



Bitesize Briefing Young Carers

What is a Young Carer?

A young carer is a person under the age of 18 who regularly provides personal, practical or emotional support and assistance for a family member who is disabled, has a long term physical or mental illness, health needs related to old age or who misuses substances.

As well as looking at what a young carer is doing, it is important to consider the impact that their caring duties are having on them. Being a young carer can affect the child's physical and emotional health and impact on their social wellbeing as well as their education or training.

What support can a Young Carer and their family Expect?

Young carers under the age of 18 who care for family members are entitled to an assessment and support from the Local Authority who are required to take a whole-family co-ordinated approach.

(Young carers aged 16 and 17 are entitled to a transition assessment of their needs for support after they turn 18).

The assessment will look at whether it is appropriate for a young carer to provide, or continue to provide, care for the person in question ([Children & Family Act 2014](#)). Inappropriate or excessive care is defined as anything which is likely to have an impact on the child's health, wellbeing or education or which is unsuitable for a particular child ([Care Act 2014](#)).

A specialist **Young Carers Service** is able to offer a range of support based on the needs of individual young carers – please click on this link [Young Carers Website](#) to see more details

How do I recognise if a child or young person is a young carer?

Young Carers are often hidden from view and they may not see themselves as carers – there are many indications that a child or young person maybe in a caring role and it is worth considering under the broad headings below in relation to an existing health issue in the family.

Personal

For example; includes lifting, feeding, washing, dressing, changing dressings, toileting, giving medication etc

Practical

For example; includes shopping, cooking, taking care of siblings, translating, dealing with finances, hiding medication, attending appointments

Emotional

For example; includes keeping an eye on someone or keeping them company, being a 'shoulder to lean on', being exposed to adult problems, being treated like an adult, feeling responsible for keeping someone well or alive.

Health issues in the family impact on child in other ways

For example; includes issues with school, high levels of stress and anxiety, lack of opportunities, difficulties in family relationships, level of poverty, housing instability.

What should I do if I am concerned about the caring role of child or young person?

- Talk with the family about your concerns
- Be aware that there may be barriers to acknowledging a child/young person is in a caring role
- Consider what support can be put in place within your own setting
- Inform the family about what support looks like and how to access it
- Ask for the family's permission to make a referral and share information to WSCC specialist Young Carers Service
- If you have immediate safeguarding concerns, contact **MASH 01403 229900**
- If you need advice contact the **Young Carers Service** by email youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk

What tools and resources are available to me?

- The **Young Carers Service** offer a range of services. To find out more click on this link; [Young Carers Website](#)
- To make an agency or self-referral to the Young Carers Service email youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk
- Click on this link; [Resource Packs for Schools - Identifying & Supporting Young Carers in Schools or Identifying & Supporting Young Carers in Primary Schools](#)