

WHAT IS CARERS NSW?

Carers NSW is the peak non-government organisation for carers in NSW and a member of the National Network of Carers Associations. Our vision is an Australia that values and supports all carers. Carers NSW works with all carers regardless of their age, location, life-stage or circumstances. This includes those caring for individuals with support needs relating to ageing, disability, health and mental illness.

WHAT IS THE YOUNG CARER PROGRAM?

The Carers NSW Young Carer Program was developed to make a positive difference to the lives of young carers and their families. Our program acts as a central point of contact for young carers by offering over-the-phone information, referral and support.

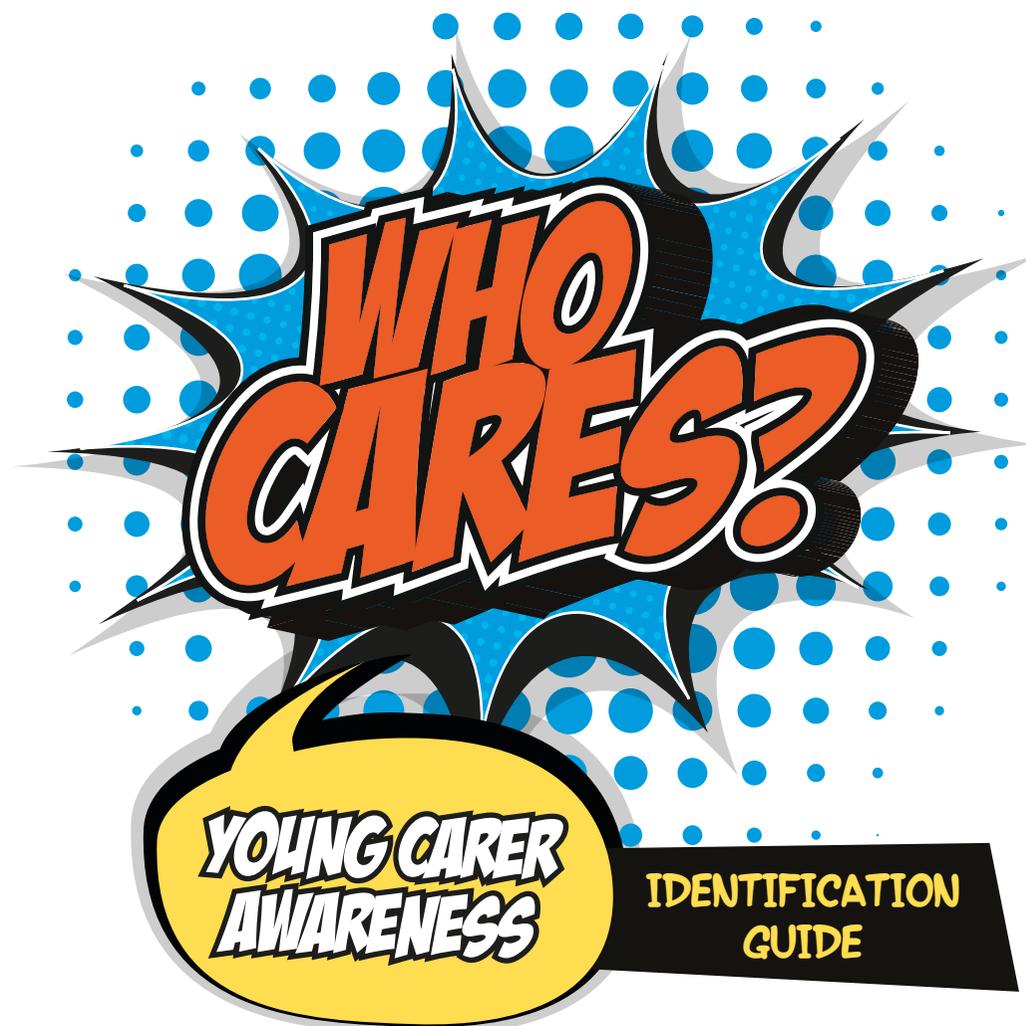
To register a young carer to our program, you can call [02 9280 4744](tel:0292804744) email yc@carersnsw.org.au or visit our website at www.youngcarersnsw.org.au

Important phone numbers to keep handy when supporting young carers might include those listed below, or write your own contacts in the spaces provided!

Carer Gateway - 1800 422 737

Lifeline - 13 11 14

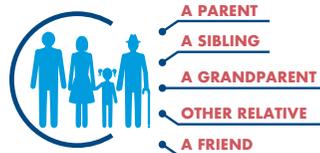
Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800



WHO ARE YOUNG CARERS AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

Young carers are children and young people, 25 years or under, who help to support a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, drug or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail.

The person they help care for may be...



Young carers may carry out various tasks in supporting a friend or relative including personal care, emotional support, household care and other responsibilities such as first aid, driving, interpreting or providing financial support.



WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS ON YOUNG CARERS?

Depending on their caring role, some young carers might feel the impacts of their additional responsibilities. These impacts might include feeling worried, anxious or stressed when they are away from the person they care for, having a higher risk of social isolation and stigma, being unable to participate in after school or weekend activities with friends or having interrupted or inadequate sleep.

LOOKING BEYOND THE BEHAVIOUR

It is important to look beyond the behaviours that a young person might be displaying to try to understand the deeper, underlying cause – especially if they might have a caring role. Some examples of this might include falling asleep in class, or not having completed their homework: for a young carer, this could be due to their caring commitments to a family member.



IDENTIFYING YOUNG CARERS

Can you identify the young carers in your classroom?

Am I able to help? Start the conversation and assess what support or referral is required. Ask the question and don't make assumptions.

Recommend an agreed plan.

Establish a support network.

Regular follow up and review as their caring situation may change.

The following tips have been prepared in collaboration with Carers NSW counsellors and Carer Support Officers. These conversations might need to be adapted depending on the age of the young carer.

TIPS:

- ✓ Maintain eye contact with the young person.
- ✓ Approach them discretely away from their peers.
- ✓ Have an adult conversation, where appropriate.
- ✓ Consult with the school counsellor, with the permission of the young person you're supporting.
- ✓ Explore and prepare some helpful resources and phone numbers to offer the young person following your conversation with them.

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

"Outside of school, how have things been for you?"

"I've noticed that you haven't been yourself lately, would you like to have a chat?"

"Is there someone at home or in your family who is needing some extra help at the moment?"

"Are you helping out more with housework at home lately?"

"What do you enjoy doing after school? Do you have enough time to do that activity during the week?"