

What you can do to mark Young Carers Awareness Day

31 January 2019



Encourage young carer services

you work with to get involved in the #CareForMeToo campaign and showcase their efforts on social media.

Make a film

If you're involved in the Young Carers in Schools programme, make a short film about the difference it's made. Post it on YouTube.

Have a stall

Download materials from Carers.org/YCAD2019 and Carers.org/careformetoo for your stand. Encourage pupils to play our Life in a Spin interactive game on a laptop. Find it at lifeinaspin.org/intro.

Have a donation bucket for money.

Host an assembly –

why not invite a local carers service or young carers in your school to give a short talk about young carers and their mental health.

Put up a **display** on your **school noticeboard** - include our posters and example blogs, poems and letters from our #CareForMeToo young carer campaign champions.

Run a lesson

about young carers and/or their mental health – check out our Young Carers Awareness Day and #CareForMeToo classroom resources.

Create Young Carers Awareness Day pages on your school's website.

Put up some of our **Young Carers Awareness Day** or **#CareForMeToo** posters.

Organise your own activity,

such as **cake sales**, or **create your own**

Young Carers Awareness Day or **#CareForMeToo** posters.

Check out what more you could do to help young carers in your school by downloading our Step-by-step Guide which makes it as easy as possible to support young carers in school. Find out more at <https://youngcarersinschools.com/>.

Visit Carers.org/YCAD2019 to find out more!

Raising Awareness of Young Carers

Ideas for activities and lessons

Teachers notes

- Raising awareness of young carers among pupils may encourage some pupils to consider issues relating directly to themselves for the first time. Carers Trust recommends support is readily available and promoted for pupils if required.
- By discussing these issues as part of the curriculum, the aim is to create a more accepting and understanding environment where young carers feel safe and confident to share their stories and where they are accepted for who they are and supported by peers.
- The message that young carers are first and foremost young people and that anyone could become a carer, should be paramount.
- Young Carers in Schools is a free initiative in England and Wales that makes it as easy as possible for schools to support young carers. See www.youngcarersinschools.com.

Ten minute activities! Ideas for an assembly or any ten minute slot!

- Play Life in a Spin game: lifeinaspin.org/intro.
- Run the Young Carer Quiz.
- Invite a local young carers service to deliver an assembly or short talk.



Resources to use in the classroom

- **Life in a Spin game:** Our game to encourage pupils to think about being in the shoes of a young carer: lifeinaspin.org/intro.
- **The Young Carer Quiz!** How much do pupils know?
- **Young Carer Case Studies:** Real life stories from young carers to promote discussion.
- **Be an Agony Aunt for a Young Carer!:** Pupils can read and respond to a selection of problems from young carers.
- **Find resources** at Carers.org/young-carers-awareness-day-2019-resources.

#CareForMeToo

This year, Young Carers Awareness Day is focusing on mental health – linking with our #CareForMeToo campaign. Find wellbeing-focused classroom activities and more about how you can support the campaign at Carers.org/careformetoo.

Outcomes for pupils

- Pupils will understand if what they are doing at home makes them a young carer. And if they are a young carer they will have a better understanding of how to access help.
- Pupils will learn who young carers are and the sorts of caring responsibilities they may have.
- Pupils will learn the barriers and challenges faced by young carers and the impact, both positive and negative, of being a young carer.
- Pupils will gain insight into how young carers may feel.

30 minute activities!

- Use one of the case studies as the basis for short role play scenarios in PSHE/PSE or drama lessons.
- Create your own True/False quiz using the Carers Trust resources and the internet.
- Read the case studies and/or other resources and write a 'Day in the Life of a Young Carer' in diary form or timetable format (06:00 Get up and make breakfast for Mum). Include the responsibilities, thoughts and feelings that a young carer may have.



50 minute activities!

- Invite your local young carers service to deliver a lesson about young carers. A young adult carer may be able to attend to talk about their experience. Visit Carers.org to find your nearest service.
- Create your own infographic or poster about young carers. Use our infographic, case studies and the internet to research information.
- Choose a case study, then draw a mind map of the young carer's family in the centre of a page. In mind map form, write down different challenges a young carer and their family may be facing. Add to the map how you think each family member could be supported. If you have time, watch the Life in a Spin game at lifeinaspin.org/intro to help you, or visit Carers.org.
- Research activity. Use the resources and the internet to research and present ten facts about young carers. Include the following: What do young carers do? How might being a carer affect a young person? What support is available for young carers?
- Read Be an Agony Aunt for a Young Carer! Choose one problem and write a response to the young carer.



Information

Watch the film and support Young Carers in Schools <https://youngcarersinschools.com/>



Thinking About Young Carers' Mental Health

Ideas for activities and lessons #CareForMeToo

Introduction

#CareForMeToo is Carers Trust's new campaign. It aims to raise awareness of, and improve support for, young carers' mental health. Being a young carer is a risk factor for the mental health of children and young people. The following activities are designed to help pupils think about their own mental health, and think about the impact caring can have on the mental health of young carers.



It will be useful for pupils to have an understanding of what a young carer is and what they do before discussing the impacts of caring on young carers' mental health. To do this, we recommend preceding the activities on this page with those suggested on our Raising Awareness of Young Carers: Ideas for Activities and Lessons resource at **Carers.org/young-carers-awareness-day-2019-resources** in the same or a separate lesson.

If doing this as a separate lesson, you can refresh your pupils' memories on the topic of young carers by using one of the short activities on the Raising Awareness of Young Carers: Ideas for Activities and Lessons resource at **Carers.org/young-carers-awareness-day-2019-resources**, or using blogs and vlogs created by our #CareForMeToo young carer champions (see **Carers.org/careformetoo**).

Teachers notes

By discussing these issues in class, the aim is to create a more accepting and understanding environment where young carers feel safe and confident to share their stories and experiences of caring for a family member. And it will help other pupils accept young carers for who they are, and to support them.



The message that young carers are first and foremost young people like anyone else at school – and that anyone could become a carer – should be paramount.

Discussion of the issues faced by young carers is designed to raise awareness of the potential impacts of being a young carer on children and young people's mental health among all pupils. But it is important to consider carefully the potential impacts of this discussion on young carers in your classroom. Make sure that everyone in the class knows following your discussion that support is available.

Young Carers in Schools is a free initiative in England and Wales that makes it as easy as possible for schools to support young carers. See **www.youngcarersinschools.com**.

Outcomes for pupils

- Pupils will learn about some of the key challenges experienced by young people with a caring role.
- Pupils will learn about the impact that having a caring role can have on young carers, particularly regarding their mental health.
- Pupils will have a better understanding of their feelings and how these relate to mental health.
- Pupils will have a better understanding of why a young carer might be more likely to experience these feelings.

Discussion topics

Do you know what the term 'mental health' means?

- What are some feelings that you think are good for someone's mental health?
- What are some feelings that you think might be less good for someone's mental health?

If a friend told you that they were having problems with their mental health, what might you do?

- What people or services would you suggest they go and speak to?
- Have you ever helped a friend in this situation before?

Young carers are children who have responsibilities you would usually expect an adult to have. Can you think of a time where you've been responsible for someone or something? How did it make you feel?

Young carers often miss out on opportunities to spend time with their friends because their caring role means they have to be at home. Can you think of a time you missed out on an opportunity to spend time with friends? How did it make you feel?

Some young carers get picked on or bullied because they are a young carer. How do you think this makes them feel?

30-minute activities to help complement your conversation

- A game of Pass the Parcel, with a twist! Each layer of the parcel should contain one of the discussion topics.
- Have a conversation using the discussion topics over some fun, stress-busting activities. These include making stress balls or mindfulness glitter jars.
- Activity guides are available as part of our resource pack. These provide examples of fun ways to get young carers and young adult carers thinking and talking about their mental health. See **Carers.org/careformetoo** to find out how to request one.



For more information, please contact **campaigns@carers.org** and visit **[Carers.org/careformetoo](https://www.carers.org/careformetoo)**.



Be an Agony Aunt for a Young Carer!

This activity is designed to be used with the other resources produced for Young Carers Awareness Day 2019.

What problems do young carers worry about? What would be helpful to say to them?

Here are three issues that young carers are facing. They are based on real examples of problems that young carers have had. What might you say to help them? Choose one and respond to the young carer in the style of an agony aunt.

Problem 1

My brother is ten and has a learning disability that means he behaves like a two-year-old. I am the only one that can calm him down and who he listens to. I am feeling really stressed and I can't have a break without him. I am often the one that is looking after him. My parents find it really hard too. What can I do to get more support for my brother's behaviour?

– **Asif**

Problem 2

My dad is disabled and he needs me to do lots of stuff for him. My friends at school have stopped hanging out with me and everything has got so much I don't think I can cope with it any more. Please can you give me some advice because my mum is worried and I have been going to the doctors because I am really depressed and I don't know what to do. I need help.

– **Stephen**

Problem 3

My mum's in hospital at the moment because she has kidney problems. So me and my little sister are living with our auntie. My auntie keeps crying loads which makes us upset! Whenever I mention it she keeps saying that I'm being rude. How can I tell her in a good way that we can't cope with all this?

– **Joanne**

Information

Carers.org/YCAD2019



The Young Carer Quiz



This quiz is designed to be used with the other resources produced for Young Carers Awareness Day. See Carers.org/YCAD2019.

1. How many secondary school children in England have a caring role?
2. On average, how many young carers are there in each classroom?
3. One in five young carers have never been away on a summer holiday with their family.
True or False?
4. Young carers are less likely than other children their age to go onto college, university or work when they leave school.
True or False?
5. What is the average age of a young carer?
6. What percentage of young carers are under the age of ten?
 - a. 5%
 - b. 10%
 - c. 15%
7. What percentage of young carers under the age of ten get up during the night to provide care?
 - a. 28%
 - b. 38%
 - c. 48%
8. Young carers are entitled to a carer's assessment.
True or False?
9. What percentage of young carers are bullied simply because they are caring for someone?
10. Young carers are more likely to experience anxiety or depression than other young people their age.
True or False?

Answers

1. A survey in 2018 by the BBC and the University of Nottingham estimated there to be as many as 800,000 secondary school pupils acting as young carers in England.¹
2. There are an estimated six young carers in every secondary school classroom.²
3. True. Research by Carers Trust and Action for Children in 2018 found that one in five young carers had never been on a summer holiday with their family.³
4. True. Young adult carers are twice as likely as their peers not to be in education, employment or training when they leave school.⁴
5. The average age of a young carer is 13.⁵
6. B. 10%. One in ten young carers is under the age of ten.⁶
7. C. 48%. Almost half of young carers under ten who took part in a Carers Trust survey said they get up during the night to care.⁷
8. True. Under the Children and Families Act 2014, young carers are entitled to a young carer's assessment. It will look at what can be done to make caring easier for them. See carers.org/know-your-rights-support-young-carers-and-young-adult-carers-england
9. 26% of young carers say they have been bullied because they are caring for someone.⁸
10. A recent NHS survey found that 13% of young carers had anxiety or depression, compared with 8% of other young people their age.⁹

¹ University of Nottingham and the BBC (2018), New research suggests more than one in five children in England carry out some care for sick and disabled family members. <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/news/pressreleases/2018/september/children-england-care-sick-family.aspx>.

² University of Nottingham and the BBC (2018), New research suggests more than one in five children in England carry out some care for sick and disabled family members. <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/news/pressreleases/2018/september/children-england-care-sick-family.aspx>.

³ Carers Trust (2018), Three quarters of children feel lonely during the summer holidays, Carers.org/press-release/three-quarters-young-carers-feel-lonely-during-summer-holidays.

⁴ Audit Commission (2010), *Against the Odds: Targeted Briefing – Young Carers* (Audit Commission).

⁵ Census, 2011 (England and Wales only).

⁶ Census, 2011 (England and Wales only).

⁷ Carers Trust (2018), Half of infant young carers under ten are suffering broken sleep to care for family members, Carers.org/news-item/half-infant-young-carers-under-ten-are-suffering-broken-sleep-care-family-members.

⁸ Sempik, J, Becker, S, (2013), *Young Adult Carers in School: Experiences and Perceptions of Caring and Education* (Carers Trust).

⁹ NHS Digital (2018), *Mental Health of Children and Young People in England – 2017: Behaviours, Lifestyles and Identities* (NHS Digital). See <https://files.digital.nhs.uk/C9/999365/MHCYP%202017%20Behaviours%20Lifestyles%20Identities.pdf>

Information

[Carers.org/YCAD2019](https://carers.org/YCAD2019)

