

YOUNG CARERS ACTION DAY

16 MARCH 2021

Protect
Young Carers'
Futures

CAMPAIGN PACK



This pack is to support young people to campaign and raise awareness about young and young adult carers and the issues that are important to them.

There are lots of suggestions on how you can plan and take action to support the goals of #YoungCarersActionDay.

However you choose to support **#YoungCarersActionDay** we would love to hear about it! Let us know what you're doing by emailing ycad@carers.org or posting on Twitter @CarersTrust @CarersTrustScot @CarersTrustWal.



WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO ACHIEVE

#YoungCarersActionDay will be about Protecting Young Carers' Futures and making sure that all young and young adult carers get the support they need to go after their dreams.

Young and young adult carers told us they wanted Young Carers Action Day to be about their futures, highlighting the incredible skills they have developed through being a carer – like resilience, time-management and empathy.

These are all important skills, not just for young people moving into higher education – but also for those looking to enter the workplace. What's more, they are skills highly valued by employers.

Young Carers Action Day is an annual event led by Carers Trust. It raises awareness and calls for action to increase support for young people with caring responsibilities.

WHAT WILL CARERS TRUST BE CAMPAIGNING FOR DURING #YOUNGCARERSACTIONDAY?

When we spoke to young and young adult carers they were really clear that #YoungCarersActionDay must be about action and **delivering change for young and young adult carers.**

This is why we are developing actions that young and young adult carer groups can take to engage with employers. This includes calling on employers **to recognise and understand young and young adult carers' skills so they are much more likely to recruit them.**

The Carers Trust team will be calling on decision-makers to develop **new national action plans for children and young people with caring responsibilities** – which must address education, employability and health and wellbeing.

We will also be making this a key message for media interviews. We'll be saying young and young adult carers have amazing skills, but governments need to do more if those skills are to really count – and that's why we need action plans for young and young adult carers.

We would love you to support our activities by planning your own actions and activities as part of #YoungCarersActionDay and sharing them with us.

HOW YOU CAN PLAN A CAMPAIGN ACTION AS PART OF #YOUNGCARERSACTIONDAY

There are lots of ways you can get involved with #YoungCarersActionDay and many schools, colleges, other organisations and young and young adult carer services will hold special events to mark the day.

It would be great if you could **share your campaigning activities on social media** and with your friends, relatives, teachers and colleagues. We want as many people as possible to join us and take action so please keep an eye on @CarersTrust @CarersTrustScot @CarersTrustWal and #YoungCarersActionDay and help us spread the word.

You can plan your own campaign actions:

Two ways you could do this are:



1. SHARE SOMETHING

It is important to recognise and celebrate things that are going well or make a positive difference to young carers' futures. Sharing this information can encourage more people do the same.

An example could be:

Write down your experience of being a young carer at school

My school holds careers sessions for young carers to help us show the skills we have as young carers in our UCAS applications, CVs or other job applications. Former young carers come and give talks about how their caring role has helped them to build a successful career and the leader of our local young carers group comes to speak about the support they can offer.

ACTION

Celebrate your school's success on social media, tagging in other schools and people like politicians so they can share your positive example.

RESULT

More schools and colleges are aware of effective ways to support young and young adult carers to help them plan for and achieve their ambitions in employment and education.



2. ASK FOR ACTION TO FIX A PROBLEM



If you think something needs to be changed it's a good idea to work through the following steps:

Describe what needs to change

Better support in school to juggle my education and caring responsibilities.

Identify what has caused this problem

Not all teachers are aware of young carers, or the responsibilities they have on top of schoolwork. Some teachers don't know that just a small amount of flexibility, such as an extension to a deadline, can make a big difference. Some young carers have chosen to miss school rather than attend without completed homework, which means they can miss out on even more learning and fall behind.

Decide how the problem can be fixed

- Awareness raising events at schools, like assemblies or notice boards
- Writing to the Head Teacher to ask them to put in place policies that support young carers and to hold a meeting so staff can learn more about how to recognise and support students with caring responsibilities.
- Asking your Head Teacher or governing body to appoint a Carer Champion at school to help young carers and teachers find solutions, together.

Research who can make or influence that change

- Head Teachers
- School Governors
- Student Councils

Once you have identified what you want to do, you can decide on the best way to have your message heard.

TEACHER
AWARENESS



MAKING YOURSELF HEARD



Creating support for your campaign

No matter what action you choose to take to support #YoungCarersActionDay, you will need people on your side to help spread your message and create the demand for change.

Peer support

Involving other young and young adult carers can be really effective. By showing that you have a goal that is shared by a number of people, you can demonstrate why what you're saying is important. Other people who have the same goals can be strong advocates, their experiences and their stories will make your campaign stronger. To gather the support of your peers you can:

- Speak to young and young adult carers you know.
- Speak at groups and activities run for young and young adult carers.
- Hold an assembly at school.
- Use #YoungCarersActionDay on social media to let other people know about what you're doing and how they can get involved.

Professional and political support

Involving Carers Trust or carer services in your area can provide you with local and national platforms to publicise your message.

You can write to the Young Carers Action Day national steering group by emailing **ycad@carers.org** or tag us on social media @CarersTrust @CarersTrustScot @CarersTrustWal using #YoungCarersActionDay.

The support of your local Member of Parliament (MP), Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP), Member of the Senedd (MS) or Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) can also be really influential.

Find out who represents you:

- UK Parliament: parliament.uk
- Scottish Parliament: parliament.scot
- Senedd: senedd.assembly.wales
- Northern Ireland Assembly: niassembly.gov.uk

Get in touch with them to ask for a meeting or for them to take a specific action to support #YoungCarersActionDay.

We'll be providing template letters at **Carers.org/YCAD** but you can write your own letter using some of the tips set out below.



GETTING CREATIVE FOR #YOUNGCARERSACTIONDAY

You will be able to find lots of resources on the Carers Trust website **Carers.org/YCAD** to help you take part in #YoungCarersActionDay. There are lots of creative things you can do to support Young Carers Action Day. Help encourage as many people as possible to take action to ensure all young and young adult carers get the support they need to have successful futures.

Posters

Design your own poster or download our poster from **Carers.org/YCAD**.

Posters are a great way to catch someone's eye and, if you can get lots of copies made, then you can reach a wide audience very quickly and efficiently. The most important things to consider when designing a poster are:

- **Locations** - Knowing where you plan to display your posters should influence your design choices. If they are going to go up on notice boards, surrounded by other posters, they will need to stand out. Check that you have permission and that it is legal to display your posters wherever you plan to.
- **Information** - Make sure that you have, at the very least, your main goal or the event you are promoting on your poster. You may not have enough space to give all the details, but if you have laid out your main aim and told people how they can find out more it's a good start!
- **Keeping things clear** - While you want your posters to attract attention and draw people in, a lot of posters are too complicated and look confusing. Some common mistakes you should avoid include using too many fonts (we'd recommend using only one or two) or fonts which are hard to read, using colours which don't contrast well (don't use yellow text on a white background for example) and using images that don't relate to or are inappropriate for your message.

Letters and letter templates

If you want to get in touch with a politician, newspaper or organisation to share your message, letters can be a powerful tool. One well written letter can make a strong argument, and there are ways to strengthen your message.

You can sign your letter personally and get people and organisations who support you to add their names as well, or you can create a template (a version of the letter with spaces for people to fill in their details or personalise the letter) and get everyone to send their copies in. Having more people involved, with either option, lets the people receiving the letters know how much support there is for your campaign action. Which is why we'll be making template letters available on **Carers.org/YCAD**.

Whichever option you choose, there are a few things to keep in mind when writing a letter:

- **Set out your aims** - Be clear about why you're writing; tell them who you are and what you're asking for.
- **Be firm** - Be sure of what you want and communicate that with confidence. Highlight the things you think are most important and explain why and what needs to be done.
- **Ask questions** - If you can, phrase the things you want as questions. A question is more open than a demand and invites further discussion: "Please could you tell me about your plans to protect young carers futures?"
- **Request a response** - Ask directly for a response and include your contact information.
- **Be polite** - Even though you should be firm in asking for their support you are more likely to be successful if you are polite and respectful.

Digital campaigning

If you are over the age of 13 you can make and use social media accounts to help spread the word about #YoungCarersActionDay and any campaigning you're doing to support it.

It can be useful to:

- Use #YoungCarersActionDay and tag in @CarersTrust @CarersTrustScot @CarersTrustWal.
- Keep things short and to the point. Describe the issue and your goal and tell people how to get involved. Facebook updates can be longer, but unless you have someone sharing their personal story in support of your campaign you should try and keep it short, punchy and action-focused.
- Use images - It's a good idea to use images to draw people's attention, They can either be photographs or created images, like digital posters and postcards. Ahead of #YoungCarersActionDay you'll be able to download digital resources from **Carers.org/YCAD** to help you.
- Use the My Young Carer Skill Card we've created for you. Find it at **Carers.org/YCAD**.
- Use videos - Short videos can really help raise awareness and get people on board with the campaign. You don't need a lot of expensive equipment to make something that will look good on social media. Most phones can record video, and simple, free video editors may come as part of the software on a phone or are available on app stores. You can plan out, script and shoot your videos carefully, or simply film someone talking about #YoungCarersActionDay and how to get involved. It's really important that you make sure that anyone you photograph or film consents to the image or video being shared online. If you want to film a video to support #YoungCarersActionDay you can contact **ycad@carers.org** for help and advice.
- Target your audience - Along with using #YoungCarersActionDay, social media sites let you tag other users in your posts. You can use this to address your messages to people who you think should support #YoungCarersActionDay, like your MP/MSP/MS/MLA for example.
- Plan your content - Unless they trend or go viral, (become very popular and are seen and shared by a lot of people) social media posts get passed over quite quickly. To make sure people see your message, and are reminded of it frequently, it's a good idea to plan to share it more than once.

Get safety tips, advice and resources to help you stay safe online from
www.saferinternet.org.uk.

Celebrate your success!

Taking part in #YoungCarersActionDay will help you to develop and showcase the many skills you have. This can be a good way to reflect on your strengths and can help you to speak to others about the skills you have.

We've created a **Young Carers Skills Journal** which you can find on **Carers.org/YCAD**. You can use this journal to write down all the skills you already have and to track all the fantastic work you are doing balancing caring on top of everything else, including your education.

Further information

If you would like any help or support with your Young Carers Action Day campaign:

- Visit **Carers.org/YCAD**.
- Email **ycad@carers.org**.

Thank you for supporting #YoungCarersActionDay

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