**Tools to support services to raise the local profile of YCiS**

**Tool 1:**

Template letter to Director of Children’s Services

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**Guidance**

**This template letter is designed for use by young carers services that are not currently commissioned to deliver Young Carers in Schools in their area by their local authority, but have been funded to do so by other organisations/funders.**

**It aims to make it as easy as possible for these services to raise the awareness of their local Director of Children’s Services about:**

* **The work the service is doing in partnership with Carers Trust and The Children’s Society to deliver Young Carers in Schools (YCiS) in the local area.**
* **The key links between this work and local authorities’ identification duties under the Children and Families Act 2014.**
* **The key steps local authorities can take to raise the profile of YCiS to increase the identification of young carers within the local area.**
* **How the local authority can maximise the impact of this work in the future by commissioning the service to engage with and support more schools going forwards.**

Services may wish to include their logo alongside Carers Trust and The Children’s Society logo on this letter. To do so, services should use Tools to support services to raise the profile of Young Carers in Schools: Tool 8 Joint logo lock-up.

The template letter states that further information is enclosed regarding young carers, the impacts of the programme, and refers to the promotional leaflet for the Young Carers in Schools programme. These materials are supplied as part of Supporting Young Carers in Schools: A Toolkit for Young Carers Services at:

* Tools to support services to raise the local profile of Young Carers in Schools: Tool 15 Young Carers in Schools A4 promotional leaflet
* Tools to support services to raise the local profile of Young Carers in Schools: Tool 16 Young Carers in Schools Impacts Infographic
* Tools to support services to build and maintain engagement: Tool 6 Gaining an understanding about young carers

Dear xx

**Meeting your identification duties under the Children and Families Act 2014: Support to increase identification in schools**

As many as one in 12 pupils could be young carers – children under 18 who are caring unpaid for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems.

Local authorities are required, under Part 5, Section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014, to take reasonable steps to identify young carers in their area who have support needs.

In the Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014, the Government recognised that schools are vital to identifying young carers who may not already be in contact with local authorities. However, evidence shows that school approaches to identifying and supporting young carers are patchy, and frequently rely on the support of a particularly passionate member of school staff.

**Support to raise identification in schools in [insert name of your local area]**

I am writing to you on behalf of [insert service name]. We are working in partnership with Carers Trust and The Children’s Society, to increase identification of young carers in schools through the Young Carers in Schools programme.

In autumn 2016, 58 schools adopting this approach across England reported the identification of almost 1, 180 young carers that were previously unknown to them.

By taking part, schools can:

* Get England wide recognition for effective practice through the Young Carers in Schools Award.
* Prioritise and take manageable steps to increase identification and improve outcomes
* Access essential support including [delete/add as appropriate: half-termly network meetings with other schools, tools, templates and good practice examples]
* Demonstrate to Ofsted that the school is meeting the needs of young carers, specifically mentioned in the Common Inspection Framework.

We have been funded by [insert name of funder] to carry out this work with [insert number of schools] in [insert name of locality].

**Next steps**

To maximise the impact of this work to increase identification of young in schools, you can:

* Include the information below in any newsletters or updates you send to schools in [insert locality]
* Circulate the attached promotional leaflet for the Young Carers in Schools programme to local authority maintained schools and recommend that they participate in this exciting initiative.
* Encourage schools to join schools across England and Wales who are showcasing their commitment to young carers online via the Schools Supporting Young Carers map (www,youngcarersinschools.com).
* Ensure any local authority services and networks for schools (e.g. Educational Psychology Services; the local SENCo network) are aware of the local authorities duty to identify young carers and the support provided through the Young Carers on Schools programme. We are able to present at relevant team/network meetings to help raise this awareness.
* Consider commissioning [insert name of service] to extend the reach of this work to a greater number of schools within [insert name of locality].

I would welcome the opportunity to meet to provide further information about this exciting programme and to discuss the ways in which [insert name of local authority] can maximise is potential to increase the identification of young carers in schools.

I enclose key information about young carers, and the impacts achieved by schools adopting the Young Carers in Schools programme on pupils’ academic achievement, attendance and wellbeing.

Yours faithfully

Job title

Name of service

**Sample text for Local Authority Newsletters**

**Is your school doing great things for young carers? Or does your school want to do more for young carers?**

Increase identification, improve outcomes and gain an Award for your school through the [Young Carers in Schools](http://www.youngcarersinschools.com) programme. This exciting, free initiative, run jointly by Carers Trust and The Children’s Society is open to schools across England and Wales.

In autumn 2016, 58 schools, where young carers previously experienced difficulties attending and/or achieving at school reported the significant positive impacts of the programme:

* 91% aid that young carers were less likely to have high absence rates
* 86% reported young carers engaged better in class
* 84% stated young carers were more motivated to learn.

**Schools in [insert name of locality]**

[Insert name of young carers service] is working in partnership with Carers Trust and the Children’s Society in [insert name of locality, to make it easier than ever for schools to achieve positive outcomes for this vulnerable pupil group..

We provides [insert as appropriate targeted 1:1 support/half-termly network meetings/expert advice and guidance], enabling you to gain expert advice, practical tools and essential feedback, and share learning with other schools.

Get involved to:

* Learn how to identify hidden young carers
* Increase the attendance, attainment and wellbeing of this vulnerable pupil group
* Demonstrate you are meeting the needs of this particularly vulnerable group of pupils (specifically mentioned in Ofsted’s Common Inspection Framework, 2015).

You can also join schools across England and Wales who are showcasing their commitment to young carers online via the Schools Supporting Young Carers map (www,youngcarersinschools.com).

Contact [insert details] to find out more.



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The Children’s Society is a registered charity number 221124. Registered Office: Edward Rudolf House, Margery Street, London, WC1X 0J

Young Carers in Focus is a Big Lottery Fund partnership programme run by The Children’s Society in conjunction with Rethink Mental Illness, Digital Me, YMCA Fairthorne Group and The Fatherhood Institute

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