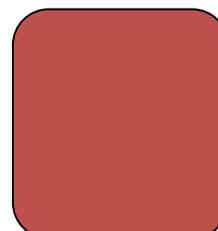
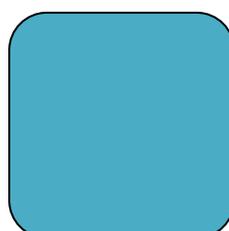
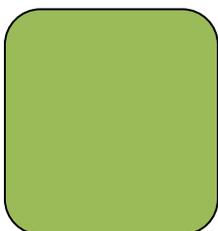
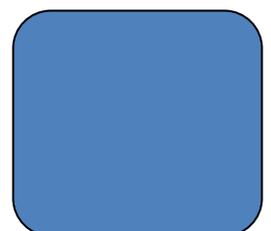
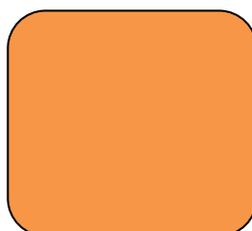
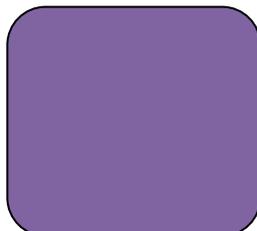
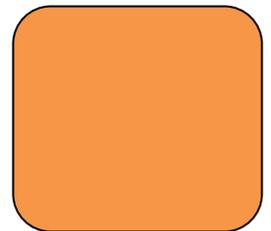
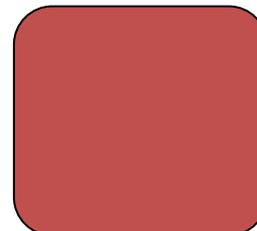
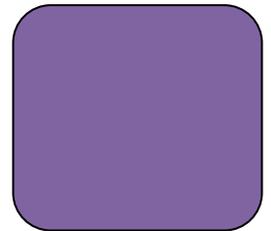
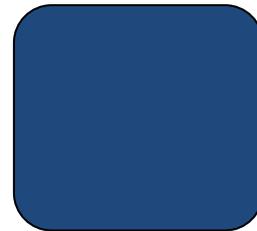
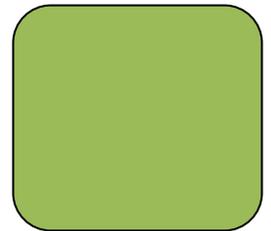


The Wi Rascals Young Carers Project



School Resource Pack

Young Carers



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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A YOUNG CARER?

Edinburgh Young Carers Project defines Young Carers as:

Young people who have practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities for another person as a consequence of ill-health, disability, mental health difficulties or drug and alcohol use.

This includes young people who:

- **Are primary carers**— those who carry out the majority or all of the caring tasks.
- **Are secondary carers**— those who whilst not being the primary carer are adversely affected by the caring situation and responsibilities.
- **Have been carers**—whose caring situation has come to an end and who need time to adjust.

The following categories of young people are not considered to be young carers:

- Those caring for someone with a short-term illness i.e. flu, chickenpox
- Those caring for non-disabled siblings whilst non-disabled parents are absent, i.e. because of work commitments,
- Inadequate parenting skills

It should also be noted that the impact of caring for young people may not correspond to the number of hours caring, e.g. during the night some young carers may be up for a short time, but on many occasions. This may only equate to a small number of hours but the impact on the

wellbeing of such young people can be significant.

WHO IS THE PACK FOR?

This pack is aimed at staff – particularly teaching staff in secondary schools - in Edinburgh to raise awareness of the needs of young carers. Although the profile of young carers has been increasing in recent years, there is still a widespread lack of awareness regarding how to identify and meet the needs of young carers. Similarly, professionals working with young people may not know how to respond to effectively support the needs of young carers.

The *Getting it Right for Young Carers – The Young Carers Strategy for Scotland (2010-2015)* suggests the approaches and principles being advanced by GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) provide an opportunity to address some of the issues around young carers as a ‘hidden population’. With a focus on wellbeing indicators, GIRFEC seeks to identify all the needs of a young person rather than just those associated with a particular role or label.

Many school staff have good opportunities to identify young carers before situations reach crisis stage; through their day to day contact, the pastoral care they offer and their concern about underlying reasons for problems with attendance, achievement, attainment and behaviour. Such opportunities may arise through their awareness of the child’s wider family circumstances, their partnership working with parents or because professionals in other agencies have shared information about the young person’s caring responsibilities.

WHAT DOES THE PACK AIM TO DO?

The pack provides practical resources school staff can use with pupils to raise awareness of the issues faced by young carers. It aims to:

- Provide information about young carers
- Help identify young carers
- Promote increased understanding of young carers
- Give ideas about useful support
- Promote supportive school ethos'

It is hoped the lesson plans included in the accompanying document will increase pupils' awareness and understanding of caring responsibilities within families.

This in turn should result in a more supportive school environment and hopefully reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness that can so often affect young carers. Young carers themselves have identified that negative or ill-informed attitudes of their peers often compound the difficulties that they experience.

Using the pack can also help young people to identify themselves as a young carer. Many may feel the range of tasks they take on at home is 'normal', feel they do not have a right to a childhood as other children do or feel they are the only one in this situation. Finding out during lessons or assemblies they are a young carer may encourage them to seek out the support they need, be that informal or professional.

Importantly, using this pack will also help schools fulfil their duties under the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2003 (as amended). If young people require additional support to access the curriculum because of their caring responsibilities, they should be supported to do so.

HOW HAS THE PACK BEEN DEVELOPED?

Carer Information Strategy funding from the Scottish Government has funded a schools awareness raising project in Edinburgh since 2010. Funding was allocated for this purpose from Edinburgh Community Health Partnership to Edinburgh Young Carers Project (EYCP).

As part of this initiative EYCP have developed a partnership approach with a further two local organisations who also provide dedicated services for young carers – Broomhouse Centre and North West Carers. Details on these three organisations are given later in this pack.

The project enables direct work with primary and secondary schools across Edinburgh. This work includes engaging with pupils and staff to better understand caring roles of certain children and young people within their households and how to offer better support to such pupils.

Key features of the project include:

- Providing input at staff meetings, assemblies and during classes
- Providing advice on how to identify and support young carers
- Developing peer support models
- Developing and disseminating this resource pack
- Developing EYCP website, including resources for professionals and young people

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

HOW MANY YOUNG CARERS ARE THERE?

The 2001 census revealed there were 174,997 young carers (up to the age of 18) in the UK – 16,701 of who live in Scotland. It is likely, however, that these numbers are an underestimate, as census questionnaires tend to be completed by an adult within each household. More recent studies have suggested there may be as many as 100,000 young carers in Scotland or **1 in 10 of the school population**¹.

SOME STATISTICS

The following statistics were reported in 2004 from a survey of **87** young carers' projects across the UK working with a total of **6178** young carers².

56% of young carers were female and **44%** male. Overall girls were more involved in all aspects of caring. **75%** of girls provide domestic care opposed to **65%** of boys. **22%** of girls provide personal, intimate care compared to **13%** of boys.

56% of young carers were living in lone parent families

82% of young carers provide emotional support and supervision

10% of young carers were caring for more than one person

50% of young carers were caring for 10 hours or less per week

33% of young carers were caring for 11-20 hours per week

16% of young carers are caring for over 20 hours per week

4% of young carers are caring for over 40 hours a week

The average age of young carers was 12 years old

63% of siblings with care needs had learning difficulties

64% of young carers had been caring for 3 or more years. **3%** had been caring for more than 10 years

THE IMPACT OF CARING

When considering the impact of caring, it is interesting to note that in recent years attention has moved away from quantifying information about tasks performed by young carers. Instead there is an increasing focus on the social and emotional impact on the individual and the family.

However, misconceptions that young carers only undertake physical tasks still prevail, and recognition of the emotional impact of caring can be neglected. Growing up coping with a disability or illness of a loved one will, in the vast majority of cases at least, result in psychosocial effects for young people. The nature and extent of such effects will most likely depend on a variety of factors including:

- The services and support offered to the family by friends and agencies
- Family structure and dynamics

¹ Scottish Government (2010) *Getting it Right for Young Carers. The Young Carers Strategy 2010-2015*. Scottish Government, Edinburgh.

² Dearden, C & Becker, S (2004) *Young Carers in the UK: the 2004 Report*. Carers UK, London. Available to download from www.carersuk.org

- The nature of the disability and the personality of the child.

In addition, research on resilience suggests that as the number of stressors increase, the ability of children to adapt and respond in healthy ways decreases. Thus, routinely used coping mechanisms may not protect young carers when situations become too intensive or demanding.

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS

When a young person provides care for a relative or sibling who has a disability, illness or substance misuse problem this can interfere with their education. Difficulties encountered can include: **attendance, lateness, concentration and tiredness and completing homework**. This can, therefore, limit **motivation, achievement and ambition**. The cumulative effects of such difficulties can therefore make it difficult for young carers to **fulfil their full potential**.

One in five young carers has missed school because of their caring responsibilities³. Further, Dearden and Becker (2004) found **27% of all young carers in secondary school and 13% in primary school** experienced some educational problems. This number increased to **40%** when the young person was caring for someone with a **substance misuse problem**⁴.

In addition to difficulties accessing the curriculum young carers may experience issues integrating socially within the school environment. A recent study of 700 young carers by Princess Royal Trust for Carers, reported as many as two thirds of young carers had been bullied by their peers⁵.

In spite of these difficulties, the majority of young carers will not be identified as such by school staff. This is because young carers and their families often remain silent about their caring responsibilities due to fears around statutory involvement and the reaction of peers, or because they are unaware help may be available.

The important role schools can play has been highlighted by young carers accessing local young carer services. They say this is because schools can provide a haven from the pressures they face at home. The positive relationships they develop with teachers and school staff who respond to them in a *sensitive* way regarding their caring role is often reported as beneficial. We believe the introduction of the *Curriculum for Excellence* will enhance such good practice.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Young carers can experience a range of social problems as a result of their caring role. Difficulties can occur for practical reasons such as:

- Being unable to go out to play regularly or take part in social activities due to their caring role
- Low income or transport difficulties
- Being seen as 'different' by other children
- The behaviour of the cared for person may be 'embarrassing' to the young carer
- The behaviour of the cared for person may be threatening
- The condition might cause stigmatisation, especially for those caring for people with HIV/AIDS, mental health problems or alcohol or substance dependency

Where young carers are able to access leisure opportunities they often find it difficult to relax

³ Dearden, C. & Becker, S. (1998) *Young Carers in the United Kingdom: A Profile*. Carers National Association, London.

⁴ Dearden, C & Becker, S (2004) *Young Carers in the UK: the 2004 Report*. Carers UK, London. Available to download from www.carersuk.org

⁵ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/8675043.stm>

and enjoy themselves because they are worried about the cared for person they have left at home.

Social problems can include:

- Isolation from peers
- Bullying
- Behavioural difficulties
- Loss of childhood
- Disaffection
- Problems with social and personal development

Caring responsibilities may also lead to false maturity - where the young carer, for example, appears to be very mature for his or her age, but will behave immaturely in a “safe” environment.

The onset of illness or disability may also lead to changes in family relationships and can cause aspects of family breakdown. Subsequent relationships in adulthood may also be affected by social problems young carers encountered during their formative years.

EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS AND MENTAL ILL HEALTH

Given the impact of caring discussed above, it is perhaps not surprising that young carers can frequently experience emotional support and mental health needs. Young carers often describe feelings of isolation, stress, depression, of being different and having a lack of control over their lives and their environment. Feelings of loss and grief are also common due to changes in family relationships, income and activities, and discernable differences between the childhood experiences of young carers and their peers.

It is not always clear what support to offer in such situations, for instance, giving reassurance to young carers so they do not worry more can

create uncertainties and isolation from the family and the cared for person.

Sadly some young carers will experience bereavement, the effects of which may be accentuated by the extended period of intensive caring that precedes it. Emotional distress experienced by young carers may also manifest through conditions such as eating disorders, suicidal behaviours and self harm.

PHYSICAL ILL HEALTH

Like adult carers, young carers can often experience physical ill health and injury because of their caring roles. Injuries may arise from lifting a parent or sibling and from undertaking heavy domestic tasks. Young carers may become ill through lack of sleep or poor self care/nutrition. Illnesses such as asthma, other allergies and severe headaches also appear to be relatively common in young carers.

SIBLINGS

Dearden and Becker’s research showed **24%** of young carers were caring for a brother or sister with a disability or illness.⁶ Often such young people will be playing a supportive role to their parents, but the impact on siblings and their consequent needs should not be overlooked or undervalued.

The 1995 study *All in the Family: Siblings and Disability*⁷, was an exploration of children who had a brother or sister with a disability. The survey found that all of the children interviewed helped to care for their brother or sister in some way. These children reported:

55% had had their sleep disturbed by the sleeping patterns of their disabled sibling

45% were sometimes tired at school

⁶ Dearden, C. & Becker, S. (1998) *Young Carers in the United Kingdom: A Profile*. Carers National Association, London.

⁷ Aitkinson, N. and Crawforth, M. (1995) *All in the Family: Siblings and Disability*, NCH Action for Children, Watford.

45% had trouble completing homework due to the attention seeking behaviour of the sibling

70% felt jealous or angry at the time parents spent with their brother or sister

Over **40%** were angry or upset because family outings were infrequent or limited in scope

Nearly **40%** felt isolated

60% did not mind helping to care, the remainder refused to comment

Over **40%** were upset by regularly disturbed mealtimes

70% had been bullied or teased at school because of their siblings' disability

Almost **60%** were embarrassed, upset or angry when their sibling's disability spoilt games with friends

Almost **70%** were upset or angry when their sibling acted oddly in public

YOUNG CARER NEEDS

On the right is a list of the types of support young carers, and professionals who work with them, have said young carers need. Every young carer and caring situation is unique and the list will therefore not be appropriate or relevant to all. In addition, whilst some will only require a minimal input, others will require considerably greater levels of support to meet their needs.

- Early intervention
- Their role to be acknowledged and valued
- Being heard, believed and respected
- Having someone to talk to
- Assessment and information on how to access their right to an assessment
- Information on the cared for person's condition
- Information on the support available to the young carer and the cared for person
- Knowing there are others in the same position
- Opportunities to take part in age appropriate activities
- A break from caring
- Educational support
- Services for the cared for person
- Services for the whole family that allow them to undertake activities, holidays etc together
- Support in their caring role (practical and emotional)
- Counselling – including bereavement counselling
- Advocacy
- Opportunities for self-determination and to plan for their futures
- Having their views taken into account in decisions taken in relation to themselves and their families
- To be empowered to feel that they deserve support
- To feel cared for themselves
- Opportunities to mix with peers and other young carers
- Transport
- Financial support

Young carers can benefit from:

IDENTIFICATION AND SUPPORT

IDENTIFYING YOUNG CARERS

Young carers are often difficult to identify because they keep their caring role hidden and secret or do not realise that they are a young carer. Many young carers fear they will become marginalised from peers or become involved in statutory investigation. For instance, they may worry the person they care for could get into trouble with the police or that they may become caught up in child protection proceedings or be taken into care.

Despite these difficulties in identifying young carers, the impact of caring responsibilities may manifest in a number of ways, and a combination of factors may indicate that a child or young person is caring. These signs can often be misinterpreted, and young carers may instead be labelled as lazy, disruptive or truants.

It is important for front-line teachers and youth work staff to be aware of these issues, as they are often the people who will have the greatest opportunity to spot the signs and identify any problems at home. Specialist young carer services rely on professionals in regular contact with young people to make appropriate referrals to the project.

The following are *possible* signs that can be used to help identify young carers within the school environment; however please note that they can easily be applied to a range of other situations also.

There are a wide range of indicators, some of which may not seem immediately applicable to young people in caring situations. The important thing is to be aware that behaviour may be masking an incredibly difficult and turbulent situation at home:

TIRED DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Young carers may feel tired at school due to extensive caring tasks and/or stress suffered at home. Young carers who are frightened of being identified as such may spend many hours working until late at night on their schoolwork. They may be awakened during the night to help the person they care for. Some young carers have been known to start paid employment after school hours, at weekends and during holidays to help with financial problems experienced in the family.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE BELOW POTENTIAL

Many young carers struggle at school because of the home situation, despite strong academic ability. This may and can affect the entry level for exams and/or complete examination withdrawal from a particular subject. They are often unable to complete or hand in homework on time, and offer poor excuses for their failure to do so. Homework may also be rushed or not up to an acceptable standard, and performance at school can be erratic and unpredictable. School work may suffer because the young carer is taking too much time off school to help out at home.

LACK OF CONCENTRATION OR FOCUS

Young carers often spend time at school worrying about what is happening to the person they care for when they are not there to look after them. They may find it difficult to concentrate for any length of time due to such worries or due to feeling tired and/or stressed.

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES

Young carers may not appreciate the relevance of certain topics being discussed and activities promoted in school. They may feel caught up in their own caring situation and be unable to see how they could achieve opportunities available to other young people. They may feel that their priorities in life are not appreciated or understood. This can lead to young carers feeling disenfranchised.

MAY LOOK AND ACT DEPRESSED AND UNMOTIVATED

Again, this may be as a result of the young person feeling tired and isolated. They can also feel guilty for being well while the loved one is ill, or for not being able to cope when the cared for person's health deteriorates. Young carers may be quiet, withdrawn and morose.

MAJOR SWINGS IN TEMPERAMENT

Extrovert behaviour – on days when they feel 'in control'

Aggressive behaviour – when they are feeling pressurised and defensive

Introvert behaviour – when they feel they are not coping

Emotional behaviour – when they are feeling guilty because of their own good health

BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES

There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that a significant number of young carers are excluded (and then referred to behaviour support units or schools to support pupils with social,

emotional and behavioural difficulties. A large number of young carers who use specialist young carer provision are referred via schools, social work and other similar avenues though not all to do with behavioural difficulties.

ATTENTION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

This behaviour can be more apparent in young carers than other young people, particularly if a sibling has additional needs. Young carers may feel they need to fight for attention due to the cared for person's needs being prioritised. They may exaggerate stories and illnesses in order to gain attention.

SOCIAL INTERACTION

Young carers recognise they are different in their outlooks and interests compared to other young people, whilst perhaps simultaneously wishing to conform. Their solution may be not to highlight their differences, but to find a close friend who in turn has similar experiences or is able to support the carer when mixing with groups.

Young carers' interests and priorities in life may differ to such a degree that they find many children of their own age group immature and selfish. Young carers often do not have time to socialise with their peers outside school and often prefer not to ask other children back to their house. They may experience a strong sense of isolation and alienation from other young people. They often find it easier to relate to adults than to their peers.

EATING HABITS/POOR HYGIENE

Poor eating habits may develop for a number of reasons. Young carers may lose their appetite due to tiredness/stress or may avoid food because of guilt feelings caused by spending money. They may feel that by eating less they are saving money. If the cared for person has poor eating habits or is unable to cook properly,

the young carer may similarly not eat nutritiously.

Young carers can often display poor hygiene and cleanliness – they may be so rushed to get ready in the morning they are unable to prepare themselves for the day properly. There may not be anyone at home taking on basic tasks such as washing and ironing clothes on a regular basis. The family may have insufficient funds to buy new, properly fitting clothes and footwear.

SHOWS LEADERSHIP QUALITIES/PARENTAL SKILLS

Some young carers are used to being in control of situations and this helps them cope at home. They may appear organised whilst at the same time being flexible enough to change approach at short notice. Young carers with primary caring responsibilities at home often assume a parental role towards their younger siblings.

PHYSICAL ILLNESS

Young carers may display a range of symptoms of poor physical health because of extra caring responsibilities carried out at home. These can include general illnesses such as flu or stomach complaints as a result of the young person feeling rundown and exhausted. They may also include specific ailments like back or neck ache caused by heavy physical tasks, i.e. moving a disabled parent, carrying heavy loads of shopping.

BULLYING

As noted earlier, many young carers can experience bullying as a result of their caring role. They may be perceived as different or threatening to their peers. Frequently children have a lack of direct understanding and personal experience of illnesses or disabilities of others. This can be reflected in thoughtless or intolerant attitudes towards young carers. In particular, young carers of adults with mental

health or drug/alcohol problems can experience victimisation and stigmatisation from peers.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

If a young carer has been ill, they tend to take longer to recover because of the stress and tiredness and the need to 'keep going' at home. Being ill may gain the attention of family and friends and the young carer may wish to prolong this. The young carer may have a history of frequent and unexplained absences because of changing circumstances at home.

Further, where the person being cared for has numerous appointments with health or care professionals, the young carer may attend these in order to provide support to their parent and be aware of medical interventions being recommended. For instance, knowing what medication is prescribed and when it needs to be administered can be important for carers in assisting with their caring role.

PARENTS

Parents may be difficult to contact and may not attend open days or parents' meetings. They can be wary or defensive when attempts are made to contact them by statutory agencies. Parents may display signs of guilt because of feeling they are holding back their child and piling too much responsibility on their shoulders. Teachers may be sent notes from parents requesting their child stay at home. The young carer may leave school to use the phone or insist on keeping their mobile on to ensure they can contact their parent.

NOT MAKING USE OF LEISURE OR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The young carer may have little time or money to focus on their own leisure needs or to pursue their own interests.

SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS

Young carers may be identified in school or their caring responsibilities made known to the school. In such cases, the school's response can have an enormous impact on the young carer, with sensitive support from schools proving to be hugely beneficial in reducing young carers' anxiety and stress.

A proportion of young carers and their families will have complex needs that require multi-agency support, and schools are frequently one of the agencies involved.

Schools clearly have a responsibility to address young carers' needs when educational achievement and wellbeing is affected by their caring role. In many cases needs can be met within the school environment, but where necessary, staff should be able to refer on to other agencies as necessary.

IDEAS FOR CLASS TEACHERS

- Teachers should only tell those staff who need to know the young person has caring responsibilities, and only with the young person's permission. Young carers generally do not tell their schools about their caring role because they are afraid of people finding out or interfering. Most young carers say they want teachers to know, but do not want to be treated differently. Communicate information about young carers and their families on a 'need to know' basis and discuss beforehand with young carers your intentions (and reasons) to pass on information.
- Teachers should speak to the young person in private and not in front of their peers. They should establish what the young carer needs and how they can help. Schools

should have an emphasis on good child care practice – a child centred approach – listen

to young carers, respect and believe what they say rather than treating them with suspicion, i.e. *another bad mark for lateness, more missed homework, etc.*

- It's important to be flexible. By the time many young carers set off for school, they may have already helped an adult with washing, dressing or using the bathroom, as well as getting younger brothers or sisters ready for school. It may not be their fault if they are late.
- Teachers should be sensitive to cultural issues. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has information on research about young carers in BME (Black Minority Ethnic) families.
- Teachers should allow the young person the use of a private phone to contact home during break or lunchtime. This will help to reduce any anxiety they feel about the welfare of the cared for person, thus defusing stress and improving attendance and concentration. Young carers often stay off school when the person they care for is doing badly, rather than spend all day worrying about them.
- Young carers should be allowed time to talk about issues and worries at their own pace. Teachers should listen to the child's perspective and be sensitive to their needs.
- Young carers need to hear that their education is important and that their school will look for ways of supporting them. Be flexible in relation to punctuality, attendance and completion of homework – punitive responses to poor attendance, repeated lateness and failure to complete homework on time will only serve to aggravate young carers' difficulties. However, a balance does need to be struck

that ensures these young carers do receive a full education and are not set apart as being different from the rest of their class. Options include providing a quiet place to do homework during the school day and help on catching up with any missed work.

- Use the GIRFEC system whenever you identify an issue for a young person, i.e. send a concern form to the 'named person' for your school. Even if you think the issue is minor, if the named person receives a number of concern forms from different sources, it can help build up a fuller picture of the young person's situation.
- Teachers/youth workers can find out about the work of the EYCP and suggest that the young carer gets in touch. The young person can check out the website of www.youngcarers.org.uk or information can be sent out to the home.

IDEAS FOR DEVELOPING WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACHES

- Once a young carer has been identified, the appropriate box on school recording systems (i.e. SEEMIS in Edinburgh) should be ticked. This helps build a picture of how many young carers have been identified within Edinburgh.
- GIRFEC 'named persons' should remember young carers have a legal right to an assessment of their needs, and ideally prepare a written plan following an assessment.
- Young carers may get little support at home with homework, and little time to do it. Lunchtime homework clubs can help or give discretionary extra time for homework.
- Many young carers lack self-esteem, so any opportunity to achieve activities other than caring can be valuable. You can find projects on the young carers' website of the

Princess Royal Trust for Carers:
www.youngcarers.net, or on the Children's Society website:
<http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/youngcarers/>.

- School nurses can help by asking pupils if anyone at home is poorly and if they help look after anyone at home.
- The school should promote tolerance of disability and mental illness. Bullies often use derogatory words to describe young carers' family members. A peer-led approach to bullying can help. Challenge bullying or isolation of young carers and where necessary help them to integrate into existing groups run in the school.
- Parents who have care needs can often be scared of services taking their children away, so staff should approach the subject with sensitivity.
- Schools should be aware of - and disseminate information to staff about - the range of youth services and specialist young carer services that exist in the area. Staff should be advised on how to make referrals to these services.
- Schools should have procedures in place for joint working between statutory and voluntary agencies in relation to young carers. They may need a multi-agency approach with liaison workers from education welfare, health and social services.
- Support parents with mobility problems in visiting the school and attending school events, for example by ensuring premises are wheelchair accessible. Maintain regular phone contact with parents unable to come into school.

- Identify a member of staff to act as a Young Carers' Champion within the school.

IDEAS FOR USING THIS PACK

- Use this pack to train staff in young carers' issues and to raise pupils' awareness. Incorporate information on young carers into lesson plans within Personal and Social Development (PSD) using the sample lesson plans in this pack.
- Adopt a Young Carers' Charter for Schools – see Appendix 7 for a sample version. Place this somewhere visible in the school.
- An example of a standard Young Carers Policy for schools is contained in the second part of this pack. The suggestions below illustrate some ways schools may support young carers.
- Contact one of the organisations on the following pages to find out more about young carers and how to support them effectively.
- Encourage children and young people to access and read the fiction literature given in Appendix 1.

Appendix 5 provides a checklist for making sure you have done all you can to support young carers you identify.

EDINBURGH YOUNG CARERS PROJECT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Edinburgh Young Carers Project (EYCP) was set up in 1995 to improve the lives of young carers through support, information, training and working in partnership with other agencies to promote their social inclusion.

EYCP provides the following support and services to assist young carers to cope with the stress and complexities of their family situation through:

- weekly sessions for different age groups so that they have some free time
- intensive one to one support for young carers experiencing particular difficulties
- residential breaks and outings during the holidays for respite
- support for young carers to maintain their schooling
- a dedicated project worker that supports young carers of a parent (s) or family member with drug and alcohol issues
- 16+ project supporting young carers as they move from adolescence into adulthood.
- A girls group which promotes healthy eating, personal safety and exercise
- Young Carers Forum which assists with awareness raising

We receive referrals from a wide range of both statutory/voluntary organisations which include,

Health & Social Care, Education, Health Service, Amber Project, Fairbridge, Early Intervention Teams, Multi-Cultural Family Base, Shakti and also from Parents and self-referrals from young carers themselves.

Many young carers supported by EYCP fit the following profile:

- they experience chronic economic deprivation
- they have high rates of health service usage, in particular, mental health outpatients appointments, casualty and admissions to hospital
- 54% of young carers live in lone parent households
- one third of young carers have a child protection referral, due to their exposure to risk factors for child abuse and neglect including parental mental health problems, drug and alcohol abuse compounded by low levels of social support.

Being a young carer clearly has a profound and lifelong impact on their lives. For many, caring is not a totally negative experience as they value the responsibility they were given at a young age which they felt led to greater maturity than their peers. However, our work suggests that being a young carer generally has a negative impact on their mental health and life chances.

Most young carers do not get help until there is a crisis. EYCP are working to change this to ensure that different service providers communicate and co-operate so that young

carers are identified and supported in order to prevent problems.

EYCP has identified and provided information and support to 400 young carers over the last five years.

SUPPORT OFFERED BY EDINBURGH YOUNG CARERS PROJECT

YOUNG CARER GROUPS

(Organised activities, discussions, support and a chance to meet other young carers and have fun)

This is the main service provided at the project and offers young carers a chance to make new friends and get a break from their caring situation at home. As well as providing a safe space to talk about young carers issues it is also recognised young carers need 'time-out' to just be a young person.

YOUNG CARER INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

(One-to-one time with a worker)

This is a very limited service. Priority is given to young people whose needs may not be fully met within group work or who are experiencing difficulty in being part of a group.

RESIDENTIAL AND DAY TRIPS

(Time-out away from home - a chance to try new things and have fun)

From time to time we are able to offer young carers the chance to get away for a week or a weekend if their home situation allows. We also organise one-off day trips and open days for young carers.

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

(To enable young carers and their families to access other services)

We recognise young carers circumstances vary enormously. We aim to support young carers and their family members, including the person being cared for, to find local services that will meet their specific needs.

YOUNG CARERS' FORUM

(An opportunity for young carers to have their say and take action on what matters to them)

For young carers aged 12 years and above, who wish to speak for and on behalf of other young carers. Speaking up for the rights of young carers and having a say in the running of the project, including interviewing staff who work for the project.

TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY

EYCP aim to highlight young carers issues and inform other professionals in order to help identify 'hidden' young carers. This is offered on the basis of training to professionals who feel they would benefit from learning more about young carers and their specific needs and issues. Sessions can be arranged to meet the needs of the individual organisation.

Please contact Edinburgh Young Carers Project to find out more:

Edinburgh Young Carers Project
Norton Park
57 Albion Road
Edinburgh
EH7 5QT
Tel: 0131 475 2322
Email: info@youngcares.org.uk
Web: www.youngcarers.org.uk

NORTH WEST CARERS CENTRE

AIMS OF SERVICE

North West Carers Centre provides services for all carers living in the North West of Edinburgh. It provides services for adult as well as young carers.

Aims of the young carer support at the Centre:

- To improve the lives of young carers and their families.
- To highlight and raise awareness of young carers, their needs and rights.
- To give young carers the opportunities to have fun and give them a break from their caring role.
- To give young carers emotional and practical support
- To work collaboratively with other agencies and organisations in identifying 'hidden' young carers.

The Wi Rascals Group is the only Young Carers project in the North West of Edinburgh. We provide support to Young Carers. Having a local Young Carers project encourages more Young Carers and their families to come forward and get the help and support that they need. Our Young Carers live in an area of high deprivation where there are very limited facilities and services available.

WI RASCALS YOUNG CARERS GROUP

The Wi Rascals runs twice weekly and enables Young Carers to gain increased confidence and self esteem. They take part in social and recreational activities; they meet with other Young Carers which reduces their isolation; we give them help with educational and other issues. We know that the mental and physical health and well being of the Young Carers improves with the right support, and that self confidence is boosted by interacting with their peers when away from their caring role.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The Wi Rascals was started as a pilot scheme in July 2008, and since then has supported over 30 Young Carers. We receive new referrals regularly and plan to work with local schools to identify the many hidden Young Carers in our area. We seek funding to enable us to continue to provide the Young Carers with an invaluable and much needed service.

Please contact NW Carers to find out more:

34 Muirhouse Crescent
Edinburgh
EH4 4QL
Tel: 0131 315 3130
Email: Marcia@nwcarers.org.uk

BROOMHOUSE YOUNG CARERS SUPPORT PROJECT

AIMS OF BROOMHOUSE YOUNG CARERS SUPPORT PROJECT

The aims of Broomhouse Young Carers Support Project are to improve the quality of life for Young Carers in West Edinburgh through providing group and individual support. We also provide information and advice which should build young carers' confidence and self esteem thus enabling them to better cope at home.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To provide respite for young carers from their caring role.
- To provide weekly support groups for young carers from 7-11 years on a Monday evening and for 12-18 year olds on a Wednesday evening
- To provide a varied programme of educational, issue based and fun sessions in consultation with young carers
- To provide information, advice and support on issues affecting young carers lives
- To build the young carers confidence and self esteem

- To provide a safe and warm environment for young carers to share experiences
- To provide the opportunity to go out on trips once every 6-8 weeks to places of cultural interest
- To provide peer support through the group work, and enable young carer participation in deciding activities
- To give young carers an opportunity to organise and participate in an annual residential

OTHER SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Broomhouse also provide a befriending service for young people affected by drug and alcohol issues and a counselling service for young people.

Please contact Broomhouse Centre to find out more:

The Broomhouse Centre
79-89 Broomhouse Crescent
Edinburgh
EH11 3RH
Tel: 0131 455 7731

Email: youngcarers@broomhousecentre.org.uk

Web: www.broomhousecentre.org.uk

EDINBURGH COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

BACKGROUND

Edinburgh Community Health Partnership (ECHP) is a joint partnership between NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council Health and Social Care. It works to develop community based health and care services and address health inequalities.

The ECHP employs a small team of dedicated staff who work strategically to support the development of services for carers across Edinburgh. It has responsibility for the local allocation of government funding specific to carers, for instance, Carer Information Strategy funding delegated from NHS Lothian.

CARER SUPPORT TEAM

Since 2010 the ECHP has operated a carer support team to provide one to one support for carers from the age of 12 years onwards. This service takes referrals from carers, GP practices and other health and social care staff. The team works with carers to identify what priorities they may have to improve their life, helps them explore options and links them to relevant services in their area. Issues relating to the caring role are discussed with carers, and the team work with individuals to support them in this role. Up to four one to one sessions can be arranged in the first instance. These are then reviewed to see if further sessions are required.

EDINBURGH CARER NETWORK

The Edinburgh Carer Network is a network of staff and professionals interested in carers issues. It arranges regular meetings for members and acts as a channel for information from and to members.

For further information on the work of the Edinburgh Community Health Partnership, please contact:

Edinburgh Carers Support Team

St Roque

Astley Ainslie Hospital

Grange Loan

Edinburgh

EH9 2HL

Tel: 0131 536 3371

Email: carer.support@luht.scot.nhs.uk

Web:

www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/Communityb/EdinburghCHP/ServicesSupportCarers

Fiction with Young Carers Themes

The following is a list of stories showing various aspects of what it is like to be a young carer for a parent, sibling or elderly relative:

Cole, N - Bring in the Spring

Sarah's life finally changes when Bel, who is helping out on a school placement, recognises Sarah's attempts at communication and proves to Bel that she is not completely brain damaged. Life is not easy for Bel at the moment but, she is determined to help Sarah even if it means going against the school's authority.

Cross, Gillian - Tightrope

Ashley's life at home is difficult as she has sole care of her mother but she has another secret life, as a dare-devil graffiti artist. She sneaks out at night and risks her life to write her pseudonym in beautiful detail, in extraordinary places.

Desai, Anita - Village by the Sea

Set in an Indian village, this is the story of a family of four children who have an ill mother and a father with a severe drink problem. They have no other adults to support them and consequently the two oldest children have to support the whole family and forego their own education and youth. The story does have a positive ending.

Fine, A - The Granny Project

Ivan and his brother and sisters cannot believe it when their parents want to put their Grandmother into a home for the elderly. They refuse to allow this

to happen and find out what it is like to look after someone else.

Feeny, Josephine - The Day My Parents Ran Away

Sarah's dad has a nervous breakdown. Then, just when he seems to be getting better, he runs away. Her mum sets out to bring him back and Sarah has promised to tell no one they have gone. She is left alone with her two little sisters but how long can she keep the secret?

Fowler, T - The Wind Is Silver

Jennifer's world is turned upside down when the accident happens. Margaret, her older sister, is away in Melbourne so Jennifer takes responsibility for running the family home, a test that she faces with a strength and courage which surprises everyone and alters her life dramatically.

Gavin, J - I Want To Be An Angel

Effie has always had a secret dream of playing an angel, but life is so busy she misses the auditions for the school nativity play. Effie cares for her disabled mum, but to keep the family together she must find help, everything seems to be going against her, then Mum mentions Auntie Janice....

Gleitzman, Morris - Two Weeks With The Queen

Colin's younger brother Luke is dying of cancer and Colin decides to find a doctor who can cure him. Colin moves to England, and during one of his visits to a top London hospital to find a doctor who will help Luke, he befriends a man called Ted, whose friend is dying with Aids.

Laird, E - Red Sky In The Morning

A very moving sensitive story that is both sad and funny. The story tells how Anna comes to terms with her new baby brother Ben who is born with a disability. The characters and situations are so real you are drawn into the story from the very beginning.

Mahy, Margaret - Memory

Johnny still blames himself for his sister's death. He searches for Bonny, who was his sister's best friend. During his search, he meets up with Sophie, an elderly lady who has senile dementia. He is horrified to learn she lives alone, and decides to do something about it.

Moore, Ishbel - Daughter

Fourteen year old Sylvie enjoys fashion, parties, music and is beginning to be interested in boys too, but her mum is starting to behave strangely. Some days she can't even remember her daughter's name and Sylvie's life is turning upside down. A touching teenage novel about a family coping with Alzheimer's disease.

Paul, Bette - Becca's Race

Digby sees life as one big movie. Even when his sister is diagnosed as having Leukaemia and he has to look after his younger brother he cannot help seeing events as a 'scene' in a film he is going to make. However the extra responsibility and his first serious relationship with a girl makes him come back down to earth ... sometimes.

Sallis, S - No Time At All

When Matt and Sam move with their family to a bungalow, Sam, who is in a wheelchair, finds life a lot easier. However the bungalow is not as normal a home as they had expected and they uncover ghostly secrets from the past.

Wilson, Jacqueline - The Illustrated Mum

Many people say that Marigold is a dreadful mother but to Dolphin she is the best and most beautiful mum in the world. She is totally covered in tattoos and has mood swings due to manic depression, so Dolphin and her sister work hard at trying to make her happy.

Wilson, Jacqueline - The Mum-Minder

Sadie's mum is a childminder who minds three young children. Disaster strikes when Sadie's mum

gets the flu. All of the other mums get together to sort out the childcare arrangements; some of them are great fun for Sadie although she often has to take control. She also has her mum to look after, a task she does very willingly and calls herself a 'mum-minder'.

Zindel, Paul - A Begonia For Miss Applebaum

Miss Applebaum is a popular teacher whom Henry and Zelda adore being around. They are horrified to discover she has left the school because she has a terminal illness. All three share a wonderful relationship during the last few months of her life.

YOUNGER CHILDREN'S FICTION

Aliki (1987) "FEELINGS". *Pan*

Althea (1988) "WHEN UNCLE BOB DIED". *Dinosaur Publications*

Ames, R "OUR BROTHER HAS DOWNS SYNDROME"

Anderson, R (1988) "JESSY RUNS AWAY". *Alblack*

Anderson, R (1989) "THE BUS PEOPLE". *Oxford University Press*

Beresford, E (1988) "THE FOUR OF US". *Hutchinson*

Buchanan Smith, D (1987) "A TASTE OF BLACKBERRIES". *Penguin*

Burningham, J (1994) "GRANPA". *Jonathan Cape*

Striker, S & Kimmel, E (1978) "THE ANTI COLOURING BOOK". *Hippo / Scholastic*

Literature on Issues of Loss and Bereavement

Many young carers experience loss or bereavement. This may be related to the parent no longer being able to do certain activities, a loss of income and in some cases the death of the cared for person.

The Richmond Hope foundation based in Edinburgh, aim to enable children to express and understand their emotions, and deal with their grief through using various techniques.

There are various publications and other resources that can be used with young people in these situations or provide useful advice to school staff:

Bryant-Mole, K (1992) *DEATH. Wayland*

Couldrick, A (1991) *WHEN YOUR MUM OR DAD HAS CANCER. Sobell Publications*

Dyregrov, A (1991) *GRIEF IN CHILDREN, A HANDBOOK FOR ADULTS. Jessica Kingsley Publishers*

Grollman, E (1993) *STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT DEATH FOR TEENAGERS – HOW TO COPE WITH LOSING SOMEONE YOU LOVE. Beacon Press US*

Heegaard, M (1991) *WHEN SOMEONE VERY SPECIAL DIES – CHILDREN CAN LEARN TO COPE WITH GRIEF. Woodland Press US*

Heegaard, M (1991) *WHEN SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENS – CHILDREN CAN LEARN TO COPE WITH GRIEF. Woodland press US*

Hollins, S & Sireling L (1994) *WHEN DAD DIED, WHEN MUM DIED. St. George's Mental Health Library*

Limb, S (1993) *COME BACK GRANDMA. Bodley Head*

Mayled, J (1986) *DEATH CUSTOMS. Wayland*

Perkins, G & Moms, L (1991) *REMEMBERING MUM. Al Black*

Sanders, P (1990) *DEATH AND DYING. Franklin Gloucester Press*

Searle, Y and Steng, I (1996) *THE GRIEF GAME. Jessica Kingsley Publishers*

Simmonds, R (1987) *FRED. Picture Puffin*

Smith, S C & Pennells, M (1996) *INTERVENTIONS WITH BEREAVED CHILDREN. Jessica Kingsley Publishers*

Smith, S C & Pennells, M (1994) *GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH BEREAVED CHILDREN. Jessica Kingsley Publishers*

Turner, M & Thomas, B (1997) *TALKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT DEATH AND DYING. Jessica Kingsley Publishers*

Varley, S (1984) *BADGER'S PARTING GIFTS. Picture Lions*

Ward, B (1995) **GOOD GRIEF 1** *EXPLORING FEELINGS, LOSS AND DEATH WITH UNDER 11'S. 2ND ED.*

GOOD GRIEF 2. *EXPLORING FEELINGS, LOSS AND DEATH WITH OVER 11'S AND ADULTS, 2ND ED. Jessica Kingsley Publishers*

Wilhelm, H (1992) *I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU. Hodder & Stoughton*

Scottish Guidance and Young Carers

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR YOUNG CARERS: THE YOUNG CARERS STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND 2010 - 2015

“We are ... pleased to have produced Getting it Right for Young Carers, which we believe will result in better outcomes for young carers. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first ever national young carers' strategy in Europe.

We recognise that many young people can benefit from providing care to a relative or friend affected by illness, disability or substance misuse. However, we are committed to ensuring that young carers are relieved of inappropriate caring roles and are supported to be children and young people first and foremost.

We are taking important steps to improve young carer **identification and support within schools**, colleges and the health service. The strategy also endorses an approach which organises services around the child or young person so that all the needs of the child or young person will be identified and addressed, including the impact of caring on their health, well-being and education.”

*Foreword (emphasis added)
Shona Robinson MSP*

Key actions identified by the National Strategy for Young Carers include:

- Classifying young carers in the school census
- Put in place measures to identify young carers
- Improve provision of information and advice to young carers

- Develop flexible, personalised short breaks for young carers
- Commission research into characteristics of young carers
- Improve support to young adult carers

THE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) ACT 1995 - CHILDREN IN NEED (SECTIONS 22, 23 AND 24)

Section 22 of the Act requires local authorities:

- to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in need in their area
- so far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of children by their families
- by providing a range and level of services appropriate to children's needs

In this Act, the term ‘children in need’ includes young people up to the age of 18 affected by disability of a family member. Local authority **services must be designed to minimise the impact of disability on a child and to give them the ‘opportunity to lead lives which are as normal as possible’** (Section 23).

Services may be provided to a child or members of his or her family, and may be in kind, or in exceptional circumstances, in cash.

EDUCATION (ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2004

This Act introduces a framework for supporting children and young people who require additional assistance to access the school curriculum. Young carers are identified in the associated Code of Practice as an example of a group of children who may require additional support. The Act promotes

an inclusive approach, encouraging engagement with families and other appropriate agencies to address barriers to learning.

INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLANNING

As part of a broader 'Changing Lives' agenda, children's services are now expected by the Scottish Government to adopt an approach to working with children and young people commonly referred to as '**Getting it Right for Young People**'. This encourages action to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people and is underpinned by a model of practice that can be applied in all services.

At its heart are eight indicators of well-being:

- **Safe:** Children and young people should be protected from abuse, neglect and harm by others at home, at school and in the community
- **Nurtured:** Children and young people should live within a supportive family setting, with additional assistance if required, or, where this is not possible, within another caring setting, ensuring a positive and rewarding childhood experience
- **Healthy:** Children and young people should enjoy the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, with access to suitable healthcare and support for safe and healthy lifestyle choices
- **Achieving:** Children and young people should have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their skills, confidence and self esteem to the fullest potential
- **Active:** Children and young people should be active with opportunities and encouragement to participate in play and recreation, including sport
- **Respected & Responsible:** Children, young people and their carers should be involved in decisions that affect them, should have their voices heard and should be encouraged to play an active and responsible role in their communities

These indicators are incorporated into a practice model that can be used to assess, plan and take action to promote individual children's wellbeing. In

Edinburgh more information for practitioners can be found on Getting it Right For Young People at:

<http://egfl.net/girfec/>

The website contains useful resources and forms required for using GIRFEC in Edinburgh.

SCHOOLS (HEALTH PROMOTION AND NUTRITION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2007

This Act ensures that health promotion has a central and continuing focus in education. It acknowledges the centrality of health and wellbeing to a child's learning and indicates that schools should provide planned opportunities for pupils to develop life skills.

The Act requires local authorities to:

- Ensure schools are health promoting – including embedding health promotion within the curriculum
- Promote school lunches, and in particular, free school lunches
- Take steps to protect the identity of those receiving free school lunches

A school is seen to be 'health promoting' if it provides activities, an environment and facilities which promote the physical, social, mental and emotional health and wellbeing of pupils in attendance at the school.

UK Wide Guidance on Young Carers

CARERS (RECOGNITION AND SERVICES) ACT 1995

CARERS AND DISABLED CHILDREN ACT 2001

CARERS (EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ACT) 2004

These Acts give young carers varying rights to an assessment of their needs, which must take into account their right to an education. See the SCIE practice guide to the Carers (Equal Opportunities Act) 2004: www.scie.org.uk commissioned by the Department of Health.

This includes information, advice and support provided through universal services, as well as targeted and more specialist support for parents of children who need them.

The Government, in partnership with local areas, is working to make sure parents and families have access to the support that they need, when they need it, so that all children can benefit from confident, positive and resilient parenting, from birth through to the teenage years. The steps being taken will help to ensure:

- Good quality universal support, in the form of information, advice and signposting to other services, is available to all parents - both mothers and fathers. It is important that access to support can be found in places where, and ways in which, parents and carers feel comfortable such as: early years settings, schools, primary healthcare services; and through childcare information services, telephone helplines and web based information.

- More specialised targeted support is available at local level to meet the needs of families and communities facing additional difficulties. Types of support offered could include structured parenting education groups, couple support, home visiting and employment or training advice.
- All schools actively seek to engage parents in children and young people's education helping parents to understand what they can do at home to work with the school.
- Children's centres and extended schools develop a coherent set of services both to support parents and to involve them properly at all stages of a child's learning and development.

"Pupil performance and well-being go hand in hand. Pupils can't learn if they don't feel safe or if health problems are allowed to create barriers. And doing well in education is the most effective route for young people out of poverty and disaffection."

- Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools
DfES/1089/2004

Useful Websites

The following provides a range of websites you may find useful to find out more about young carers. These links were active at the time of going to print.

KEY WEBSITES ON YOUNG CARERS

www.youngcarers.org.uk

Website of Edinburgh Young Carers Project

www.youngcarers.net

www.youngcarers.net/interactive

Princess Royal Trust for Carers site for young carers - also particularly useful for staff as it has a site designed for professionals.

www.youngcarer.com

Pages on young carers from the Children's Society

www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ss/centres/YCRG/
Young Carers Research Group - Loughborough University

CHARITIES WORKING TO SUPPORT YOUNG CARERS

www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-services/young-people/supporting-young-carers Some information on young carers

www.barnardos.org.uk/young_carers

Barnardos is a national charity that works with young carers

www.children1st.org.uk/

Leading children's charity with range of resources about child care and local projects

LOCAL YOUTH WORK INFORMATION

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/550/youth_clubs_and_organisations

Information on local youth work services across Edinburgh

HEALTH RELEVANT WEBSITES

www.richmondshope.org.uk

Information for children dealing with bereavement

www.onesite.info/camh/

Information on child and adolescent mental health, for young people, parents and professionals

www.youngminds.org.uk/

Information for Young People on mental health issues

www.riprap.org.uk/

Website for children who have a parent with cancer

www.theplace2be.org.uk

Place2be is a charity providing counselling within schools to improve the emotional wellbeing of children. Has a 'hub' in Edinburgh.

www.teenagehealthfreak.org/

Information on health conditions aimed at 10-16 year olds, based on best-selling 'Teenage Health Freak' series by Oxford University Press

www.kidshealth.org

An American site, but with sections on health issues for children, teens and professionals - also has a section in Spanish

DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES

SUPPORT IN MIND (formerly the National Schizophrenia Fellowship) has produced 3 excellent booklets for young people living with an adult suffering from mental illness. These are free to download or order from the following link:
www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk/

- *It's about You Too!* (for children aged 8-10)
- *Need to Know* (for young people aged 11-14)
- *Making Time to Talk* (advice for parents)

The **MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION** has produced a booklet for children and young people supporting someone with dementia. It can be downloaded free from:

www.mentalhealth.org.uk

- *The Milk's in the Oven* (a booklet about dementia for children & young people)

NHS HEALTH SCOTLAND has produced booklets for children about how to deal with negative emotions including:

- *R u sad?* (a guide to what you can do when you're sad)
- *R u worried?* (a guide to what you can do when worried)
- *R u friends?* (a guide to making, keeping and helping friends)
- *Head kit: Tools for healthy minds in healthy bodies*

These can all be downloaded from:

www.wellscotland.info

ADFAM is a national organisation working to support those affected by drugs and alcohol. There are a range of downloadable resources for professionals.
www.adfam.org.uk/publications/resources_for_professionals

- *Adfam research, toolkits and policy documents*
- *Data and statistics*
- *Parental substance use and safeguarding*
- *Kinship care and grandparents*
- *Strategies and policy initiatives*
- *Guidance and protocols*

Checklist for Action

Once you have identified that a young person has caring responsibilities, check to see that you have done all you can to support them. Use this checklist to help you.

- Spoken to them about their role, and offered your support as a 'listening ear' – built a trusting relationship
- Informed them that anything they say will be confidential unless you feel they are at risk of harm, in which case you will need to report this to social services
- Advised them of their right to a 'carers assessment'. If they would like one, let the GIRFEC 'named person' for your area/school know about their request
- Found out what other services they use, and discussed with them if they are willing for you to speak to staff in these services to let them know they are a carer
- Asked about their relationship with their peers, and identified if there are any issues relating to bullying or isolation
- Discussed with them if they feel their parents need more support. If so, and with their permission, contact Social Care Direct on 0131 200 2324 or email: socialcaredirect@edinburgh.gov.uk
- Considered other groups or services they could access (e.g. befriending, youth projects, young carer groups, counselling) and made referrals
- Identified any cultural issues and taken account of these in your approach
- Thought about ways you could make adjustments to your practice e.g. timekeeping, homework, use of mobile phones
- Completed a GIRFEC 'concern form' and sent to the 'named person' for your area/school
- Recorded on SEEMIS (school IT system) that they are a young carer
- Spoken to a member of the senior management team to make sure that the school has a 'whole school' approach to addressing the needs of young carers

Local Contacts

If you have identified young carers in your class you may like to contact the following agencies to see what support could be available:

Local carers support worker or young carers support worker

Education Welfare Officer

Local Social Services Access office

Youth services / youth counseling service

Disability charities such as the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Motor Neurone Disease Association, etc

Richmond's Hope – Local bereavement support

Children 1st

Social Care Direct

A Place2be

For further information & other agency details:

www.edinburgh.gov.uk

Example of a “Charter for Action”

Young Carers – A Charter for Action

Young Carers are children or young people who look after or help to look after someone in their family who has an illness, disability, mental health difficulties or problems with drugs or alcohol misuse.

{Name of School}

We are committed to supporting young carers to access education. This charter aims to ensure young carers are identified and offered appropriate support to achieve their potential.

We will:

- Be sensitive towards young carers’ needs.
- Appoint a “Young Carers Lead Teacher” within our school who will have special responsibility for young carers.
- Make sure all the staff and pupils in our school are aware of who is the “Young Carers Lead Teacher”.
- Run regular information sessions on young carers for pupils.
- Run regular CPD sessions on young carers for school staff.
- Liaise with and refer to Edinburgh Young Carers Project.
- Give information to the young person about young carers, along with the advice and support that is available.
- Help young carers to participate in all aspects of school life.

Signed _____ (Head Teacher)

Signed _____ (Young Carers Lead Teacher)

Signed _____ (Edinburgh Young Carers Project)

Pack Evaluation Sheet

Any comments you might have on this pack would be gratefully received and taken into consideration when producing future editions.

Contact Name	
Job Title	
School	
Class(es) pack used with	

Was the background information sufficient to inspire confidence in teaching the module? (please circle)

Yes	No
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If not, what further information do you feel you would need?

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Please score the lesson plans on the following areas (1=low 6=high)

Ease of use	1	2	3	4	5	6
Timings	1	2	3	4	5	6
Age appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	6

Appropriateness to the Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6
Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6

If you scored any of the above 3 or less please comment below

Was the background information sufficient to inspire confidence in teaching the module? (please circle)

Yes	No
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If not, what further information do you feel you would need?

To your knowledge, were there any young carers present during the sessions? (please circle)

Yes	No
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If YES, please comment on how this work was received by them

How have these materials changed your approach to young carers?

Have the lessons changed pupils' responses to young carers and if so how?

How do you feel this pack could be improved?

Do you have any further comments?

Thank you for completing this form. Please return it to:

Project Manager (Schools Awareness Raising Campaign)

Edinburgh Young Carers Project | Norton Park | 57 Albion Road | Edinburgh | EH7 5QY