**Young Carers**

We know it can sometimes be tricky to fully understand who to go to for information, help and advice. There are a few different ways you can find help if you are a young carer and need support. We are always here to help, you can find our contact information at the bottom of this page if you need our assistance.

In addition to contacting us you may also want to reach out to someone in your school, your GP or someone else you feel you can talk to. They can always join you on a telephone or video call to us if you want to.

You can also consider contacting your local authority who may be able to help. For example, search “Child duty team Caerphilly”, if you live in Caerphilly.

**Being a young carer**

Some people start giving care at a very young age and don't really realise they are carers. Other young people become carers overnight. Every person and circumstance is different and can also change on a regular or not so regular basis.

If someone in your family needs to be looked after, you may really want to help them. But as a young carer, you shouldn't be doing the same things as adult carers. Nor should you be spending a lot of your time caring for someone, as this can get in the way of you doing well at school and doing the same things as other children or young people.

It is important you decide how much time and what type of care you're willing or able to give, or whether you should be a carer at all. Think about whether you're the right person to offer the care needed by the person you look after.

Find out more about who can help young carers:

**Help from your Local Authority/ Young Carers assessment**

All disabled adults are entitled to support from their local authority (or council), depending on their needs, so they shouldn't have to rely on their children to care for them.

If you or your parent/s request it, a social worker from your local authority must visit to carry out a young carer's assessment.

This assessment is different from the one adult carers receive. It will decide what kind of help you and your family may need. And if your needs or circumstances change, another assessment should be carried out.

A young carer's assessment can determine whether it's appropriate for you to care for someone else and considers whether you want to be a carer. The social worker must also look at your education, training, leisure opportunities and views about your future.

The social worker must ask about your wishes and involve you, your parent/s and anyone else you or your parents want to be involved. All these people should receive a written record of the assessment. This will include whether the council thinks you need support, whether their services could provide you with it, and whether they will give you it.

It should also explain what you can do if you or your parent/s disagree with the assessment.

If you and the person you care for both agree, the local authority can assess your needs as a young carer and the needs of the person you care for at the same time.

Find out more about having a carer's assessment: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carer-assessments/>

**Help with money**

If you're 16 or over and not in full-time education, you may be eligible for help finding work, as well as with your family's finances (for instance, through benefits such as Carer's Allowance) <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance>.

Getting an assessment is the best way to find out what's available in your situation.

**Your education**

If you’re a young person who also looks after someone else, then you’re probably used to doing a bit more than some of your friends. But you might find that you need to be even more independent right now and that can be tough, especially when you’ve lost some of that support from school or college.

Education is important as it can often shape your future opportunities. and it's where people make lasting friendships. Sadly, we regularly hear of young carers missing school, dropping out of education, or not getting the results they'd like.

This is not surprising, as you're having to juggle care and support responsibilities, being in school, doing homework, being with your friends and doing the things you enjoy.

If you need help with education, try first reaching out to someone you can talk to in your school, college, or university. Many will have designated welfare leads, although their titles may be different at different education settings.

**Your well-being**

Being a young carer can often have a significant impact on a young person’s emotional health and well-being. Young carers may be investing a lot of time and energy into looking after a family member or friend and therefore not finding enough time for themselves. Many young people who have caring responsibilities can notice a negative impact on their physical and mental health and well-being, so emotional support is very important.

Although it’s natural to feel anxious about things at times, there are lots of simple, positive steps you can take which will help you feel a whole lot better.

The Mix is the UK’s leading digital charity for under 25s, reaching over 6 million young people each year. Whatever issue a young person is facing, The Mix is always there for them – via their website, over the phone or via social media. Support is free, confidential and anonymous and can be accessed wherever young people are.  <https://www.themix.org.uk>

Shout 85258 provides free, confidential, 24/7 text message support in the UK for anyone struggling to cope. They can help with issues including suicidal thoughts, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, abuse, self-harm, relationship problems and bullying. Text "Shout" to 85258 to speak to an empathetic, trained volunteer who will listen and work with you to solve problems.

Meic is the helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales. Freephone: 0808 80 23456 or visit the website for other ways to get in touch <https://www.meiccymru.org/>