

In a young carer friendly school, you could talk to anyone and it wouldn't matter. You wouldn't have to keep explaining yourself.

Young carer aged 17

Each young carer is an individual with different needs and ways of protecting themselves. Our experiences with young carers have taught us some important do's and don'ts.

DO:

- Take a supportive, but non-intrusive role. Remember to respect the privacy of the young person, including their right to withhold personal information.
- Treat any information that is shared with you with respect and confidentiality.
- If you feel you need further advice or suggestions, consider contacting a young carer organisation (Resources are included in this pack).

DON'T:

- Interrogate a young carer or insist that s/he specify what kind of care they provide. The impacts of caring are not always related to the amount of time involved with caring or in tasks that a young person can easily articulate.
- Minimise the caring role that a child performs for a family member.
- Raise the personal circumstances of a young carer in class discussion without checking with the young person in advance if s/he feels comfortable with your idea.
- Suggest a student is lying or exaggerating their care responsibilities. Young carers often carry heavy responsibilities in addition to the challenges of their own learning and development. Days when their caring is not as intense, may be abruptly followed by days of high anxiety or discouragement for either the young person or their family member.

