

Scarborough & Ryedale  
**Carers Resource**

# YOUNG CARERS IN SCHOOLS

## Everyone's Responsibility



This booklet is aimed at Young Carer Champions within local schools. It is everyone's responsibility to identify and support young carers and their families. Using this guide in schools, will help you to find out more about young carers and how you can help make a difference to the young carers in your school.

The booklet also aims to raise awareness amongst professionals in schools, regarding young carers. The issues facing them and the barriers to education and achievement.

Helping to care for a family member is something that many young people are happy and proud to do. It helps them develop a sense of responsibility and skills they will use later in life. Taking on a caring role can strengthen family ties and build maturity and independence. However, inappropriate or excessive levels of caring by young people can put their education, training and/or health at risk and may prevent them from enjoying their childhood in the same way as other children.

**The definition of a young carer...**

**A young carer is a person who helps to look after someone in the family at home because they are disabled, ill, have a mental health problem or a problem with alcohol or drugs.**

The term does not apply to the everyday and occasional help around the home, that may often be expected or given by children in families. The key features for us are that the caring responsibilities persist over time and are important in maintaining the health, safety or day to day wellbeing of the person cared for and/or the wider family.

**Things young carers may do:**

<p><b>Practical tasks</b></p> <p>For example, cooking, housework, shopping</p>	<p><b>Physical care</b></p> <p>For example, lifting, helping up the stairs, physiotherapy</p>	<p><b>Personal care</b></p> <p>For example, dressing, washing, toileting needs</p>	<p><b>Emotional support</b></p> <p>For example, listening, calming, being present</p>
<p><b>Household management</b></p> <p>For example, paying bills, managing finances, collecting benefits</p>	<p><b>Looking after siblings</b></p> <p>For example, putting to bed, walking to school, parenting</p>	<p><b>Interpretation</b></p> <p>For example, for hearing/speech impairment or English as an additional language</p>	<p><b>Administering medication</b></p> <p>For example, insulin needles, preparing daily tablets</p>

Because of doing these things, young carers can sometimes feel tired and not always be able to concentrate on their school work or homework, or they can be worried or feel stressed.

## What can this mean for a young carer's education & attainment?

→ 27% of young carers of secondary school age experience educational difficulties or miss school, this raises to 40% where pupils are caring for someone who misuses drugs or alcohol.

→ Young adult carers aged between 16 and 18 years are twice as likely not to be in education, employment, or training (NEET) (Audit Commission, 2010).

→ 68% of young carers experience bullying at school and 39% said that nobody in their school was aware of their caring role (The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, 2010).

→ Young carers missed on average 5% of school days due to their caring role and additional 5.9% through lateness.

## Things young carers have said:

“ Ask me separately why my work is not in, I will explain but not in front of everyone.”

- “
1. If they tried to understand my situation more.
  2. If they discussed my changing needs regularly rather than just once.
  3. If they provided support when I miss lessons.
  4. Flexibility.”

“ Understood that although I got good grades when I said I needed help, I needed help and that sometimes I could not do it all and would need some time just to stop.”

- “
1. Help me when I had issues from home.
  2. See how my day was.
  3. Tell me not to worry about my brother getting in trouble.”

“ I feel the way my teachers could have helped me more is to understand if or why I'm late to school instead of getting in trouble!”

“ Treat us like other pupils but remember we have extra problems outside of school and we need extra support.”

### Young carers in Primary Schools (national data):

- Between 2001 and 2011 the numbers of 5-7 year olds providing care increased by 83%
- Over 11% of primary aged carers are providing more than 50 hours of care a week.
- 13% of primary aged young carers miss school or experience educational difficulties.

### Young carers in Secondary Schools (national data):

- A survey by the BBC in 2010 estimated that about 1 in 12 secondary aged pupils have caring responsibilities.
- Young carers are particularly vulnerable to educational underachievement. It has been estimated that 27% of all young carers of secondary school age are missing school or experiencing educational difficulties. This figure rises to 40% for young carers specifically caring for someone who misuses drugs or alcohol
- In 2001, it was estimated that there were 175,000 young carers in the UK aged under 17 (139,000 in England), and 230,000 carers aged 18-24. Research undertaken in 2010 suggests that the number of young carers in the UK is significantly beyond previous official estimates and could be as many as 700,000 (8% of all children) reflecting a 'hidden army' of young carers.

In addition to families where young carers are supporting a family member with a condition of a physical health nature, a significant sub-set of young carers care for someone with mental health or substance misuse problems; in particular 29% have mental health problems. Furthermore, it is widely recognised that there are many young carers, particularly where their care relates to parental mental ill health or substance misuse, who do not receive the support they require.

This may be because they do not recognise themselves as a young carer (or if they do, do not seek help); services are not identifying them as carers; or because of fears within the family about involving children's services in support.

Many young carers and young adult carers also experience difficult transitions to adulthood, work, and in their own personal lives

Research has highlighted the particular issues faced by young carers in transition (aged 16 and 17 and young adult carers aged 18-24), in terms of the support available to prepare them for their 'next steps', their ability to access the same opportunities, and achieve the same outcomes as their peers.

## What does Ofsted say?

In its paper, *Supporting Young Carers: Identifying, Assessing and Meeting the Needs of Young carers and their Families* (Ofsted, 2009), Ofsted reports that councils and partners should ensure that professionals within universal services are aware of the needs of young carers so they can be identified and supported.

Ofsted's Schools Inspection Handbook framework states: "Inspection is primarily about evaluating how well individual pupils benefit from their school. It is important to test the school's response to individual needs by observing how well it helps all pupils to make progress and fulfil their potential." It includes young carers as those with protected characteristics whose achievements it may be relevant to pay particular attention to (Ofsted, 2013).

*"Schools have a key role in identifying and supporting all young carers..... Ofsted take particular interest in the experiences of more vulnerable children, including young carers, during inspections."*

**Edward Timpson, the Minister for Children and Families, October 2012**

## Ofsted report 2009...Examples of Effective Practice..

- Training for school governors and school nurses on young carer issues
- Awareness-raising days within schools
- The analysis of data on persistent absenteeism – both authorised and unauthorised – revealed pupils previously not identified as having caring roles
- A healthy, open and caring school environment encouraged more young carers to self-identify
- The introduction of designated school staff for young carers, who were aware of young carers' issues
- A young carer's identity card enabled young carers to be easily recognised by professionals and to receive appropriate educational and pastoral support
- Young carer support groups work with teachers who lead on personal, social, health and economic education programmes of work.

*"When I found out about her family situation I suddenly understood why she was often late and seldom did her homework. I was amazed at just how well she had done but frustrated that we as staff had not known."*

**Local Teacher**

## Early Identification & Support... Everyone's Responsibility

### What can Schools do?

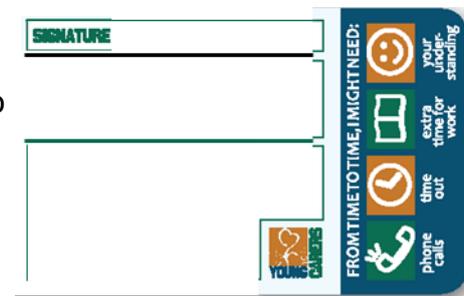
- **Identify and recognise a member of staff as the lead and young carer link for referrals and support**
- **Create a young carer log or register in school**
- **Ensure that young carers progress and attendance is tracked sensitively**
- **Review all school policies to reflect young carer needs**
- **Adopt the NYCC Young Carer's Card initiative (secondary only)**

The young carer's card is for young carers in schools who have difficulty balancing their education with the responsibility of caring for someone at home. The card provides a form of carer identification that young carers can carry with them at school/ college and use to signal discreetly to the teacher or tutor that they need support.

The card is for young carers who are unable, or find it difficult to arrive at school on time; stay after school without earlier warning; finish homework on time; need to carry a mobile phone (on silent) so they can keep in contact with the person they care for; leave early on occasions or talk to someone.

### **What the card looks like...**

The card is the size of a credit card and will have the young carer's name, school/ college and photo on the front. On the back of the card there is a description of some of the needs of young carers, the teacher's / tutor's name, and some contact details in case of emergencies.



For more details contact George Tyson - NYCC Education Development Adviser, Vulnerable Learners T: 01609 798155 or your local Young Carers Service.

- **Have a designated young carer noticeboard**

Posters/leaflets are available from <https://professionals.carers.org/> as well as your local Young Carers Service.

- **Develop in-school young carers support**

Consider how schools can support all young carers, particularly those who have an identified low level caring role, ie: that has low impact to the young carers health and wellbeing or educational achievement. Some examples could be a lunch-time homework club or a young carers hub.

- **Signpost or refer young carers to local specialist support where necessary.**

Scarborough & Ryedale Carers Resource support young carers in school, when they become vulnerable. When the level of care giving and responsibility to the person in need of care, becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking impacting on his or her physical and/or mental wellbeing or educational achievement and opportunities. To refer young carers to Carers Resource please complete our referral form.

- **Use the Fronter Room to access information & training**

This includes training delivery plans aimed at staff and pupils. Short young carers information such as quizzes and questionnaires, Assembly guidance right through to full lesson plans. If you do not have access to Fronter please contact Scarborough & Ryedale Carers Resource and we can forward all the support information you need.

- **Consider the Young Carers in School Award**

Young Carers in School is an exciting England-wide initiative that equips schools to support young carers and awards good practice. Run jointly by The Carers Trust and The Children's Society, it aims to improve the identification and support of young carers in schools across the country, <http://www.youngcarer.com/resources/young-carers-schools>

**Scarborough & Ryedale Carers Resource Aims for 2017:**  
**Empowering schools to be self-sufficient in supporting all young carers, in particular those with a low level impact of care**

- For all young carers in secondary schools to have access to Young Carers cards, regardless of their support levels and whether known to the Young Carers Service or not. As well as all staff in schools to understand the purpose of the cards.
- For all secondary schools to complete the Young Carers in School Award
- For professionals to help identify & reach new previously unidentified young carers
- All professionals to recognise young carers and promote their rights in schools
- Schools to provide a safe space for young carers to have time out
- Improving integrated working between the voluntary sector & education across Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale.
- Strengthening communication to raise awareness of young carers & the support available across schools, through assemblies, parent's evenings & PSHE

## **Specialist Young Carer Support Service – Scarborough & Ryedale Carers Resource**

We are a local charity covering Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale, providing free and confidential support for all unpaid carers from the age of 8 upwards. We provide specialist support for young carers under 18 whose life is significantly affected by a member of their family needing extra help at home due to an illness, disability or addiction.

### **Our Young Carers Service remit includes working in schools with professionals to:**

- Work with an identified staff member who leads young carers support in schools
- Support the roll-out of the NYCC Young Carers Card
- Support young carers during transition periods
- Promote school communications with families
- Help to raise awareness of young carers within schools
- Provide positive messages and images of people with disabilities
- Develop peer support groups for young carers in schools
- Provide access to 1:1 support for young carers and access to drop in sessions
- Provide information about young carers for school newsletters
- Promote the Young Carers in School award
- Identify other agencies working in school to support initiatives for young carers
- Support/encourage additional curriculum and homework clubs for young carers
- Work with school nurses to monitor health needs of young carers
- Formal & informal training for school staff

### **Types of support we offer to young carers and their families:**

- Information & advice regarding reducing the impacts of care
- Young carers assessments focusing on their needs
- Signposting & referrals to key agencies and services
- Face to face on-going emotional support (often in school)
- Peer support and targeted groups
- Employment & volunteering information and opportunities
- School drop-in sessions
- Multi-agency working across services
- Low level benefits advice & signposting to specialist support

For further information, please contact our Young Carers team:  
96 High Street, Snainton, Scarborough, YO13 9AJ.  
Tel: 01723 850155 [www.carersresource.net](http://www.carersresource.net)

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