

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the actual definition of a young carer?

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 defines a young carer as a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person. The concept of care includes practical or emotional support. This definition allows more children than under previous legislation to qualify as young carers and be entitled to a need's assessment.



Legislation previously spoke about the requirement for a “substantial” caring role in order to be classified as a carer, however this language has been removed. Caring is unique and can impact different young people in different ways.

Does a young person have to be the sole carer to be considered a young carer?

No, some young carers are helping an adult or another individual in their family to provide care and support for a cared for person

Is there a certain number of hours a week a young person must be caring for in order to be considered a young carer?

There is no set number of hours a week a young person must be caring for in order to be considered a young carer. Support for a young carer is very much based on the individual impact caring can have on the young person. Caring roles vary in levels.

A young person must be providing physical or intimate care in order to be considered a young carer?



No, although some young people are providing personal care it's important to remember there are other forms of caring that can impact on a young person including emotional and social support, medication and medical appointment support and practical support such as shopping, money management and form filling

You must be caring for an adult to be considered a young carer?

No, there are young carers who support and care for a sibling who have a disability, long term health condition or another additional support need. Some sibling carers benefit from young carer support and the opportunity to meet with other sibling carers.



Who provides care for the cared for person when the young carer is at school or taking part in a young carer activities?

We must stress that if a young carer is unable to attend school at all or participate in any activity outside of the house there is a likelihood that the caring role is too onerous. Some young carer's have a strong family network who can be relied on to provide time out so the young person can participate in social activities. Other young carers feel comfortable being apart from their cared for person for a number of hours or even overnight if they have ways to communicate with their loved one or have a plan in place if an emergency was to occur. In high end caring roles, the young person and family should be known and supported by other professionals.

What are the main barriers to young carers accessing social and leisure opportunities?

Alongside restrictions due to time caring for a loved one, young carers can sometimes find it hard to participate in social activities due to the following:



- Financial – some young carer households experience financial difficulties due to the fact that illness or disability renders it difficult for an adult to remain in employment.
- Transport – Due to illness or disability some adults in young carer households do not drive or experience difficulties leaving the home to support their young person to attend social activities.
- Worry about leaving the person they care for alone.
- Aren't informed about what is available to them in their local area
- Lack the confidence or support to attend local social and leisure opportunities
- Have experienced bullying

Do all young carers want to be part of a young carer group?

Not all young carers want to take part in a specific young carer project, choice is very important to young carers. For some young carers being included with their friends and being supported to access local activities and youth opportunities meets their need for a break.



In what circumstances should I prepare a young carer statement? (YCS)



The local authority is responsible for offering a young carers statement. A YCS should be offered to any young person you have identified as having a caring role or if a young person self identifies and requests an assessment of their needs. The statement should take the form of a conversation at a time and place that is convenient for the young carer. A copy of the statement should be provided to the young carer and any other person the young carer requests, unless there is a reason this would be inappropriate due to protection concerns.