



Swindon Young Carers – guide to services

We acknowledge that for many young carers and their families the need for support can vary depending on their individual circumstance. The support required at the point of referral may initially be high but as the interventions are taken up this support can decrease. To ensure that we meet the needs of all the young carers receiving interventions and services from Swindon Carers Centre we have devised a level of caring system. The actual decision as to which category a young carer may fall will be made by a Young Carers Support Practitioner following a Young Carer Assessment and Impact Scale. This document is to help you as a guide.

Children and young people may possibly be experiencing problems in one or more of the following areas because of their caring role: child protection, social isolation, friendships, education and school, emotional and/or physical health, mental health, lack of confidence, finances, housing, family breakdown, and personal free time.

WHAT IS A YOUNG CARER?

¹The official definition of a young carer is '...a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work).' Children and Families Act 2014 Section 96.

These young carers are forced to grow up early and miss out on the same opportunities as other children because they care for family members who are disabled or chronically ill, or for adults who are misusing alcohol or drugs.

Some of these children are not only losing their childhoods they are also missing out on vital school and training, which will have a negative impact on the rest of their lives.

Young Carers provide, care, assistance or support to another family member who has a learning disability, a physical or long-term mental illness, or has a substance misuse problem. They carry out, often on a regular basis, significant or substantial caring tasks, taking on a level of responsibility that is inappropriate to their age or development. Young Carers may also care for parents with periodic spells of illness, such as poor mental health, where in an acute phase; the caring role is sudden and intense.

¹ The Children's Society

The nature and extent of the difficulties that young carers face will depend on a number of factors, however, many young carers find that their lives are significantly affected by their caring responsibilities.

LEVEL OF CARING

The various levels of service we can offer young carers are as detailed below. Young carers may move between levels of support depending on their circumstances at any given time.

Level One - Low level of care

Level of actual caring is minimal/occasional or after intervention and support there has been a reduction in their caring role. There may be a secondary carer or they could be affected emotionally or practically by the circumstances in the family. They will have wider family support and regular access to other activities/clubs, and/or accessing support in school through young carers groups and activities.

Level Two – Moderate level of care

Fairly high level of caring responsibility but coping reasonably well, good support from other family members e.g. another parent, sibling/s and / or other agencies. Not experiencing significant problems but would benefit from some contact and support in relation to their caring role. This will also include for example a sibling carer requiring additional support in school holidays when the impact of their caring role may increase.

Level Three – Substantial

Young person is acting as primary carer for substantial periods throughout the day, has a high level of responsibility, offering inappropriate care, probably experiencing some difficulties (for example at school or with confidence/self esteem levels), possible social care involvement, isolated and very little family support, not accessing other activities/clubs or services, may be open to Team Around the Child or Child Protection.

Level Four – Critical

Young person is the primary carer, has a high level of responsibility, offering age-inappropriate care, experiencing difficulties for example low levels of school attendance. Parent(s) in need of additional support. Young Person and or family are not engaging with other activities/clubs or services.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE FROM SWINDON CARERS CENTRE

Support available from Young Carers may include one or more of the following:

Initial assessment through home or school visit, annual reviews, access to holiday activities, term-time groups, possible access to additional funding for hobbies/equipment, 1:1 support, referral to other agencies, newsletter, information

shared with other relevant agencies (e.g. school nurses), and the opportunity to join a young carers forum. Young Carer Support Practitioners may take Lead Professional role where appropriate.

Young Carer Support Practitioners will discuss with young carers, and their families, the level of support being offered, which is primarily decided by the Support Practitioners, based on information shared on the referral and within the Initial Assessment, and using professional judgement.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any questions, want further information or are unsure as to whether to refer or not. We have a separate referral form for you to use or families can self refer. If you do not have a current copy of our referral form, please either contact Swindon Carers Centre or download a copy the Swindon Carers Centre website www.swindoncarers.org.uk

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