

When well-managed, caring can be an incredibly positive experience. Young carers have reported that their caring responsibilities contribute to the development of their:

Sense of self and personal value

Young people who support a family member with an illness or disability often develop a strong sense of their own worth as they face the realities and restrictions of their lives. This confidence is often accompanied by a sense of compassion, which leads some young carers to encourage their peers at school, in theatrical productions, and at young carer camps and conferences.

Sense of connectedness and value within their family

Many young carers express a strong sense of connection and mutual respect within their families. Illness and disability create ongoing challenges for a family, but they also contribute to its resilience and sense of accomplishment.

Broad base of knowledge

Young carers often gain a broad knowledge of mental and physical illness and disability, human behaviour and relationships. They report that this knowledge is invaluable as it assists them with everyday situations.

Life skills

Young carers learn multi-level skills including: budgeting, home-management, cooking, laundry and cleaning, administering medications, problem-solving and time management.

“The good thing about living in a caring family is that everyone has become a lot closer and sharing.... I love my sister and wouldn't want her to change in any way. She has a great personality and sense of humour”

(Young carer 16).

