

# THEY CARE DO YOU?

Believe in  
children



Barnardo's  
Northern Ireland



DU DANCE (NI)

## Who are Young Carers?

Young people aged up to 18 years who provide significant care for a family member or friend and whose health or development may be affected due to the caring role.

## How do they care?

Practical tasks. Physical care. Personal care. Emotional support. Household management. Looking after siblings. Interpretation. Administering medications.

## Impact of caring?

- **Physically** – lack of sleep, poor diet, heavy lifting, stress (presenting physically).
- **Emotionally** – lonely, not understood, mental ill health, different.
- **Socially** – isolated, bullied, harassed, limited social opportunities.
- **Educationally** – missed school time, unable to concentrate, lower educational outcomes.
- **Environmentally** – unpredictable, changing and/or traumatic home life.

WHAT QUESTIONS, FIND OUT  
WHAT THEY SAY WOULD HELP.

ACCESS TO PHONES  
IN CASE OF NEED  
AT HOME

SOMEONE TO  
TALK TO

## Recommendations for a school's Young Carer Policy

The whole school is committed to meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and have equal access to education.

### OTHER STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND

**29% of young carers  
aged 16 years  
have never told anyone  
outside their family  
about their caring  
responsibilities**

(ARK Research update  
Number 76, June 2011)

To understand the issues faced by young carers, what to look and listen for and how to respond, the school will:

- Designate a member of staff to be the young carers champion:
  - to improve their wellbeing, attainment and attendance;
  - to seek feedback and ideas from young carers and their families; and
  - to ensure a young carer's/family's privacy is respected and information about them or their caring role is not communicated in front of their peers.
- View young carers as any other pupil but understand that they have the additional pressure of caring undertakings.
- Have a strong partnership with appropriate local support agencies and share information strictly on a need-to-know basis.
- Identify young carers at risk of falling into the NEET category and take appropriate actions to address this.
- Offer flexibility regarding detentions to accommodate the young carers other responsibilities.
- Allow young carers to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunch times so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member.
- Where appropriate, negotiate deadlines e.g. for homework and coursework.
- Reflect on how effectively the school identifies and supports young carers.

### SUPPORT GROUP, MENTORING OR COUNSELLING

# FILMS ON USB

## Film 1: **Who Do You See** (5:58)

Filmed at St Congall's School and Conway Mill, Belfast and The Holystone, Doagh.  
With Young Carers aged 11–18 years from Greater Belfast.

## Film 2: **Split Down The Middle** (5:19)

Filmed at Echo Echo Studio and on the streets of Derry, and at Lisfannon Beach.  
With Young Carers aged 12–18 years from Derry/L'derry.

## Film 3: **The People I Know** (5:48)

Filmed at the Braid, People's Park and Eco Centre, Ballymena, and at Ballintoy Harbour.  
With Young Carers 8–13 years from County Antrim.

## Film 4: **Through Our Eyes** (6:29)

Filmed at Slieve Gallion, The Jungle NI, Ballyronan Beach and Magherafelt town centre.  
With Young Carers aged 9–16 years from Mid-Ulster.

## Film 5: **Imagine** (6:40)

Filmed at Devenish Island and Fivemiletown College, County Fermanagh.  
With Young Carers aged 9–13 years from County Fermanagh.

## Film 6: **Do You Care** (4:44)

Filmed on the streets of Belfast and at Belvoir Park Forest.  
With Young Carers aged 12–16 years from Greater Belfast, Mid-Ulster  
and County Fermanagh.

**In respect of the young carers we request that you do not show a film that relates to your area where pupils may know the young carers involved.**

**Late handing in work or struggling to complete.  
Missing days from school.**

## Film 1: **Who Do You See** Poem by Lauren

Turn around. Who do you see?

Do you know what we're going through?

Emotions aren't as transparent as you believe

Pressures – grades, friendships, appearance – worries we all have

That can be overwhelming for anyone

Imagine having more than that

Being responsible for a life other than your own

Instead of walking out of the school gates with a sigh of relief, your feet drag along the ground,

(as though) weighted – guilty for feeling this way about someone you love.

There are times when you have to lie about what you're doing to your friends, because even if somebody assures that they understand, the feeling of isolation is just as strong.

Changing plans because you're too exhausted, or worried about what will happen when you're not at home, where this person needs you.

## Selection of words used in Films 2, 3 & 4

Tired / Sad / Depressed / Angry / Loved / Happy / Positive / Excited / Stressed / Frustrated / Concerned  
Isolated / Down / Emotional / Trapped / Lonely / Anxious / Calm / Hopeful

## Film 5: **Imagine** Text by Maire Campbell

Sometimes I imagine that life is like running through a field. With your mates. Free. Running free.

No cares. No worries. Imagine.

But sometimes, I feel like I am being covered with water. Like the water is ...

... all around me. Like I can't get out. It's as if this water is holding me down,  
but keeping me up at the same time.

What if I told my friends? What would happen.

## Film 6: **Do You Care** Rap by Jay Suttin

Lemme tell ye bout the life I lead

Sometimes I smile thru gritted teeth

Sometimes I cry, Sometimes I'll weep n plead for a good  
night's sleep

Sometimes inside it's like I'm swimming but the tides  
against me

My friends make castles with the sand sometimes I'm  
green with envy

Can't make plans like they do

I can't be so free and easy

I Got things that I got to do

Loved ones at home that need me

And I'm proud to be there believe me

I just want them to see me

I just want you to know what I go thru

If for one day you could be me

Because I'm up early late to bed

A hundred and one things in my head

A hundred and two things left to do

Got a list so long never reach the end

But it's ok cos I got this

Just sometimes feels like a lot

Just sometimes when I been stewing

feels like a lot going on in the pot

Thoughts chase me round and round

Roller coaster ups and down

Stress been bestest friend so long

I still miss him even when he's not around

But it's all good cos we got this

Just sometimes feels like a lot

Just sometimes feels if let it all drop or I fall then I  
wouldn't get caught

Sometimes I think

When I'm feeling low

I sit and think

Do you know

What I go thru

Just to be here

And If you knew

Then would you care

**Low confidence and self esteem.**

**Difficulty concentrating in class, distracted.**

# ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES ARE BASED ON A CLASS OF APPROXIMATELY 35 MINUTES

## Theme: **Anxiety**

Class stand on the spot, tall and still. Teacher turns over an action card. Class responds by doing the action. Repeating until the next card is turned over. Teacher turns cards over and back getting faster each time. (20 mins)

Add to the stress level by giving the pupils a random paragraph of written text to read aloud. This might be in the form of a nursery rhyme or academic text. Repeat the above exercise with the class trying to read the given text at the same time.

**Discuss:** How did this feel? Did you have difficulty doing both things well?

Young carers have many responsibilities, this can cause stress and anxiety.

What responsibilities do you think they may have? (10 mins)

Finish the class with everyone taking several deep breaths. Counting length of breath in and out and increasing the length each time. (5 mins)

## Theme: **Do You Care**

True or False – Teacher creates five statements taken from the postcard in the pack, add a few false statements to this. Pupils stand if they think the statement is true or sit if they think the statement is false, or move to different sides of the classroom. Reveal the answer and open a small discussion on the fact. Repeat with different statements. (20 mins)

Eg. True or False – There is estimated to be 5,000 Young Carers in Northern Ireland.

FALSE – there are approximately 30,000.

**Discuss:** After all questions are done – what facts shocked/surprised you and why is it important to know the facts. (15 mins)

## Theme: **Isolation**

Choose one person to stand blind folded in the middle of the room. Class forms a big circle around them. Class all talk, whisper, laugh, saying anything randomly. Teacher indicates one or two to cross the circle, getting closer to the blindfolded person without touching them. Vary speed and proximity of crossing. Repeat changing the person in the middle. Do not leave one child in the middle for too long. (10 mins)

Half the class blindfolded/eyes closed (agreement not to cheat), they don't move from the spot. Other half move around them talking and whispering. (Must not physically touch anyone). Swap roles with the other part of the class now blindfolded. How did it feel to know something is happening but not to be a part of it? (10 mins)

**Discuss:** How did it feel? Carers are often isolated and have difficulties making friends as they can't meet out of school or bring people home. How could you help them feel less isolated? (15 mins)

**Bullying – young carers are often very quiet and at the back.  
Difficulties attending extra curriculum activities.**



## Theme: **Emotions**

Split the class into groups of four or five. Give each group an emotion from the list below. Group discuss the emotion and create a Freeze-frame photo to represent this emotion and decide what may have happened to cause it. (15 mins)

Each group demonstrates their photo to the class, the class guess what the emotion could be/what is happening in the photo. (5 mins)

Happy / Sad / Tired / Frustrated / Stressed / Isolated / Trapped / Concerned / Hopeful / Angry etc.

**Discuss:** From looking at a film discuss the words used by Young Carers and why they might feel this way. (15 mins)

## Theme: **Affirmed**

DO YOU KNOW THAT ...

Affirmation podium – One student sits on a chair at the front of the class. Five students read from the affirmation sheets given by the teacher. Use affirmations such as:

- I can count on you
- You are reliable/dependable
- You don't complain when things need to be done
- You are never mean to me
- You never make me feel guilty
- I wish people knew how tough it is for you
- I know I can ask you to help
- I'm sorry that I depend on you so much
- You are so unselfish
- You give up so much for my benefit

**Discuss:** How did it feel to have these nice things said to you?

Ask for another volunteer to sit on the affirmation podium. Cut out the above suggestions and the pupils choose which one to use. Repeat 3 or 4 times with different volunteers. (20 mins)

The above affirmations are taken from parents of young carers. Look at a film (8 mins). After looking at a film discuss why there is often two parallel emotions for young carers.

Pride / Trapped / Frustrated / Guilty / Happy / Angry etc.

What positive attributes do you think a Young Carer may have?

Empathy / Dependability / Sympathy / Understanding etc. (7 mins)

**Worry about finance and cost of living.  
Strong empathy – mature quickly.**

TEACHERS TO  
UNDERSTAND AND BE  
FLEXIBLE IF ISSUES ARISE

# WE CARE THAT YOU CARE

## **DU Dance (NI)**

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## **Barnardo's Young Carers Service**

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