All about Young Carers

This factsheet has been created by the Young Carers Link Worker for Brighton & Hove City Council. It is designed to give parents of young carers an overview of the support available when there is a child or young person in the home with a caring role. They may be caring for you, your partner, or another family member. Accessing the right support can help to reduce the pressure and responsibility on the child or young person who is caring.

The Family Information Service offers

- Support and advice on where to go for help when you need it
- Information and advice about childcare and funding
- Help with applying for a school place
- A wide range of useful information and factsheets for families

For more information

- Search online for childcare, services for families and factsheets: www.familyinfobrighton.org.uk
- Visit our website: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/fis

Need extra help?

- Email: familyinfo@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- Telephone: 01273 293545
- Arrange an appointment to see us at 3 Palace Place, Brighton BN1 1EF
- Follow us on Twitter @bhcffamilyinfo

The Family Information Service cannot accept any responsibility for errors or omissions in this factsheet. All information provided is for guidance only and correct to the best of our knowledge at March 2016. All services that are referred to throughout this factsheet are listed in the contact section at the end.
What is a Young Carer?

There are over 700,000 young carers in the UK, and around 500-600 in Brighton & Hove, around half of whom are aged between 11 and 13 years of age*.

Young Carers are children and young people under the age of 18 who look after another family member who has a long term health condition such as a disability, illness, mental health condition, or a drug or alcohol problem. Most young carers look after one of their parents or care for a brother or sister and do extra jobs around the home such as cooking and cleaning, or helping someone to get dressed and move around. They can also be providing emotional support to the family member.

Some people start caring at a very young age and don't realise they are carers, other young people become carers overnight. Many Young Carers want to provide the care to their family, and feel good about doing so, and their role can also offer new and lifelong skills, and give them special relationships within the family.

However, a caring role can sometimes get in the way of a child or young person doing well at school, or doing the things that other children and young people do, such as clubs, or spending time with friends. It can also have an impact on their emotional wellbeing.

* taken from The Carers Rapid Needs Assessment 2016

What are a Young Carers Rights?

On 1st April 2015 The Children and Families Act 2014, and the Care Act 2014 gave Young Carers new rights to have support - whether they do a little or a lot of caring. Local Authorities now have a statutory responsibility to carry out a Young Carers Needs Assessment on the appearance of need, or if the family request one.

This means that if you or your child feels they have a caring role then you can speak to a professional about accessing support. This could be your Social Worker, Health Professional, your GP or somebody in school. Equally, if a professional feels that there might be a caring role then they must speak to you about what Brighton and Hove City Council can offer you.

This professional can try to find out a little more about your child’s caring role, possibly completing a Young Carers Checklist with your child, which will give them more of an idea about their caring role, and discuss a referral for further support. Alternatively, please contact the Early Help Support Team on 01273 292632, or email at earlyhelp@brighton-hove.gov.uk, to discuss additional support for your child.

Getting the right support

Some young carers might find it difficult to ask for help or support, they might feel very loyal towards the family and feel guilty about asking for help, or be worried about adding pressure to the family by being honest about the impact. They might be concerned that the care they give will be judged or criticised, or that there will be stigma associated to it. It can help to talk to them and
explain that it is best to be honest about how they’re feeling, as it might be a start to making things better.

There are also some children and young people who may not need or want any young carers support, for example

- It may be that a young person is living in a home with either a parent or sibling who has a physical or mental illness and doesn’t have a caring role. This could be because there is another family member who does most of the caring, or because there is somebody who comes in to the home to carry out tasks and support the cared for person.
- Some young carers are able to manage their caring role without it having any negative impact on them.

**Helping yourself to help your child**

As the parent of the young carer ensuring that you, or the cared for person, are accessing all support available to you is vital, as the more that other people can do to help, the less your child will have to do.

- **Speak with the key professional** supporting you around your illness or disability; this could be a Care Coordinator, Social Worker, Care Manager, or Mental Health Worker for example. Alternatively contact your GP and discuss your health, and the caring role you child has.
- **Adult Social Care (ASC) or Mental Health Services** might be able to help. ASC can provide practical support around the home, rails on the stairs or in the bathroom for example, or explore getting some help around the home. Mental Health Services can explore talking therapies or offer information and advice, support groups or psychological therapy services. Your GP can help you to access these. If you have received support in the past, and things have changed, you may need a review and Adult Social Care can arrange this.
- If you are a carer to another child then contact **Children’s Services** who can look to help you with this, or local charity **Amaze** in Brighton are a charity that gives information, advice and support to parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- If you are an adult carer in the family, for example for an elderly relative, contact **The Carers Centre** in Brighton for support and advice 01273 746222.

**How can you help your children?**

- Speak to the school – it is important that schools understand the needs of their pupils, and knowing that a child or young person is a young carer is vital to them being able to offer support. This could be around homework, a time out card, or having someone to talk to and understand the stress or worry they might be feeling.
- Speak to your child about how they are feeling. Talking to and listening to them will help you to understand what they do, how they feel, and whether they would like some additional support, or somebody to talk to. Check in with them regularly and listen to them.
about whether anything has changed. Make sure that they know it is ok to be honest about their feelings, and that you will support them.

- Your child may have concerns about their own physical or mental ill health, especially if there is a hereditary aspect to your illness. Talk to them about this and help them to understand more about it. School nurses can advise you or your child about health concerns.
- Encourage your child to take breaks where they can, spend some time with friends or doing other social activities.
- Ensure there is a plan in place of what your child should do in an emergency or if your health deteriorates. This plan could include who they should contact, emergency services, a professional or family member for example, or planning where they might stay if you need to go to hospital. Knowing there is a plan in place might offer reassurance and reduce worry.
- Spend some quality time with your child that isn’t about caring, playing games or going for a walk for example. Or if you care for another child, ensure you get some one to one time with your child that doesn’t have an illness or disability.

Young Carers Needs Assessments

The new legislation states that some form of assessment must be offered by Brighton and Hove City Council if a professional recognises that there is a caring role, or if you as a family request one. Completing the Young Carers Checklist to access Young Carers Support may be sufficient for your child and family, with nothing further needed.

However, in some cases a more thorough assessment might be necessary. This assessment would aim to find out more detail about your child and their caring role, and ask whether they wish to continue caring, and whether it is appropriate for them to continue caring. It will take in to account education, achievement, social activities and opportunities, views on the future, and also any physical or mental health issues.

Where there are multiple needs for a family, A Whole Family Assessment, also known as a Joint Assessment, might be more suitable. It can ensure that the needs of all family members are considered, with services offered or explored with each. This can result in all services working together to ensure the right support is in place, and the family as a whole functioning better.

Young Carers Checklists, Young Carers Needs Assessments, or Whole Family Assessments are to ensure that Brighton and Hove Council are doing enough to support the young carer in their role, and not to test whether they are doing a good job or not. The aim is to help reduce some of the responsibilities where possible, and to make things more manageable for the young carer.

What support is there for a Young Carer in Brighton?

The Young Carers Project in Brighton supports Young Carers, offering information and advice, groups and activities, advocacy, one to one support and a term time weekly drop-in space for young carers. They are also currently offering Young Carers an Emotional Wellbeing Service, where Young Carers can access a counsellor, life coach or Yoga sessions for example.
After a referral the Project will contact you and / or your child to discuss accessing support. Your child will need to attend a set of 3, 2 hour support sessions so they can learn and understand more about their own identity as a young carer, what support they would like from the service, and meeting other children and young people in a similar situation and look at how to support their own wellbeing. Your child can meet with one of the project workers prior to these support sessions if they would like to.

Following these sessions, your child will be supported depending on what they want and what they need. The Young Carers Project team offers a range of groups and activities for young carers throughout the year. Some are fun breaks and new experiences, whilst others are more focused on supporting young carers around specific needs and issues. Support Workers also provide a casework service. Depending on the level of need of the young carer this can include the following: 1:1 support sessions; inputting to Early Help/Child In Need/Safeguarding plans and meetings; and advocating with services on the young carer’s behalf.

School Nurse – Your child may benefit from a one to one appointment with a school nurse, to try and understand more about the health issues in the family, or to discuss more about any concerns they may have about their own health. A school nurse can also offer a visit to discuss the young carer’s everyday health, supporting them to access a GP or dentist, and healthy eating for example.

Team Around the Family (TAF) – Where there is more than one service or professional supporting your family, it can sometimes be useful to have TAF Meetings. This is when all professionals and the family come together every 6-8 weeks and discuss how things are going, what can be done and ensure that all parties understand and agree on everything that is going on.

Young Carers Cards - All Young Carers are entitled to a Young Carers Card, which will provide discounts to many local leisure and activities around the City, such as cinema, swimming and bowling. Speak with someone at The Young Carers Project to get one of these, or alternatively contact Access Point, at Adult Social Care.

Local Services and Support

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<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tr>
<td>Early Help Hub</td>
<td>01273 292632</td>
<td><a href="mailto:earlyhelp@brighton-hove.gov.uk">earlyhelp@brighton-hove.gov.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/childrens-services/early-help">http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/childrens-services/early-help</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Social Care / Access Point</td>
<td>01273 295555</td>
<td><a href="mailto:accesspoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk">accesspoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/a-z/a-z-pages/access-point-adult-social-care-services">https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/a-z/a-z-pages/access-point-adult-social-care-services</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Young Carers Project and The Carers Centre</td>
<td>01273 246222</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@thecarerscentre.org">info@thecarerscentre.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.thecarerscentre.org/">http://www.thecarerscentre.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amaze</td>
<td>01273 772289</td>
<td><a href="mailto:helpline@amazebrighton.org.uk">helpline@amazebrighton.org.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="http://amazebrighton.org.uk/">http://amazebrighton.org.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Nurse Service</td>
<td>contact your child’s school, or speak with your Young Carers Worker</td>
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Making a referral for support for your child

A referral to The Early Help Hub will ensure that the right support can be offered to your child. This can be made by any professional, or by you. If you feel you and your child would benefit then speak with your child’s school about a referral. Details on the referral process, the referral form, and young carers checklist can be found on the Early Help Hub website, or the Young Carers Project Website, under making a referral.

Local and National Websites for Young Carers

https://babble.carers.org/ - Babble is an online community for young carers. It is an online space where those under 18 who are caring for a family member can chat, share their experiences and access information and advice. It is a safe, fun and supportive space.

http://www.mylifebh.org.uk/ - My life is an easy to use, online directory listing local and national organisations and services to support everyday living, including children and families.

http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/young_carers - Young Minds is a National Charity who offer advice and support for Young Carers and the impact it can have on mental health and emotional wellbeing.

https://www.youngsibs.org.uk/ - Young Sibs is a website for brothers and sisters of disabled children. It is an online space with information and advice on disabilities, illnesses, difficult situations and family life. It also has an online chat facility to talk with other young carers.

http://www.thecarerscentre.org/our-services/young-carers/ - The Young Carers Project in Brighton and Hove offering support and advice to Young Carers, their families and professionals in the city.