



Life as a young carer can be challenging and often young carers can feel immense guilt, and pressure to stay home and look after their relatives, rather than attending school or meeting with friends. This can impact negatively on their education and even more so on their mental health and wellbeing due to social isolation.

At Carers Northumberland we aim to work in partnership with schools and colleges to help identify young carers and offer them the support they need whilst monitoring their progress. Attendance, engagement, behaviour, and performance in school can improve as a result of additional support. Young carers can access 1-1 sessions with our staff at their school, this is something we know has already helped some of the young carers already engaged with the service.

There are 411 young carers registered with Carers Northumberland; however, this does not represent the number of young carers that are living in the county and attending school. The 2011 census and research from the University of Nottingham predicts that there are likely to be approximately 10,500 unregistered young carers in Northumberland, and this figure could be much higher when the new census data is published later this year. In order to offer the right support at the right time, we need your help to identify young carers in schools.

WHAT CARERS NORTHUMBERLAND CAN OFFER YOUR SCHOOL

Northumberland Young Carers Toolkit

In March 2022, the Northumberland Young Carers Toolkit for Education Settings (Toolkit) was launched to support schools to recognise and implement changes to support young carers. The Toolkit is a support pack for schools to use to help identify, refer and support a young carer with their caring responsibilities to enable them to achieve their full educational potential and future aspirations. The Toolkit outlines how Carers Northumberland can support young carers with 1-1 school visits, home visits, free respite activities, additional family support where appropriate and overall support to help with their emotional needs.

The Toolkit also has a range of recommendations for schools which can help to make the school a young carer friendly environment. These include, a Young Carer Policy template, a Young Carers Charter example, assigning a member of staff to lead on Young Carers and Young Carer themed assemblies.

RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE IN SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS

We are now pleased to add our Recognition of Excellence in Supporting Young Carers standard to our package of schools' support which will acknowledge the implementation of the recommendations in the Toolkit for individual schools. A digital logo showing that your school has achieved the Recognition of Excellence in Supporting Young Carers standard will be provided that can be displayed on your school's website to demonstrate that you are acknowledging and implementing positive change for the wellbeing of students with caring responsibilities within your school. Schools who have achieved this standard will also be publicised on our website, social media and newsletters.

Schools who achieve the Recognition of Excellence in Supporting Young Carers standard may also wish to apply for the Young Carers in Schools Programme, which is a national award scheme run by Carers Trust and the Children's Society. More information regarding this can be found here [The Award | Young Carers in Schools Programme](#)

SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

We can arrange for a member of the Carers Northumberland Young Carers Service to attend a school assembly to talk to students about who is a young carer, what they might do at home and how to get additional support or arrange a specific one-off assembly about young carers, and how they can be supported both at home and in school and who to contact for support and advice following the session.

YOUNG CARER AWARENESS TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

A sound understanding of the role of Carers Northumberland and the part teachers can play in identifying young carers and seeking the right support is crucial. We can provide tailored Young Carer Identification and Awareness training sessions to school staff. This training covers how to identify young carers and the aspects of behaviour to look out for, how to approach a pupil who may have a caring role explain the support available and how to link in with Carers Northumberland and other key support organisations and/or agencies. This training can be delivered in-person or remotely.



WHAT CARERS NORTHUMBERLAND OFFER TO YOUNG CARERS DIRECTLY

WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS

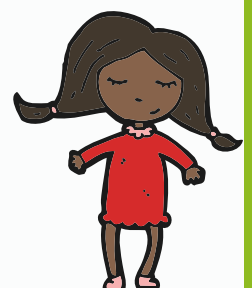
We can also offer Young Carer Awareness sessions for parents, carers and guardians. These sessions include information about Carers Northumberland's services for both young carers and adult carers, how to register and how to get support. This workshop will also cover parental guilt which is often a key factor in parents not engaging with the Young Carer Service or recognising their child could be a young carer. Parents may feel guilt or embarrassment if their child has to support them or that they are not able to give a child enough attention or support due to caring for a sibling with a disability or additional needs.

YOUNG CARER GROUPS IN SCHOOLS

Carers Northumberland can assist schools to set up a Young Carer Support Group in school and can attend the group if appropriate. Setting up a group in school can help engage students with caring responsibilities in shaping the support offered in school, meeting others in similar situations and allowing them to share their experiences and challenges and build stronger support networks with their peers.

EVALUATION

We love feedback. The Toolkit and School Support Offer are new services and we hope to be able to build and improve our offer with your suggestions. We regularly receive feedback from parents and young carers who are using our services and we would appreciate feedback from your school on how we are doing. We will use any feedback to improve and implement changes where required. We will provide you with an evaluation form when you have engaged with our services and hope you can support us by completing this.



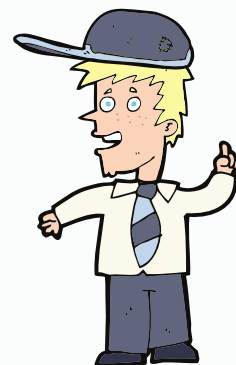
WHAT CARERS NORTHUMBERLAND OFFER TO YOUNG CARERS

ASSESSMENT OF NEED

Young carers registering with Carers Northumberland complete the initial Young Carers Health and Wellbeing Check which provides important information about the young carer and their family and what kind of support is required. Once registered, young carers and their family, where appropriate, are asked to complete our Young Carer Impact Assessment questionnaire which allows us to assess the amount and type of caring they are providing and what the impact is – this allows us to recommend a route for support. Not all young carers will require one-to-one support, however, all young carers who complete the assessment will be provided with a choice of potential interventions to help support them in their caring role. Children working one-to-one with a member of our team in school, will be given a full impact assessment and a recommendation report will be compiled. One-to-one support is usually time-limited to get the young carer to positive outcome. Most young carers who receive one-to-one support progress to our group activity programme, however, more intensive support can be accessed again if circumstances change.

YOUNG CARERS NEWSLETTER AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We send out our Young Carers Newsletter bi-monthly to all the young carers registered with the service. The newsletter usually contains news about the service, information about our groups, activities, events and trips and how to book, information from other organisations that young carers may find helpful, and competitions for young carers to take part in. The newsletter is emailed or posted depending on the young carer's preference. We also have closed Young Carers Facebook Group where we add useful updates, activity information and additional support tools.



GRANTS

Young carers can apply for a grant from our Young Carer Support Fund which can provide funding to take a break from caring. This can be used for respite activities such as dance lessons, music lessons, art materials, sports equipment or subscriptions and equipment for established hobbies or pastimes. The Young Carers Support Fund can also be used to purchase an Active Northumberland Young Carer Annual Pass which entitles young carers aged 8-18 years and friend to unlimited swimming, and for those over 14 years, unlimited use of the gym at any Active Northumberland facility.

Carers Northumberland can also support families to access grants for breaks, and/or household goods from various charitable providers where there is a carer need.

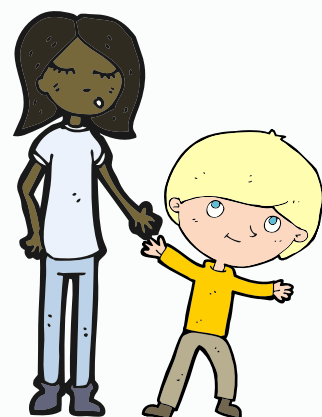
YOUNG CARER FORUMS

Every half term we host a Young Carers Forum which has a different theme for each one. We encourage honest young carer feedback by facilitating a focus group so that young carers can talk freely about the set topics. This allows young carers to have a voice and input into how the Young Carer Service is shaped.

Young Carers attending the forum will also have the opportunity to feedback on external services and the Young Carers Steering Group which consists of professionals from the local authority, NHS, education and the voluntary and community sector.

YOUNG CARER ACTIVITIES

The Young Carer Service is able to offer up to six free respite activities each month for the young carers to participate in. These are often a range of in-person and remote activities with free travel arranged for some of the countywide trips. Events include craft sessions, book group, getting to know you sessions, opportunities to try new things (paddleboarding, canoeing, graffiti art), meals and trips just for young carers. The getting to know you sessions are held in different locations and are an opportunity for young carers who are newly registered to come along with parents and meet other young carers and gain more information about the services offered. The respite activities aim to tackle social isolation felt by many young carers.



If you would like to access support to implement any of the toolkit recommendations please contact us on:

Telephone: 01670 320025

Email: youngcarers@carersnorthumberland.org.uk

Website: www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk

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