

# Young Carers

Young Carers Project

## Who are young carers?



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The term “young carer” should be taken to include children and young people under 18 who provide regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.

The term does not apply to the everyday and occasional help around the home that may often be expected of or given by children in families. The key features for us are that the caring responsibilities persist over time and are important in maintaining the health, safety or day to day well-being of the person cared for and/or the wider family. A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking impacting on his or her emotional or physical well being or educational achievement and life chances.



## How Does West Berkshire Young Carers Project Work?

We meet with young carers together with their family at home to discuss the needs of the young carer and to consider the needs of the whole family. We may call some families and this discussion will take place over the phone.

Once we have made an assessment we develop a plan of support to meet the needs of the individual and their family.

## Our priorities are to:

- Reduce the amount of caring a young person has to do if it is too much for them.
- Increase young carers awareness and confidence to manage their situation.
- Work with schools and colleges to support young carers .
- Make sure that the young carer gets a regular break and time for friends and fun.
- Improve the life opportunities of the young carer.
- Ensure that the young carer is supported by other adults and professionals in their lives.
- Make sure that the young carer has someone to talk to when things are difficult.
- Signpost the young carer to a service which will give them someone to talk to when times are difficult

## What can help Young Carers?

- Acknowledging that they are in a caring role.
- Supporting the person who is cared for so that children and young people do not have to do so much.
- Having regular breaks from caring and ensuring they have the same opportunities as other children and young people of their age.
- Meeting other young carers and knowing they are not alone.
- Having someone to speak to who understands.



## *Raising awareness*

We want to make sure that children and young people with caring responsibilities get support from all the different adults in their lives.

We therefore offer information sessions and training workshops to a wide range of other professionals so they can have a better understanding about what children and young people do to care and how it affects them.

We are committed to being accessible to everyone. If you require this document in an alternative format or translation, please call Joe Sutton on Telephone 01635 43639.

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