

Young carers **It's not always easy**

If they are under 18 and look after a parent or relative who is ill, has a long-term illness, has a physical or mental disability or is addicted to drugs or alcohol, then they could be a young carer.

“They may be doing the household chores such as washing, cooking, and cleaning on behalf of the whole family.”

They may be providing personal or nursing care like giving medication, changing dressings, helping with mobility, or intimate care such as washing, dressing, assisting with toilet requirements, or giving emotional support. This can feel stressful or overwhelming at times. Sometimes they may feel under pressure to take time off school or college to help around the house, or may not have time to go out with their friends, do homework, or play.

Many young carers find it difficult to talk about being a carer. They may worry that people will think they aren't coping, or that their family will be split up if they don't carry on with their caring role. But it's important to understand there are organisations who can help and support them, so they can balance their responsibilities with their personal life, and not miss out on things.

It can be hard to think about their future, whether they plan to get a job or apprenticeship, go to college or university. But they have to live their life too. That doesn't mean that they love their family any less. It's good to talk about how they feel and get them to ask for help if they need it.

“Caring for someone can make them feel tired so they need to try to look after themselves, both physically and mentally.”

tell them it's okay to have some time doing things they enjoy, like relaxing with friends or listening to music. The person they are caring for wants them to enjoy life too.

Being a carer

- Being a carer means looking after someone who could not cope without their support, they could be offering

support for just a couple of hours a week.

- It is common for carers to forget about their own health and well-being and often miss GP, dental appointments and health checks.
- If they're finding things hard, is there anyone else who can share the caring?
- Not talking about how they feel means they might miss out on getting the support they need.
- Unfortunately some young carers are bullied at school or fall behind in lessons. Encourage them to talk to their parents, school nurse, teacher or an adult they trust.

Contacts

Childline

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc.

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk/explore/homefamilies/pages/youngcarers.aspx

Barnardos

www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/young_carers.htm

The Children's Society Include Programme

01962 711511

www.youngcarer.com

Carers Trust

0844 800 4361

www.carers.org/help-directory/young-adult-carersguide

www.carers.org/young-carers-stories

Email support@carers.org

Babble

Babble has been created by Carers Trust as an online space where those aged under 18 who are caring for a family member or friend can chat, share their experiences and access information and advice.

www.babble.carers.org

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-supportguide/pages/young-carers-rights.aspx

PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide)

www.papyrus-uk.org

National Confidential Helpline -

HOPELineUK 0800 068 41 41
(Mon-Fri 10am to 10pm; Weekends 2pm to 10pm;
Bank Holidays 2pm to 5pm)

Matter

www.youngercarersmatter.org

Email matter@carers.org

Matter is a dedicated website and online community for young adult carers aged 16-25 to connect with each other, find useful information and get support online. Designed by and for young adult carers, it provides a safe space to take time out, make friends and share news and support. Content can be posted publically or privately to the Matter community and the site is moderated by an Online Support team who are on hand to offer advice or provide one-to-one support via email.

Sutton Young Carers

www.suttoncarerscentre.org/young-carers-services