

## How to help

Many young carers say they feel invisible and that their responsibilities often aren't recognised by professionals.

In order to care safely and stay in good health, young carers need information, support, respect, and recognition.

Acknowledgment of their role and a listening ear can be a lifeline to young carers. Simply asking 'how are you?' can be the most important action you can take for a young carer.

Another way to help is by referring them to us.



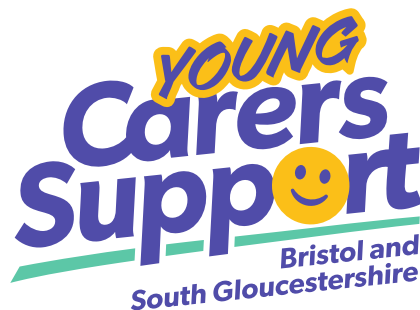
## Help we can help

Young Carers uses a family-centered approach to provide information, one-to-one support, and respite to young carers and professionals in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

When a young carer is referred to us, we provide an assessment to identify their needs and so we can make their life easier.

We also collaborate with local agencies to offer a range of engaging activities and talking groups, giving young carers a chance to take a break, connect with others in similar situations, and ultimately learn that they're not alone.

Young carers also get a chance to voice their issues and raise awareness of other young carers.



## Find out more

To find out more, or to make a referral, please visit our website.



 [www.carersbsg.org.uk/young-carers](http://www.carersbsg.org.uk/young-carers)



Or contacting us on:

 0117 958 9980

 [youngc@carersbsg.org.uk](mailto:youngc@carersbsg.org.uk)

   @YoungCarersBSG



Young carers is a part of Carers Support, which offers services to carers of all ages.



# Recognising and Supporting Young Carers:

## A Guide for Professionals in Bristol and South Gloucestershire



# Who is a young carer?

A young carer is a child or young person under 18 who provides regular ongoing support and care to a family member who is disabled, has a long-term illness, mental health issues, or is affected by substance misuse.

## The support they provide can be:

- Practical - helping with things like shopping, feeding, interpreting and translating, cooking and cleaning, or looking after brothers or sisters.
- Emotional – calming them down when they're angry or upset, or listening to their problems.

"I care for my younger sister who can't do anything for herself. I help feed her, bath her, dress her and do every other thing for her."

Young carer, aged 9

"I hate when teachers ask why you are late and ask lots and lots of questions that never end. And the worst thing is I don't get enough time to finish my homework and get detentions for it."

Young carer, aged 13

"My mum has depression, anxiety and suffers with self harm. On the bus, I would be wondering how she would be during the day, if she was safe. At college, I would text and ring my mum as much as I could to see if she is okay."

Young carer, aged 17

# How are young carers affected?

Caring is a huge responsibility and young carers do an amazing job managing it every day.

However, it can also cause a range of effects that can seriously negatively impact their life:

**Young carers are twice as likely to leave primary school below age-related expectations (MYTIME, 2022)**

**At least a third of young carers said their caring role resulted in them either 'always' or 'usually' feeling 'worried', 'lonely' or 'stressed' (Carers Trust, 2022)**

**Young carers are significantly more likely to be bullied (Carers Trust, 2016)**

**Young carers' physical health can be affected by lifting, heavy domestic tasks, lack of sleep, poor self-care and nutrition**



It is no exaggeration to state that many of these young carers simply miss out on their childhood. Young carers lack the time to play, make friends, pursue hobbies, and generally live their lives.

# Spotting the signs

Young carers rarely identify as young carers, but instead feel they're simply doing what must be done to help their family.

Many also keep themselves 'beneath the radar' of support services, as they're worried about what might happen if they talk to a professional.

For these reasons, it can be hard to recognise young carers, but we've identified some signs that may suggest a young person is a carer:

## Are they

- Repeatedly late or absent from school?
- Anxious, withdrawn or isolated?
- Unwilling to talk about home life and personal issues?

## Do they

- Lack of concentration in class?
- Have inappropriate peer relationships?
- Display emotional difficulties or challenging behaviour?
- Have limited or no aspirations for their future?

**If so, they may be a young carer.**

