

Supporting Young Carers in School

**An Introduction for Primary and
Secondary School Staff**



Foreword

The Education Authority for Northern Ireland welcomes this guidance and would wish to acknowledge the collaborative approach between partners from the voluntary and statutory sectors that has facilitated the development of this booklet. Crucially the Authority recognises the voice of children and how their experiences informed this best practice guide for school staff.

Children and young people deserve the very best from their educational experience so that they can enjoy their educational journey, achieve their full potential and become valued members of society. The Education Authority is committed to providing quality education and support services for all children and young people and sincerely hopes that through the dissemination of this guide, schools will more fully understand the needs of young carers and offer appropriate advice and support.

*Dr Clare Mangan, Director Children & Young People's Services
Education Authority*

The Health and Social Care Board have been funding the current Regional Young Carers Service since 2007 but the needs of Young Carers have been an important consideration for the Children's Services Planning process since 2002. In 2007 the HSCB funded new services to respond to their needs and the Regional Young Carers Service has been operational since then. The current service is modelled on the interagency work carried out through Children's Services Planning. The preparation of this guidance through the interagency Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) Young Carers Group is a continuation of the tradition of collaborative work that has characterised our approach to this vulnerable group of children and young people. I am particularly pleased to note that this work has been done in collaboration with the children and young people who use the service. When CYPSP was established we were determined to see participation of children and young people as being at the heart of what we were trying to do. I would like to thank the agencies from the statutory and voluntary sector involved in the preparation of this document. I hope this guidance is helpful for all those who support young people in education and we look forward to continuing to work together to address the needs of young carers.

Fionnuala McAndrew, Director of Social Care & Children-HSCB

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Who are Young Carers?

Young Carers are defined as:-

Children and young people aged up to 18 years who have a substantive caring role for a member of their family and/or Children and young people aged up to 18 years whose health or development is affected due to that caring role.

(CYPSP Regional Young Carers Sub Group)

The tasks and level of caring undertaken by young carers can vary according to the nature of the illness or disability, the level and frequency of need for care and the structure of the family as a whole.

A Young Carer may undertake some or all of the following:

Practical tasks For example cooking, housework, shopping	Physical care For example lifting, helping up the stairs, physiotherapy	Personal care For example dressing, washing toileting needs	Emotional support For example listening, calming, being present
Household Management For example paying bills managing finances collecting benefits	Looking after siblings For example putting to bed, walking to school, parenting	Interpretation For example hearing/speech impairment or English as an additional language	Administering medication For example insulin needles, preparing daily tablets

Why do Young Carers need your support?

A Young Carer's personal and physical development, physical and emotional health, education and social opportunities can all be affected by the family situation and their caring role. Young Carers learn practical and caring skills at an early age and can be wrongly seen as 'copers'.

“

Finally admitting to my teacher what was going on at home was the bravest thing I'd ever done ... after that, things finally changed for me.” Young Carer

Impact of caring on young people

- Physical health: often severely affected by caring through the night, repeatedly lifting a heavy adult, poor diet and lack of sleep. *1 in 10 16 year olds provide at least 30 hours of caring per week.*
- Isolation: feeling different or isolated from their peers, limited opportunities for socialisation, bullying and harassment – more than two out of three young carers are bullied at school (The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, 2010).
- *'29% of young carers aged 16 years have never told anyone outside their family about their caring responsibilities'* (ARK Research update Number 76, June 2011).
- Emotional wellbeing: stress, tiredness and mental ill health are common for Young Carers.
- *'Although 71% of young carers surveyed enjoy caring 85% say that lack of free time is an issue.'* (ARK Research update Number 76, June 2011).
- Unstable environment: traumatic life changes such as bereavement, family break-up, losing income and housing, or seeing the effects of an illness or addiction.

Case example

I'm a 14 year old girl who cares for my mum who has diabetes and is blind. Dad works away from home. Every morning I help mum to dress. Mum does not know what colours she is putting on and won't know if things match so I have to arrange them and lay them out for her. I get myself and my younger brother ready for school every morning. This means sorting our breakfast and making sure he hasn't forgotten things like his PE kit. Before I leave the house I make sure that everything for mum's shower is laid out the way it needs to be – that the shampoo, conditioner and gel are in the correct place so mum knows by touch which is which. I leave out mum's medication and give her her insulin injections. If mum goes into a 'hypo', I have to do first aid or call for an ambulance. All this makes for an unsettled day at school and I will worry more than I usually would.

When I come back from school I do the shopping and then help mum with cooking – like making sure that the oven is at the right temperature and telling mum when the meat has turned brown. I take care of the bills using internet banking each night . . . before sitting down to do my homework . . . and help my brother with his.

Why are Young Carers hidden?

- Their parent's condition is not obvious so people don't think that they need any help.
- They do not realise that they are a carer or that their life is different to their peers.
- They don't want to be any different from their peers.
- They believe that the school will show no interest in their family circumstances.
- They want to keep their identity at school separate from their caring role.
- It's not the sort of thing they feel can be discussed with friends.
- There has been no opportunity to share their story.
- They are worried about bullying.
- They worry that the family will be split up and taken into care.
- They want to keep it a secret and/or are embarrassed.
- They see no reason or positive actions occurring as a result of telling their story.

You may think you only have a small number of Young Carers in your school. The likelihood is that there are many more but they remain hidden.

What Young Carers in Northern Ireland say would help them

“

15 year old

It would be nice to be allowed to phone home if I am worried.

“

15 year old

All my teachers should know about my caring role. I need to have my mobile on at all times and teachers who don't know this challenge me and I need to explain again and again which is embarrassing.

“

14 year old

I was given an extension so on the day of handing in work I obviously didn't have my work like everyone else. The teacher asked me in front of everyone why I hadn't my work in. I felt embarrassed having to say she has given me an extension and then the class made fun of me.

“

14 year old

Encourage me rather than make me feel that I am not going to be able to do the work anyway and set low expectations of me.

“

14 year old

It would help to have a schedule so you have time to study and do homework even though most of your time is taken up caring.

“

16 year old

Ask us how it's going every now and again.

What Young Carers say would help them

Young people have raised concerns about whether schools are aware of their caring role and if they know how much support they provide.

Young carers can be frequently late for school due to the amount of demands placed on them before school begins, or perhaps due to attending a medical appointment with the cared for person.

Some schools and teachers are aware of the pupil's caring role, but can sometimes fail to understand the extent this affects the young person's daily life.

School holidays can leave young carers feeling socially isolated without regular access to friends and the break from caring that school provides.

“

My French teacher was very cross at me one day after I had been up all night with my mum. I found it hard to concentrate in class and my teacher gave me a detention for that day. All I wanted to do was go home and check up on my mum. It was the longest day and detention I've ever been in. All I did was worry about my mum.” (Girl, age 13)

Young Carers have said they would like

- Someone we can talk to who understands about Young Carers and will listen.
- Teachers to be understanding and flexible if we have issues with our homework and support us.
- Other students to understand.
- Support when we are bullied.
- Access to our phones in case anything is wrong at home.
- A support group with other young carers, mentoring or counselling.
- Understanding that being late or absent can be about their parent being ill and unable to drive them to school.

What does the Law say in NI?

Meeting the needs of Young Carers has a foundation in children's rights because being a Young Carer can impact on health, family relationships, opportunities for play and leisure, experiencing a childhood, and accessing education. In Northern Ireland this is expressed in legislation as a 'blended duty' across carers' and children's legislation – the Carers and Direct Payments Act (NI) 2002 (particularly Section 4) and the Children (NI) Order 1995 (particularly Article 17A). This all sits within a children's rights approach. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 creates a duty on public bodies to have due regard to promote the equality opportunity between people with dependents and those without. Schools will have a role in considering how this is delivered for Young Carers.

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

Through the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, education has committed to working with others to meet the needs of Young Carers, taking a whole child, whole family approach. This is consistent with an early intervention and prevention approach, and the aspiration to deliver services that are community based, non-stigmatising, responsive and flexible.

Education and Young Carers

The Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) in their Report of a Survey of Vulnerable Children and Young People 2006-2007 state that:

"All children and young people are entitled to education of the highest quality which enables them to develop as individuals and gain skills, knowledge and understanding."
(page 1)

They also highlight, in line with research that:

"Access to education and keeping children and young people in school or education, is a key element in determining life chances such as the opportunities to gain qualifications and employment." (page 1)

Schools are remarkable places where the whole staff team work diligently to support and encourage the learning of children and young people not only in terms of their educational needs but also their social and emotional development.

Teachers have a responsibility to provide a safe, structured and consistent environment for the children and young people in their class with a strong emphasis on pastoral care.

At any time in schools there can be a number of young people who are facing challenges which may impact on their ability to attend school, access the curriculum and participate in other aspects of school life. This is echoed in ETI's Evaluating Pastoral Care 2008 which specifically highlights young carers:

"In virtually all schools there are pupils who have to cope with particular difficulties at home, including caring for parents, siblings or other relatives. Such circumstances may affect adversely the pupils' health and welfare, behaviour, attendance and academic performance". (Appendix 6)

This guidance also provides schools with specific guidance to support young carers effectively. It is suggested that schools should ensure that their pastoral care arrangements:

- Enable and encourage young carers and their families to seek and receive understanding, help and support from the school.
- Provide a co-ordinated approach to supporting young carers within the school.
- Enable effective liaison with outside support agencies such as:
 - The Education Welfare, Social and Medical services, to ensure appropriate support;
 - Voluntary organisations providing support services for young carers
- Enable each case of young caring to be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality necessary to preserve the dignity and privacy of the young carer and his/her family.
- Maintain well informed and up to date records of the individual circumstances of the young carers.
- Promote effective home/school links.
 - Provide staff with appropriate training to deal with the needs of young carers and their families

With this ETI guidance in mind, the following framework is suggested for schools as best practice in identifying and supporting young carers.

Good Practice in Identifying and Supporting Young Carers

→ Make it everybody's business

- Provide training on young carers to all relevant school staff.
- Publicise information about available support.
- Raise awareness of the issues faced by young carers to pupils and staff.

→ Develop a secure and safe environment where pupils have the confidence to let staff know that they are a young carer

- Ensure there is a designated person for young carers to talk to.
- Promote positive images of disability, illness, mental ill health and caring throughout the school curriculum and environment.
- Link to policies and practice to prevent bullying and stigma and to raise the self-esteem of children who are young carers.

→ Provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to self-identify

- Publicise how pupils can access support effectively.
- Provide opportunities for identification following assemblies and personal, social, health and economics education lessons (PSHE education).
- Provide non face-to-face communication opportunities, such as a post box, texting service or online method.

→ Create an environment where families have the confidence to tell the school that their child has a caring role

- Publicise your young carer support on your website and in other communication.
- Promote good communication between your school and families.

→ Provide early opportunities for pupils and families to inform schools that:

- The pupil has parents or other family members who have an illness or disability, or who is affected by mental ill health or substance misuse.
- The pupil helps to look after them and what impact this has on their education.
- The family is in touch with support services that could support the young carer's role.

→ Develop good partnership working with your local young carers service

- Support the young carers' service awareness-raising as an opportunity to identify young carers.
- Engage with your pupils with caring responsibilities who have been identified by the young carer's service but not to your school.

Setting up a framework of support in School

Step 1: Awareness Raising

- Training and awareness raising for School Governors; Senior Management Team and Whole School Staff
- Acknowledgment and understanding of the importance of supporting young carers



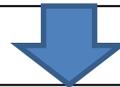
Step 2: What can your school do?

- What pastoral processes already exist in your school to support young carers? Can you map those processes?
- Can you assign a school lead for young carers or is there a network of staff to support young carers
- Consider amending relevant school policies to include the needs of young carers
- Consider developing a specific policy to support young carers in your school-see appendix 1
- Develop good working relationships with local provider of Regional Young Carers Service



Step 3: Develop an Action Plan

- Clear communication strategy between home and school
- Create opportunities in school to share information with young carers e.g. pastoral noticeboard with useful contacts details for young carers services
- Buddy/Mentoring Schemes
- Access to breakfast/homework clubs
- Policy re use of mobile phones/contact with home
- Clear knowledge of external services to support young carers and knowledge of referral pathways
- Understanding of when child protection procedures are appropriate



Step 4: Identification of Young Carers

- Awareness of young carers through enrolment data
- Create opportunities for communication with home that are open and supportive
- Referral to support services as appropriate



Step 5: Monitoring and Review

- Review of school policies, school action plan and support plans for young carers

Support for Young Carers in Northern Ireland

Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS)

Access to professional counselling support is available for young people in post-primary schools during difficult and vulnerable periods in their lives. Counselling contributes to tackling barriers to learning which may result from personal trauma, difficult home circumstances, stress, bullying and child abuse.

Young people can self-refer to this service as well as being referred by the school. A minimum amount of counselling time is allocated to those schools which use the service. 98% of post-primary schools and 100% of special schools (whose post primary pupils can avail of the service) are signed up to use the free service.

Schools in the post-primary sector report that the availability of the counselling service has been a major boost to their capacity to support young people.

The ICSS is provided under contractual arrangements by organisation(s) that have undergone a public tendering process. The service is delivered using standards and protocols based on good counselling practice within the organisational context of the school.



“It is sometimes hard being a young carer especially when school is involved. I sometimes find it hard that teachers sometimes do not understand what I am going through. In fact one teacher said that “I was just another troubled child”. I did not choose to be a young carer but am proud of the difference I have made to my family and am not a troubled child...but they just don’t understand that, they don’t understand. What young carers desperately need is peer support, not peer pressure”
Siobhan- Young Carer aged 17

Education Welfare Service

The aim of the Education Welfare Services (EWS) is to promote a culture of regular attendance at school and they do this through:

- Ensuring that parents/carers are aware of their responsibility for ensuring that their children receive an education appropriate to their age, aptitude and ability. Working with children and their families to encourage children and young people to access educational provision.
- Working with schools and other education providers to ensure a continuity of education for children and young people experiencing problems with school.
- Working with other board services and external agencies to contribute to the overall welfare of vulnerable children.

The EWS provides a service to all schools, parents and children within the Education Authority. The core area of responsibility for the EWS is ensuring that children and young people receive a beneficial education, which in the majority of cases is through attendance at school. The EWS will concentrate their service delivery on children and young people whose pattern of attendance is a cause for concern – schools are expected to refer pupils with below 85% attendance if they are not satisfied with the reason provided for absence. Non-attendance or poor attendance at school is frequently a symptom of underlying factors in the child or young persons' life.

These factors can be identified:

- Within the child or young person
- In school
- In the home
- In the community

Factors that lead to non-attendance at school are frequently a complex combination of the above and require EWOs to work closely with schools, other board services and external agencies. The EWS on receipt of a referral carries out an assessment to identify what issues are preventing regular attendance at schools and, in partnership with parents and child/young person develops an action plan which will be monitored over a period of time in an attempt to remedy the situation. The action plan may include regular one-to-one meetings with the child/young person in school or group work support.

Pupils who may require additional support

Particular groups of children and young people are statistically more likely to experience poor attendance at school than the general population. These include children and young people from a Traveller background, Looked After Children (LAC) and School Age Mothers. The EWS provides additional support for these groups.

Other children such as Young Carers may require additional support.

The Department for Economy Careers Service

All young people in education are able to avail of impartial careers guidance. This is delivered by the Department for Economy Careers Service. The Careers Service works in partnership with schools to ensure all learners in post primary education have access to high quality and impartial careers guidance.

During a guidance interview the careers adviser can help pupils to:

- identify their personal qualities and skills;
- identify the skills they would like to develop;
- explore current and future job opportunities;
- understand the processes of job search, writing a CV and going for interviews;
- explore their interests, likes and dislikes, family influences, barriers and work experience;
- think about ideas for study and work; and
- think about how study, work experience, home-life etc. all contribute to their employability.

In their application for careers guidance, pupils are asked if they have any barriers that may affect their choice of careers. The Careers Service would encourage young carers to tick this section and discuss their caring responsibilities with the careers adviser at interview.

The careers adviser can provide pupils with:

- accurate and up-to-date information on jobs, training courses, apprenticeships, and further and higher education options;
- the opportunity to complete a personality-based assessment which helps individuals to know themselves better; and
- alternative sources of information and help if required;

At the end of an interview the careers adviser will produce an action plan for each student which will identify appropriate and achievable next steps. The Careers Service is offered on an all age basis, so on leaving school the young person can continue to get the help and support they need throughout their career.



Knowing that they are not alone has helped them greatly.” Teacher

Northern Ireland Regional Young Carers Service (NIRYCS)

The Northern Ireland Regional Young Carers Service (NIRYCS) is delivered in partnership by agencies including Action for Children and Barnardo's NI. This regional service, established in 2007, offers young carers a break from caring, a listening ear, individual support, information about illnesses, peer support groups, personal development, group work programmes, fun social activities, a voice, a safe environment to express concerns and worries, advocacy, advice and signposting.

Both organisations employ project workers who will meet with young carers who are referred, complete an assessment of their needs and then agree and deliver a package of support appropriate to their needs. Young people are eligible if they are aged between 8 and 18, have a substantial caring role for a member of their family or whose health or development is affected due to their caring role.

Both agencies cover a geographical area. Enquiries about the service should be directed to the relevant agency as follows:

Belfast, South Eastern & Southern Health and Social Care Trust Areas

Action for Children

Loughshore House

10 Heron Road,

Belfast

BT3 9LE

028 9046 0500

nioffice@actionforchildren.org.uk

Northern & Western Health and Social Care Trust Areas

Barnardo's NI

36a Westland Road

Magherafelt

BT45 5AY

028 7963 1344

dougie.tyler@barnardos.org.uk

Young Carers' Services across NI

Crossroads <http://www.crossroadsyoungcarers.co.uk/>

Carers Matter <http://www.carersmatter.com>

Kinship Care NI www.kinshipcareni.com

Other services for Advice and Support

Children Law Centre <http://www.childrenlawcentre.org.uk/>

Family Support NI <http://www.familysupportni.gov.uk/>

NICCY <http://www.niccy.org/>

Carers NI <http://www.carersuk.org/northernireland>

Family Support Hubs <http://www.cypsp.org/family-support-hubs/>

EANI offices <http://www.eani.org.uk/ea-regional-offices/>

Trust Carers' Co-Ordinators

How can the Carers' coordinator help you?

- The Carers Co-Ordinator can help:
- To provide information, advice and resources for carers;
- To connect carers with a member of Trust staff for example a social worker, district nurse etc. who can carry out a carer's assessment;
- To provide information for and to support carers support groups in the Northern Trust area;
- To promote, devise and deliver training to empower and support carers;
- To gather information about the needs of carers in order to inform future planning of Trust services.

The coordinator will monitor issues being faced by carers and will provide feedback to management.

The Carers' coordinator can also give advice on:

- Training for carers
- Young Carers;
- Carer assessment;
- Direct payments;
- Support for carers;
- Employment rights while caring.

The Carers coordinator will regularly link with other organisations in Northern Ireland such as Carers NI in order to keep carers up-to-date with changes in legislation, policy and practice.

Health and Social Care Trust Carers' Co-ordinators

Belfast Trust

North & West Belfast: 028 9504 6108 Lynne.Calvert@belfasttrust.hscni.net

South & East Belfast & Castlereagh: 028 95046702 Margaret.McDonald@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Northern Trust

028 2766 1392 anne.cummings@northerntrust.hscni.net

South Eastern Trust

028 9756 5456 joan.scott@setrust.hscni.net

Southern Trust

028 3083 4252 Patricia.mccrink@southerntrust.hscni.net

Western Trust

028 6634 4000 Cathy.Magowan@westerntrust.hscni.net

If you have any concerns around a Young Carer's responsibilities and that young person, please contact your local Gateway team.

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust- 028 9050 7000

South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust - 0300 100 0300

Western Health & Social Care Trust - 028 7131 4090

Southern Health & Social Care Trust - 028 3741 5285

Northern Health & Social Care Trust - 028 7965 1020

Financial Support: Direct Payments for Young Carers

A direct payment is money from the local Health and Social Care Trust to pay for care services which may be provided following an assessment of need. These can be paid to carers who are over 16 years old.

Direct payments (or self-directed support arrangements) can be used to buy services from an organisation or to employ somebody to provide assistance. A carer can use a direct payment to purchase the services they are assessed as needing to support them in their caring role.

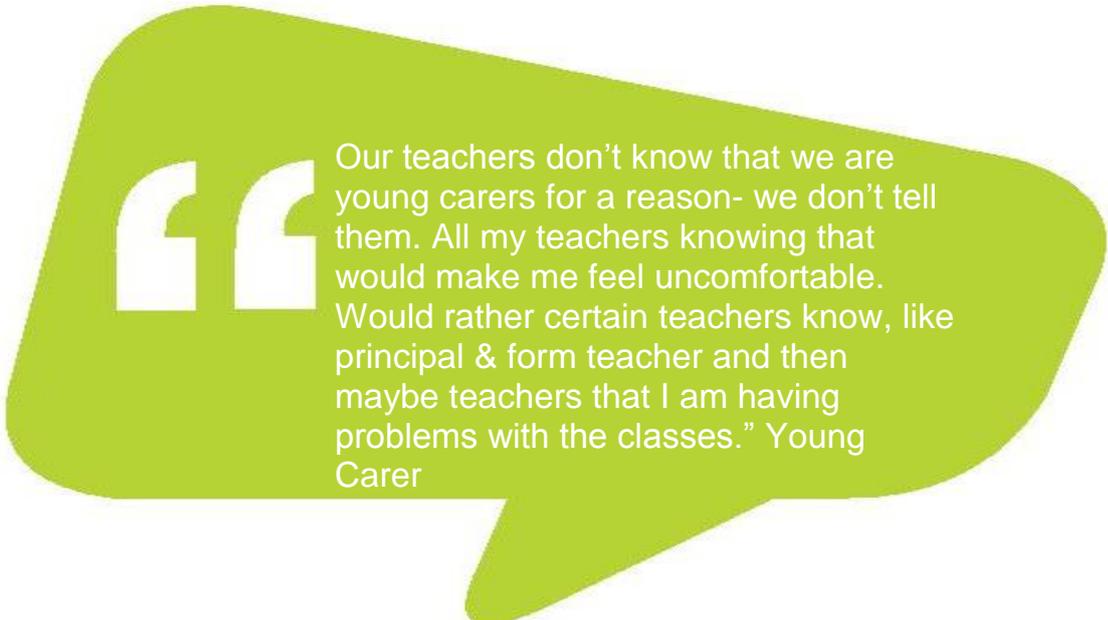
This includes support that may help maintain the carer's health and well-being. For example driving lessons or a holiday so can have time to themselves. A carer who is assessed as needing domestic help, could ask for a direct payment and buy the support services they need.

The Carers Co-ordinator in the local Trust can provide further information on direct payments and the assessment process. The Regional Young Carers Service can refer young carers who want to be assessed to the Carers Co-ordinator in the local Trust.

Exam Concessions

If a young carer also has a Special Educational Need, examination concessions may be considered where appropriate. The School's Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) should look at each case individually and consider applying for examination concessions in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications Regulations and Guidance as they pertain to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

Guidance can be found at www.jcq.org.uk



“

Our teachers don't know that we are young carers for a reason- we don't tell them. All my teachers knowing that would make me feel uncomfortable. Would rather certain teachers know, like principal & form teacher and then maybe teachers that I am having problems with the classes.” Young Carer

Other Useful Contacts

The Education Authority (EA) was established on 1 April 2015 and replaces the five Education and Library Boards. The EA has responsibility for education, youth and library services throughout Northern Ireland with a headquarters and five local offices.

Chief Executive's Office	40 Academy Street Belfast BT1 2NQ Phone number 028 9056 4000 Email address info@eani.org.uk Website www.eani.org.uk (external link)
Belfast Office	40 Academy Street Belfast BT1 2NQ Phone number 028 9056 4000
Ballymena Office	County Hall 182 Galgorm Road Ballymena BT42 1HN (main entrance via Sourhill Road) Phone number 028 2565 3333
Dundonald Office	Grahamsbridge Road Dundonald Belfast BT16 2HS Phone number 028 9056 6200 Fax 028 9056 6266
Armagh Office	3 Charlemont Place The Mall Armagh BT61 9AX Phone number 028 3751 2200
Omagh office	1 Hospital Road Omagh BT79 0AW Phone number 028 8241 1411 Fax 028 8211 1400

Family Support Hubs

A Family Support Hub is a multi-agency network of statutory, community and voluntary organisations that either provide early intervention services or work with families who need early intervention services. The network accepts referrals of families who need early intervention family support and uses their knowledge of local service providers and the Family Support Database to signpost families with specific needs to appropriate services.

What do they do?

The specific purpose of hubs is as follows:

- To improve access to early intervention family Support services by matching the needs of referred families to family support providers
- To improve coordination of early intervention family support services by creating a collaborative network of community, voluntary and statutory providers
- To improve awareness of early intervention family support services
- To assess the level of unmet need for early intervention family support services and inform the Trust Outcomes Group

There are currently 29 Family Support Hubs in operation across Northern Ireland providing full geographical coverage.

Further details can be found here <http://www.cypsp.org/family-support-hubs/>

Family Support Website

The Health and Social Care Board for Northern Ireland, has developed the Northern Ireland Family Support website. The purpose of this website is to create a comprehensive database of family support and childcare services across Northern Ireland.

Who is the website aimed at?

- Parents looking to access information on childcare and related financial support;
- Frontline staff to help them get up to date information on the location of family support services; and
- Organisations/Partnerships can use it as a planning tool that can be linked to outcomes for children and young people.

Further details can be found here <http://www.familysupportni.gov.uk/>

Steps to Cope

Steps to Cope is a confidential support service dealing with children aged 11-18 faced by the harmful effects of alcohol misuse in their home. Steps to Cope can be contacted on: **0800 254 5123**. Further details can also be found here: <http://stepstocope.co.uk/>

Appendix 1: Recommendations for a school's Young Carer policy

School Commitment	In place
<p>The whole school is committed to meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and have equal access to education. (This commitment is reflected in all relevant school policies).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → A school lead (e.g. member of pastoral care team) has been assigned with responsibility for young carers and their families. Pupils and families will be made aware of the identity of the schools young carer lead and how to access support from them. → The school to minimise any barriers to education and learning experienced by eligible young carers to improve their wellbeing, attainment and attendance. → The school has an effective referral system and strong partnership in place with the local young carers' service. → The school actively seeks feedback and ideas from young carers and their families in order to shape and improve provision for young carers. <p>The school understands the issues faced by young carers, what to look and listen for and how to respond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Training on young carers' issues is embedded in ongoing professional development for governors and all staff. → The school keeps up-to-date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families. <p>Young carers know how to access support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Information about support available for young carers and how to access it is clearly available to both pupils and families. → The school uses the curriculum to promote a full understanding, acceptance of, and respect for, issues such as caring, disability and impairment, for example, embedding the challenges faced by young carers into Personal Social Health Economic education lessons curriculum. → The school is accessible and welcoming to parents with disabilities and/or illness, offering additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings or other school events. Home visits are considered where appropriate. → The school offers additional support to remove any communication barriers with parents, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child. 	

Appendix 1: Recommendations for a school's young carer policy

School Commitment	In place
<p>Young carers are respected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → A young carer's privacy is respected and information about them or their caring role is not communicated in front of their peers. → A family's privacy is respected and the school only shares information with professionals and agencies on a need to know basis in order to support pupils and their families. → The school views young carers as any other pupil, but understands that they have the additional pressure of caring undertakings. <p>Transition support is in place for young carers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The school offers support to the pupil and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school/college/university lead for young carers and their families. → The school will identify young carers at risk of falling into the NEET category and take appropriate actions to address this. <p>The school will reduce barriers to education and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The school offers lunch-time detentions as well as after school ones. Some Young Carers also prefer after school detention as this gives them more time away from home. Flexibility dependant on Young Carer's situation at home at the time would be useful. → The school allows young carers to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunch times so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member. → Where appropriate, the school negotiates deadlines, for example, for homework and coursework. → The school actively seeks feedback and ideas from young carers and their families in order to shape and improve provision for young carers. → The school will consider how best to support those parents who find it difficult to escort younger children to school. → The school uses and evaluates data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers and reviews young carers individual plans accordingly. 	

References

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Materials and Resources

Department of Education NI: iMatters Programme - Posters & Diary Inserts '*Being a Young Carer*' <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/>

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