

Young Carers Update

On **16th March 2022 it will be Young Carers Action Day** – This years theme is **‘Tackling Isolation’**. Many young carers tell us they feel like they are the only young carer in their schools or that they didn’t know any other young people were also looking after their mam/dad/bother/sister. We want to identify young carers across Northumberland to ensure they have the targeted support they need.

Some facts to highlight the need for young carers to get support:

- 27% of young carers (aged 11-15) miss school or experience educational difficulties (40% where children care for a relative with drug or alcohol problems) (Dearden, C, Becker, S, 2004).
- They have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level – the difference between nine Cs and nine Ds (Children's Society, 2013).
- A quarter of young carers said they were bullied at schools because of their caring role (Carers Trust, 2013).

Our young carers service:

Carers Northumberland are commissioned by Northumberland County Council to provide support to young carers up to the age of 18 across Northumberland. We do this by providing access to one-one support, activities, grants, newsletter and 16 plus support for further education, employment or accessing apprenticeships. You can find out more here [Professionals \(carersnorthumberland.org.uk\)](https://www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk)

How can schools support young carers:

Help to identify young carers – Carers Northumberland have produced a toolkit for schools, based on the Barnardos recommendations, if your school would like a copy please contact me on annemariejohnstone@carersnorthumberland.org.uk We have also produced a ‘What is a young carer’ short video that can be played on school TV, you can download it directly from our website here [Professionals \(carersnorthumberland.org.uk\)](https://www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk) or we can send you this via email, please contact us if you require a copy.

Young carer awareness training for staff and governors - in participation with Northumberland Adolescent Services we offer free training, this can be booked via the learning and development site here [Course: Young Carers Identification and Awareness \(learningpool.com\)](https://www.learningpool.com)

I wanted to share with you a shining example of good practice, highlighting the amazing support from Wise Academies who have gone that extra mile to support young carer in their schools.

27% of young carers aged 11-15 regularly miss school, and 39% said no one in their school was even aware of their caring responsibilities. At Carers Northumberland we understand the importance of working with local schools and we have created our Young Carers in Schools Toolkit to enable schools across Northumberland to identify and support young carers. Our shining light for good practice is on Malvin's Close and Croftway Primary schools', part of the Wise Academies based in Blyth. Both sites have engaged with our Young Carer Service, going above and beyond to support young carers in their schools. The Family Support Teams within the schools have identified, supported, and referred 10 children to our Young Carer Support Project over the last few months. Our Young Carer Support Coordinator regularly visits 6 children over the 2 sites providing a range of one-to-one support, tailored to the individual needs of each child. The Family Workers keep in regular contact with our services and share service information, newsletters, and information about what support is available to both the young carers and their families. One of the first to receive the new Young Carers in Schools Toolkit as pilot, they were keen to embed this into daily practice and have already taken on board many of the key recommendations outlined in the Toolkit. One of the most exciting developments for support young carers are plans for a dedicated Young Carers Group within the school and it is hoped that this will be launched when the new term begins. Well done Wise Academies, we are looking forward to what the future brings and are excited to continue working with you to improve that lives of young carers attending your schools!

*Source: Facts About Young Carers | The Children's Society
(childrenssociety.org.uk)*