

A guide for young people

Wandsworth Young Carers Plan



Looking after **someone...**

...having **your own** life...

... and your **right** to be a **child**

Are you a young carer?

A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18, whose life is restricted because of the need to care for someone who is frail or ill, has a disability or mental health condition or is affected by substance misuse.

Wandsworth
**Young Carers
Plan**



Introduction

We hope that this important plan will make a real difference to your life as a young carer. Whilst you may be happy helping the person you care for we know that the situation you are in can sometimes be stressful. You may find it hard to get the best out of your education. Finding time to relax and enjoy life with your friends can be difficult.

Despite your caring responsibilities you have the right to be cared for and to enjoy life in the same way other children and young people do. We hope that our Young Carers Plan will help you to achieve this while ensuring that you feel fully supported.

Claire Clay

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Wandsworth Carers' Champion

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Wandsworth

Young Carers Plan

What can we do to help?

We know that as young carers you make a big difference to the lives of the people you care for. We want to make sure we give you the support you need to lead happy and successful lives.

We asked you what was important to you and how you would like to be supported and protected in your role as a young carer:

Here are some of your responses:

“I wish my school understood when I take time off to look after mum”

“I’d like to know what to do when dad tries to self harm”

“Friendships are really important”

“When you first become a carer you don’t know what you need to do”

“I don’t want to get shouted at when I don’t have my homework”

“I want to make schools understand what young carers are going through”

“I want extra help at home with cleaning up and getting my brothers to school”



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Our response

Everything you've told us has helped us to plan how we can best help to improve your life as a carer and also your life outside that role.

From what you've told us we know that:

- *You feel that it's important that your school understands what you do as a young carer and how this affects your ability to do well, attend regularly or get your homework in on time.*
- *You want to be more involved in the decisions about helping the person you are caring for.*
- *You want to be offered more training in what to do to be able to care safely.*
- *You want to get support so that you can also live your own life, get to school regularly and spend time with your friends.*
- *You want someone you can go to who you can trust and talk to in confidence.*

Wandsworth Young Carers Plan

There are five areas that have been identified as the most important to help give children and young people a happy and healthy life.

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being



Being healthy

Having good physical and mental health gives you the best chance of doing well in school or college, making friends and playing an active part in the community. Physical health is about the health of your body and mental health is about the health of your emotions and feelings.

What are we going to do?

Improve the information we give you about staying healthy and about activities you can get involved in.

Offer you training so that caring is less stressful, particularly on mental health issues.

Give you more publicity on how and where to get help and support.

Increase awareness of young carers in schools and with other professional people, including school nurses.

Staying safe

Many young people have concerns about street crime including gangs, racism and harassment and we want to try to make where you live as safe as it can be. And as a young carer we want you to feel safe with the caring you do.

What are we going to do?

Offer you training so that you are more able to care in a safe environment.

Give you support by telling you how to get help, so that you are not taking on more responsibility than you can manage.

Offer training to our staff so that they all understand your situation better.

Enjoying and achieving

Having a good balance of work and play is the best way to enjoy life and to achieve, particularly in school. We want to give you the support you need as a young carer to be able to achieve in education and enjoy a good time with your friends, free of your caring responsibilities.

What are we going to do?

Raise the profile of young carers so that you and your role is seen in a more positive way.

Help you to enjoy school by making sure that others understand what you do and how you need help.

Give you information on activities you can enjoy outside of the school day.

Making a positive contribution

Making a positive contribution can include many things, including having a say in the things that affect you, being useful and helpful in the community and offering support to others who need extra help to overcome problems and succeed in life.

What are we going to do?

Involve you in the assessments and reviews of the person you care for.

Raise the profile of young carers in school so that you can get more help and support and a named person to speak to in confidence.

Achieving economic wellbeing

Not having enough money can affect the health and achievements of everyone. We want to give support and training to help young people to achieve in school and beyond and to get qualifications that give them good choices for their future.

What are we going to do?

Raise awareness in schools so that you are able to learn in a more positive environment.

Try to give you a named person in school whom you can speak to in confidence.

Make sure that we give training to Connexions staff so they can help you to get further training and give you advice on additional payments you may be due.

Useful contacts

Wandsworth Young Carers Project
(020) 7228 2566
youngcarers@klsettlement.org.uk

Family Information Service
(020) 8871 7899
www.wandsworth.gov.uk/fis

www.childrensociety.org.uk

www.youngcarers.net



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