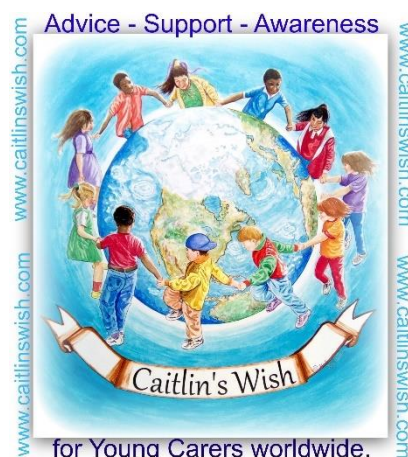


What is a Young Carer?



Introduction.

All children have the right to an education, to go to school, learn, play and enjoy life. However, making these rights a reality isn't always straight forward for the millions of children worldwide who have a caring role. All too often these children have to endure bullying because of their circumstances, and many spend their school days worrying about the person left at home. Some children even miss school because their loved one is too poorly to be left alone that day and there is no one else to look after them.

Research has shown that young carers often under achieve in school; getting lower grades than their peers. * That's why it's imperative that schools start identifying young carers as early as possible in their education and giving them adequate support, so they can achieve their full potential. It's estimated that there are 2 young carers in every classroom, ** so this really is an issue that schools must address.

It's imperative that young carers awareness and disability awareness is taught in P.S.H.E / social education classes from primary school onwards. That way students will have a better understanding of what it's like to be a young carer. With more compassion and understanding within school environments young carers will have a better chance of achieving their full potential.

That's why I have designed this resource - to help students and teachers understand what it's like to be a young carer, what it's like to live with illness and disability and why it's so important to adjust to help young carers reach their full potential.

*Carers Trust Research. ** BBC Research.

Overview.

This lesson helps children to think about how other children live. It explores what it means to be a young carer, and how these children help and support their family members.

There may be children who identify themselves as young carers as the lessons progress, which is why it's imperative to have a behaviour code in place before the lessons begin. It ensures that the children's thoughts and feelings will be respected and that the class is prepared for the possibility that someone may get upset, and if so they respond in a kind and supportive manner.

Learning objectives.


- To recognise that some children have caregiving roles at home.
- To encourage the children to think what it would be like if they were a young carer.
- To understand that everyone has their own opinions and that's okay.
- To recognise how our behaviour can affect other people.
- To recognise that family and friends should care for one another.
- To develop kind and supportive relationships through work and play.

WHAT IS A YOUNG CARER?

Do you know? Can you guess?

Discuss as a class or write down your ideas.

A young carer is...

- 
- a child or young person who helps to look after someone at home.
 - It might be their Mum or Dad,
 - Grandma or Grandad,
 - Brother or Sister,
 - or anyone who has a long-term illness,
 - a disability,
 - a mental health condition or a problem with drugs or alcohol.

Young Carers help their families in many ways.

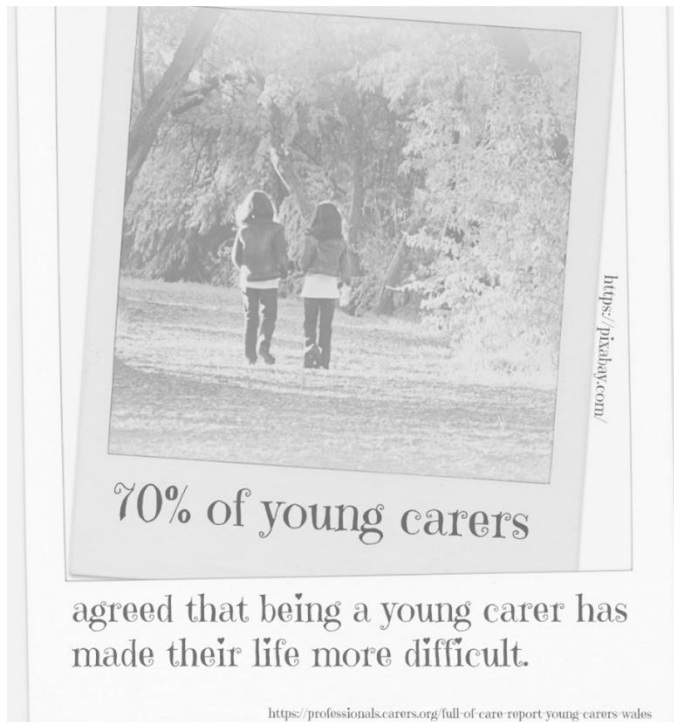
How do you think they might help?

Discuss as a class or write down your ideas.

These are just a few ways in which young carers help their families.

How many did you get right?

- Cleaning.
- Washing Dishes.
- Cooking.
- Making Drinks.
- Washing the clothes.
- Ironing.
- Tidying.
- Feeding pets.
- Pegging the clothes out to dry.
- Helping them to get around e.g. pushing them in a wheelchair.
- Translating (either into Sign Language or into another spoken language.)
- Helping them cope with the world around them. (E.g. With brain injury, Autism etc.)
- Walking pets.
- Paying bills.
- Looking after other brothers and sisters.
- Taking younger brothers & sisters to school.
- Washing & dressing the person they look after.
- Shopping.
- Giving them their medicines.
- Emotional support. Cheering them up :)
- Helping them to get in and out of bed.



How do children become young carers?

terminal illness such as cancer.

- Children become young carers when a family member is diagnosed with an illness or a disability.
- Children become young carers when a family member is hurt after an accident; with an injury that leaves them disabled. It might be an accident at home or at work, or it might be a car accident.
- Children become young carers when a family member is diagnosed with a terminal illness such as cancer.
- Children become young carers when a family member has a problem with drugs or alcohol.
- Children become young carers when their brother or sister is born with a disability, a health condition, a genetic condition, a learning disability, or autism spectrum disorder etc.

Do children volunteer to be young carers?

Most young carers say that caring for a member of their family is normal to them. They love their family, and they work together as a team.

When somebody you love becomes ill or disabled it doesn't mean that you love them any less. You look after them because they need more help to do everyday things...it's not really a case of volunteering or not. The family works together to help each other.

Life can be difficult for young carers sometimes though and they might feel sad that life has turned out this way. They feel tired because of all the extra things they have to do.

That's why it's so important to be supportive. Try to imagine what their life is like, and listen to what they say.

Remember that they're just like you in every single way, it's just that they have extra responsibilities.

"It's very frustrating being different from my friends." Young carer, Age 15, UK.

"I worry about my Mum and Dad while I'm at school." Young carer, UK.

"Caring is just a way of saying 'Thank you' for loving and raising me." Young carer, Age 17, UK.

Activity.

Try to imagine how you would feel if your mum or dad had an accident and couldn't walk any more. You would want to help them, wouldn't you?

Now you are thinking like a young carer.

Think of the ways in which your life would change.

The latest figures show that there are 1.3 - 1.4 million young carers in America. Approx. 700,000 young carers in the UK, 388,800 young carers in Australia and 108,000 young carers in Canada...

BUT all these figures are outdated, and there are many more young carers than this!

"Millions of children in the United Kingdom and around the world are living in families where there are severe circumstances and these children are having to take on a caregiving role."

Professor Saul Becker.

(Ted X Talk, 2014. <https://youtu.be/1FBWEMYQNFU>)

Further Resources...

Carers support organizations in the UK.

- <http://www.carers.org/>
- <https://babble.carers.org/>
- <http://www.youngcarer.com/>
- <https://carersuk.org>
- <http://www.careforcarers.org.uk/support-info/national/caring-organisations>
- [http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/our projects/young carers.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_projects/young_carers.htm)
- <http://www.spurgeonsyc.org/>
- [http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for parents/worried about your child/young carers](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/young_carers)

Australia

- <http://youngcarers.net.au/>
- <http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/>
- <http://carers-sa.asn.au/>
- <http://www.youngcarersnsw.org.au/>
- <http://www.carersvictoria.org.au/>
- <http://carersqld.asn.au/>
- <http://www.youngcarerswa.asn.au/>
- <http://www.australia.gov.au/people/carers>
- <http://carers-sa.asn.au/contact-assets/disability-support>

USA

- <http://www.caregivingcafe.com/blog/>
- <http://thecaregiverspace.org/resources-young-caregivers/>
- <http://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/resources/directory/>
- <http://www.lifespanrespitewa.org/for-family-caregivers/>
- <http://www.familyresourcenetwork.org/>
- <http://www.caregiveraction.org/>
- <http://www.apa.org/about/gr/issues/cyf/caregiving-facts.aspx>
- <http://www.caregiver.com/>

Canada

- <http://kim-ontheway.blogspot.co.uk/p/young-carers-initiative.html>
- <http://www.actioncanada.ca/project/cares-young-carers-raising-awareness-invisible-population/>
- <http://www.powerhouseproject.ca/about/>
- <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/lifeevents/caregiver.shtml>
- <http://www.canadacares.org/>

New Zealand.

- <http://www.carers.net.nz/>
- <http://www.caringforcarers.org.nz/>
- www.facebook.com/youngcarersnz/

Further Resources –

- <http://saulbecker.co.uk>
- <http://professionals.carers.org/young-carers/articles/schools-resource-pack,6282,PR.html>
- <http://www.youngcarer.com/resources/schools-resources>
- <http://www.aacy.org/index.php/publications-324>
- <http://www.carers.org/news/supporting-young-carers-schools-new-resource-school-staff-launched>
- <http://www.youngcarer.com/resources>
- <http://www.youngcarers.org.uk/resources>
- <http://www.youngcarerstoolkit.co.uk/>

- <http://youngcarers.net.au/resources-and-links/>
- <http://www.youngcarerswa.asn.au/info-for-schools/resources/resources-for-teachers/>
- <http://www.tesaustralia.com/ResourceDetail.aspx?storyCode=6071465&>
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299270/Young_Carers_pathway_Interactive_FINAL.pdf