



YOUNG CARERS LESSON RESOURCES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS



INTRODUCTION TO LESSON RESOURCES

Carers Trust Wales provides support, services and recognition for unpaid carers in Wales. We deliver training and information to carers and those who work with them, including people working in schools, social care and in health care.

We have produced a range of engaging, easy-to-use, printable resources for primary and secondary school teachers in Wales. These are designed to help:

- teachers understand how caring roles can affect a young person's learning;
- schools meet the recommendations emerging from Estyn's thematic review of young carers (May 2019);
- pupils with a caring role the support to remain happy and motivated learners; and
- ensure young carers are receiving support and recognition in schools.

We have developed lesson plans and accompanying resources for teachers in primary and secondary schools. The plans outline links to the 'What Matters' statements for the 'Health and well-being' strand of the new Curriculum for Wales. The resources are in line with numeracy, literacy and digital learning and will help support home-school links and outdoor learning. They have been designed to be flexible so that teachers can adapt instructions based on each learner's ability but designed primarily with learners in Year 3 and Year 9 in mind. They can be worked through independently, with peers, as a class, or at home with an adult.

We have also produced three factsheets for teachers.

- Young carers and emotional well-being.
- Young carers' rights.
- Guide to working with local carer's services.

Our resources have been developed in consultation with carer's services, teaching professionals and Estyn HMI. Download them from wales@carers.org

IMPORTANT NOTE:

BEFORE YOU BEGIN



Young carers are a vulnerable group, especially those who have a caring role at home but haven't recognised themselves as a carer. They may not realise that their life is different from other young people, and families may not be aware of local support available for them.

Familiarise yourself with your school's policy on young carers (and your wider safeguarding policy) before commencing this lesson so that you are able to act appropriately if any information is disclosed to you. It is also worth mentioning at the beginning of the lesson that learners can approach you, or a trusted adult, if the content of the lesson upsets them.

Some schools have a young carers lead that can you speak to; sometimes this is the same individual as the well-being lead. If in doubt, speak to your headteacher before commencing the lesson. You can also call your local authority for information on local support or a local carer's service.

Remember to read our factsheets about young carers, written especially for you to support your learning. Find them at carers.org/wales

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND AIMS

This resource, and the accompanying PowerPoint presentation, give you the flexibility to prepare and shape lessons suitable for your class.

Below is a list of outcomes that you can meet using the resources but it is not an exhaustive list.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To help learners understand that some young people are carers for family members.
- To explore the range of tasks a young carer may undertake.
- To explore how being a young carer can impact a young person's physical well-being.
- To explore how being a young carer can impact a young person's emotional well-being.
- To explore how being a young carer can make school life difficult.
- To learn the impact of caring on the whole family, including lifestyle and finances.
- To understand how to be a good friend for a young carer.
- To equip pupils with the confidence to talk to a trusted adult about their caring role.

LEARNING AIMS

- Learners can define and articulate what a young carer is.
- Learners know what tasks a young carer undertakes.
- Learners know that the experiences of young carers are diverse.
- Learners recognise if they, or someone they know, is a young carer.
- Learners with caring responsibilities know who to turn to for help.
- Learners can describe the challenges young carers face at school.
- Learners can describe the positive and negative impact of caring.
- Learners know what behaviour makes a good friend to a young carer.
- Learners can empathise with young carers.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM FOR WALES 2022

Our resources have been developed to align with the Curriculum for Wales 2022. The **Area of Learning and Experience** most suited to teaching children and young people about young carers is the **Health and Well-being** strand.

Our resources can help you to give pupils the chance to be ambitious, capable learners and support them to become ethical and informed citizens. Learning about caring responsibilities is one way to help young people feel confident and ready to lead fulfilling lives.

Below is a list of outcomes that you can meet using the resources we have prepared for you. This resource was prepared using the Draft Curriculum for Wales, so you will need to ensure you're aware of updates since then.

1

WHAT MATTERS STATEMENT 1:

Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits.

I can plan and prepare a variety of nutritious and balanced meals using simple and affordable ingredients.

I can apply my knowledge of diet and nutrition to make appropriate choices that have a positive impact on my health and well-being.

I can make appropriate dietary choices that allow me to maintain an appropriate energy balance.

I can analyse the physical and emotional changes that occur when I'm active.

2

WHAT MATTERS STATEMENT 2:

Life experiences impact on our feelings, thoughts and physical state.

I can independently focus attention on my perceptions, thoughts and feelings in order to further develop my self-awareness.

I can identify different strategies to self-regulate my emotions in response to a range of experiences.

I can reflect and learn from the past in order to anticipate and prepare myself for future experiences.

I can understand the value of being able to empathise with others and how this leads to actions which are compassionate and kind.

3

WHAT MATTERS STATEMENT 3:

Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others.

I can use information from a variety of sources, including learning from past experiences, to make decisions which support the health and well-being of myself and others.

I can critically consider relevant factors when making decisions.

I can use information to set personal goals and work towards them.

4

WHAT MATTERS STATEMENT 4:

How we engage with different social influences shapes who we are and our health and well-being.

I can engage with different social groups beyond those with which I am familiar.

5

WHAT MATTERS STATEMENT 5:

Healthy relationships are fundamental to our sense of belonging and well-being.

I have developed an understanding of the expectations and requirements of healthy behaviours in a range of relationships.

I have developed an understanding that there is an interaction between my relationships with other people and my identity.

I can form and maintain purposeful relationships with a wider circle of people.

I can empathise with other people's feelings and adapt my behaviour in response to this.

I can exercise my own rights and respect those of others.

I can recognise that rights can be infringed and can identify this.

ACTIVITIES AND TASKS

TASK 1 LEARN ABOUT ME

This worksheet features stories of young carers in Wales. We've shared what daily life is like for four young people: James, Hope, Fiona and Oliver. In addition, we showcase how Beth and Kay have been supported by their local carers' service. You can use the stories in any way you like. You can adapt the language for your class if you need to. Here are some ideas for how you could use this resource.

- Ask learners to extend the story and perform it to the class—exploring the emotions and challenges that the young carers might face.
- Ask learners to write a diary excerpt or local news report based on the information presented.
- Consider how families, friends, schools, local authorities, young carers' clubs and Welsh Government can support the young people featured in the story.
- Consider the long-term impacts of caring. Use the stories to explore the possible futures that each young carer could have—what would their life outcomes look like with support, compared to if they did not have support. Support could be from school, friends or carer's services.

TASK 2 YOUNG CARERS CARD

This activity is designed to help learners understand the benefits of a young carers card in school and health settings. A paragraph introduces what a young carers card is to learners; some may be familiar with the concept already. You can use the information provided as the basis of tasks that could include:

- writing a letter to a your headteacher, persuading them to introduce a young carers card by outlining the benefits;
- creating a short video for social media to raise awareness about the benefits of a young carers card; or
- holding a debate so learners can develop arguments for and against launching a young carers card in schools.

Young people can conduct research online to find out what young carers think about young carers cards.

NB - Welsh Government have committed to launch a young carer's ID card in Wales. The roll-out is being supported by Carers Trust Wales. The card is to support the identification and support for young carers in Wales.

ACTIVITIES AND TASKS

TASK 3 MY HOBBIES

This task explores the impact of caring. Young carers can miss out on being carefree and some say that they feel like an adult trapped in a child's body. This activity is a chance to talk about and explore activities learners enjoy and consider how it may be difficult to give these up if they had caring tasks which took priority. You can ask learners to physically cross out two of their hobbies to make space in their schedule for their caring task.

But it's also important to note many young carers may enjoy their caring tasks and are happy to support their family member.

TASK 4 AGONY AUNT

This task is designed to help familiarise learners with the activities a young carer does and is an opportunity to demonstrate empathy. It will help learners identify when young carers can take steps to look after their own well-being, when they should get support from family and friends and when it's important to reach out for external help.

TASK 5 DESIGN A POSTER

Raising awareness about caring responsibilities can help reduce stigma in schools. Learners can demonstrate their understanding of this topic by preparing a poster or social media content to encourage peers to speak up and get

support if they need it. You can link this activity to Young Carers Awareness Day.

TASK 6 YOUNG CARERS AWARENESS DAY

Raising awareness about caring responsibilities can help reduce stigma in schools. Learners can demonstrate their understanding of this topic by writing an article based on what they have learnt.

TASK 7 WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE

Spending time ensuring learners know where to access support is important. We've provided you with a list of possible avenues of support. You can use this information in a lesson to help learners:

- know who is the most appropriate adult to turn to;
- know how different agencies can provide different support; and
- understand how they can campaign for more support for young carers in their school. For example, how decision making is made in the school or how they can bring the issue to the attention of the school council, or school governors.



TASK 1 LEARN ABOUT ME

JAMES

James is 12 and lives with his mum. His dad died when James was a baby. His mum has been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis and often finds it difficult to walk short distances or climb the stairs. He hates to see his mum in pain but doesn't like to show how upset he is. James takes his responsibility seriously and helps with the shopping, household tasks and visits to the doctor.

FIONA

Fiona is 11 and lives with her mum and two brothers. Her parents divorced three years ago. Her younger brother, Owen, has learning difficulties—he is unable to concentrate on one thing, finds it hard to listen to other people or make them understand him. Their mum has a part-time job and juggles this with her caring role. When Fiona gets home from school, she has to look after Owen while her mum does the chores or puts her other brother to bed.

HOPE

Hope, 15, helps care for her brother Andy, 14. Andy is a wheelchair user and has learning disabilities following a brain injury as a baby. Helping Andy onto his school bus each morning is a struggle, especially when he resists by biting, spitting and lashing out. Hope helps her mum get Andy onto the bus safely but this means she misses her school bus sometimes. Although Hope's school know about her caring responsibilities, she still gets in trouble for lateness and can end up in detention regularly.

Hope does not enjoy school because she faces bullying about her brother. Her peers tease and even blame her for his disabilities which Hope finds distressing. Hope is unable to concentrate on school work, feels alone and is often in trouble at school.

Hope would like to have more quality time with mum – who is often preoccupied with caring for Andy.

OLIVER

Oliver is 13 and lives with his mum, dad, two brothers and sister. His mum has cancer and, on bad days, finds it hard to get out of bed. His dad has a demanding job which often means that he has to leave the house early in the morning. As Oliver is the eldest child, when his dad is away he has to get his brothers and sister ready for school, which includes making breakfasts and putting lunches together. He also has household chores to take care of before the nurse comes and he can go to school.

TASK 1 LEARN ABOUT ME

BETH

Beth cares for her mum and her younger sister. She attends the local secondary school which begins at 8.20am. Beth often takes her younger sister to primary school and the gates do not open until 8.45am. This has meant that Beth is often late for school or she does not attend at all.

Beth also has responsibility for her mum's emotional well-being. When her mum is not feeling well, Beth will stay at home to support her and ends up missing school again.

How have Beth's local carers' service been involved?

Explaining Beth's caring role to the school so there is more open communication and trust as well as arranging a reduced timetable for Beth.

Beth's mum has been signposted to a befriending scheme so she receives support one day a week.

Beth's older brothers now also share the task of taking the younger sibling to school.

Beth has attended activities, the counselling service at school, workshops and residential trips.

KAY

Kay is in sixth form studying IT. As the sole carer for her mum, she has a substantial caring role, providing both personal and physical care to her mother who suffers with severe arthritis and mental health issues.

Before leaving for college Kay makes breakfast, helps her mum wash and dress and prepares sandwiches for her mum's lunch. When Kay arrives home, she cooks the evening meal before starting her coursework and revising for her upcoming exams.

Kay struggles to meet assignment deadlines because of the demands of her caring role. She occasionally has to leave lessons early to attend appointments with her mum or visit the pharmacy. Kay struggles with anxiety relating to managing her mum's daily medication. Kay also says she feels isolated.

How have Kay's local carers' service been involved?

They introduced Kay to the carer's champion at the college who was able to support Kay to ask for changes to deadlines and discuss attendance.

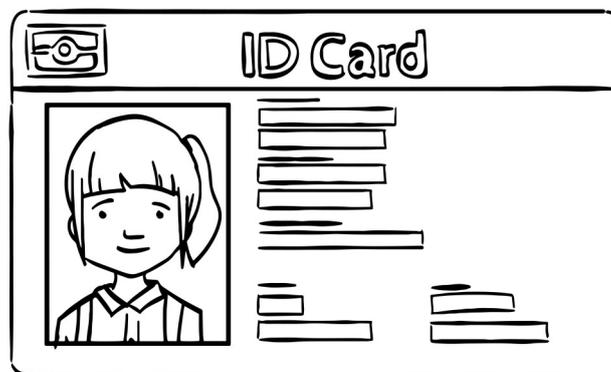
They supported Kay to organise home delivery for medications and to administer them in blister packs to relieve her anxiety.

Kay attended a young carers bowling activity and met new friends who were from the same college.

TASK 2 YOUNG CARERS CARD

In some parts of Wales and in some schools, young people are able to access a young carers card. This helps them tell a teacher, doctor or pharmacist that they are young carer. Young carers tell us that they don't want to tell their story or personal information to adults several times over so having a young carers card really helps them get the message across discreetly.

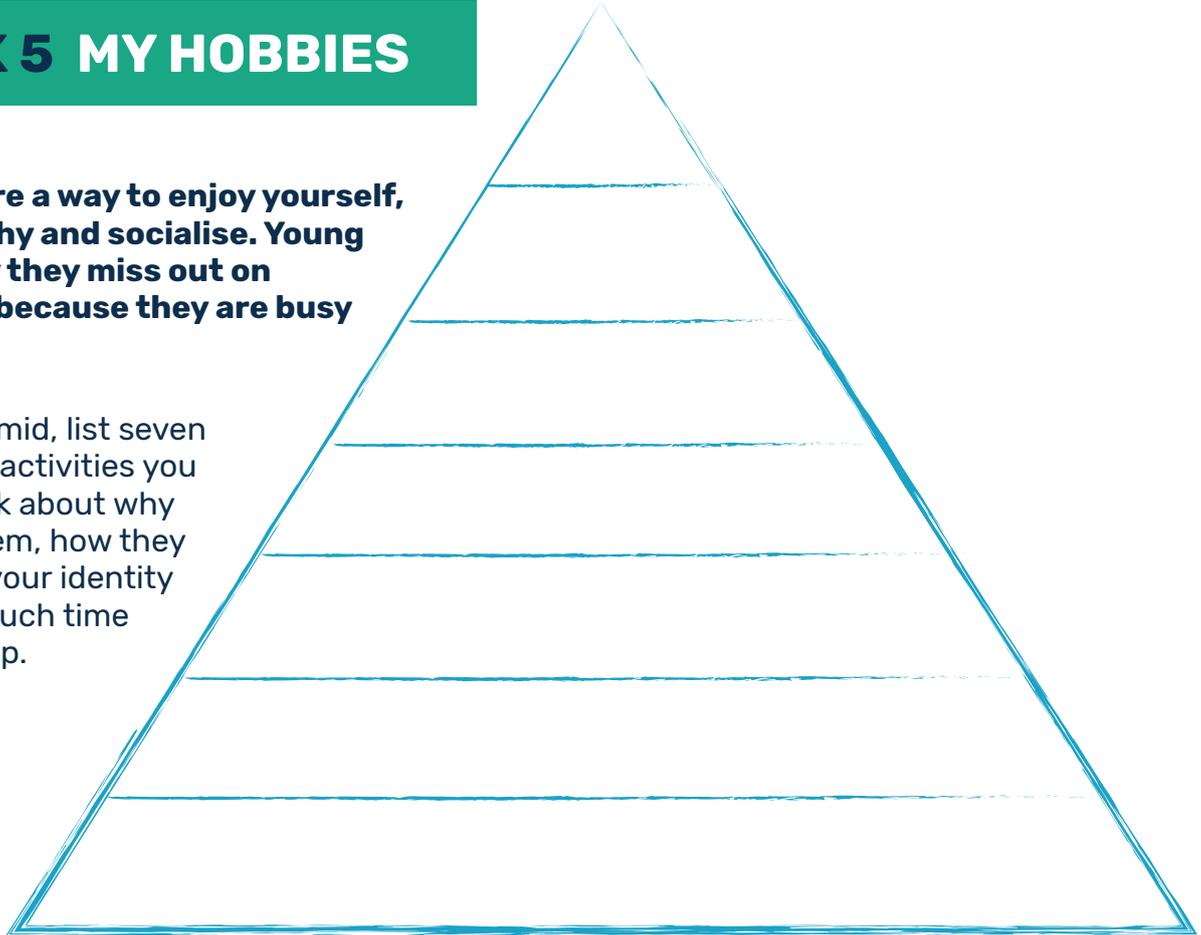
Carers Trust Wales believe that every young carer in Wales should have access to a young carers card as it will help them get the support they need. Welsh Government have announced they are committed to launching young carers cards across Wales.



TASK 5 MY HOBBIES

Hobbies are a way to enjoy yourself, stay healthy and socialise. Young carers say they miss out on activities because they are busy caring.

In the pyramid, list seven hobbies or activities you enjoy. Think about why you like them, how they help form your identity and how much time they take up.



Next, think of four tasks that young carers may need to do.
Write them in the rectangles.

Choose four of the hobbies you noted in the pyramid and put a cross through them. Instead, replace them with the tasks you've written.

Think about how it felt to remove the activities you enjoy from your list. Think about how you chose which ones to remove, and which ones you will miss the most. What would happen if you tried to fit your hobbies and tasks in?



TASK 4 AGONY AUNT

Read these two letters and respond to each young carer with some advice. They are based on real examples of problems that young carers have had. What might you say to help them?

Dear Deirdre,

My dad is disabled and he needs me to do lots of stuff for him. My friends at school have stopped hanging out with me and everything has got so much I don't think I can cope with it any more. Please can you give me some advice because my mum is worried and I have been going to the doctors because I am really depressed and I don't know what to do. I need help.

Stephen

Dear Deirdre,

My mum's in hospital at the moment because she has kidney problems. So me and my little sister are living with our auntie. My auntie keeps crying loads which makes us upset! Whenever I mention it she keeps saying that I'm being rude. How can I tell her that we can't cope with all this?

Jo

TASK 5 DESIGN A POSTER

Design a poster for young carers to promote good well-being

Think about the challenges young carers face and how they can overcome them. You can:

- write a list of advice, or just focus on one area in depth (e.g. think about nutrition for a busy family if a young carer needs to help with shopping and preparing meals daily),
- conduct research online,
- use direct quotes and experiences of young carers,
- find out whether you can place your posters in the school, and
- show your knowledge of good design skills. For example, remember that a good poster is striking, bold and features clear messaging.

Some ideas to get you started can be found opposite on this postcard illustrated by Simone Lia for a charity that was the predecessor of Carers Trust Wales.



TASK 6 YOUNG CARERS AWARENESS DAY

Young Carers Awareness Day takes place every January to raise awareness about young carers.

Imagine you are asked to write an article for your school newspaper or website about Young Carers Awareness Day. Your piece should include the information below.

- Definition of a young carer.
- The impact of caring.
- Details of activities are planned for Young Carers Awareness Day (you can make these up).
- Why people should take notice and take part.

You can find inspiration from [carers.org](https://www.carers.org)



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Young Carers Awareness Day
30 January 2020
Count Me In!

Who are young carers?
A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family who is ill, has a disability or misuses drugs or alcohol.

In their caring role, a young carer might do things like:

- Helping out around the house more than their peers who are not carers.
- Helping someone out of bed or to get dressed.
- Talking to someone who is distressed.
- Helping someone dress.
- Collecting and helping to give medicine.
- Managing the family budget.
- Looking after siblings.

Because of caring, young carers:

- Find it hard to finish study at home.
- Are late to school altogether.
- Struggle to complete homework because they have to care for the person they are caring for.

TASK 7 LOCAL SUPPORT

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Talking openly about worries and concerns can help young carers feel heard and understood. They may be offered help, advice or a solution that they hadn't considered before.

SUPPORT IN SCHOOL

Schools may have a young carer's lead or a well-being lead. If they're unsure, pupils can also speak to their class teacher, head of year or the school nurse. Some schools run young carer clubs too.

LOCAL CARERS' SERVICE

Local authorities and charities around Wales offer services for young carers. They can include counselling, clubs, trips and other support. The local authority will know what is available in each area. Schools can help young carers and their family get in touch with the carer's service too.

LOCAL AUTHORITY

Under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, every in Wales is entitled to a Carers Needs Assessment, including young carers. Welsh Government have produced a short video about this here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITjccInFN_w

CHILDRENS COMMISSIONER FOR WALES

Sally Holland, the current commissioner promotes and safeguards the rights of all children. Find out more here: www.childcomwales.org.uk

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

GP practices, pharmacy settings and other health professionals may be able to offer you guidance about what local help is available too.



THANK YOU



We would like to thank Education Achievement Service (EAS), Central South Consortium (CSC), School Effectiveness and Improvement Service for North Wales (GwE) and Education through Regional Working (ERW) for the guidance and support in developing resources to support the education of young people with caring responsibilities. Regional education consortia have been invaluable partners in developing and piloting resources and our sincere thanks go to Kath Bevan, Siriol Burford, Dylan Williams and Sharon Williams.