

Supporting Young Carers

An online good practice guide for social care

A supplementary guide to Coventry's 'No Wrong Doors' Memorandum of Understanding



Coventry Trust Heart of England
YOUNG CARERS PROJECT



Who are young carers and why are they important?

Young carers are children or young people who look after someone (normally in their family) who have an illness, a disability, mental ill-health or a problem with drugs or alcohol.

Around one in 20 young people miss school because of their caring responsibilities

There are an estimated 5,000 children and young people under the age of 25 with caring responsibilities in Coventry. Schools play a vital role in helping to identify young carers and ensure they get the right support at the right time.

They may take on **practical or emotional** caring tasks that an adult would normally do.

Some young carers have to:

- help someone to get around or help them wash, go to the toilet or get dressed or take medication
- look after a brother or sister and make sure they are safe and help them get to school
- provide emotional support and cheer someone up or support them when they are feeling down
- help care for someone by doing the cooking, cleaning, laundry, shopping or other jobs in the home
- interpret for someone or help them communicate
- supervise the person with the illness or disability to make sure they are safe and monitor their condition
- manage aspects of their own care that other children of their age would not usually be expected to do (e.g. preparing meals)

The caring role they undertake may not always be obvious particularly when it involves a lot of emotional support or supervision. The role might fluctuate, particularly if the person they care for is a relative experiencing mental ill-health or struggling with drug or alcohol addiction. The young carer may experience a lot of stress and worry wondering what they might come home to.

One in 12 young people care for more than 15 hours per week

The impact for a young carer can be huge, regardless of the type of care they provide or how often they provide it. It can take a toll on their physical and mental wellbeing as well as impact on their own development and opportunities. Juggling all their responsibilities may be difficult and it can be hard to find time for homework, activities after school or friends.

Identifying young carers

Young carers don't always identify themselves as a carer because they see it as part of their everyday life and something they have always done.

Often young carers are reluctant to tell anyone about their caring responsibilities due to concerns about:

- bullying
- losing friendships or what others might say
- other agencies getting involved and what that might mean
- family loyalty
- putting that extra pressure and stress on the person they are caring for
- not being allowed to continue caring
- families being split up

Instead of seeing friends, enjoying hobbies and doing homework, children as young as 10 are cooking, cleaning, managing medication, shopping, looking after brothers and sisters

This can lead to young carers becoming isolated and not getting the right support so it is important to raise awareness and help spot the signs that a young person might have caring responsibilities which could include:

- Anxiety or concern over an ill or disabled relative
- A need or desire to be in regular contact with home
- Often late or missing from school
- Secretive about their home life
- Often tired, distracted, withdrawn or anxious
- Low self-esteem and self confidence
- Isolated or victims of bullying
- Poor relationship with peers
- May take on a caring role with younger children
- May demonstrate confidence when interacting with adults
- Isolation or withdrawal or behaviour that may be deemed as challenging
- Back pain or other related pain

The average income for families with a young carer is £5,000 less per annum than families without a young carer

Workers undertaking or receiving referrals or with responsibility for carrying out assessments will have a key role in identifying young carers.

Local support for young carers



The Young Carers Project

Carers Trust Heart of England

Phone - 024 7610 1040

Text - 074 2867 0040

The Young Carers Project is independent of statutory services, funded through Children in Need and Big Lottery.

How can the project support young carers?

We work with young carers aged between 5 and 18 years old and run a range of supported activities, as well as providing one to one emotional support and working with families. We can also support young carers to raise any issues they might be having at school. Our workers have a presence in a number of schools across the city

We also have a support worker for young adult carers funded through the Carers Trust “Programme for Change” who provides support to 14-25 year old carers on issues around managing a caring role and education and/or employment.

Our service is open to all young carers and [more information can be found on our website.](#)

The project works in partnership with Children and Families Workers in Children’s Services who specialise in working with young carers and will provide support for young carers with complex needs. This will include more in-depth assessment and appropriate interventions.

Following this period of intervention the worker will ensure arrangements are in place for the young carer to continue to receive support from the Young Carers Project in line with the young carer’s needs and wishes.

Duties to assess young carers

The Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 introduced new rights and assessments for young carers and their families which, taken together, promote a whole family approach that aims to reduce children's caring roles and responsibilities.

Young carers are more than one-and-a-half times as likely to be from black, Asian or minority ethnic communities

Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 has been amended and introduces new rights for young carers in the following ways

- Local Authorities must identify young carers in their area
- Young carers have a right to a needs assessment and support
- The assessment should appraise whether it is appropriate for the child/young person to provide, or continue to provide care, their other needs and wishes and should also identify whether they are a child in need
- The assessment should include the views, wishes and needs of the young carer and the person who needs support, and any others identified by the young carer
- The young carer and the person who needs support should be given a written copy of the assessment
- Assessment and support should address the needs of families through the whole family approach

The Care Act 2014 introduces new measures for assessing adult carers aged 18 and over and young carers in transition – those moving between children's and adult services. The Act introduces new measures that are intended to

- Recognise the changing needs of young carers
- Give young carers in transition the right to a needs assessment in their own right
- Ensure assessments identify their support needs and assess whether they are able and/or willing to provide care after the age of 18
- Ensure any support provided helps young carers in their preparations for adulthood (e.g. education, training, employment, etc.)
- Address the needs of families through the whole family approach (including parenting needs)

Young carers are more likely than the national average to be 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) between the ages of 16 and 19

Supporting and safeguarding young carers

Children and young people must not be relied upon to provide excessive or inappropriate care and all practitioners must be able to recognise and respond to risks to children's safety and welfare, especially where they have concerns that children are or may be suffering significant harm.

Young carers are one and half times more likely to have a special educational need or a long-standing illness or disability

At the point of assessing a young person or an adult with care needs the assessor will have a key role in establishing whether there are children in the same household and if so, how much care and support children may be undertaking. Discussions and decisions should include the child/children concerned and the young carers' own needs must also be assessed.

The assessment must explore whether it is appropriate for the young carer to provide, or continue to provide care having considered:

- the amount, nature and type of care which the young carer provides;
- the impact of the caring role on the young carer's wellbeing, education and personal and emotional development;
- whether any of the caring tasks the young carer is performing are excessive or inappropriate having regard to all the circumstances
- whether a needs assessment of the cared for person (be they a child or adult) has been carried out, and if not, to request one;
- whether any of the young carer's needs for support could be met by providing support or services to the person they care for or another member of the young carer's family.
- what the young carer's needs for support would be likely to be if he or she were relieved of part or all of his or her caring role and whether the young carer has any remaining unmet needs.

The assessment must include the views of the young carer, their parent and anyone else the young carer or their parent asks us to involve.

It should also consider any other assessment that has been carried out either for the young carer or the person they care for.

Who is responsible for assessing young carers?

Children's Services

- Young carers of disabled children are the responsibility of the Children's Service which will also need to undertake carers' assessments for any young adult carers who look after disabled children
- Consideration must be given to whether a young carer is a 'child in need' under the Children Act 1989. The assessment must establish if they are unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services
- Children's Services will support Adult Services in assessing the needs of young carers where appropriate
- Children and Family Workers who specialise in working with young carers will provide support and more in-depth assessment to those in greatest need

Adult Services

- Adult Services will identify children in the household / family network and ensure that young carers are not left with excessive and inappropriate levels of caring responsibilities that risks them becoming vulnerable.
- They will also need to undertake carers' assessments for young adult carers.
- Adult Services will refer to Children's Services for further assessment where the child is thought to be a child in need or to the Young Carers Project or Early Help where other preventative support is needed.

The flowcharts on pages 8 – 11 outline where the responsibilities lie between adult and children's services in the following circumstances:

- **A young carer is identified as supporting a disabled adult**
- **A young carer approaching 18 is identified as supporting an adult**
- **A young carer is identified as supporting a disabled child**
- **A young carer is identified by Children's Services when working with a family**

There are also other good practice guides in this series clarifying responsibilities for Schools and Health Professionals. Those with a responsibility to lead CAF assessments will start this process and refer in to Children's Services if required.

Young carer supporting a disabled adult is identified

Further guidance
The Care Act and
Whole Family
Approaches

Further guidance
Young Carers
Needs Assessment

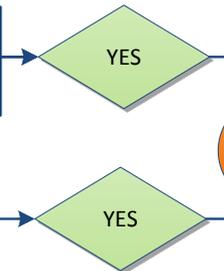


The presence of a young carer in the family should always constitute an appearance of need and should trigger either an assessment or the offer of an assessment to the adult needing care.

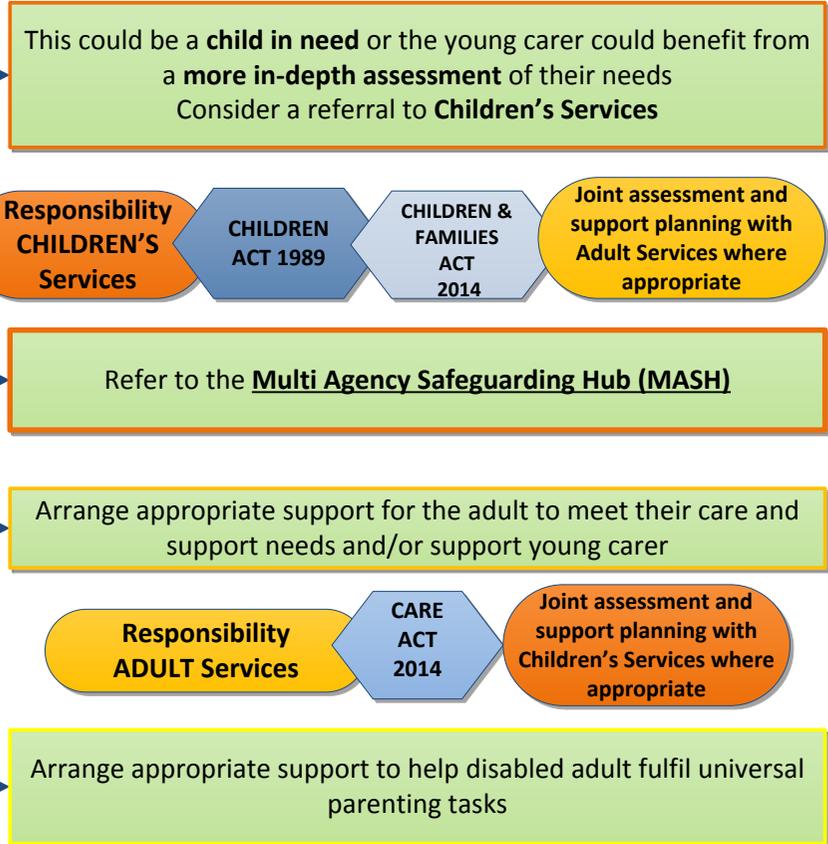


The adult's assessment must consider:

- Does the caring role appear to be impacting on the young carer's wellbeing, welfare, education and/or development?
- Is the young carer taking on excessive or inappropriate caring roles? (including roles providing support to other children in the family)
- Are there safeguarding concerns for the young person or other young people in the household?**

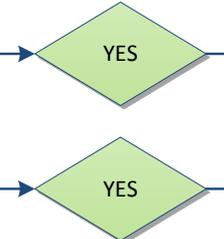


Actions to take



What are the young carer's needs?

- Is there any support that could be provided to the adult to help prevent the young carer from taking on inappropriate or excessive caring roles and/or meet the young carer's needs?
- Does the adult have any needs for support in relation to caring for the young person or any other children in the household?



If adult has non-eligible needs support may still be required to meet the needs of young carer

Young carer approaching adulthood is identified

Further guidance
Transition
Assessments SCIE



Further guidance
Young Carers
Needs Assessment

The Care Act requires councils to undertake a Transitions Assessment for a young carer who is approaching adulthood and will be caring for or intends to care for another adult when they reach 18 years *if* it considers that she/ he is likely to have needs for support after becoming 18 *and* that the assessment would be of significant benefit to him/her

Responsibility ADULT Services – team responsible for the adult with care needs should assess

CARE ACT 2014
Needs are assessed under the adult statute against Care Act eligibility

CHILDREN'S Services to joint work where person with care needs is a young person in transition AND/OR where current needs are identified for the young carer

The young carer transition assessment must consider:

- The outcomes the young carer wishes to achieve in day-to-day life, now and in the future and how care and support (and other matters) can contribute to achieving them.
- The young carer's needs now and in the future and how they impact or might impact on wellbeing
- Is the young carer able and willing to care now and after they turn 18?
- Does the young carer work or wish to do so?
- Does the young carer participate in education, training or recreation or do they wish to do so?

• Does the young carer have any **current** needs for support?

• Is the young carer likely to have needs for support after they become 18 and if so what are those needs likely to be and which are likely to be eligible needs?

Actions to take

Consider whether joint assessment or support planning required with Children's services to help meet young carer's **current** needs (responsibility for service provision transfers to adults after they turn 18)



identify what support might need to be put in place for the **adult** to help meet young carer's **current** needs including support with universal parenting tasks



Start to identify what appropriate support might be necessary for the adult to meet their care and support needs and to enable young carer to meet their own outcomes after they become 18

Start to identify whether any direct support is likely to be necessary for the young carer after they become 18 and if so, what the indicative personal budget might be, if required

If adult has non-eligible needs support may still be required to meet the needs of young carer

Young carer supporting a disabled child/young person is identified

Further guidance
Coventry Children's
Services Procedures
Manual

Further guidance
Young Carers
Needs Assessment



The presence of a young carer in the family should always constitute an appearance of need and should trigger either an assessment or the offer of an assessment to the child needing care.

Responsibility
CHILDREN'S Services

CHILDREN
ACT 1989

CHILDREN &
FAMILIES ACT
2014

The Children & Families assessment of the disabled child must consider:

- Does the caring role appear to be impacting on the young carer's wellbeing, welfare, education and/or development?
- Is the young carer taking on excessive or inappropriate caring roles?(including roles providing support to other children in the family)
- Are there safeguarding concerns for the young carer or any other young people in the household?**

YES

YES

What are the young carer's needs and what are the needs of other family members (e.g. parent carers, other children)?

- Is there any support that could be provided to the disabled child/family to help prevent the young carer from taking on inappropriate or excessive caring roles and/or meet the young carer's needs (e.g. support to take a break)
- Do parents have any needs for support in carrying out their parental role or to meet their needs as parent carers?

YES

- Do parents have appearance of need for care and support arising from a disability or illness / are there safeguarding concerns for this adult**

YES

Actions to take

This could be a **child in need** or the young carer could benefit from a **more in-depth assessment** of their needs
Carry out appropriate assessment, identify needs and arrange support to meet the needs as required (whole-family working)

Follow safeguarding procedures

Responsibility
CHILDREN'S Services
work jointly where other family
members have open referral

CHILDREN
ACT 1989

CHILDREN &
FAMILIES
ACT
2014

Joint assessment and support
planning with Adult Services
where appropriate

Arrange appropriate support for the disabled child to meet their care and support needs and/or the needs of their family

Consider referral to **Adult Services** for assessment of adult's needs or for safeguarding checks/ investigation

Responsibility
ADULT Services

CARE
ACT
2014

Joint assessment and support
planning with Children's Services
where appropriate

Young carer identified by Children's Services when working with a family (CAF, Child Protection, Social Care)

Further guidance
Coventry Children's
Services Procedures
Manual



There will be provision for an assessment of needs for support for all young carers under the age of 18 on request from them or their parent, or on the appearance of need.
This will be available regardless of who they care for, what type of care they provide or how often they provide it.

Responsibility
CHILDREN'S Services

CHILDREN
ACT 1989

CHILDREN
&
FAMILIES
ACT
2014

Further guidance
Young Carers
Needs Assessment

The CAF assessment or Children & Families assessment must consider:

- Does the caring role appear to be impacting on the young carer's wellbeing, welfare, education and/or development?
- Is the young carer taking on excessive or inappropriate caring roles?(including roles providing support to other children in the family)

YES

Actions to take

This could be a **child in need** or the young carer could benefit from a **more in-depth assessment** of their needs
Carry out appropriate assessment, identify needs and arrange support to meet the needs as required (whole-family working)

- Are there safeguarding concerns for the young carer or any other young people in the household?**

YES

Follow safeguarding procedures

What are the young carer's needs and what are the needs of other family members

- Is there any support that could be provided to the family to help prevent the young carer from taking on inappropriate or excessive caring roles and/or meet the young carer's needs (e.g. support to take a break)

YES

Arrange appropriate support for the family to meet identified needs

- Do parents have any needs for support in carrying out their parental role or to meet their needs as parent carers?

Consider referral to **Adult Services** for assessment of adult's needs or for safeguarding checks/ investigation

- Does any adult in the household have an appearance of need for care and support arising from a disability or illness / are there safeguarding concerns for this adult

YES

Responsibility
ADULT Services

CARE
ACT
2014

Joint assessment and support
planning with Children's Services
where appropriate

Responsibility
CHILDREN'S Services
work jointly where other family
members have open referral

CHILDREN
ACT 1989

CHILDREN &
FAMILIES
ACT
2014

Joint assessment and support
planning with Adult Services
where appropriate

Other guides in this series:

Supporting Young Carers

An online good practice guide for health professionals

A supplementary guide to Coventry's

'No Wrong Doors' Memorandum of Understanding

Supporting Young Carers in Schools

an online good practice guide

A supplementary guide to Coventry's

'No Wrong Doors' Memorandum of Understanding

All the guides and the

*'No Wrong Doors' A Memorandum of Understanding for Young Carers
can be downloaded from*

www.coventry.gov.uk/youngcarers

Our local Carers' Strategy is also available on the Council website at

www.coventry.gov.uk/carersstrategy