

## Practical support for young carers in Northern Ireland

We work with schools, health services and local authorities to identify young carers, develop the right support, and raise awareness of their situation.

Our projects give young carers a break, helping them to learn, have fun and meet people. They allow them to balance their caring responsibilities with simply being a child or teenager.

### What we offer:

- | Fun activities that give young people a breather, including trampolining, crazy golf, climbing, movie nights, residential trips, arts and crafts, and more.
- | The chance to share experiences with people in a similar situation.
- | Group programmes that provide specific caring advice and tailored support, from looking after a sibling or parent, to caring for a person with a disability.
- | Groups that promote positive health and wellbeing, friendships, relationships, self-esteem and confidence.
- | A participation group that listens to the voices of young carers and influences change.
- | One-to-one support as required
- | Signposting on to other services

### Find out more

We accept referrals from family members, social workers, health professionals, teachers, voluntary sector professionals and young carers themselves.

For more information about the practical and emotional support we offer young carers, or to make a referral, please contact:

Action for Children Young Carers Service  
10 Heron Road  
Belfast  
BT3 9LE

Tel: 028 9046 0500 (and ask to speak to a member of the young carers team)

Email:  
NIYoungCarers@actionforchildren.org.uk

 @YoungCarersNI

### Are you a young carer?

Get in touch with us on Facebook (search 'YoungCarersNI') and one of the team will call you back. We know that every person's situation is different, and we will always offer support that is right for you, when you need it.



## Young Carers Service

In Belfast, South Eastern and Southern Trusts

Providing practical and emotional support for young carers



### **What is a young carer?**

A young carer is someone aged between 8 and 18 who looks after a member of their family, or a friend.

Young carers may care for a parent, sibling or relative who has a disability, mental health condition, long-term illness, drug or alcohol addiction.

The Action for Children Young Carers Service works with young people in the Belfast, South Eastern and Southern Trusts in Northern Ireland. Our job is to provide the practical and emotional support young carers need, when they need it.

### **What do young carers do?**

Being a young carer can be hard, and each person's responsibilities are different. A young carer may:

- | Listen to and keep the person they are caring for company.
- | Keep the person they care for safe.
- | Help with personal care and medication.
- | Care for siblings.
- | Do domestic chores, like shopping, cooking and housework.
- | Translate or use sign language.
- | Respond to challenging or unusual behaviour.

### **The impact on a young person's life**

The responsibility of caring for a loved one can affect a young person's education, friendships, physical health and emotional wellbeing. They may:

- | Feel stressed and worried.
- | Struggle to concentrate at school.
- | Feel tired, low and their health may suffer.
- | Miss out on time with friends.
- | Not get the attention they need from parents.
- | Feel lonely and isolated.

"I joined when I was 11. My dad suffers from severe epilepsy and various mental health problems. Action for Children has been amazing for just giving me the opportunity to make friends, have fun and talk if needed. They have made a massive difference in my life. I have learnt so much from various groups and will take these lessons with me into the future."

