

Young Carers in Focus

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
EDUCATION BULLYING
SKILLS & ADVICE
EMPLOYMENT MONEY
THE LAW INFLUENCING CHANGE

The
Children's
Society

Working together to give young carers a voice

No child
should feel
alone

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

WELCOME TO THE KNOW YOUR RIGHTS PACK FOR YOUNG CARERS IN ENGLAND!

This pack aims to make you aware of – your human rights, your legal rights, and your rights to access things like benefits, support and advice.

Need to know where to find things out in a hurry? Our pack has lots of links to useful and interesting resources that can help you – and help raise awareness about young carers' issues!

Know Your Rights was produced by Young Carers in Focus (YCiF), and funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

Find out more about Young Carers in Focus **3**

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HOW TO USE THIS PACK

To use the pack, just click on the links to go straight to the pages you need. Each section is marked with its own logo that you can click to go straight to that section from anywhere in the pack. You can also scroll through the pack normally if you choose to.

If you'd like you can save a copy of the pack to your computer, or alternatively you can print it out.

To print out your own copy of the Know Your Rights pack, please click this button.



TIP: Look out for **TIP boxes** like this one, to discover helpful tips and that provide additional support. **Bold** links will take you to other useful websites. Underlined links will guide you to other pages in the Know Your Rights pack.

Disclaimer

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YOUNG CARERS IN FOCUS (YCIF)

The pack was produced by Young Carers in Focus (YCiF), an exciting four-year programme that gave young carers a chance to communicate, share their stories and advocate for the things that matter most to them.

Through YCiF, the young carers reached out to other young carers, and told policy and decision-makers about the changes they wanted to see!

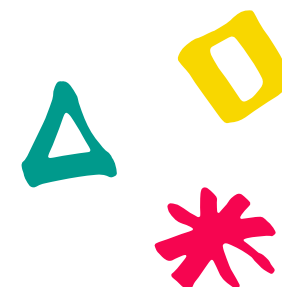
The YCiF champions' network

YCiF created a national network led by 200 young carer 'champions', aged 10-25. The Champions spoke out on behalf of young carers, and created content for a YCiF safe social network. They received training and skills that improved their resilience, confidence, skills and knowledge.

Our champions also had the chance to become media spokespersons – they have featured in national newspapers, on BBC News, radio, Channel 4 TV, documentaries, magazines, blogs and on social media. Millions of people have found out about young carers and the issues they face as a result.

'As Children's Commissioner, it's my job to help promote and protect the rights of children and young people, including young carers, across England. I have spoken with many amazing young carers. I want you to understand your rights as a young carer so you can make the most of school, work, your health and social life. You play an important role in caring for someone you love, and you deserve to be recognised, listened to and supported.'

Dr. Maggie Atkinson, Children's Commissioner for England from 2010 to 2015.





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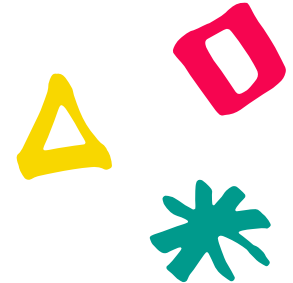
HUMAN RIGHTS



'Human Rights' is a term that is used a lot, but what does it really mean? Human rights are basic, fundamental rights that affect everyone. They protect people from serious injustices – such as being forced into labour, abused or tortured – but they also help us in lots of other ways that we all take for granted.

Human rights are universal and protect the individual at all times, as opposed to the law, which defines the system of rules for living in a particular country.

There are many different human rights documents, but they all cover certain key themes. Those documents covered here have been broken down into themes and rights that specifically affect young carers.



The different Human Rights documents

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Page 6

European Convention on Human Rights / European Social Charter Page 6

General rights Page 7

Health rights Page 7

Social security and social welfare Page 8

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The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The United Nations (UN) is a multinational organisation created to encourage countries to work together. It promotes peace and security and agrees people's human rights.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was written by the UN to outline what rights children should have, and how countries should protect and support children. It is not signed into law, but it does provide guidance for best practice, and most countries have agreed to follow this.

The UNCRC defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 – so everyone under the age of 18 can enjoy the rights in it, **regardless of their personal situation or circumstances**.

For more information about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, you can visit The Children's Commissioner's website.

The Children's Commissioner

The Children's Commissioner is there to promote and protect the rights and best interests of all children and young people in England. The aim of the commissioner is to make young people aware of their rights, to let them have their say and for their views to shape decisions made about their lives. As children and young people, young carers can voice their opinions about their rights to the Children's Commissioner.

Visit the Children's Commissioner's website here:
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

The Children's Commissioner also has a page about the UNCRC where you can give your views and opinions about human rights.
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/guide-to-the-uncrc/

There are also websites for the Children's Commissioners of:
Wales: www.childcom.org.uk
Scotland: www.sccyp.org.uk
Northern Ireland: www.niccy.org

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the European Social Charter

The European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter are human rights documents that are specific to European countries. They apply to every country in Europe except Belarus. These human rights are for everyone living in Europe, not just children, like the UNCRC.

Full text versions of each document

Each document is broken down into **Articles**, and each article is one human right. You can see the full text version of the **UNCRC** here:
www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/
Scroll down to page 46 for the articles in the convention.

The European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter

The full text version of the **EHRC** can be found here:
www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf

You can read the full text version of the **European Social Charter** here:
www.conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/035.htm



GENERAL RIGHTS

You have a lot of rights, and they are protected in a number of ways. The main themes are covered below, but there are lots of others – take a look at the documents on [Page 6](#) if you want to know more.

Basic rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Firstly, governments should do everything they can to make basic rights available to all young people (Article 4), and recognise that **every child has the right to live a happy life** and develop to the ‘maximum extent possible’ (Article 6).

Governments and services working with families should **respect the rights of families** to direct and guide their children. But services and professionals working with young carers should recognise they need **guidance and space to be young people and to learn, play and enjoy positive futures** (Article 5).

Most importantly, **young carers have the right to be consulted about everything that affects them and their families**. If you’re a young carer, your role is very important, and you have a right to be told about everything that affects your family before any decisions are made (Article 12).

HEALTH RIGHTS

Health is a very important theme running through all the human rights conventions. Everyone has the right to remain healthy and to receive medical assistance when they need it.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Under the UNCRC, **children have the right to healthcare**.

Article 24 states that countries should provide the best possible standard of healthcare.

Article 23 states that countries should give specific attention to children with a mental or physical disability, and that children with any kind of disability should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child’s active participation in the community.

Governments must do all they can to provide support to disabled children. **If you have a disability, or are caring for a child that has one**, you are entitled to get any help you need. This should be at an appropriate cost, or free of charge whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child.

This article also states specifically that **the family of the disabled child has to apply for this assistance**.

You can contact your social services representative to find out what you can apply for, or contact your local council.

Find out who your local council is by using the government tool:

www.gov.uk/find-local-council



HEALTH RIGHTS (CONTINUED)

European Convention on Human Rights and European Social Charter

The stress and tiredness that can be caused by spending so much time caring might lead to ill health.

This affects your rights, because both the ECHR and the European Social Charter state that under European law, everyone has the right to be **free from the causes of poor health**, to be educated about how to remain healthy, and to receive good quality healthcare.

Article 11 of the European Social Charter specifically protects your right to stay healthy, so governments should **make sure that your caring role doesn't affect your health**.

Article 13 gives you **the right to healthcare and support** – you should be able to get healthcare, and get help to stop you being ill in the future.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND SOCIAL WELFARE

The European Social Charter has a number of articles that give everyone living in Europe the right to social security, social welfare and social services (Articles 12, 13, 14 and 16).

Under these articles, **social security** refers to your rights (amongst other things) to be protected against poverty or 'social exclusion', access to childcare and healthcare facilities, social housing, and legal protection under national and European laws.

Social welfare refers to your rights to receive benefits payments and guidance. You have the right to receive welfare payments to protect you if you lose your job (Jobseekers allowance) or if you need assistance to pay for housing (Housing benefit), benefits

and legal protection to promote families (child tax credit and legal status of families), and a number of other benefits. Take a look at the **Money** section of this pack if you want to know more about the benefits you may be entitled to.

Social welfare also gives you the right to free education up to the age of 16 (or up to the age of 19 for those who wish to attend Sixth Form college), free guidance and advice services. It also gives you the right to financial and healthcare provision in cases such as maternity, illness, industrial accidents, long term dependency or old age.

These rights are very important; they mean that everybody has the right to a means-tested 'safety net', and that **governments should promote the development and well-being of everyone**. This protection is hugely relevant to young carers, as it provides protection for you and your whole family.

For more information and an official breakdown of the social rights outlined in the European Social Charter, please visit the **Council of Europe** pages:

www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/default_en.asp

For a simplified version of the charter you can visit:

www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Presentation/CharterGlance/English.pdf





PRIVACY

The right to privacy is an important part of human rights. **Individuals and families have the right to a private life**, and to be free from unlawful and unnecessary intrusion (Article 16 UNCRC, Article 8 ECHR).

However, if there is a justifiable reason, public services and professionals can get involved with your family's private life. They can assess families to make sure that they are safe and healthy, and provide assistance if it's needed.

State authorities that work with families have to try to do what's best for each person, taking into account their unique circumstances (UNCRC, Article 3). So if authorities know there is a young carer in the family, they must get involved to provide support. **In fact, in the UK, they now have a legal duty to do so (see The Law)** – which is in your interests, so you and your family get the support you need.

FREEDOM

Freedom is something we all take for granted, partly because it's protected as one of our most basic human rights. Naturally, freedom is protected for children under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as well.

Freedom of expression gives children the right to express themselves freely and to do what they like, unless it causes harm to others or breaks national laws (Article 13).

Freedom of expression also gives you the freedom to learn and get information on what you want, which means that young carers have the right to be told about the support and benefits that are available. Nobody can deliberately withhold that information from them.





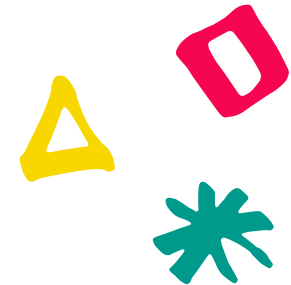
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE



If you're a young carer, there may be a variety of people, authorities or organisations helping you and your family.

These people are called 'professionals'. A professional can be anyone who is employed to ensure the well-being of the family, the young carer, or the person being looked after.

In this section you can find out how they should be helping you, and what you can do to help them give you better support.



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SOCIAL CARE WORKERS

Social workers are professionals working for your local council's social services department. Part of their job is to help children and families be safe, happy, and stay together.

There are two forms of social care. Adult social care services are responsible for people aged 18 or over, and children's services are for people under 18. The role of care services and the support they provide varies between different local authorities. For more information, and to find your local authority, visit: www.gov.uk/find-local-council

Social care providers, such as adults' and children's services, must work together to provide assessments and support for you and your family. They are required to do this by law, under the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

There is a document to support local authorities to do this. It is called the joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and was developed by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and The Children's Society.

The joint MoU promotes partnership between all services working with children and families. You can direct any social care workers that are involved with your family to the MoU here: www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/no-wrong-doors-working-to-27d.pdf

Adult social care workers

Adult social care services assess the needs of adults with care needs. If the adult is eligible, the adult social worker needs to ensure that the adult is receiving the right level of support (Care Act 2014).

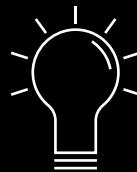
Children's service workers

Children's services assess the needs of children in need to ensure they are receiving the right level of care. Children in need include children, young people with disabilities and young carers. Children's social workers do have the power to protect children in need by removing them from the family unit, but this is very rare and is only done in extreme circumstances.

Young carers have a right to an assessment of their needs separate from the needs of the person they care for. The local authority must offer an assessment if it appears that a child or young person is a carer. Within this assessment they must consider whether your caring responsibilities are affecting your well-being, education and development.

They must also refer the person you are caring for so they can have an assessment of their own needs. They may also refer you to a young carers project.

You can **apply for a needs assessment** here: www.gov.uk/apply-needs-assessment-social-services



TIP: Your local council now have a legal obligation to provide assessments for the whole family when a young person is taking on a caring role see The Law and the Care Act 2014 easy read guide (http://www.disability.co.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Making_Sure_the_Care_Act_Works_EASY_READ.pdf) for more information.

Young and caring: Accessing support is a guide that can help you think about the practical and emotional support you need, and prepare you for talking to professionals about assessments. www.rethink.org/carers-family-friends/support-for-young-carers



CHANGING FROM CHILDREN'S TO ADULTS' SOCIAL SERVICES

The local authority must conduct an assessment known as a 'transition assessment' for young carers who are approaching 18 and may have needs related to caring after they have turned 18. This can be carried out when the young carer is 14 to 17 years old and takes into account your needs and how they may change after higher education.

If you aren't receiving support, or if you are but think you might be entitled to more, visit the government's **local authority finder** to find out who your local authority is at:
www.gov.uk/find-local-council

You or someone in your family can then contact your local authority, or visit their website, to find out more about your local support services.

Your local authority may also have a 'transitions' team that supports young people between 16–25 when moving from Children to Adult Services.

DOCTORS (GPs)

If you have concerns about your own physical or emotional health, or you care for someone with a physical or mental illness, you can speak to a doctor or GP in a safe and confidential environment.

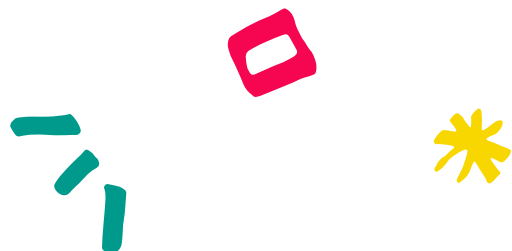
Once they know you are a young carer, your GP surgery can make sure they consider your specific needs. For example, you might not be able to come in for an early morning appointment, or if the person you care for cannot leave the house, a home visit can be arranged.

You can ask your GP if you're unsure about aspects of a treatment or medical procedure planned for the person you look after, including a hospital appointment or surgery.

As a carer, you are at a higher risk of becoming ill yourself or developing chronic conditions, such as back pain. **Routine health checks for carers** are being set up across England, and there's no harm in going to your GP once or twice a year to talk about your role and how you're feeling. Your GP can also monitor the effects that caring can have on an individual's health, such as depression.

Lastly, **GPs can direct you to local sources of information and support**. This can be anything from leaflets in the practice to putting you in touch with carers networks. Your GP can also advise you on sorting out benefits and getting respite care from the local authority – issues which you needn't be afraid to ask about.

There is a lot of guidance available for doctors to tell them how they can help you. The next time the person you are caring for has to go to the doctor, here are some things you could show them:





DOCTORS (GPs) (CONTINUED)

The **Young carers GP leaflet**, produced by **Young Carers in Focus**, provides guidance for GPs. Print one out and give it to your family doctor: www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/gp-pack-booklet_0.pdf

There is also a **GP checklist** that doctors can use to ensure that they are supporting young carers properly: www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/gp-pack-guide_0.pdf

The **Royal College of General Practitioners** has also produced an online learning module, **Supporting Carers in General Practice**, that is free to all primary healthcare professionals: www.rcgp.org.uk/learning/online-learning/ole/supporting-carers-in-general-practice.aspx

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Remember to take care of your own emotional well-being and mental health. Young carer champions have created their 'Top Five Tips' for emotional well-being:

1. **Connect.** Spend some quality time with other people including your friends and family, **OR** connect back with yourself and picture where you are in your life.
2. **Be active.** Play a team game or do something active with a friend, **OR** spend some 'me time' doing something you enjoy outdoors.
3. **Think positive.** Take stock – what good have you done today? **OR** What positives are around you?
4. **Know where you are going.** Take your time and be realistic **AND** look after yourself.
5. **Keep learning.** Give yourself a chance to learn new skills **AND** feel a sense of achievement.

Watch our **Top Tips for Well-Being video** on Makewaves: www.youtube.com/watch?v=45CEvBi3F3M



TIP: If you need to talk to someone outside of your family, you can access a counsellor.





EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING (CONTINUED)

You can get further support and information online from:

Rethink Mental Illness: www.rethink.org

Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Barnardo's: Keeping the Family in Mind
www.barnardos.org.uk/keeping_the_family_in_mind.pdf

Minds, Myths and Me: A booklet about living with a family member with a mental illness, produced for young carers, by young carers. www.flipgorilla.com/p/24919606124610322/show

LOOKING AFTER YOUR OWN EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

As a young carer you will often find yourself looking after someone else in your family. Being a young carer can be challenging and sometimes we all need a little support and time out, just to be ourselves and relax.

Looking after yourself is not about being self-centred or uncaring. It simply means that you are allowed (and have the right to) take care of yourself and recognise the pressures that you can face as a young carer.

Staying 'well', whether or not you have a physical or mental health problem yourself, means feeling that you have a sense of positive well-being which includes:

- * Feeling good
- * Being able to do the things that mean something and are important to you
- * Feeling in control
- * Having the resilience to 'bounce back' if things go wrong or change (with some additional support if you need it).

'Well-being' is different for everybody, and people will do many different things to keep themselves feeling well. These could include:

- * Talking to someone
- * Doing some exercise (or physical activity)
- * Taking a break (going for a walk, listening to some music, reading a book, watching a film)
- * Trying some relaxation techniques.

Looking after myself: A wellness plan for young carers

is a booklet to help young carers develop some useful ways of coping, and help them to explore their caring role:

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/rethink-mental-illness-looking-after-myself.pdf



LOOKING OUT FOR THE EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF ANOTHER

If you're worried about a parent's mental ill health, it can be hard to know where to go to for help.

Visit a health professional (such as your GP) if you're worried about your parents' mental health. It's good if you can encourage them to come with you, but if they refuse, you can still go to your GP and tell them about your concerns and talk about any help you might need.

If your parent/sibling is already in touch with your local Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) you could contact them directly, or you could ask your GP to contact the most appropriate professional if you are worried (this could include a duty social work team or a mental health crisis team). Assessments relating to the mental health of the person you care for should also take into account your needs as a young carer.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is the professional body responsible for education, training, setting and raising standards in psychiatry. You can access free information leaflets and guides, which cover a whole range of mental health issues.
www.rcpsych.ac.uk

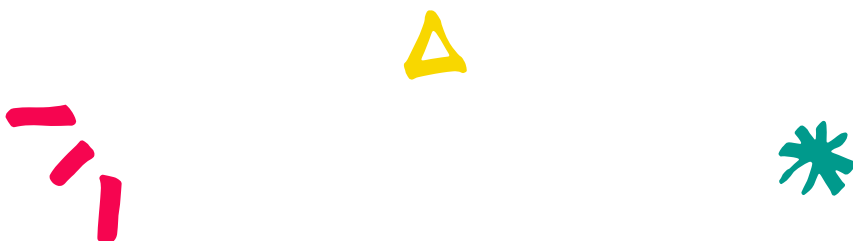
YOUNG CARERS IN FAMILIES LIVING WITH HIV

It is estimated there are around 101,200 people living with HIV in the UK, so if you live in a family affected by HIV you are not alone. There is a wide range of support available for people living with HIV, including community support programmes and information and support available online.

People are often concerned about being discriminated against if they or someone in their family is living with HIV. If you are worried about this, there are a number of resources that you can access confidentially. Furthermore, people working in HIV support services are professionals; their only responsibility is to improve the health and well-being of people affected by HIV. They should not judge people based on the illness, nor do they have the power or desire to deport families based on their HIV status.

What do young carers affected by HIV want?

- * Specialist HIV and young carers training sessions for all teachers, education professionals, social care and health professionals.
- * Lessons about HIV and the impact on family members and young carers in schools.
- * Raise awareness of young carers affected by HIV all the time, not just on World Aids day.





YOUNG CARERS IN FAMILIES LIVING WITH HIV (CONTINUED)

There is a lot of information about HIV available online, so if you would like to find out more you can visit any of the following websites:

Find HIV support services in your area:

www.aidsmap.com/hiv-basics

The Children's Society's Include Programme also has a section dedicated to young carers in families affected by HIV.

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/families-affected-by-hiv

They have also produced a pack with information about young carers for HIV professionals: carers for HIV professionals, find it here:

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/changetoolkit/identifying-and-supporting

CHIVA, the Children's HIV Association has a website where you can get information about HIV and ask questions.
www.chiva.org.uk

NAT is a UK charity that promotes the rights of people with HIV and campaigns for fair and equal treatment. It has a wealth of help and support for people living with HIV. www.nat.org.uk

SUBSTANCE MISUSE

If you are worried or experiencing peer pressure, and need some friendly, confidential advice about both legal and illegal drugs then talk to **Frank**. You can phone **0800 776 600**, Text **82111** or visit www.talktofrank.com

Lots of people drink alcohol and some people take drugs, and in some families, alcohol or drug misuse can make things difficult at home and cause problems or worries. If this is happening it can make you worry about all sorts of things, and affect different areas of your life such as school, home, friends or money. The most important thing to remember is that you did not cause the problem, and that help and support are available.

There is a lot of secrecy and stigma attached to drug or alcohol misuse but you have the right to receive information and support in your own right, as does the person who is struggling with drugs or alcohol.

If a family member that misuses substances has any contact with doctors, drug or alcohol workers (sometimes known as Recovery Workers) or social services, you have a right to be involved as well. Make sure that these professionals know and are aware of how you are impacted by the substance misuse in your family and that you are caring for family members. You have the right to ask for help, to share your feelings with safe people, and to be heard.

There is some support available online, including from the following websites.



SUBSTANCE MISUSE (CONTINUED)

STARS National Initiative is a hub of information, resources and guidance run by The Children's Society with specific pages for young people. www.childrenssociety.org.uk/substance-misuse-domestic-violence/substance-misuse/our-work

They also offer a booklet to help you talk to support services about your parent's drinking: www.childrenssociety.org.uk/substance-misuse-domestic-violence/substance-misuse/practice-resources/you-are-not-on-your-own

National Association for the Children of Alcoholics (NACOA) is a support service offering help, information and advice to everyone affected by a parent's drinking. www.nacoa.org.uk

Alateen is part of Al-Anon. Alateen meetings are attended by 12 to 17 year olds who meet to share their experiences of having, or having had, a problem drinker in their lives.

www.al-anonuk.org.uk/public/what-alateen

To find out about Alateen meetings near you, phone the General Service Office on **020 7593 2070**.

Adfam provides a place where people with a drug user or drinker in the family can take that first step and find information about where to get the expert support and advice they need. www.adfam.org.uk/families

It is important for young people living in families affected by substance misuse to remember the 7 C's:

- * I didn't **cause** it
- * I can't **control** it
- * I can't **cure** it
- * But I can take **care** of myself
- * By **communicating** my feelings
- * Making healthy **choices**
- * And **celebrating** myself.

Taken from *Discovery Finding the Buried Treasure* by Jerry Moe

SEEKING ASYLUM

If your family has moved to England or are seeking asylum or have refugee status you can find further information about rights and entitlements for you and your family through **Coram Children's Legal Centre** www.childrenslegalcentre.com

You can also suggest that any practitioners working with you and your family look at **The Refugee Toolkit**, a good practice resource for people working with refugee and asylum seeker young carers and their families. www.refugeetoolkit.org.uk





EDUCATION

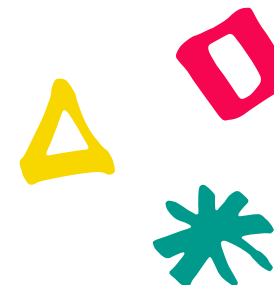


In this section you can find information and resources about schools, colleges and further education. There are also links to help you with your school work and exams.

Further education

Where to find college or university courses that suit you:

Sixth form or college	Page 19
University	Page 19
Apprenticeships and other training courses	Page 20
Exams	Page 20
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Special educational needs (SEN)	Page 23



TIP: You can gain skills and knowledge outside of formal education, and get accredited online. [Learn more about UK badges.](#)



FURTHER EDUCATION

⚡ Sixth form or college ⚡

Some people who study for A-levels stay at their own school or go to their local sixth form college. However, if you want to study at a different school or go to another college, you can choose from any that suit you.

Here's an online college directory with contact details of schools and colleges in the UK: www.colleges-uk.co.uk

If you're interested, see if you can book yourself on to an open day so you can have a look around and meet the teachers.

⚡ University ⚡

Choosing a university can be a tough decision, but you shouldn't have to make it alone. Most schools will have a careers department to provide you with as much advice as you need, so don't be afraid to ask for help.



TIP: Some universities offer continued support to carers through their Students Union. Don't be afraid to ask!

Think about what you want to get from the university experience, and use that to make your decision about whether to study, where to study, and what to study.

Whether you want to go to university for fun, to get a job, or just for the love of your chosen subject, think about what you can get out of your degree once you finish. Visit the Prospects website (see box) and see what jobs are available for graduates in your subject. Even if you aren't studying to get a better job, consider whether specialising in a different area of your subject will make it easier to find work once you've graduated.



TIP: You might be able to receive financial help with university living costs. See [Help with Housing Costs on page 44](#).

Which? University help for every step of your uni journey.
www.university.which.co.uk/advice

The Guardian University Guide is a regularly updated portal with league tables, news articles and information about subjects, courses and universities in the UK.
www.theguardian.com/education/universityguide

UCAS is where you need to go to apply for universities, and to find a course. It can be a good starting point to see what's available, and where.
www.ucas.com

Prospects is the official graduate jobs website.
www.prospects.ac.uk/careers.htm

Learning and Work Institute (L&W) aims to encourage all adults to engage in learning of all kinds including specific information regarding education and career paths for young adult carers.
www.learningandwork.org.uk/?redirectedfrom=niace





University (continued)

You should not feel that going to university is your only option.

Don't let your school or peers pressure you into going to university if you don't want to. **Not Going to Uni** is a website with advice for many alternatives to university:

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk



TIP: The Open University run free courses www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue# and can also offer a bursary for low income families www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/bursary

APPRENTICESHIPS AND OTHER TRAINING COURSES

Traineeships

Traineeships provide essential work preparation training, Maths and English development, and the work experience needed to get an apprenticeship or another job. Traineeships are delivered by training providers and funded by the government.

www.gov.uk/further-education-skills/apprenticeships

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a system of training a new generation of young people to become competent in a particular skillset. Find out more about getting an apprenticeship:

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

The Government have a useful guide to apprenticeships, with an online vacancies search engine and information about qualifications you can earn whilst completing an apprenticeship.

www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide

Other training courses

Colleges also have other training opportunities, with courses in practical skills like plumbing, tiling or becoming an electrician. If you want to gain skills you should be able to find a course near you.

City and Guilds are a leading vocational education and training organisation, offering a wide variety of training courses, qualifications and apprenticeships. www.cityandguilds.com

EXAMS

Exams aren't the same in every school, and there isn't a clear schedule that tells you exactly when your exams are. Each school will use one of the different exam boards, who create and mark all the exams that its students take.

It's up to your school to tell you when your exams are and to help you prepare for them. Your teachers should not only teach you everything you need to pass, but also show you a marking scheme and examples of past exam papers.

If you'd like to find past exam papers yourself, try to find out what exam board your school uses and visit their website. Here are some links to the most prominent exam boards' past papers websites:

Edexcel

www.edexcel.com/i-am-a/student/Pages/pastpapers.aspx

AQA

www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/exams-guidance/find-past-papers-and-mark-schemes



HELP WITH SCHOOL WORK

If you're struggling to keep up with homework, or if you're falling behind at school, make sure that your teacher is aware of your circumstances. Saying that you are a young carer is not just making an excuse – it is a valid explanation and reason for being behind.

You can download the printable schools leaflet, which will help make your teacher aware of what a young carer is, and give them resources so that they can better understand and help you.



TIP: Talk to your teachers before you get behind on your work and they might be able to help you stay ahead!

If you do want to catch up, or get ahead of the game, there are a number of things you can do to help you learn – like after school clubs or classes, reading at home, using online learning resources, or getting private tuition.

But if you aren't able to do any of these things, or if you don't have time, make your teacher aware that you are a young carer. Tell them why you can't keep up with homework or why you might be falling behind – that way they can find out how to give you extra support on your own terms.

But remember that you should also make time for yourself, so that you can learn and play and do what you want to do!

You can find more support here:

GCSE Bitesize has revision tips and advice for each subject and qualification: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

Grid Club has games to help you learn and develop your skills: www.gridclub.com

Some schools and young carer's projects have homework clubs or groups you can join to help you get work done on time.

MAKING TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF AWARE OF YOUNG CARERS

Teachers

It may not always feel like it, but your teachers will want what's best for every student. Where there is guidance available, they will follow it to make sure that their pupils are being supported correctly.



TIP: Does your school know about the Young Carers in Schools programme? Let them know about it! See below...

The Young Carers in Schools programme aims to create an effective and meaningful support tool for schools to use, and provides recognition through an award. It helps schools reduce levels of insufficient support for young carers and remove the negative impacts on their education and future life chances. Ask your teachers if the school has an award, or provide them with more information from:

www.youngcarersinschools.com



MAKING TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF AWARE OF YOUNG CARERS (CONTINUED)

You can also tell your teacher to go to the Include Programme's resources page.

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/resources-for-professionals

For more resources for schools, try visiting:

www.youngcarersinschools.com

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/schools/award

Printable schools leaflets

If you're comfortable telling your teacher that you are a young carer, you can either talk to your teacher in person, or you can print out or send them a copy of the leaflet for schools. The leaflet was created by YCiF to tell teachers what a young carer is and to help them identify and support young carers. You can find the leaflet here: www.professionals.carers.org/sites/default/files/ycinschools_info_leaflet_2015.pdf

SCHOOL NURSES

Your school may also have a school nurse whom you can talk to about any medical or health concerns. A new scheme by the department of health means that these school nurses are receiving training and guidance on how to identify and support young carers.

This training means that school nurses understand the issues that can affect young carers. They are also trained to be impartial, trustworthy and helpful in order to help each young carer individually based on their needs.

You can also suggest your school nurse access the Department of Health school nurse pathway: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299270/Young_Carers_pathway_Interactive_FINAL.pdf





SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

If you or a sibling/dependent that you care for, identify with having a special educational need, you may be entitled to extra support and an assessment carried out by your local council to ensure that you are getting the support that you need.

Some special educational needs might not have been identified, but examples of them are:

- * Behavioural/social (eg difficulty making friends)
- * Reading and writing (eg Dyslexia)
- * Understanding things
- * Concentrating (eg Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)
- * Physical needs or impairments.

Visit the **Government webpage** for further information about getting support. www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/overview

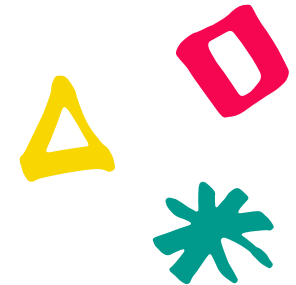
Young Minds have resources to support children and young people's emotional well-being whilst they are at school. Direct your parents or your teachers towards this resource, to help them to understand and support you.

www.youngminds.org.uk/what-we-do/commission-us/360-schools/





BULLYING



Being bullied isn't just a horrible experience – it's also a breach of your rights.

Everyone has the right to be themselves, and to be free from persecution.

So don't feel you have to suffer in silence – you can take action. In this section you'll find lots of useful links to information, coping strategies, and hotlines you can call if you want to talk to someone.

Remember, everyone's situation is different, and only you can decide whether or not this advice will help you – and only you can follow it. It may take courage and determination to decide to get help, but these resources are a start.

[Being bullied at school?](#) [Page 25](#)

[Being bullied at work?](#) [Page 25](#)

[Staying safe](#) [Page 26](#)

[Online safety](#) [Page 26](#)



BEING BULLIED AT SCHOOL?

All schools want to put a stop to bullying, so your teachers should definitely be willing to help you.

What's more, all schools have strict government guidelines to help stop bullying, with lots of tried and tested methods to tackle it.

With this in mind, you should never feel that your school can't help you.

Your teachers, parents or a school counsellor should be your first port of call if you're having trouble with bullies. But if you want more advice or support, or if you feel that your school isn't doing enough to help you, you can try some of these links:

Childline

www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/Bullyinginfo.aspx

Childline also has a phone number that you can call at any time to talk about problems: **0800 1111**

Bullying UK has a lot of general information for all age groups about how to deal with bullying at school or in the workplace. www.bullying.co.uk

Kidscape is a UK-based anti-bullying charity. They publish resource packs with tons of helpful information for teachers, parents and students. Go to www.kidscape.org.uk for more information.

Here's a direct link to a page for resources on bullying: www.beyondbullying.com/uploads/stopbullying.pdf
You can download any of these resources for yourself, for your parents or for your teacher.

The Government has a useful page that tells you exactly what kinds of bullying are illegal. It also has guidelines on who you should report bullying to, and when you should get the police involved. www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school

BEING BULLIED AT WORK?

Despite what you might think, bullying doesn't just happen at school. Even in the workplace, some people feel the need to bully others in order to empower themselves.

The rules about bullying at work are less strict than for schools, but you can still take action. Many forms of bullying count as abuse, which is illegal and punishable by law.

The Government has guidelines on when bullying becomes illegal. www.gov.uk/workplace-bullying-and-harassment

Bullying UK has advice for people experiencing bullying in the workplace. www.bullying.co.uk/bullying-at-work/bullying-at-work/

Most workplaces should take a stand against bullying, so take your concerns to your boss, manager or Human Resources department (if you have one).

Although bullying is very serious, it is not in itself a criminal offence. But bullying in the workplace could be, or could lead to, a more serious criminal offence such as harassment, theft or assault. Review the government guidelines and decide if there is any legal action that you can take.

Remember that much of the advice and information around tackling bullying at school can apply to the workplace, so take a look at those too.



STAYING SAFE

Staying safe is really important. We all lead complicated lives, and we can all get into trouble and face problems, whether through bullying or other means.

The Metropolitan Police has a safety website with guides which are great ways to keep on top of everything and help you make the right decisions.

www.safe.met.police.uk

Kidscape also has resources to help keep young people safe. Some are for teachers and parents but there's also some for young people. www.kidscape.org.uk

If you're under 16, your identity is protected under UN laws. This means that if you are suffering, harassed or are the victim of a crime and want to report someone to the police, you'll remain completely anonymous. So don't worry that you might get into trouble with someone – they won't be allowed to know it was you who involved the police.

ONLINE SAFETY

Staying safe online

The internet is amazing – it's never been easier to keep in touch with your friends or meet new people all around the world.

However, not everyone is who they seem, and it can be very easy to get in trouble online. The websites below have very useful advice to help you stay safe.

Childnet has tips, competitions, advice and blogs to help you stay safe online. It also has sections that provide more specific advice for your age group.

www.childnet.com/young-people

Kidsmart has loads of advice and links to safe sites, plus competitions and games for you to take part in.

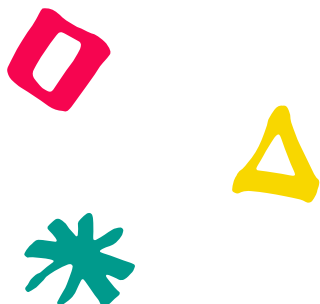
www.kidsmart.org.uk

ThinkUKnow is divided into age groups to give specific advice for people like you.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is a terrible way to use the internet – however, bullying via technology can be punished in just the same way as bullying in real life. If it's particularly bad, you can even get the police involved.





ONLINE SAFETY (CONTINUED)

Here are some websites with more information on how to combat cyber bullying.

Childline

www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/CyberBullying.aspx

Bullying UK

www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying

Stop bullying

www.stopbullying.gov

Reporting offensive and illegal materials

If content is abusive or offensive, report it immediately to the host site (such as Facebook or Twitter) and ask for it to be removed.

If you are contacted by someone online that you don't know


and they are being inappropriate, threatening or sexually abusive, you should tell an adult whom you trust **immediately**. You should then report this to the **Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre** (CEOP). www.ceop.police.uk



TIP: Also check out www.bit.ly/2FL1GXT



SKILLS & ADVICE



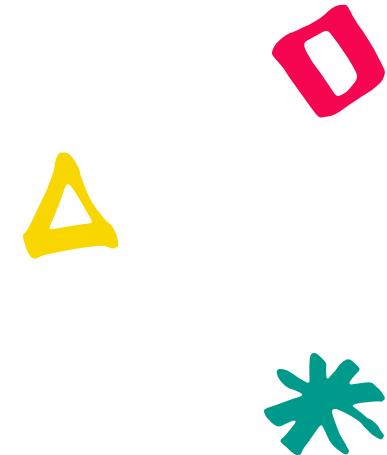
As a young carer, you have a right to get as much help as possible to gain skills, be given good advice, and access websites that can help to make your life easier.

In this section you'll find advice on:

Hotlines, help-lines and websites	Page 29
Young carers' services	Page 29
Counsellors	Page 30
Life skills	Page 31
Leisure time	Page 32

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) has produced the **Really useful book of Learning and Earning**, which really lives up to it's title and is full of advice for everything about living independently and looking after yourself.

You can find it here: www.shop.niace.org.uk/ruble-yac-2014.html





HOTLINES, HELP-LINES AND WEBSITES

In an emergency, call 999 immediately.

If you need to contact the **police in a non-emergency**, you can call **101**. For more information, visit: www.police.uk/101

If you're worried about anything in your life, or if there's anything that you want to talk about or get advice on, call **Childline** on **0800 1111** or visit www.childline.org.uk.

If you're struggling to cope under the weight of your caring duties, need help with a specific problem, or just want general advice, call the **NHS Carers direct helpline** on **0300 123 1053** or visit www.nhs.uk/carersdirect/carerslives/updates/pages/carersdirecthelpline.aspx

If you or a family member are having trouble with the law, or have any legal questions or concerns and want to get advice, you can call the **Coram Children's Legal Centre** on **0808 802 0008** or visit www.childrenslegalcentre.com

If you or a family member has a mental illness or disability, and you want to get some practical advice or information about mental health, you can call **Rethink Mental Illness** on **0300 500 0927** or visit www.rethink.org/about-us/our-mental-health-advice

If you have a family member who struggles with an addiction to alcohol, or if you're worried about how much a family member drinks, you can call the **National Association for Children of Alcoholics** on **0800 358 3456**, or visit www.nacoa.org.uk. It doesn't matter how old you are, or who the family member is, you can talk to them about anything.

If you have any concerns about housing, or if you need housing, **Shelter** has a free housing advice helpline – you can call them on **0808 800 4444** or visit www.bit.ly/2GDtE9r

YOUNG CARERS' SERVICES

There are **Young Carers' Services** all around the UK that specialise in providing support and respite for young carers. Many offer trips and events to give young carers a break from their caring duties, and they can give one-to-one support. The services can vary greatly: some are unable to provide support once you are over 18, while others have specific young adult carers' groups for 18–25 year olds.

You can find your nearest young carers project and see what they offer by using the **Include Programme's young carers' service locator**:
www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/young-carers-services

You can refer yourself (or a family member can refer you) to a young carer's project for additional support. You can also be referred after an assessment from Social Services. See [Page 11](#).





YOUNG CARERS' SERVICES (CONTINUED)

Finally, if you are already in contact with any young carers' services or professionals, you can show them the following guidance:

The Children's Society's Include Programme has created the **Whole Family Pathway**, to give professionals advice on how to help the whole family.

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/whole-family-pathway-2018.pdf

The **ADCS**, which directs Children's Services in the UK, has advice on good practice for professionals when dealing with young carers. www.adcs.org.uk/goodpractice/youngcarers.html

There are lots of other resources on the **Include Programme** website, some giving guidance to specific services. www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/home

COUNSELLORS

Counsellors are people you can talk to about anything troubling you in your life. They don't have any agenda – they listen objectively and confidentially, and help you find ways to cope.

If you want to talk to someone outside the family, but who knows you and your situation, most schools have a **school counsellor** or other counselling service. You can talk to a teacher or school nurse about your situation, and if you're OK with it, they might be able to get the school to help you more.

Some school counsellors also get professional training and support from other charities like **Place 2 Be**. A list of Place 2 Be schools can be found here: www.place2be.org.uk/what-we-do/where-we-work, but other schools may be getting help elsewhere.

It's good to talk is a website run by a respected professional body called the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). You can enter your postcode and find counsellors in your area. www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk

The Samaritans believe that everyone should have someone to talk to, no matter what their situation. If you just want to speak on the phone in complete confidence, call **0845 790 9090** or visit www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/contact-us

Childline also has a phone number that you can call at any time to talk about problems – **0800 1111** – or visit www.childline.org



LIFE SKILLS

Eating healthily is a very important part of looking after yourself, and cooking your own meals is the cheapest and most effective way of doing this. When you leave home and live by yourself, these skills will be very important.

The **NHS Live Well** pages cover a variety of topics from food hygiene or improving your diet to information about eating disorders.

www.nhs.uk/livewell/healthy-eating/Pages/Healthyeating.aspx

BBC Food has a huge range of recipes – you can search for a recipe based on what ingredients you have, what dietary restrictions you have or anything else. www.bbc.co.uk/food



TIP: Remember to look out for your emotional well-being as well. Check out YCiF well-being planner www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/advice-for-young-people/well-being-and-mental-health





LEISURE TIME

Finally, let's not forget that young carers have the same right to get up, go out and have fun that everyone else their age has! Everyone's idea of fun is different, but here are some links with some general ideas, and some deals to get you interested.

Merlin is a company that owns many attractions around the UK ranging from theme parks to sea life centres – they almost always have 2 for 1 offers available. Visit www.moneysavingexpert.com/deals/merlin for up to date information.

Time Out reviews everything from attractions to restaurants and beyond – you can search for your local area and find some ideas on things to do or places to visit at www.timeout.com

The **Days Out Guide** has huge lists of things to do all around the UK, and you can get 2 for 1 offers or other deals on almost everything if you have a national rail ticket for that day. www.daysoutguide.co.uk

There are a range of **museums** across England, and particularly London, that offer free entry to most of their exhibitions (such as the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum and the Tate Modern).

Young carers deserve to have some time to relax, and there's plenty on offer, so if you can save money whilst doing it, why not?





EMPLOYMENT



Entering the world of work can be tough, with lots of challenges to face. There's no right or wrong way to go about finding and getting your dream job, but lots of help and support is available.

Make the most of it – don't just look for work in the papers or online, try to use every resource out there. Have a look at the following links to decide where to go.

Age-specific work time regulations and advice

Under 13	Page 34
13–16 year-olds	Page 34
16 and 17 year olds	Page 35
18 and over	Page 35
Career advice if you're still at school	Page 36
Careers services	Page 36
Apprenticeships	Page 37
Online resources	Page 37
Graduates	Page 37
Volunteering	Page 38
CVs and applying for jobs	Page 38
Keep looking!	Page 39





AGE-SPECIFIC WORK TIME REGULATIONS AND ADVICE

Everyone has the right to be free from having to work more than a certain number of hours per week. The amount you can work depends on your age, job and whether you're still at school.

Under 13

If you're under 13, staying in school and having enough free time is very important. Normally, children this young aren't allowed to work at all – but you can work in television, theatre or as a model.

To work in these areas you will need to apply to your local council for a performance licence. The council will want your employer to prove that you will still be able to learn when you are working, and that you don't work too many hours. They will also make sure that you have a 'chaperone' (an adult to look after you) at all times.

To find out more, visit:

www.gov.uk/child-employment/minimum-ages-children-can-work

If you are this age and you are already thinking about what you want to do once you've left school, look at our [advice for people still in school](#) or [schools careers service](#) pages.

13-16 year-olds

At this age you're allowed to work for a few hours each day, but there are tight rules about how much you can work and when, and there is no minimum wage – so what you are paid will be decided by your employer.

General rules:

You are not allowed to work:

- * During school hours
- * For more than 1 hour before school
- * For more than 2 hours after school
- * Before 7am or after 7pm
- * Anywhere that may be harmful to your health, or in pubs or betting shops

During term time:

You are allowed to work:

- * For a maximum of 12 hours a week
- * For 2 hours a day on school days and Sundays
- * For 5 hours a day on Saturdays if you are 13–14
- * For 8 hours a day on Saturdays if you are 15–16

During school holidays:

If you are 13–14 you can work:

- * For a maximum of 25 hours a week
- * For 5 hours on a weekday or Saturday
- * For 2 hours on a Sunday

If you are 15–16 you can work:

- * For a maximum of 35 hours a week
- * For 8 hours on a weekday or Saturday
- * For 2 hours on a Sunday



13-16 year-olds (continued)

To find out more, visit:

www.gov.uk/child-employment/restrictions-on-child-employment

Big companies like supermarkets are unlikely to employ people in this age group due to the strict rules about when they are allowed to work. If you're aged 13 to 16, the best place to look for work will be local businesses, shops or newsagents (for a paper round). Your wages will be up to your boss as there is no minimum wage.

If you are this age and you are already thinking about what you want to do once you've left school, look at our [advice for people still in school](#) or [schools careers service](#) pages.

16 and 17 year olds

Want to work full time? After the last Friday in June in the school year that you turn 16, you're officially allowed to work for a maximum of 40 hours per week, and you're entitled to receive a minimum wage (this is less than the National Minimum Wage though – as at 2017 it is just £4.05).

To find out more, visit:

www.gov.uk/child-employment/minimum-ages-children-can-work

Go back to the main work page (**Page 33**) and select from the links menu to get advice on what to do next if you are looking for work. Or consider looking at our [Education](#) pages to get advice on how to apply for college or sixth form.

18 and over

If you're 18 or over, you're classified as an adult, so a different set of rules apply. You'll be entitled to work for 48 hours per week (including paid or unpaid overtime). You can work for more than 48 hours in one week as long as it averages under 48 hours per week over a 17-week period.

These regulations are designed to protect you from being forced into doing many hours of unpaid overtime. There are also a number of exceptions, and other rules that apply. To find out more, visit: www.gov.uk/maximum-weekly-working-hours

You can opt out of restrictions, but only if you're willing. It's illegal for employers to include an 'opt out' in an employment contract, or for them to choose employees based on whether they have opted out or not, so you should not be pressurised into working for more than 48 hours per week.

Find out more here: www.gov.uk/maximum-weekly-working-hours/weekly-maximum-working-hours-and-opting-out





CAREER ADVICE IF YOU'RE STILL AT SCHOOL

Young carers develop skills from an early age as they learn to be resilient, mature and capable. They develop these skills in order to look after themselves and their family.

These are highly desirable skills! Even if you lack the free time to do extra-curricular activities or go to clubs, you have lots of skills to put on your CV already.

If you have time, there are other things you can do to prepare for work.

Your **school's careers department** will be able to give you advice – ask them what subjects to take to get into a certain job, or where you can go to gain skills.

Go to **after school clubs** or take part in **extra-curricular activities** – these are things that employers like to see.

Think about **volunteering**. If there's a charity with a cause close to your heart, you can dedicate some of your time, learn new skills and meet people who can give you a reference or help you find a job. Find out more on our volunteering page ([Page 38](#)).

CAREERS SERVICES

School careers service

Whether you're at school, college or university, there should be a careers advice service with experts who can help. If in doubt, ask your teacher or personal tutor how to get careers advice from your school.

Job Centre

Whether you are applying for **Jobseeker's Allowance** or not ([see Page 43](#)), the Job Centre will still be able to provide free and impartial careers advice.

You can also visit their website and apply for work near you.

www.jobsearch.direct.gov.uk/JobSearch/Browse.aspx

National Careers Service

The National Careers Service has tools to help you choose a career, advice on how to enter an industry, and tips on making a successful application.

www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx

Open University

Open University provide online support with finding a job, interviews and opportunities for employment. Please note, some resources are restricted to registered students.

www.help.open.ac.uk/job-seeking





APPRENTICESHIPS

If you've just left school (or if you're older but need experience) consider looking for an apprenticeship. There are plenty of industries you can choose to go into – you need no prior experience and it's a great way to get contacts, meet people and get on-the-job training.

Visit the **government's apprenticeship finding service** to find apprenticeship schemes near you:
www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

The Children's Society also provides internship opportunities in a range of departments for young people over 18. You can find out more at www.careers.childrenssociety.org.uk

See more about [apprenticeships and other training courses on page 20](#).

ONLINE RESOURCES

Whether or not you have a clear idea of what you want to do, there's a HUGE amount of help online.

How to look for jobs

Some job agencies charge employers to advertise their vacancies online, and send out emails to lists of applicants looking for work. They will be free for you to use.

Here are some job agencies that work in this way:

Jobsite: www.jobsite.co.uk

Monster: www.monster.co.uk/Jobs

Reed: www.reed.co.uk/jobs

TotalJobs: www.totaljobs.com

There's also a free government website that lists jobs in your local area: www.jobsearch.direct.gov.uk/JobSearch/Browse.aspx

How to help employers find you

Other agencies are hired by applicants to find them work based on their skills, interests, and experience. This type of agency may charge you up front, take some of your first wage packet, or take a percentage of your wages from the employer. **Agency Central** is a UK directory listing these job agencies. www.agencycentral.co.uk

Specific industries

If you're looking for more industry-specific websites, here's a link that might be a good place to start: www.jobs.ac.uk

GRADUATES

Are you a graduate? All the age-relevant rights and advice given here applies to you. But there will be 'graduate' level jobs that you can get with your degree. You can normally use your university's career department to help you find work for several years after graduating.

Prospects, the government graduate jobs website, offers extensive advice for finding graduate jobs based on your degree, and advertises jobs aimed at recent graduates. www.prospects.ac.uk

Look out for graduate-specific sections on most other **job agency websites** (see [Page 39](#)).



VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering can be a great way to gain the experience needed to start a career. It doesn't just mean helping out in a charity's shop – you can volunteer as an activist, at an activity centre or project, at a museum or gallery, and much more.

Why not take part in any local fundraising events? You could do something silly, funny, worthy or sporty – contributing in any way to a charity is something great to put on your CV.

Find out more from the **government page on volunteering**, which also has information on volunteer's rights:

www.gov.uk/volunteering/find-volunteer-placements

V Inspired is a charity that aims to connect young people to interesting volunteering placements: www.vinspired.com

Volunteering England is a website with extensive information, advice and listings to help you find somewhere to volunteer:

www.volunteering.org.uk

You could also volunteer for one of the **Young Carers in Focus** partners:

The Children's Society

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do

Rethink Mental Illness

www.rethink.org/get-involved/volunteering-participating

YMCA www.ymca-fg.org/work-for-us/volunteering

CVS AND APPLYING FOR JOBS

The most daunting part of finding work can be the application process itself. Writing a CV or filling out an application form is a difficult thing to do, but there's lots of advice around.

Your first step should be creating or updating your CV. You should include information about your education and work experience, but most importantly your CV should tell employers your skills, and how you can add value to the company.

Some jobs won't ask for a CV, but want you to fill out an application form instead. Your CV will still be very useful for this as you can use some of the same information about your skills, education and experience. Try not to be put off by big application forms as it will all be worth it if you get the job.

It is also a good idea to tailor the information you give in each application to best suit that job. You can include more information in your CV about the skills they want, or write a targeted cover letter. Some of the links on **Page 39** give more information about this.

Interviews

Everybody gets nervous about doing job interviews, but preparation is the key. If you are well prepared for an interview it will boost your confidence and make you less nervous. One way of doing this is practicing common interview questions (for more information, visit some of the careers advice websites listed on **Page 39**). You could also do mock interviews with friends to practice answering tough questions.



CVS AND APPLYING FOR JOBS (CONTINUED)

Here are some useful career advice pages from job agencies:

Jobsite: www.jobsite.co.uk/insider/category/career-advice

Monster: www.monster.co.uk/career-advice/cv-writing-tips/cv-advice

Reed: www.reed.co.uk/career-advice

TotalJobs: www.totaljobs.com/careers-advice

The **National Careers Advice Service** has excellent advice on all parts of the application process, and has a CV builder tool.
www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

Prospects has advice on job applications, including example CVs and cover letters, and advice on how to disclose disability.
www.prospects.ac.uk/careers.htm

LiveCareer has a free CV builder that allows you to choose from templates and guides you through each section to help you create your perfect CV.
www.livecareer.co.uk

KEEP LOOKING!

Don't forget, you can always increase your exposure to the job market – consider all these ways of searching:

- * Local newspapers
- * National newspapers or magazines
- * National newspapers jobs websites
- * Local advertising boards
- * Local shops – you may see 'staff needed' signs, or you can drop your CV off with the manager in case something becomes available
- * Job agencies
- * The internet
- * Professional bodies or trade unions sometimes have job listings for work in their industry

Try to be positive, no matter how long you've been looking! You never know where the next opportunity might present itself, so always keep an eye out and look in as many different places as possible.





MONEY

We all know how tight money can be at times, but there is often help out there in the form of benefits and tax credits. Each year billions of pounds of benefits go unclaimed by those who really need them.

In this section, you'll find information on some of the key benefits which you might want to look into, and useful advice on them.

Making money go further or understanding tough financial terms is a challenge for everybody. Fortunately, there are a number of advice services, charities and web pages to help you understand, budget and do everything you can to manage your money effectively.

The **Money Advice Service** is an independent, government-run free service giving tips for all aspects of money and finance:

- * Use their free Health check service to make the most out of your money: www.healthcheck.moneyadviceservice.org.uk
- * Visit their page with guidance on support available for young carers: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/financial-support-for-young-carers
- * Or visit their home page to browse categories or search for advice relating to your circumstances: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

For more general advice, and guides on how to save money on bills or shopping, visit **Money Saving Expert** www.moneysavingexpert.com

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Help with disabilities	Page 43
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WHAT BENEFITS AND TAX CREDITS ARE AVAILABLE?

There are hundreds of different benefits, so it is really important to make sure you get help to identify all of those which you may be entitled to. Below are some helpful websites to give you an overview of the benefits you could be entitled to.

Visit the **Citizens Advice Bureau** page on benefits:
www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/benefits_e.htm

Alternatively, you can use the **Government benefits adviser**:
www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser

Finally, if you would like to browse through all the benefits pages yourself, you can visit the **Government benefits advice home page**, available here:
www.gov.uk/browse/benefits



TIP: Alternatively a **benefits calculator** can give you a rough idea of what you may be entitled to:
Turn2Us benefits calculator:
www.benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk
Entitled to www.entitledto.co.uk

ORGANISATIONS THAT MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP

Getting help with your money can be a complicated business, but there are a number of organisations that could provide you with support to help you to make sure you are getting the money you are entitled to.

Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) provides free, impartial and confidential advice. Find your local CAB at the link below:
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/getadvice.htm?txt_search=&local-bureau-sbmt=Search

Turn2Us have lots of advice about benefits that are available, that you may be entitled to receive:
www.turn2us.org.uk/benefits_search.aspx

The **NHS choices** website can help you to find carers services locally:
www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Carers/LocationSearch/1796

If you need help with debts, a charity like **Stepchange** may be able to help you: www.stepchange.org/Howwecanhelpyou.aspx





HELP FOR CARERS OVER 16

Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance is a benefit paid to help you look after someone with substantial caring needs. You don't have to be related to, or live with, the person you care for. You must be 16 or over and spend at least 35 hours a week caring for them, and not studying over 21 hours a week.

www.gov.uk/carers-allowance

Carer's Credit

You could get Carer's Credit if you're caring for someone for at least 20 hours a week, who is on Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independent Payments, an Attendance Allowance or Armed Force Independence Payment.

www.gov.uk/carers-credit

Carer Premium

If you can't get Carer's Allowance because you are being paid another benefit that overlaps with it, you may still be able to get the carer premium. The carer premium is an extra amount of money included in the calculation of Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Council Tax Reduction (Rate Rebate in Northern Ireland) and Housing Benefit.

www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/help-with-benefits/carers-allowance

Young Carers Needs Assessment

The Young Carers Needs Assessment Regulations 2015 outlines that a local authority must carry out an assessment of a young carer's needs, particularly their education, personal and emotional development. This assessment should also take into account other members of the family, and result in an assessment of the person you are caring for.

To arrange for an assessment you should contact the social services department of the local authority that you live in. You can find out which local authority you live in here:

www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council

HELP FOR UNDER 16S

If you are under 16 the person you care for may be entitled to additional support to reduce your caring role. You can point them towards The **Citizens Advice** 'advice guide' which is a great place to start when looking to find out about help available for sick or disabled people: www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/benefits_e/benefits_sick_or_disabled_people_and_carers_ew/benefits_for_people_who_are_sick_or_disabled.htm

The **gov.uk website** also has information that can help you with this: www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled/disability-and-sickness-benefits



TIP: Young people (aged under 18) who provide care to adult family members are also entitled to an assessment of their needs. Assessments, of the whole family, should ascertain why a child is caring and what needs to change in order to prevent them from undertaking excessive or inappropriate caring responsibilities which could impact adversely on their welfare, education, or social development.



HELP WITH DISABILITIES

There are several benefits available to supplement the income of people that are unable to work due to disability. Some are subject to assessment to determine the severity of your disability, most are also available whether you're in work or not.

Disability Living Allowance (under 16):

www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/overview

Personal Independence Payment (over 16):

www.gov.uk/pip/overview

Disability Premiums:

www.gov.uk/disability-premiums-income-support

Blind Person's Allowance:

www.gov.uk/blind-persons-allowance

Reduced Earnings Allowance:

www.gov.uk/reduced-earnings-allowance

Employment Support Allowance:

www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance. This benefit has been created to replace the Severe Disablement Allowance and Incapacity Benefit. For more information visit the relevant pages:
www.gov.uk/severe-disablement-allowance
www.gov.uk/incapacity-benefit

Attendance Allowance:

www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance/overview

If you are a higher education student living in England, you are entitled to apply for a **Disabled Students' Allowance** (DSA) if you have a disability, long-term health condition, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia.

www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview

HELP IF YOU ARE OUT OF WORK

Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) is a key benefit for people who are looking for work. To get JSA you are likely to have to meet several other conditions, including showing that you are seeking work. You can normally only claim Jobseeker's Allowance if you are 18 or over. Some 16 and 17 year olds can claim JSA, but they should seek advice since other support may be more appropriate.

You can find out more about JSA here:

www.gov.uk/jobseekers-allowance

If you are eligible, apply for Jobseekers Allowance as soon as you are looking for work because:

- * You'll get minimal financial support
- * It counts towards National Insurance contributions
- * You can have meetings with employment specialists at the Jobcentre every two weeks for free. They can give you career advice, and help you find work in areas that interest you.
- * You'll be made aware of training courses and seminars that might be of interest to you.
- * If you're on income support, you can then become eligible for several other benefits.



HELP IF YOU ARE OUT OF WORK (CONTINUED)

To claim Jobseeker's Allowance you must go to a Jobcentre and apply for an interview.

For more information, and to check if you are eligible, please visit **the government's advice page**
www.gov.uk/jobseekers-allowance

HELP FOR THOSE WHO ARE WORKING

If you are working, this doesn't necessarily mean you aren't entitled to receive benefits. If you are on a low income you may still be entitled to receive benefits like Housing Benefit and help with your Council Tax. Some benefits, such as Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payment, may be paid no matter how much you earn. Working Tax Credit is normally only paid to working households.

You can find out more about benefits for people in work here:
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/

Additionally, there are a number of benefits that people can apply for to get extra income, either because they don't have any income from a job, or to supplement their incomes if they do.

Income Support: www.gov.uk/income-support

Working Tax Credit: www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit/overview

Maternity Allowance:
www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance/overview

HELP WITH HOUSING COSTS

Housing Benefit is a benefit to help people living on a low income to pay their rent. It can be available whether you are living in public or private rented accommodation. You don't have to be out of work to get Housing Benefit, but it is affected by how much you earn.

You can find out more about Housing Benefit here:
www.gov.uk/housing-benefit

You may also be entitled to **Cold Weather Payment** if you're getting certain benefits. Payments are made between 1 November and 31 March during periods of very cold weather.

You can find out more about Cold Weather Payment here:
www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment/overview

There are also a number of government grants, tax reductions and allowances to reduce the costs associated with housing. There are a number of tools to help you determine if you or your family are entitled to any of this support:

Council Tax Reduction: www.gov.uk/council-tax-reduction

Energy grants calculator: www.gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator

Free or discounted TV licence:
www.gov.uk/free-discount-tv-licence

Help using your benefits to pay bills:
www.gov.uk/bills-benefits



TIP: For some good advice specifically for young carers on housing, visit the **Carers Trust page on housing:**
www.carers.org/help-directory/leaving-home-and-housing-options



STUDENT HOUSING

When you come to move out of the family home, you have certain rights to protect you from being treated unfairly by a landlord. Whether you're moving into student housing at university, or moving out permanently, your rights are protected and there is advice available.

There are a number of resources outlining your rights as a tenant in student housing. The law varies in each region of the UK, so make sure you visit the page relating to where you live.

The **National Union of Students** has all sorts of advice relating to housing and other things. Regional links will also take you to advice pages from **Shelter**, a UK homelessness and housing charity: www.nus.org.uk/en/advice/housing-advice/your-rights-and-responsibilities-as-a-tenant

The **Citizens Advice** has advice and information including your rights in both private and university provided accommodation: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/renting-a-home/student-housing/

Renting or leasehold

When renting or buying a leasehold property you also have rights as a tenant. These rights vary depending on where you live in the UK, so make sure you visit the relevant pages.

The **Citizens Advice** has general housing advice, including your rights. www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/housing_e.htm

Shelter has a page about your rights while renting or leasing.

- * If you live in England, visit:
www.England.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice
- * If you live in Scotland, visit:
www.scotland.shelter.org.uk

HELP FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN

There are lots of different benefits and tax credits for families with children, and for women who are expecting a child.

The **Citizens Advice guide** provides a helpful introduction to the support available:
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/

The **gov.uk website** also has helpful information for families:
www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/families

Child benefits

All families in the UK are eligible for Child Benefit for any child under 16 (or 16 to 19 and in approved education or training). You can find out more on the government website.
www.gov.uk/child-benefit/overview

There are also other benefits and payments available for families with children.

Child Tax Credit: www.gov.uk/child-tax-credit/overview

Free school meals: www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals

Guardian's Allowance: Available to people caring for children whose parents have died: www.gov.uk/guardians-allowance

Widowed Parent Allowance:
www.gov.uk/widowed-parents-allowance





HELP WITH DEBTS

If you or your family are struggling with debt, money can be a real problem. You have to be careful getting free, quality debt advice because some organisations have misleading names that sound like debt charities but are actually commercial businesses.

The **Money Advice Service** provides a list of free and confidential debt advice providers: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/where-to-go-to-get-free-debt-advice

The **Citizens Advice Bureau** also has a section offering a variety of financial advice, from how to budget to how to deal with debt. www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/debt_e.htm

Bereavement Payment

When someone dies, unexpected costs usually follow which can contribute to unmanageable debt, but there is support available out there. If someone in your family's husband, wife or civil partner has died, they may be entitled to Bereavement Payment to help cover the unexpected costs at this difficult time. www.gov.uk/bereavement-payment/overview

Emergency support and welfare assistance schemes

Local authorities are now providing individual emergency loans and welfare assistance schemes, but each area provides different levels of help.

To find out what support is available near you, visit The Children's Society's website: www.childrenssociety.org.uk/news-views/our-blog/use-our-map-find-your-local-welfare-assistance-scheme

If you or your family are receiving income support, you can apply for **budgeting loans**: www.gov.uk/budgeting-loans/overview

HELP WITH CONTINUING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

If you want to continue with your education, training or employment but are being held back for financial reasons, there are many benefits, grants and bursaries available to those who need extra support. Whether it's education, training or your work that you need support with, there's help out there available for you.

Here are some key benefits which could help you whilst you are studying, training or working:

Discretionary bursaries

If you are aged 16 to 19, in full or part time further education, and need financial support to stay in education you may be entitled to a bursary directly from your school, college or university through the 16 to 19 bursary fund. To apply, contact student support service in the institute you intend to study and see if they can support you. www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2017-to-2018-academic-year

Discretionary Learner Support

If you're aged 19 or over, on a further education course and facing financial hardship, you could get Discretionary Learner Support to help pay for accommodation and travel, course materials and equipment or childcare. www.gov.uk/discretionary-learner-support

Grants and bursaries for adult learners

Adult learners can apply for grants and bursaries to help pay for courses and training. Usually, you don't have to pay this money back. www.gov.uk/grant-bursary-adult-learners



HELP WITH CONTINUING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT (CONTINUED)

Flexible working

Flexible working is a way of working that suits an employee's needs, eg being able to work certain hours or work from home. Employees who care for someone (eg a child or adult) have the legal right to ask for flexible working.
www.gov.uk/flexible-working/overview

Help with childcare costs

You can also get help with childcare costs in the form of childcare tax credits, childcare support through your employer or financial support whilst you are studying.
www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs

Parent's learning allowance

Full-time students with children could get financial support each year whilst they are studying, to help with their learning costs.
www.gov.uk/parents-learning-allowance/overview

Here are a few grants and bursaries you may be entitled to, which can help you get the additional financial support you need to kick start your future or help you get back on track with your education or career.

Educational grants

Family Action's Educational Grants Search helps you identify appropriate charitable funding for education or training, based on your circumstances and needs.
www.family-action.org.uk/section.aspx?id=21211

Student Cash Point

Access thousands of grants, loans, bursaries, scholarships and awards available to support school leavers, college students and those ready to take the big step into undergraduate and postgraduate studies in the UK.
www.studentcashpoint.co.uk

You can also consider studying remotely: the Open University offers a range of courses that can be completed remotely with tutorial support.

Access to Success courses, for people with no experience of Open University or further education and on low incomes can also be accessed for free.
www.open.ac.uk/choose/ou/access





THE LAW

As a young carer it is important to know about what laws are in place to help you with your caring responsibilities. This section highlights some of the key contacts that are useful for you to know, and some of the key policies that are in place to support you and your family.

[The law and young carers](#)

[Page 49](#)

[If your parents separate](#)

[Page 49](#)

Everyone is protected by human rights, but each country has its own national laws as well. Some may offer more protection than basic human rights, while others may allow the government to change certain rights.

This means that England has its own set of laws, which you can find out more about in this section.

The government has advice on laws that affect young people here: www.gov.uk/browse/justice/young-people

The Metropolitan Police has a website for young people with lots of information about crime and the law, as well as general tips and advice: www.safe.met.police.uk

Coram Children's Legal Centre has a website with information about the law in the UK. If you have any questions about the law or anything you read here, if you have any legal concerns, or if you would like to get free legal advice, you can contact the Coram Children's Legal Centre. Call free on **0808 802 0008**, or visit their website here: www.childrenslegalcentre.com



THE LAW AND YOUNG CARERS

STOP PRESS! Historic change to UK law to help young carers!

Young carers have told their stories and made a historic difference to UK law! The new Children and Families Act has a section about young carers – which means that **all young carers are now entitled to an assessment**. This can be in response to either an appearance of need, or to a request for an assessment from a young carer or their parent. The needs of everyone in the family must be considered. That includes you!

The Care Act also has sections which remind adult social care teams to think about any children in the family and whether or not they might be a young carer, and to assess if the family is able to get more help. This means that as young carers, your local authority should offer an assessment for you and the person you care for to reduce your caring role.

Key changes to the law for young carers

Now when a child is identified as a young carer, the needs of everyone in the family will be considered. This will trigger both children's and adult support services into action – assessing why a child is caring, what needs to change and what would help the family to prevent children from taking on this responsibility in the first place.

This means that as a young carer, you can request an assessment from your local authority to receive support to meet your caring responsibilities.

Young Carers in Focus Champions created this film at a media weekend, to share their thoughts about the new law which gives every young carer the right to an assessment of need.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=vuHctQyTkNA&t=34s

IF YOUR PARENTS SEPARATE

If your parents divorce or separate you may find yourself splitting your time between two different homes. If one of your parents has additional needs it may be that you take on a caring role away from the area where you attend school or spend the majority of your time.

You are still entitled to a Young Carers Needs Assessment for yourself and an assessment for the person who needs care under the Care Act, to ensure that your education, personal and emotional development is not negatively impacted. Your family should contact the Social Work department of the local authority where the person with additional care needs lives to request an assessment.





INFLUENCING CHANGE



What can you do to influence decision makers locally and nationally, to raise awareness of young carers and make sure they receive the support they need throughout their lives? This section has information on steps you can take to influence people and work towards positive changes.

Influencing people and policy makers	This page
Having your say	Page 51
Local MPs and services	Page 51

INFLUENCING PEOPLE AND POLICY MAKERS

Young Carers in Focus (YCiF) is working hard to make people aware of young carers' issues. YCiF is lobbying for improvements in services for young carers, and for changes in the law.

As a young carer, there are many ways that you can get your voice heard. You can help to raise awareness by talking to people or by signposting any of the professionals mentioned here to relevant guidance.





HAVING YOUR SAY

UK Youth Parliament

The UK Youth Parliament is run by young people, and provides opportunities for 11 to 18 year olds to use their voice in creative ways to bring about social change.

Ways to get involved and have your voice heard include supporting campaigns, joining debate forums, using social media to influence change and becoming a member of youth parliament.

For more information and ways to get involved go to:
www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk

Becoming a member of youth parliament

As a young carer, you could use your voice to influence change for young carers locally and nationally.

Your responsibilities as a member of Youth Parliament would be to find out the concerns and needs of other young people in your area, and represent these views to decision makers on a local, regional and national level. You would also have the opportunity to get involved in a variety of events projects and campaigns.

Find out more about applying to be a member of Youth Parliament:

www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/myps/becoming-a-member

LOCAL MPS AND SERVICES

How to contact your local MP about young carers

Finding out more about your local MP (and what local and national decisions they have helped and are helping to make) can give you an insight into what they are doing for young carers or what they could be doing better. The resources in this section can help you find out more about your local decision makers and how you can get in contact with them, ensuring that your voice and the voices of other young carers are heard.

Parliament's online MPs directory

This online resource can help you to track what MPs in your local area are doing, if they are doing anything to help benefit young carers, and what's missing; what could they be doing to improve local services for young carers?

This website allows you to find your local MP and learn more about them, including details of their parliamentary career, their political interests and contact information, including web and social media.

You can search for MPs by postcode if you are unsure who your local MP is: www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps

They Work For You

Find out more about your local area's representative through online resource They Work For You. Read debates your local MP has taken part in, see how they voted on topics of interest and sign up for email alerts. This resource will keep you up to date on decisions being made that could affect young carers in your local area and nationally: www.theyworkforyou.com



LOCAL MPS AND SERVICES (CONTINUED)

Write to Them

You might want to voice any concerns you have about issues affecting young carers in your local area, or on a more national scale (remember that sharing positive experiences of support you receive is important too). If you have had positive experiences in your local area, in school or through your local young carers' service, then perhaps write to your local councillors or MP to let them know. Sharing these stories can persuade other MPs to influence change for young carers.

Write to your politicians, national or local about young carers through online resource **Write To Them**: www.writetothem.com

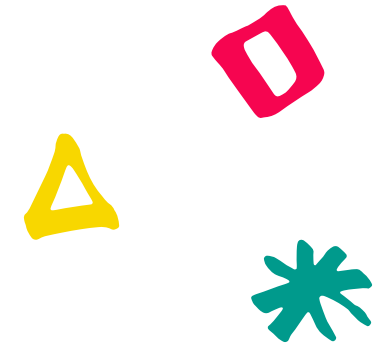
Just type in your UK postcode to find out who your local representatives are – this includes your local councillors and your MP. Your councillors represent your Borough and are responsible for **local services**, and your MP represents you in the House of Commons. The House of Commons is responsible for **making laws in the UK**.

YCiF Young Carers Influencing Change Pack

Now you have all the knowledge about young carer's rights, head over to our YCiF Young Carers Influencing Change Pack. This pack aims to give you the skills and confidence to get out there and influence change at a local or national level!

The pack has a video with tips to get you started, handy how-to guides and templates to save you time when contacting MPs, starting petitions and approaching the media.

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/advice-for-young-people/rights-and-social-change



ABOUT US

YOUNG CARERS IN FOCUS

Young Carers in Focus (YCiF) was an exciting four-year programme giving young carers a chance to communicate, share their stories and advocate for the things that matter most to them.

Funded by a Youth in Focus grant from the **Big Lottery Fund** www.biglotteryfund.org.uk, YCiF created a national network led by 200 young carer 'champions' aged 10–25.

Young people took part and received training and skills which improved their resilience, confidence, skills and knowledge.

The aim was to increase their well-being and quality of life – particularly during transitional stages in their education, and as they moved towards independence.

Young Carers in Focus was delivered by The Children's Society in partnership with DigitalME, YMCA Fairthorne Group, Rethink Mental Illness and The Fatherhood Institute.

Working together to give young carers a voice

**No child
should feel
alone**



www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer