



One minute guide

Young Carers

No. 154, April 2021

What do we mean by young carer and what support are young carers entitled to?

A young carer is someone under the age of 18 who looks after a relative with an illness, disability, mental health condition or a drug or alcohol problem. Young carers often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. The tasks undertaken can vary according to the circumstances, the level and frequency of need for care, and the structure of the family as a whole.

Under the Children and Families Act 2014 ([part 5 Section 96](#)) and in line with the [Young Carers \(Needs Assessments\) Regulations 2015](#) young carers are entitled to an assessment, whatever the level of care they provide.

Under the [Care Act 2014](#), local authorities also have a duty to consider the needs of children living in households where there is an adult who has a disability or impairment that requires help or care as part of a "whole family assessment". If you are assessing an adult's needs, you have to consider whether a child is in the household and consider whether any of the children may undertake any care roles in the home. The Care Act 2014 ([section 63-65](#)) also gives rights for young carers aged 16 to 18 who are transitioning to adulthood to have their specific needs assessed in light of how their role might change. This is called a Transition Assessment.

In addition, [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) reinforces the need for agencies to work in partnership to support families with young carers using a whole family approach. It is important to note, particularly when communicating with young carers and their families, that any assessment offered will be focused on the needs of the young person themselves, and will not be an assessment of how well they are carrying out their caring responsibilities.

What support is available in Leeds?

Young carers under the age of 18 years in Leeds can receive support from the [Family Action Leeds Young Carers Support Service](#) who work to support practitioners to identify young carers who may be hidden within local communities, signpost into the most appropriate service, reduce levels of inappropriate caring and ensure that young carers have a voice and influence. The service offers:

Information and Advice: To practitioners, young carers and their families, so that young carers are getting the right level of support for their needs

Awareness Raising: Community Engagement Practitioners can deliver practice development sessions to your team, helping them to identify young carers, break down barriers, assess need, offer support and promote services and activities available to them in their community.

Specialist Support: For young carers whose needs cannot be met through universal support, targeted support or Early Help services, the service provides specialist individual support, which includes an assessment of need, an outcomes-focused plan and may also include group support.

In addition [Carers Leeds](#) offer support to young carers aged 16-25 across Leeds, providing them with information, advice and emotional support, through their Young Adult Carer project. More information is available on the Young Adult Carer Project webpage.

What should children's service practitioners do if they are working with a child or young person who may have caring responsibilities?

If you have identified a young carer who you feel you cannot support within your service or setting, please refer for support in the following way:

If you are referring from a cluster school: contact your Targeted Services Lead to make a referral using the Early Help Request Form. Please also ensure you have completed the Leeds Young Carers Support Service Additional Information Form.

If you are referring from a non-cluster school or from any other organisation: contact the Leeds Young Carers Support Service directly at leedsyoungcarers@family-action.org.uk with a completed Early Help Request Form and their Additional Information Form. Leeds Young Carers Support Service will work with the appropriate Early Help Hub and/or Targeted Services Lead to ensure that the right support is offered to meet the young carer's needs.

How can practitioners working with adults recognise and support the needs of young carers?

If you work with adults with a physical illness or disability, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem then you need to consider whether they have children undertaking a caring role.

Leeds is committed to the early help approach, which means that families should be enabled to have the right conversations about their needs or concerns with the right people and at the right time. By working collaboratively, we can ensure that the right level of support is provided by the most appropriate agency for that young carer and their family. If you identify a child or young person with caring responsibilities, you can contact the Leeds Young Carers Support Service on tel: 0113 7339126 to discuss how to access appropriate support.

For further information

There are a range of resources both locally and nationally which offer advice and guidance on supporting young carers and their families:

[Family Action Leeds Young Carers Support Service](#) - tel: 0113 7339126;

[Carers Leeds](#) offer support to young adult carers aged 16 - 25 years;

[Mindmate](#) - support in Leeds for mental health and emotional wellbeing;

[The Carers Trust](#) offer support and advice to carers, including young carers and young adult carers;

The [Young Carers in Schools](#) programme provides training and resources to help schools and teachers improve how they support pupils who have caring responsibilities;

[NHS guide to young carers' rights.](#)

[Young Minds](#) offers support and advice on young people's mental health and wellbeing;

[Childline](#) offers a private and confidential service for children up to the age of 19, to talk to a trained counsellor over the phone on tel: 0800 1111 or via online chat or email.