secondary aged pupils**.
- There are likely to be young carers in every school and college.

\*The Census identified over 200,000 young carers, but many remain hidden.



**1 in 3 young carers** spend between 11–20 hours each week caring.



### Which one is the young carer?



Young carers are just young people – with caring responsibilities! They look the same as everyone else but they can lead very different lives!

**The average age of a young carer**

**= 12**

## What might a young carer do?

- Practical tasks, such as cooking, housework and shopping.
- Physical care, such as helping someone out of bed.
- Personal care, such as helping someone dress.
- Managing the family budget and collecting prescriptions.
- Helping to give medicine.
- Emotional support, such as talking to someone who is distressed.
- Helping someone communicate.
- Looking after brothers and sisters.



## Being a young carer can have a big impact on the things that are important to growing up

- It can affect a young person's health, social life and self-confidence.
- Many young carers struggle to juggle their education and caring which can cause pressure and stress.
- In a survey, 39% said that nobody in their school was aware of their caring role.
- 26% have been bullied at school because of their caring role.
- 1 in 20 miss school because of their caring role.

**But young people can learn lots of useful skills by being a young carer.**

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## The Rights of a Young Carer

A young carer shouldn't be doing a caring role that:

- Makes them feel worried, sad or lonely.
- Makes their health worse.
- Means that they miss out on time with friends.
- Means they do worse at school, college or university.
- Stops them getting a job or keeping a job.
- Stops them wanting to achieve your goals for the future.



## What can schools do?

Understanding young carers' rights can help with referral and signposting.

- Teachers should know which member of staff to contact if they have identified a young carer to ensure an appropriate follow-up conversation takes place to identify whether the child or young person has a caring role and if so, what support needs to be put in place.
- As some young carers may display poor behaviour within school due to their experiences of caring at home: identify, support and signpost young carers effectively. Ensure there are follow-up conversations with pupils to understand the root cause of a pupil's behaviour, inform the school's young carers/pastoral leads and take a flexible approach to these pupils, for example allowing time out.
- It is important to understand the role of young carers' services and how they can provide support.
- Consider becoming part of the Young carers in schools programme. The following link provides further information: <https://carers.org/content/young-carers-schools-map>
- Get involved with Carers week [Education](#)

## Resources

A range of links and resources can be found on the Cheshire East Young Carers page on the Cheshire East website.

[Cheshire Young Carers](#)  
[Young carers](#)

The Carers' trust has a professionals page, included in this is a checklist to identify a potential carer.

<http://static.carers.org/files/18-identification-5087.pdf>

A guide to the rights of Young carers can be obtained from the Carers trust following the link below:

[https://carers.org/sites/files/carustrust/media/know\\_your\\_rights\\_0.pdf](https://carers.org/sites/files/carustrust/media/know_your_rights_0.pdf)

Barnardo's Young carers' page. This contains information and videos of their work and the support available to Young Carers.

[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/young\\_carers.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/young_carers.htm)

