

Action for Carers Surrey

**Surrey Young Carers
SUPPORT PLAN PACK:**

Transition –

*‘Being a Young Adult
Carer’*



Contents

1. Who are Young Adult Carers?	1
2. What are life transitions?	2
3. Your Rights	3
4. Workplace support	4
5. University support	5
6. Tips for carers who want to go to University	6
7. Where can I get more help?	8

1. Who are Young Adult Carers?

Young adult carers are young people aged 16–25 who care – unpaid - for a family member or friend with an illness or disability, mental health condition, or addiction.

There are at least **376,000** young adult carers in the UK and you'll find carers in **every** school, college, university and workplace.

Why do young adult carers need specialist help?

This is the time to get reliable information from someone who will help you think about your family situation and your own future. Just when further education or starting your career becomes very demanding, your family might expect more of you.

Action for Carers Surrey support carers of all ages from aged 5 – 95! You might enter the service as a young carer and continue into our adult support services at 18. It is our job to support you at the right time and provide age appropriate information, guidance and events. We want the transition from our young carer service to be smooth and helpful.

At **Action for Carers Surrey** we understand how difficult life can be for young adult carers. We can provide information about things like education and employment decisions, as well as balancing your life with your caring role. We also hold some special events just for you!

From aged 16, **Surrey Young Carers** will start discussing your transitions into adulthood. We can introduce you to our Adult Carers Support Team to make you feel comfortable. There is lots of really useful information on our website – topics like **education, working, housing, money, future and health** – take a look!

www.actionforcarers.org.uk/who-we-help/young-adult-carers-18-24/what-you-need-to-know/

2. What are life transitions?



Life stage transitions may include things like moving schools, starting, or finishing university, starting a new job, adjusting to chronic illness, moving away from friends or family etc. They can have a serious impact on general health and wellbeing.

Adjusting to change is important, and something that many young people may struggle with. Life changes that are not in the person's control, such as being forced to change schools or relocate, can be especially unsettling and difficult to adjust to.



Signs and symptoms someone is not coping well with change:

- ✓ Feeling like they can't cope, either with a specific problem or task, or just in general
- ✓ Constantly feeling under pressure or that they are being weighed down by others
- ✓ Feeling lost and unsure of oneself
- ✓ Feeling anxious, irritable, moody or upset much of the time
- ✓ Exhaustion
- ✓ Not wanting to engage in social activities or attending school
- ✓ Difficulty sleeping or restless sleep.

The Care Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to provide young carers with a 'Transition Assessment' before they turn 18 to take into account their aspirations for the future, and how their caring role may impact upon their well-being and goals as they transition into adulthood.

3. Your Rights

Becoming an adult can be a challenging time for you and the person you look after, so it's important to have all of the information, options and choices about caring and what you want to do.

You may want to explore whether you go to college or university, or perhaps you want to start work; you may want to talk about carrying on being a carer and look at support to help you. It's important that professionals and responsible adults help you to achieve what you want, while looking at the support the person you care for may need to help that happen.

You *shouldn't* be doing a caring role that:

- ✓ Makes you feel worried, sad, or lonely.
- ✓ Makes your health worse.
- ✓ Means you miss out on time with your friends.
- ✓ Means you do worse at school, college or university.
- ✓ Stops you getting a job or keeping a job.
- ✓ Stops you wanting to achieve your goals for the future.

Young Carers' Transition Assessments

When you start moving towards being an adult the way you receive and access support/ services changes. This can put you at a disadvantage to your friends who don't care for someone.

It's important that you get support to make the transition into adulthood as smoothly as possible and you don't 'fall between the cracks' of Children's and Adult's Services.

YOUR NEEDS ARE IMPORTANT

That is why there are **LAWS** that tell your council that they must find out what support you need, by asking some questions.

This is called an **ASSESSMENT** and it is a discussion to find out information about

- You
- The caring you do



This is so that the person doing the assessment can make decisions, with you about:

- **Whether your situation is OK**
- **If more support would help you and the person you care for.**

An assessment isn't an exam, and it isn't about how good you are at supporting the person you care for. It is about finding out if the council is doing enough so you have the same chances as other people your age.

If you are under 18, you have the right to explain your needs. It might be part of a family assessment, or it might be a **young carers assessment**. You can ask for a discussion without your parent if you wish.

4. Workplace support

Having a caring role can seriously affect young people's ability to find and stay in work.

Caring responsibilities can mean that carers are occasionally late or need to leave work at short notice. Carers may also feel tired, frustrated, or anxious at work, leading to a lack of concentration. Because of caring commitments, many young adult carers also find it difficult to attend social activities outside of work and build relationships with their colleagues. This can lead to carers feeling 'different'.



Unless your first job is your dream role, it will be an adjustment!

A good employer will support your caring role and if you are comfortable to, let them know your situation and your eagerness to work and support the person you care for. Chances are that your employer will work with colleagues in the same position.

Examples of workplace support for working carers:

- ✓ Carers' leave or other special leave arrangements
- ✓ Flexible working options
- ✓ Information on career breaks
- ✓ Access to wellbeing sessions
- ✓ Carers' support networks
- ✓ Occupational health and employee assistance programmes
- ✓ Access to an external carers' advice support line
- ✓ Drop-in lunchtime carer support sessions
- ✓ Access to a personal telephone to be able to contact people in case of emergencies.

A mix of solutions could be used to respond to a particular situation, such as flexible working combined with some paid/unpaid time off or special leave.

Explaining your role as a young and young adult carer

If you are comfortable to, let your future employer know about your caring role.

It's probably best to put this at the beginning, in your personal statement.

Future employers will want to see your skills and capabilities (YOU'LL HAVE TONNES!).

Start with your studies, volunteering, any groups you are part of.

Then make a list of all the things you do while caring, and think about how they can transfer into job skills. Note these as skills, or go into more detail about your caring role. Eg:

"Organisation: e.g., calling the pharmacy, booking appointments, knowing when things day-to-day need prioritising."

"Due to my role as a young adult carer, I often talk to health care professionals, support my family with their budget, and buy the weekly food shopping, I can manage my time, communicate confidently to professionals and take responsibility."

5. University support

What support is available to carers in higher education?

Some carers think their caring role will prevent them from going to university, even if higher education would help them meet their aspirations in education and work. This might be because of financial reasons, concerns about balancing studying with a caring role, or worrying about who would provide care in their absence if they wanted to move away.



STRESS



If you're balancing your studies with the responsibility of caring for another person, this can sometimes be challenging.

To help you manage this, many universities and colleges have put support in place specifically to help student with caring responsibilities.

This can include:



-  **Academic help** – this might be flexible deadlines, help with managing your workload, or priority access to academic or career opportunities (e.g. internships).
-  **Financial help** – some course providers offer bursaries and other financial support to student carers. You might be eligible for a scholarship, grant or bursary.
-  **Health and wellbeing support** – as well as support services on campus, some universities and colleges offer induction days over the summer to help you settle in and to give you the chance to discuss your support needs.
-  **Carer Passport** – some universities run the Carer Passport scheme, which means you won't have to share your story multiple times with different staff across the university. Find out more about the Carer Passport www.carerspassports.uk/mental-health/in-action/



Many people resist change, possibly because of the perceived risk or fear that change will not be beneficial in the end. Other people resist change because it's more comfortable and familiar to stay with what you know. But no matter how hard you fight it, change happens.

"Any transition is easier if you believe in yourself and your talent."
Priyanka Chopra



6. Tips for carers who want to go to University

TIP	INFO	HAVE A LOOK...
<p>Do your research</p>	<p>If you're thinking about applying to university or college, it's a good idea to find out what support they offer for carers before you make your final decision.</p> <p>Often, this information is provided on their website, sometimes on a student carers web page. You can contact student support services directly by email or telephone (their details will be available on the university's website) or visit them during open days to find out more about the academic and practical support they can offer.</p>	<p>https://tinyurl.com/yfstr7we</p> 
<p>Tell the university about your circumstances</p>	<p>Knowing a prospective student has caring responsibilities allows the university or college to put support in place. We recommend you do this as early as possible, however small or major your caring role may seem to you.</p> <p>There are several ways you can tell the Uni about your circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share if you have caring responsibilities in the 'More about me' section of the UCAS application – this is the quickest and easiest way. 2. With your permission, your referee can mention your circumstances in the reference. They can also make sure the university knows if your caring role has had any impact on your studies or exam results (e.g. through any absence). 3. You can also contact the university or college directly after you've received your offers or confirmed your place. 4. Knowing about your circumstances can help admissions staff take your achievements into account, and gain a better understanding of your potential in context. It will not reflect negatively on your application or academic ability, but instead will enable them to form a more complete picture of you as an individual, and your potential to succeed. 	

<p>Use your personal statement to highlight your strengths and skills</p>	<p>Your personal statement is a great place to highlight the skills, strengths, and positive attributes your caring responsibility has allowed you to develop.</p> <p>Read more about completing your personal statement or read more about advice for writing a personal statement as a carer specifically.</p>	<p>https://tinyurl.com/2zcmznnF</p> 
<p>Consider the practicalities and make plans before you go</p>	<p>Whether you're planning to live at home or move away, it's helpful to think about some of the more practical aspects. Some things to consider might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances – as well as applying for student finance, don't forget to check when you need to apply for any carers' bursaries or grants. Set aside some time to plan your budgeting, taking into account any costs for equipment, books, etc. you'll need, as well as your day-to-day living costs. • Travel plans – if you're planning to commute to university, think carefully about travel time at different points in the day, such as rush hour. Find out where you would need to park (if driving), or where the train station or bus stops are. If you're planning to move away from home, how you will move your belongings to your new accommodation? Remember to build all travel costs into your budget. • Work placements – if you're planning to take a course that requires work placements or off-site learning, it's a good idea to find out in advance when these are likely to take place — so you can make any necessary arrangements and update your caring arrangements, travel plans and budget accordingly. 	<p>Visit the Blackbullion website for some useful resources to help you get your finances in order.</p> <p>https://www.blackbullion.com/</p> 

“Your life is a story of transition. You are always leaving one chapter behind while moving on to the next.”
– Anonymous

7. Where can I get more help?

Surrey Young Carers (part of Action for Carers Surrey)

We're here for you! Call us on 01483 568269 or email syc@actionforcarers.org.uk

And read lots more on our website <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/who-we-help/young-carers-under-18/>

www.actionforcarers.org.uk – our website provides lots of information about being a young carer, different disabilities and illnesses and other support available to you and your family.

Anyone can call on 0303 040 1234 and speak to our Helpline for help and advice.

Additional help

- www.NSPCC 0800 111 111 – this helpline supports children who need help and support.
- www.kooth.com – an online wellbeing support network for young people..

Surrey Young Carers, part of Action for Carers Surrey

Call on us on **0303 040 1234**, option 3,

or email syc@actionforcarers.org.uk

www.actionforcarers.org.uk



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