



YOUNG CARERS

Toolkit for Professionals

The Lowry & Salford Young Carers Partnership Project



The Alarm Rings, You Take a Breath, Then it Starts

Sitting at the back of the bus, skipping the lunch queue and skiving lessons. At school Nicole, Jade and Connor are just like everybody else. But when they get home, things are very different.

Nicole started caring for her mum when she was four. Every morning Nicole helps her get washed, put on clothes and eat breakfast. Jade has always cared for her brother, but she never expected to look after dad as well - now she juggles two lots of appointments, two lots of prescriptions, two lots of assessment forms. Connor cares for his mum. But he doesn't like to talk about it.

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Introduction

Welcome to this toolkit for teachers and youth workers which has been developed as part of the Who Cares UK tour. This toolkit has been designed by young carers themselves to ensure it has the information they need you to know. This toolkit is designed to not only raise awareness of the issues surrounding young carers with young people, but also to challenge your understanding and knowledge.

About the play

Who Cares began in 2016 when The Lowry and Salford Young Carers Service commissioned a new production from LUNG that would shine a light on the untold stories of young carers in Salford.

It is estimated that there are more than 700,000 young carers in the UK. These are children and young people, aged 17 and under, who provide unpaid care to a family member because of a disability, illness, mental health condition, or a drug / alcohol addiction. These young people often manage a wide range of responsibilities from practical tasks like cooking, managing budgets and picking up prescriptions, through to providing personal care and emotional support for their families. What's more, they are often managing these responsibilities under the radar of professionals, schoolteachers and friends.

We know that many young carers are not aware there is support available to them. We wanted to commission a piece of theatre that would help young carers identify themselves, and help the adults and peers around them better understand the reality these young carers are facing.

We also wanted to give young carers a voice in front of the politicians and decision makers who can lobby for a change in policy so that there is more support for young carers across the country.

We spoke to LUNG, one of The Lowry's Associate Artist companies who specialise in verbatim theatre. This is a kind of theatre where actors use the actual words of real life people onstage. LUNG followed and interviewed a group of young carers in Salford for a year to build up a picture of their day to day lives. They also talked to teachers, politicians and the young carers' parents. Then they crafted that into a professional production, working with the young carers throughout to make sure that what was being seen onstage was honest, authentic and true to them.

Why is this important?

70% of young carers are hidden. This means that 70% of the young people with caring duties at home are completely unknown, with no support system or recognition for the work they do. Research indicates that being a young carer can seriously affect education, life opportunities, health and wellbeing. Therefore it is vital that we all take responsibility for being proactive in the identification of young people who may be carers.

Everyone can make a difference by being aware of the needs of young carers, referring potential carers and knowing where to signpost young people for additional support.

"I go to school everyday but nobody understands. Nobody knows what I have to put up with at home or at school. Most of all, the teachers don't understand what we have to do. It's hard, we know, but they don't!"*

*Excerpt from Everyday, a poem written by a young carers as part of the There's more than meets the Eye project.

How to use this resource

While this toolkit has been designed as part of the Who Cares Tour, it is a stand alone resource that can be used in youth and education settings that have not seen the production.

To ensure that the voices of young carers are still heard we have included links to videos that can be shown as part of a session with young people who have not seen Who Cares.

The first section contains facts and information that should give you a better understanding of the situation young carers are in.

The second section contains activities and plans for running sessions with young people. This should increase their understanding of what a young carer is and help anyone who may not know they are a young carer, begin to self-identify.

In the final section of the pack, you will find a set of case studies and other resources that you can use in conjunction with the activities.

There are two films referenced in the session plans, these are designed to be flexible, dependant on the needs of the participants. The films can be used individually or as part of the session plans and related tasks aimed at enabling a deeper exploration and understanding of the key issues.

Click on the links to navigate to each section or page. Session plans, activity sheets and case studies are designed to print off as handouts. Click on the films to play directly from this resource or copy the web links to play online.



For Facilitators

General Overview

This toolkit is designed to not only raise awareness of the issues surrounding young carers with young people but also to build your understanding and knowledge. Some of these pages have been designed so they can be printed out and used in public spaces for young people and teachers to view.

These are marked with 

The session plans are there for your guidance, you can use them all, part of them or look at developing your own. You know the group you will be working with, so use the materials as appropriate to ensure a safe space where everyone can participate.

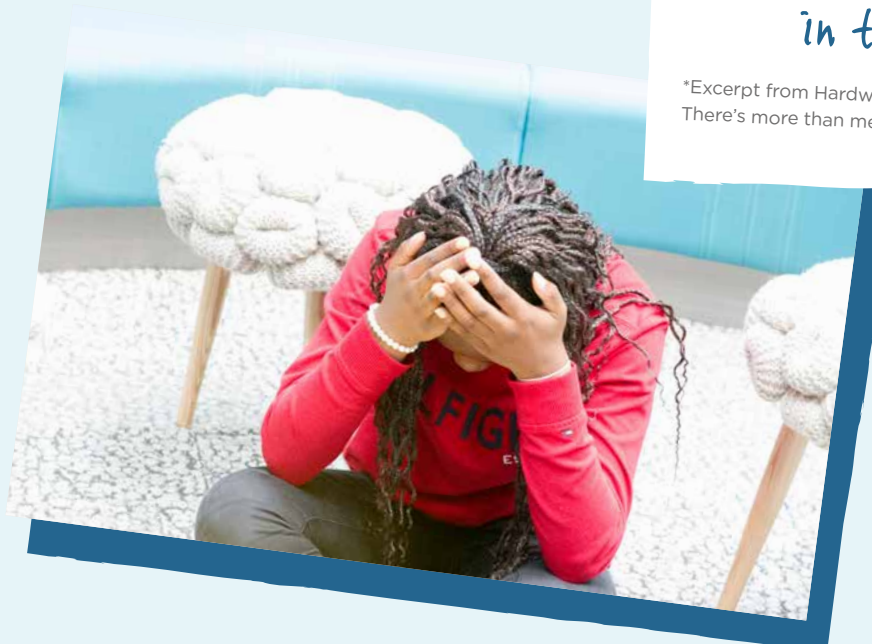
We have worked hard to make sure the session content is as accessible as possible, however for some young people, the content may be difficult and require one to one support and follow up. As part of the Who Cares tour we have set up a website (www.whocarestour.org.uk) that signposts directly to local young carers services for any young person you have concerns about. If any young person self identifies as a young carer as a result of the show or these sessions, please support them as needed to access external services but also services within your School or Youth Centre.

Should you need to seek further support for a young person following the sessions, please [click here for information](#).

We hope you enjoy using these resources and would appreciate any feedback you may have which will enable us to develop the site further. Like the partnership between the Lowry and Salford Young Carers, we see it as a long term venture which we hope will continue to develop.

"Tick, tock! Tick, tock! I look at the clock counting down the seconds as the time passed. RINGGGG! As soon as the bell rings I jump out of my seat and run out of school. I pant as I reach the pharmacy, collecting my mum and dad's medicine and rush back to my house. Who knows what awaits in the house for me."*

*Excerpt from Hardworking, a poem written by a young carer as part of the There's more than meets the Eye project.



WHAT IS A YOUNG CARER?

70% of
Young Carers
are hidden

70% of young carers are “hidden” or as young carers in Salford say either ignored or invisible, sometimes it’s hard to understand what a young carer is if it’s something that young person has done all their lives and feels normal.



WHAT IS A YOUNG CARER?

While there are many definitions of what a young carer is, each one is unique not only in their caring responsibilities but the impact it has on them too.

Here are 3 different definitions from different places:

Government

“Children and young people (under 18) who provide or intend to provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis”

Salford city council definition

“A young carer is a child or young person under 18 who provides regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.”

Salford young carers

“A young carer is a child or young people aged 17 and under who carries out significant caring tasks and assumes a level of responsibility for another person which would normally be taken by an adult.

The caring role they undertake has a major impact on their lives taking into account their age and family circumstances.”

Moving away from set definitions, what do young carers actually do and why?

Reasons for caring

An illness or disability stops a person caring for themselves.

Disability

(Physical, Learning Difficulties, Sensory)

Illness

(Serious, long term or terminal)

Substance misuse

(drugs, alcohol)

Mental wellbeing

Types of Caring

A young person may do one or more of any of the following, but it is about the impact it has on their lives and the fact they have to do it because of someone else's illness or disability, not just because they are asked i.e "look after your sister whilst I go to the shop".

The caring tasks may be viewed as inappropriate for someone that age and usually carried out by an adult or paid Health Care professional.

- » Domestic; cleaning, cooking, washing-up, washing clothes, ironing, shopping, looking after siblings alone, taking siblings to school, paying bills, repairs/gardening.
- » Emotional; motivating, keeping safe, spending time with, emotional support, making feel wanted and needed.
- » Personal; all aspects of dressing, washing, toileting, feeding, other tasks such as hair brushing, make up, shaving.

Being a young carer is nothing to be ashamed of, embarrassed about or scared of. It doesn't make your parents' bad parents, it just means they need help and support.

If you think you are
a carer stand up and be proud,
you are special



Did you know?

Being a carer has a serious impact on a young person's education and life opportunities and therefore has a long term effect on their physical and mental well-being, and ability to make a positive contribution to the communities they live in.

There are young people who use education as their escape with 100% attendance and a list of A*s & A/Bs. However the majority struggle, and we all have a responsibility to raise awareness by identifying the 70% of young carers who are hidden, helping them achieve to their potential and have the same life opportunities as their peers.

» The average age of a young carer is 12.5

» They can care for; mums, dads, guardians, siblings, grandparents, in some cases other family members/friends

» 25% are bullied in school solely because of their caring role

» On average 3 pupils in every class will have caring responsibilities at some level or other, in every school of 1,000 pupils there will be a minimum of 80 pupils as carers, over 8% of a school roll

» 35% of young carers miss school because of caring responsibilities which affects their education and long term futures

» 50% say they experience difficulties when they move to college and 16% face having to drop out

» Less than 50% felt they had good careers advice and 16% felt such advice never takes into account their caring role

"I want to glow again.
I want to laugh like this
is brand new again.
I want to smile like a
Cheshire cat again. I
want to hum like I am
on the West End again."*

*Except from Dear Happy, a poem written by a young carer as part of the There's more than meets the Eye project.

» 75% of young adult carers who got to college or university told people they were carers, but felt there was still no one there to recognise them and support them as carers

Remember while the numbers tell one story, young carers are individuals, and everyone of them has a different story to tell. The numbers are only part of that story.



SESSION 1

What is a young carer?



This session is designed to be a recap for those young people who have seen the show, or an introduction to what a young carer is for those who haven't.

When running this session with young people, it is very important to be aware of how they are responding. Some of the content may lead a young person to self-identify as a young carer and you should be prepared in this situation to support them and refer them as necessary.

More information can be found on Whocarestour.co.uk on local services.

Aims

- » Understand what a young carer is
- » Understand what definitions are used for

Ice breaker

Group Count

This is a low energy ice breaker to build focus within the group.

Inform the group that you are going to ask them to count to 10.

This is done by having one person say 'one', another person say 'two', and so on – you must also tell them that they can not go in order round the circle and they cannot discuss in advance who will say which number.

If two people say a number at the same time, the whole group must go back and start over again from 'one'.



Activity one

What is a young carer and what do they do?

Open the session by asking young people what the phrase Young Carer means to them, write their answer on the board or on a flip chart so they can see their answers.

Once you have as many as they can come up with, try and group them into appropriate areas.

For example, you might have personality traits, responsibilities, physical traits etc.

Use this to begin a discussion around the ideas we have in our heads of what a young carer might be versus the reality.



Activity two

Defining a young carer

Read out each of the definitions below of what a young carer is and discuss each of them using the questions below as a guide.

Government definition

"Children and young people (under 18) who provide or intend to provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis"

Salford City Council definition

"A young carer is a child or young person under 18 who provides regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances."

Salford Young Carers definition

"A young carer is a child or young people aged 17 and under who carries out significant caring tasks and assumes a level of responsibility for another person which would normally be taken by an adult.

The caring role they undertake has a major impact on their lives taking into account their age and family circumstances"

Guide discussion points and questions

- » What does this definition tell us about young carers?
- » Is this a good definition?
- » What is good about the definition?
- » What is missing?
- » When might this definition be helpful?
- » When might it be less helpful?
- » How does it differ from the other definitions?

Once all the definitions have been read out, ask them which they think is the best.


Ideal conversations to draw out

- » Why might a definition be needed? Does the government need a different definition to one that a young carer might use themselves?
- » Why are definitions important?
- » Is there one way to define a young carer?
- » What are some of the contexts in which a definition like this might be used?

Activity three

How do would you define a young carer?

Break the class into smaller groups and ask them to write their own definition of what a young carer is.

Print out pages **7, 8, 9** and **24** (marked ) of the toolkit that outline the definitions you have just read out, the reasons for caring and the types of caring, for them to use. Ask each group to share their definitions of a young carer and discuss the differences between them. If possible, try to find a place on the wall to display them until the next session.

Session close

Ask each young person to share one thing they have learnt during the session.

Remind the young people you are available to discuss anything further, or signpost them to whocarestour.org.uk for more information on local services.

SESSION 2

**We aren't different,
we just do
different things**

This session is framed around the film “We’re Not Different, We Just Do Different Things”, a film produced jointly produced by The Lowry and Salford Young Carers Service. It was created by Salford Young Carers to raise awareness of how life as a young carer affects education and school life.

bit.ly/2gHQ9gX

GO »

Aims

- » Build an understanding of the challenges faced by young carers every day.
- » Explore the complexities of being a young carer with multiple responsibilities.



Ice breaker

What are you doing?

An improvisation game to get the participants active and following instructions.

Everyone stands in a circle around one participant. This participant starts miming an activity. As soon as the activity is clear, another person from the circle steps into the circle and asks 'What are you doing?' to the person miming an activity.

The first player answers something that has nothing to do with what they are actually doing. E.g. if player 1 is cutting someone's hair, when asked what they are doing they might say; "I'm reading the newspaper".

First player moves away and the second player starts miming the activity stated by the previous player. A third player comes up to player 2, asks what they are doing and so on.

Play until everyone has mimed something and has answered the question.

Activity one

We aren't different, we just do different things

Give each young person a character to watch during the film, Josh, Lizzie or Ashley. Get them to watch closely for what the characters are doing but also what they might be feeling.

Hand out copies of worksheet 1 to each student to keep notes on through the film.

Play film and encourage young people to take notes to answer the questions as the film plays.

After the film ends group the young people into groups based on the character they were watching. Compare notes and discuss what they thought.

Each character group should present back their findings.

Key questions

These are a list of questions that can be used as stimulus for debate and conversation with groups who need more support

1. What jobs and responsibilities do Josh, Lizzie and Ashley have?
2. What shows that mum cares about her children?
3. How does being a young carer affect the 3 children? (At school, emotionally, physically, relationships?)
4. What do each of the children do to help them cope?
5. How could Joshua and his teacher have handled their conversation differently?
6. Why does Josh worry when he arrives home from school?
7. What do you think might be wrong with mum?
8. Are the family friends they meet in the park helpful?
9. Are they supported by their peers?
10. What is a young carer?
11. Do you think there are young carers in your school?
12. How might you be able to help someone who is a young carer?
13. Who might a young carer be able to speak to for support?

Activity two

Diamond of responsibility

Print out copies of the diamond (worksheet 2) and cut up each diamond (including the blank ones) and keep them as a pack. Each diamond represents a responsibility or activity a young carer might need or want to do.

Getting to school
on time

Doctors appointment

Going food shopping

Collecting medication

Finishing homework

Seeing friends

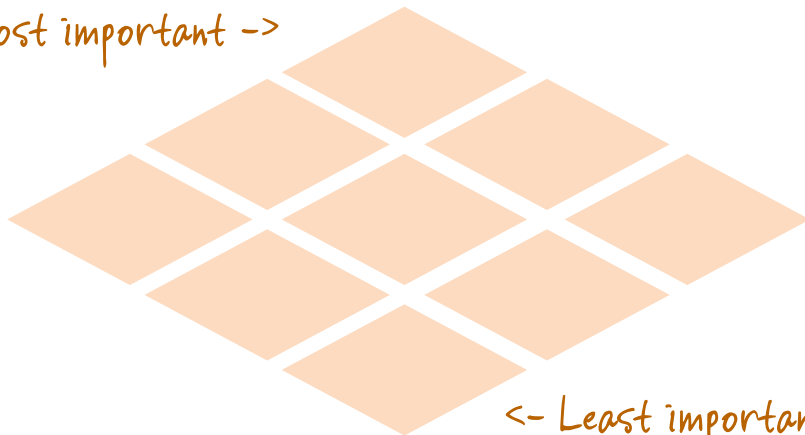
Paying the electric

Cooking dinner

Going to football

Mix the young people up to be in a new group and give each group a pack of diamonds then ask each group to build a diamond by ordering the most important tasks in a young carer's day. It should look something like this:

Most important ->



<- Least important

Remind the young people as they try and do it that there is no right or wrong answer.

- » What are the most important tasks in a day?
- » Could this vary day to day?

Once each group has completed the task go round as a class to look at the different layouts and ask each group to explain their reasonings and choices.

- » Why is that the most/least important?
- » How do you think a young carer might feel having to choose between X and Y?
- » Do you think this would be easy for a young person to manage?

Develop

If the group get on well with this activity ask them to use the spare blank diamonds to write other responsibilities they want to add into the diamond.



Activity three

Hot seating

Ask each group to create a character who is a young carer. They can make notes or just imagine this, but they will need to remember their character.

Ask them to think about the following:

- » How old are they?
- » What is their name?
- » What do they like doing? Hobbies?
- » Who do they live with?
- » Who do they care for?
- » Are they the sole carer?
- » What responsibilities do they have?
- » How does caring affect them?
- » What do they want to be/do when they leave school?

Set up a 'Hot Seat' facing the rest of the young people (the audience). The audience take turns to interview the character being hot-seated. The aim is to find out more about this character and how they feel. The facilitator will need to introduce each character and establish taking turns of questions and characters.

As a facilitator it is important to set the tone for the questions being asked, be sure to prepare the audience and remind them to keep the questions appropriate. Hot seating can be done as a whole group or in smaller groups.

When you are finished with hot seating, ask everyone to say goodbye to the chair that has been used as the hot seat. This should then be removed from the circle.

Session close

Each person in the circle mentions one other person to appreciate.

This could be something they were impressed by, something they learnt from that person or anything positive they want to recognise from the session. Each person can only be mentioned once and mention one other person so everyone gets mentioned.



SESSION 3

A caring community



*The me you don't see;
building empathy with
young carers*

This session is aimed at getting young people to understand the motivations and actions of young carers and to build empathy with young carers.

Aims

- » **To build empathy and understanding of the challenges a young carer faces and how that might make them feel.**
- » **Explore the multiple layers of young carers, understanding there is more to them than just their caring role.**

Ice breaker

Ask everyone in the room to stand up and create space on the floor.

Label one side of the room 100% and the other side of the room 0%, tell the young people you will be giving them facts and they have to guess at which percentage the answer is.

Example:

What percentage of people with access to the internet have a facebook account globally?

Ask them to place themselves on the 0-100% scale

Answer - **38%**

Questions to ask

What percentage of our DNA is shared with a banana? A: **50%**

And what about with a slug? A: **70%**

What percentage of young carers miss school because of their responsibilities? A: **35%**

What percentage of the world's population is under 25? A: **43%**

What percentage of the world is covered by water? A: **71%**

What percentage of young carers are bullied because of their caring role? A: **25%**

How much of the human body is made up of water? A: **60%**

Activity one

Who am I?

This activity is designed to help young people see the similarities and differences between them and a young carer.

Be aware of your audience, if you are aware of young carers in the room, ensure they are supported properly and do not disclose anything you may know about their caring role to the group.

Print copies of worksheet 3, two per student.

Ask each young person to fill in one copy according to the following:

- » **Head** - What kind of things do they think about?
This could be worries, concerns, hopes, dreams
- » **Hands** - What do they do to fill their time.
Jobs they do at home, hobbies etc.
- » **Space around the figure** - The challenges they face in their lives. This could be exams, losing a friend or relative.
- » **Heart** - How do they feel and what are the different emotions they experience.

Remind them that no one has to share what they write on their page, but are welcome to if they wish to. Discuss how they found the task and find out if there was anything they found particularly difficult?

Part two - Young carers' stories

Split the young people up into small groups of 2-4 and give each group a case study to look at from the annex at the back of the pack. Ask them to read the case study as a group, discuss the challenges the young carer in their story faces.

Each student should take the second copy of worksheet three and fill it out according to the young carer in their case study using the same parts of the body as before. For example the hands might be giving medication, the head might be thinking about school and they might be feeling overwhelmed.

Ask the groups to share the case study and their interpretation of what that young person might be going through.

Once all of the young people have shared, discuss the similarities and differences that they found between their own sheets and the sheets for the young carers.

Ideally you want them to see that while there are differences, there are also similarities such as; being stressed about school, worrying about someone they care about, wanting to go play football etc.

Activity two

Tell a story

In small groups read through a case study (this can be the same as the previous exercise or a different one) and ask them to share ideas on situations and scenarios that the young person in their story may find themselves in. Ask each group to share their ideas with the rest of the class.

Still images – these are frozen pictures of the scene or a moment in time. Like a photograph is being taken of that one moment. There are no words or movements.

Ask each group to create a still image or photograph of one of the situations they discussed. Look at each image in turn and facilitate a discussion around each with other groups analysing the image.

Develop this by asking the groups to create an additional 2 still images of the same scenario to tell the story of what is happening. When linking images together it may be helpful for a facilitator to give the cue; “image 1, image 2, image 3”.

Once all three images have been created, ask them to bring their images to life by turning them into a short scene, using dialogue and actions to tell the story of the young carer and the situation they are in.

Development

Thought Tracking or Inner Monologue

At any point the facilitator (or the group) can freeze the action by saying ‘pause’ or ‘freeze’ to ask the characters what they are thinking or feeling inside. The action continues when the facilitator says ‘play’.

Once all of the scenes have been shown, ask the group how they felt about the activity. Was there anything they learnt? Anything that surprised them?

Activity three

Letter writing

Ask the students to think about what they have learnt over the course of the session/sessions. What pieces of information might they want to share with another student who knows nothing about what a young carer is?

Ask for some examples and write them on the board.

Give each young person a piece of paper or a book and ask them to write a letter to someone who might not know what a young carer is or does. Explain to them who young carers are and the challenges they face. Encourage them to also share what they can do to support young carers in their school.

They can choose to read these letters out or keep them private.

At the end, ask them how they found the activity and what they have learnt through the session.

Session close

One thing I would say to a young carer...

Go round the group and ask everyone to say one thing they might say to a young carer. This should be an affirmation or piece of advice, try and be positive and uplifting.

As the facilitator you should start to set the tone for the rest of the responses.

SESSION 4

Invisible or ignored?



This session is aimed at young people aged 14+ and can be used as part of a politics or debate session, it has been designed to encourage dialogue around the practicalities of being a young carer and the challenges they face.

Aims

- » Explore systematic challenges Young Carers face
- » Encourage critical thinking using different sources for reference.
- » Develop skills vocalising the challenges facing young carers and sharing them.

Ice breaker

Giants, Wizards and Elves

This runs in the same way as rock, paper, scissors but using the whole body not just the hands.

Split the group in half and line them up facing each other. Demonstrate what each movement looks like, then, as a group they need to decide (quietly and secretly) whether to be a wizard, an elf or a giant. On the count of three the teams do their move, for best of 5.

- » Elf beats Giant
- » Giant beats Wizard
- » Wizard beats Elf

Giant - Stand tall with arms in the air

Wizard - Wands out

Elf - Crouch and hands on side of face for elf ears
(Sounds effects optional!)

Alternative Icebreaker

Ask the group to split into pairs, ask one member of the pair to form a fist, then ask their partner to try and open the fist. Give them one minute to attempt to open the fist.

You should find they all try to force their partner's hand open. Find out if anyone succeeded? How did they find the activity?

Ask if anyone asked their partners to open their hands?

This should form a talking point that will encourage them to start to think about using their voices to get things done and to change situations.

Activity one

Hear their voices

Split the group into pairs and hand out a case study to each pair. Ask them to read the case study through together looking out for different people who are involved in each story and write them in a list.

This should be anyone who might come into contact with that young carer as part of this story, if school is mentioned that could be teachers, school nurses etc.

Give each pair a copy of worksheet four, ask them to fill it out in relation to each of the people or groups of people they have listed.

Before beginning, an example might be:

- » **Who?** - GP
- » **What?** - They won't talk to Jeremy on his own.
- » **Why(barrier)?** - They think he is too young.

Once each pair has completed the task try and collate them onto a piece of flip chart or onto the board so everyone can see the list and the different barriers faced by young carers and professionals.



Activity two

Invisible or Ignored

Please note this film explore situations that might be upsetting for young people and adults so please view the film and assess suitability for your group before showing it.

The documentary was created in collaboration between The Lowry's Learning and Engagement team with Salford Young Carers. Invisible or Ignored is the result of many discussions with young carers in Salford about how they feel they are invisible or ignored by health professionals who provide healthcare for the people they care for.

Introduce the session as an opportunity for the participants to engage directly with the issues being faced by young carers and a chance for them to see how they can use their voices to support young carers in bringing about change.

bit.ly/2yWZZWD

GO »

Ask the group to watch the film. Give the group 2-3 minutes afterwards to write down their initial thoughts, feelings and reactions. Ask them to condense these into three key points they felt were the most important to come from the film. These points could be related to anything they feel stood out for them in the film, a challenge faced by young carers, challenges faced by nurses, opportunities for change etc.

Once they have completed this, ask them to turn to the person next to them, then in pairs discuss what they found and their top three points. Give them another three minutes to discuss, but they must condense their six points (three from each person) in to three again.

Once this has been completed ask them to join with a pair near them, they should repeat this until there are two large groups in the room, each with 3 points.

Ask each group to present one of their ideas at a time, alternating between the two groups. Push them to try and interrogate their ideas and ensure each time a point is explained they deliver a clear reason why they choose it as one of the top three most important points that came out of the film.

As a group discuss if the case studies and the documentary tell the same story. Encourage the participants to develop their thinking by asking "why?" and challenge where appropriate.

Key questions

These are a list of questions that can be used as stimulus for debate and conversation with groups who need more support.

1. Should a system be put in place that raises awareness of young carers with GPs and informs them which of their patients are young carers?
2. Should there be a responsibility on GPs and other health professionals to be proactive in the recognition of carers of all ages?
3. Do you think the health needs of young carers are ignored by the lack of recognition of the caring they do by health professionals?
4. If we expected them to act as adults in their role as carers at home why do we treat them as children in all other aspects of their caring roles?
5. Does the attitude of health professionals to young people have a negative effect on the health of young carers?
6. In order to make sure the most appropriate care is being offered to people within the community should young carers who are living alone with the person they care for, or are the main carer in a household, be exempt from issues of confidentiality relating to age and Doctor/Patient confidentiality?
7. Will the present system contribute to the carers of today becoming the cared for of the future and the deterioration of the physical & mental wellbeing of young carers?

Activity three

Get your voice heard

By this point in the session, the participants should have an understanding of the realities and challenges faced by young carers everyday. This activity is designed to get them thinking about the problems and developing ideas to solve them.

You can choose a scenario below or offer all three for the group to choose from:

1. **You have been invited to a conference** with a large group of people from a particular profession. You have 3 minutes to deliver a speech explaining the problems young carers face everyday.
2. **You are writing a letter** to someone you believe can affect change in this situation. Write your letter to be delivered directly to the person you choose.
3. **Design a creative campaign.** Use the information you have to design a campaign to get the attention of the people you think can affect this change.

As facilitator, you should encourage them to pick a group of people to address that they feel could affect the most change, it could be people from the list in activity one or it could another group (such as the government) that might not come into contact directly with young carers but could affect change.

In this activity you should encourage the group to consider:

- » Why is this group of people important to talk to?
- » What are the key issues they could affect change on?
- » Why should they do anything?
- » How are you going to persuade them?
- » If they only get one message across what would they want it to be?
- » Is there a call to action (a specific task you are asking people to do?)

This activity could be set for homework or for a long activity so the group have a chance to do some research to build their arguments. Once they have completed the task, they should have the opportunity to share with the group and for discussion around the key issues raised.

We would love to see what your students have come up with, please share anything using whocares@thelowry.com or, if appropriate, [#whocarestour](https://twitter.com/whocarestour) on twitter.

Session close

In a circle ask the group to say one thing they have learnt or had their perspectives changed on.

Ask someone to write down the things that are said and take a moment for reflection at the end to highlight the things learnt and why it's important.



Information Page

This page is for both professionals and young people.

If you want further information about issues relating to carers of all ages but in particular young carers and young adult carers check out the following web sites:

Think you may be a young carer but just want to chat with other young carers?



Who Cares Tour

www.WhoCaresTour.org.uk

The Who Cares website will be able to signpost you to services in your area which can offer you more help and support.



Carers Trust

www.carers.org

The Carers Trust will be able to link you into your local carers service who will be able to offer you more help and support.



Children's Society

www.childrenssociety.org.uk



GO »

Try Kooth

www.kooth.com



GO »

Try The Mix

www.themix.org.uk



Young carers in Schools award

If you work in a school, and wish to find out more information, or would like the opportunity to be awarded for your good practice in identifying and supporting young carers, visit the Young Carers in Schools website.

Young Carers in Schools is a free, England-wide initiative, run by Carers Trust and www.childrensociety.org.uk, and comprises a number of tools and resources, as well as the Young Carers in Schools Award.

One of the resources available is Supporting Young Carers in Schools: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff, which includes tools and exemplar materials on such topics as Raising the awareness of school staff about young carers, Raising the awareness of pupils and families about young carers, and Sharing good practice with others.



Arts Award

This toolkit and associated resources such as the schemes of work also link with the Art Award accreditation.

Arts Award is a range of unique qualifications that supports anyone aged up to 25 to grow as artists and arts leaders, inspiring them to connect with and take part in the wider arts world through taking challenges in an art form - from fashion to digital art, pottery to poetry.

Offered at five different levels, young people get to:

- » Discover the enjoyment of creating and participating in any art form
- » Develop their creativity and leadership skills learn new skills and share them with others get to work with or experience working with creative arts professionals
- » Gain experience and knowledge to progress into further education and employment

To achieve their Arts Award, young people take on challenges in an art form, participate in arts activities, experience arts events, get inspired by artists and share their arts skills with others. For more information please visit artsaward.org.uk



THANK YOU!

The Lowry

The Lowry opened on 28th April 2000, bringing together a wide variety of performing and visual arts under one roof.

Opening its door to the best in entertainment and education in the arts, The Lowry aims to give everyone access to new areas of creativity and to embrace its broad community.

The Lowry increases opportunities for social interaction within the community and generates a spirit of participation. Above all, it is an exciting and stimulating venue for education, recreation and creativity.



Salford Young Carers Service

Salford Young Carers Service and Young Adult Carers Service works with young people aged 24 and under who take on caring responsibilities for another family member.

We provide a mixture of services to ensure that all carers aged 24 and under have an opportunity to fulfil their full potential and have the same access to life opportunities that other young people have.

Salford Young Carers Service are managed by Gaddum, a well established health and social care charity based in Manchester



LUNG

LUNG is a national touring theatre company developing innovative and politically driven work that broadens horizons and investigates modern Britain.

They make work with communities, by communities and for communities. LUNG are Associate Artists at The Lowry.

Founded in Barnsley in 2012, LUNG also frequently perform and develop new work with The National Theatre Studio, Battersea Arts Centre and The Civic in Barnsley. They are dedicated to producing new verbatim theatre as well as collaborating with new writers. LUNG also pursues an extensive education programme which specializes in bringing theatre into new communities from Bradford to Battersea.

www.lungtheatre.co.uk

LUNG



This is our story, but there are many more. There are 700,000 young carers in the UK and loads who remain unidentified.

If you're a young carer, don't stay hidden.

Talk to someone. You don't have to do it alone.

Antonia, Ciaran, Kerry, Paige

The Oglesby Charitable Trust

The tour of Who Cares is being made possible thanks to the generous support of The Oglesby Charitable Trust.

Founded by Michael and Jean Oglesby, since the early 2000s the trust has supported over 300 charities through donations exceeding £10 million. The trust primarily supports activities in the North West of England, which benefit the well-being of the region and its people through a wide range of activities, particularly those which address root causes to drive real change.

We are delighted to be working with The Oglesby Charitable Trust on a project which will not only benefit children, young people and their families across Greater Manchester and the North West, but which will have a real impact on the lives of children up and down the country.



Curious Minds

Curious Minds has invested in 'Who Cares' through their Partnership Investment programme.

The purpose of this programme is to attract new sources of money that would not traditionally be spent on arts and culture for children and young people. It enables Curious Minds to make strategic investments that lever new sources of funding from public sources, private investors, trusts and foundations.



Toolkit Evaluation

Please fill in the following form at the end of the sessions about Young Carers. Please try and complete it as honestly as possible.

The information in this form will be used only in a very general way, you will not be named unless you are requesting support

Name:

1. What did I think of the sessions?

Please circle one **Excellent** **Good** **OK** **Poor**

2. Was the tool kit useful?

Please circle one **Yes** **No**

Comments:

3. The best bit of the sessions was:

4. I now understand the issues for young carers?

Please circle one **Yes** **No**

Some of the issues that affect them are:

5. If I was a young carer I would feel:

6. If I thought a friend was a young carer what would I do?

7. I live with the following people:

- ☐ **Mother**
- ☐ **Father**
- ☐ **Brother(s)** How many? _____
- ☐ **Sister(s)** How many? _____
- ☐ **Carer**

8. Which statement is true?

- ☐ **All my family are well**
- ☐ **Someone in my family is ill/disabled**
- ☐ **Someone in my family is ill/disabled and I have to help care for them**

9. If you ticked statement 2 or 3 please tick one of the following statements

- ☐ **I would like to talk to someone on my own about my situation**
- ☐ **I do not want to talk to anyone about my situation**

Additional comments

Worksheet 1

Character name:

Role:

Age:



What caring roles does the character undertake?

What things in their life are affected by their caring role?

What challenges does your character face?

What kind of feelings do you think your character is experiencing?

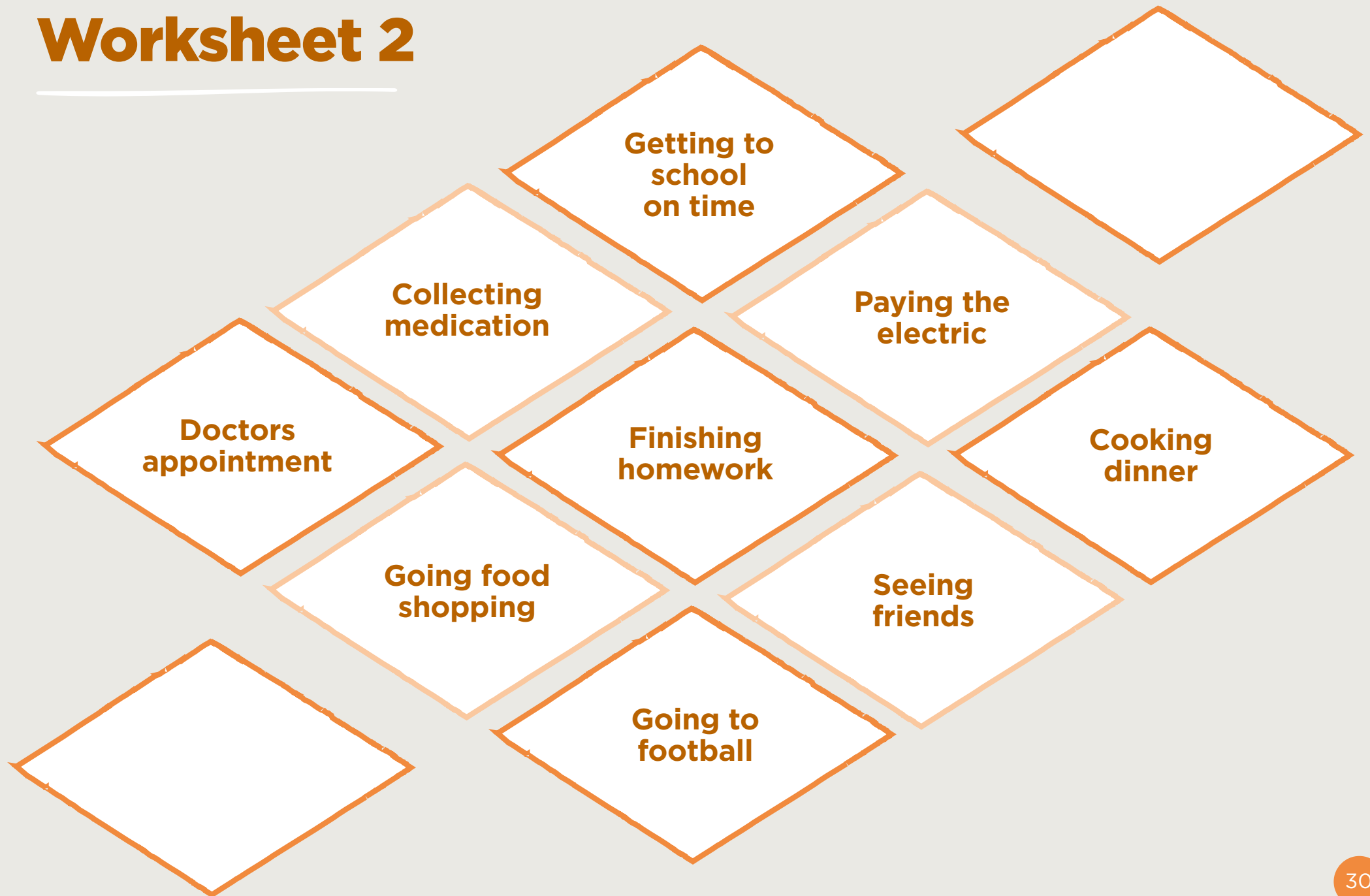
What impact do other characters in the film have for your character?

What kind of things does your character do to cope with the situation?

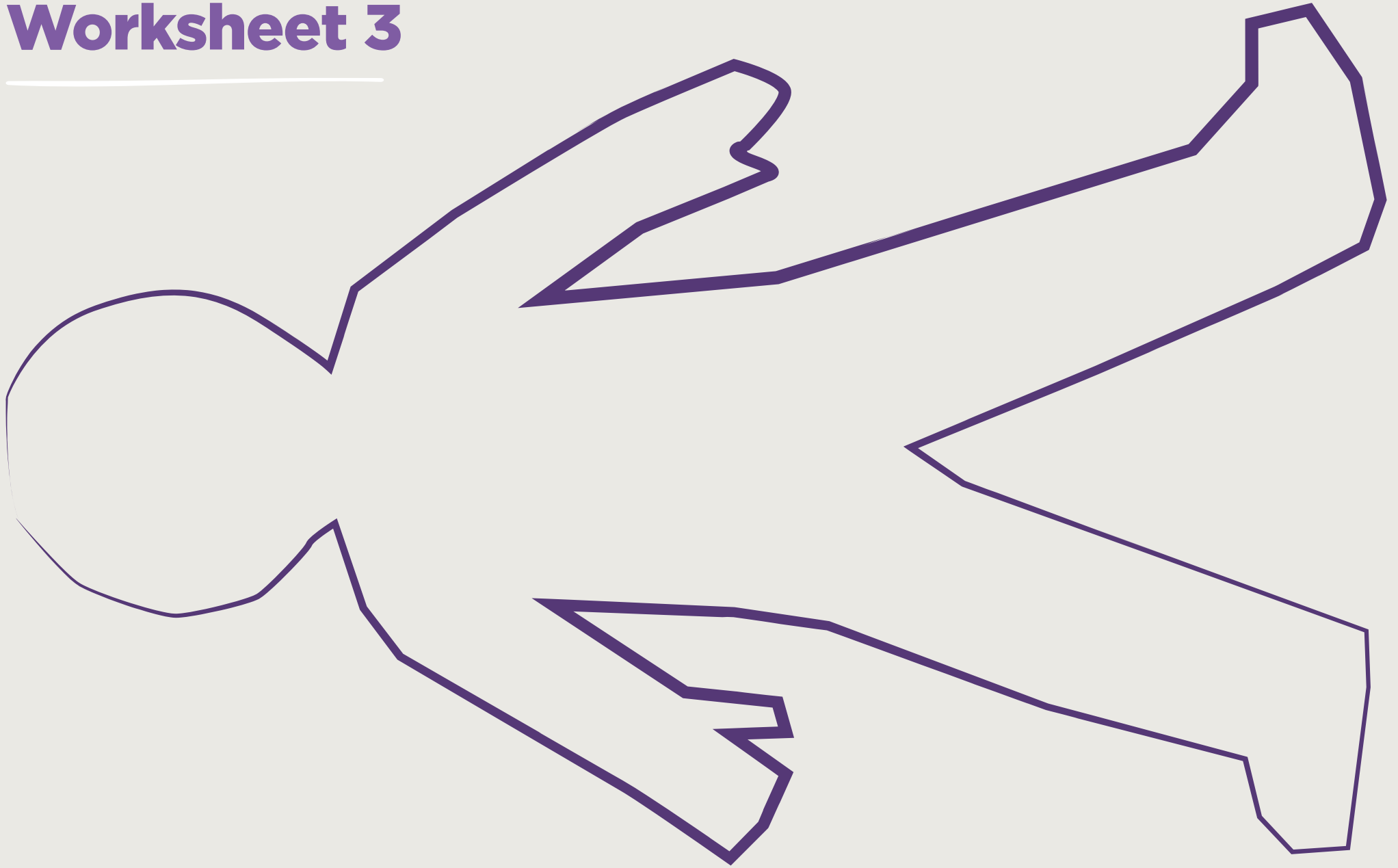
Are they supported by their peers?

Do you think their mum cares about them? Why?

Worksheet 2



Worksheet 3



Worksheet 4

WHO	WHAT? PROBLEM?	BARRIER
GP	Won't see young people on their own They think they are too young.	Receptionists block access.

VOICES FROM YOUNG CARERS



Sally's story....

Sally is aged 6, she lives alone with her mother who is very ill and Sally is the only person who cares for her.

She has to help her mother with the cleaning and cooking and has to make sure her mother takes her medication as she often forgets and when she does, she is in a lot of pain.

Sally does not know what is wrong with her mother as no one will tell her, just that she is very ill.

She can stay behind at school for "After School Clubs" and has few friends where she lives, often she is late for school as she needs to make sure her mother is ok, and often she will be dressed in scruffy/dirty cloths as her mother has been too ill to do the washing. The other pupils in class notice this and start to bully her both for her appearance and because she needs to look after her mother.

One day she refuses to go to school

Max's story...

Max is 8 and he lives with his mother, father and sister. His dad is profoundly deaf and his sister has a serious learning disability.

His mother works full time to support the family and she is often very tired when she returns home from work.

Max is a very clever young man who is very good at sign language and he will often have to interpret for his father when his mother is not around and has to manage his sister's behaviour and look out for her having possible fits as his father cannot hear what is happening.

Max's father gets very frustrated by it all as he feels he should be looking after his son and daughter and not Max looking after him. Because of this he can have angry outbursts.

Max is getting remorselessly bullied at school because of his sister's disabilities but does not feel he can tell his father as it might really upset him and he will not tell his mother as he feels sorry for her because she is always tired.

Max has no friends and is a very lonely young person.

George's story...

George is 8 years old he lives on his own with his mother because his father died 5 years ago; he can just remember his father and misses him very much.

He is frightened that he will lose his mother. His mother has serious mental health problems coupled with the fact she misuses alcohol and has been using cannabis and other drugs for a long time. She has had opportunities and the support to stop, but never has.

George's mother keeps him off school to look after her if she feels depressed or suicidal as she will not do anything if he is at home. She tells the school George is ill and George will lie for her because he does not want her to get into trouble or to be taken away from her.

As his school attendance has fallen to below 50% Social Workers are now involved.

Ashley's story...

Ashley is 15 years old and lives on her own with her mother. Her mother is an alcoholic and Ashley knows this is an illness and not out of choice but she still gets angry with her mother, who has tried and failed to stop a few times.

Ashley never knows what she will wake up to or return home to-has mum been drinking? Is the house a mess? Has she been sick? Will Ashley have to clean her up again?

This all Ashley can remember and she tries everything to be supportive as she loves her mum. She has even taken over managing the money so she can make sure the bills are paid and the shopping gets done

She has no friends as she is frightened that others will find out about her mother and laugh at her. She is struggling at school as she finds it hard to concentrate because she is worrying about her mother all the time.

Ashley loves her mother, but is starting to get angry with her life. She does not know if her mother loves her and is very sad and lonely.

Gareth's story...

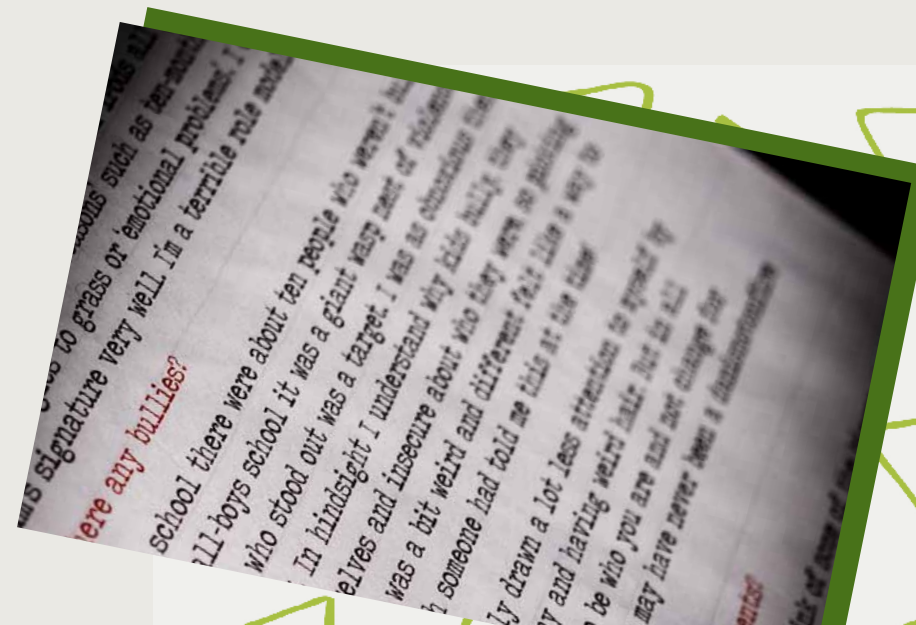
Gareth is 13 and lives with his mother and two younger brothers. His mother has a mental health condition called Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).

For her it means she is obsessively tidy and clean and likes everything in exactly the right place. This is very hard to achieve when Gareth's 2 younger brothers are aged 7 & 9. When his mother is ill, she will spend days cleaning and tiring herself out, she will also run the risk of hurting herself by her endless use of bleach damaging her hands. She will also get very frustrated and sometimes angry with her sons if things are out of place.

Gareth has never known life to be different, his father left when he was 7, because he could not put up with it any more. So since then, he has been the main carer in the house. When his mother is ill, Gareth will get his brothers up and ready for school, he then takes them and picks them up when school has finished. He will also do the shopping and cooking.

He gets to school late, often fails to do homework and gets into trouble but he will not talk to anyone about it as he is scared they will take him and his brothers away from his mother.

His class teacher has noticed he is getting very stressed easily and looks very depressed most of the time.



Stella's story...

Stella is 13 years old and she lives on her own with her mother who has Multiple Sclerosis. This is a physical disability caused by neurological problems, which cause issues with mobility, balance, tiredness, vision and nerve spasms.

Stella's mother has it very bad and needs support in getting from place to place and with her personal care such as washing, going to the toilet and dressing.

Her mother has a carer who comes to help get her up in the mornings and at night, will sometimes shower her before she gets her to bed. But this is an issue for both Stella and her mother as the carer never comes when mum wants to get up or go to bed and she would like daily showers, not every 3 days. They have been told that Stella's mother cannot have an improved care support package.

As well as doing the shopping, cleaning and cooking most of the time, Stella also has to help her mother go to the toilet if the carer is not there, and will help mum in and out of bed when she wants rather than just when the carer is there. She also helps her mother shower in the wet room every night if the carer is not coming. They don't blame the carer, but are really annoyed they cannot get any more help.

Although the school knows her mother is disabled, no-one has ever talked to her about it or asked if she needs any support.

She has one really good friend that she can talk to, but that's it and she is now getting very tired and has a bad back herself from all the lifting.

Jeremy's story...

Jeremy is 14 years old and has had to care for his mother since the age of 6. He lives with his mother and two older siblings but they say they cannot help with the caring as they have to go to work and college. Jeremy feels his education does not matter.

He cares for his mother as she has severe arthritis which affects all the joints in her arms and legs, making mobility and lifting/carrying very difficult and painful. He also has to help his mum dress especially when it is cold, which makes her arthritis worse.

To help he does all the shopping, most of the cleaning and also has to make sure his mother takes her medication as she will forget.

One of the issues Jeremy faces as a carer is his own health. Because of his age, his mother has to attend the drs or any hospital appointments he has, yet due to his mother's condition she can quite often be too ill to go with him so his own health suffers. Also he would like to discuss in private how his mental well-being is suffering as he prepares for GCSEs and still has the pressure as a carer, but has been told his mother must attend with him. He does not want his mum to know he is struggling to balance school and caring, so has not made an appointment.

Now his work is suffering and he is getting frustrated and depressed about the situation.

Helen's story...

Helen is aged 15 and loves Irish dancing but has no time to really do it, or go out with friends or in fact to do anything that does not involve her family.

She has a 6 year old sister who is physically disabled and has very poor mobility needing to use, on a good day, 2 walking sticks, but the rest of the time needs a wheelchair.

Helen has taken on the role of her sister's main carer, helping her dress, wash and making sure she gets her breakfast before going to school and her tea in the evenings. She loves her sister and loves caring for her, but is starting to get angry about it all as she has no life of her own and is beginning to see how being her sister's carer has affected her friendships and her school work. She is scared she will fail all her exams.

She also lives with her mother and father and is always told they love her and they always say thank you for what she does, but although she loves them, she is beginning to hate the situation. She has to care for her sister as her mother is addicted to prescription drugs and cannabis and her father spends all his time smoking cannabis and has severe depression and suicidal feelings. They are no help at all in caring for her sister but she knows if she tells anyone, they might take her sister away.

As well as caring for her sister she needs to keep all the medication and sharp knives locked up, and manages the money to make sure there is enough for food and bills

Joel's story...

Joel is 16 and cares for his father who has auto immune disease; this is when your body's immune system attacks healthy cells in your body by mistake.

Symptoms are fatigue, muscle aches, fever, inflammation, which can cause redness, heat, pain and swelling. Joel's dad's type leads to flare-ups, and severe swelling of joints which stop him doing any personal care or domestic tasks. Joel's mother is the main carer, but can get very tired so Joel often helps out and always puts his father in front of other activities.

He will miss college because he helps his mother take his father to hospital appointments, and when his father is very unwell, he keeps an eye on him if his mother needs to do other things.

He loves his dad a great deal, but he does not understand what the matter with him is, and what the future is for his father, will he die because of the illness?

He gets very worried and upset.

Gwendolyn's story...

Gwendolyn is 12 and has cared for her mother, who has depression and her brother who has a learning disability, autism, and ADHD. A lot of the time she finds herself balancing the emotional needs of her mother and the constant attention that her brother needs, she has very little time for her own studies or hobbies.

Because of her depression, her mother hardly ever leaves the house so it is up to Gwendolyn to collect the medication from the pharmacist. However due to her age the pharmacist will not allow her to do this, which often means both her brother and her mother will run out of medication. This leads to deterioration in their conditions and an increase in the caring pressure on Gwendolyn. She has taken a note to the pharmacy and tried to explain the situation, but they will not change their minds.

Gwendolyn can only resolve the situation by trying to get her father, who left them 3 years ago, to collect the prescriptions, but he is not always happy to do so.

Bella's story...

Bella lives with her mother and father. She is 14. Her mother works and has to do shifts.

Both Bella and her mother care for Bella's father who has severe bronchitis and has to use oxygen tanks, has a complex heart condition and also suffers from mobility/balance problems. When Bella is the main carer for her father she will not only be emotionally supporting him, but will also help him up and down the stairs if needed so he can get to the toilet, will help him dress and sometimes wash.

Sometimes when her mother is working she will go with her father to his appointments at the drs or the hospital. They all recognise her as a carer and allow her to sit in the discussions with her father so she knows what is happening, what is wrong with her father and how best to care for him.

They also give her the prescriptions to take to the pharmacy, although the pharmacy does not allow her to collect the medication.

