

12 Information and contacts for young carers: a template

This has been developed with the view that schools will tailor the information to fit their own school and the support put into place for young carers and their families.

This model text is suitable for use in your school literature, on your notice boards, intranet or website.

Do you help to look after someone at home?

Then you may be a young carer. Young carers are children or young people who look after someone (normally in their family) who has an illness, a disability, mental ill-health or a problem with drugs or alcohol. You may take on practical or emotional caring tasks that an adult would normally do.

If you are a young carer, you may be looking after your mum or dad, your brother or sister, gran or granddad or maybe someone else who lives with you.

The first thing to know is that you are not alone. There are lots of other young people like you who care for someone in their family.

Some young carers have to:

- help lift someone to help them get around or help them wash, go to the toilet or get dressed.
- look after someone and make sure they are safe.
- cheer someone up or support them when they are feeling down.
- help care for someone by doing the cooking or housework or other jobs in the home.
- interpret for someone or help them communicate.

If you are a young carer, juggling all your responsibilities may be difficult and it can be hard to find time for homework, activities after school or friends.

What other young people who care have said

"It's not just the caring that affects you... what really gets you is the worry of it all. Having a parent who is ill and seeing them in such a state, of course it's upsetting – you think about it a lot."

"I'm not on my own! I didn't realise how many young carers were in my school."

Getting help and support

As a young person, you have the right to a good education. So if your caring role is getting in the way of your education please seek advice and support. There is a lot of information that might help you if you are a young carer.

There are also a lot of people who can help you. Sometimes you might not know where to get help, so here are a few suggestions:

- Speak to someone at your school
[INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL LEAD/APPROPRIATE STAFF MEMBER]
- Speak to a good friend who you trust.
- Go online at www.youngcarers.net
The Princess Royal Trust for Carers has a website where you can chat to other young carers, for advice, information and support. Make sure you look at “Who Can Help Me?”
- Contact the Orkney Young Carers Service
The service offers confidential support and advice, the opportunity to meet other young people who have caring responsibilities and who may be in a similar situation to you, fun activities and information for you and your family. The young carers support worker can be contacted on 01856 870500 or by email at orkneycarers@tiscali.co.uk. The website can be found at www.orkneyyoungcarers.org.

Further sources of information and advice

- Speak to your doctor
- Call the Carers Helpline on 0808 808 7777
- Go to Carers Direct
www.nhs.uk/carersdirect/Pages/CarersDirectHome.aspx