

Who is a Young Carer?

A young carer is a person under the age of 18 who regularly provides emotional and/or practical support/care for a family member who:

- Has disabilities or experiences difficulty completing daily tasks;
- Experiences physical or mental health challenges;
- Experiences difficulties with substances.

What are considered caring responsibilities?

Physical Care

- Helping with personal hygiene (bathing, dressing, toileting);
- Assisting with mobility;
- Administering medication or medical treatment;
- Doing chores such as cooking, cleaning, laundry.

Emotional Support

- Providing companionship and emotional support;
- Offering reassurance/comfort during difficult times.

Practical Assistance

- Managing household budgets and finances;
- Shopping for groceries and other essentials;
- Co-ordinating medical appointments or other necessary arrangements.

Sibling and Family Care

- Looking after siblings (preparing meals, helping with homework);
- Supporting the household to run smoothly.

**Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.*

How do I know if a young carer I know needs Wellbeing Support for their caring role?

Consider if a young person is experiencing any of the following because of their caring role:

Emotional and mental health

- Stress, anxiety, depression etc ;
- Behavioral changes such as withdrawal, aggression, mood changes;

- Difficulty coping with emotional demand of caring;
- Missing out on connecting with peer group e.g. not attending social events;
- Limited social interactions and friendships;
- Isolation from peers;
- Difficult engaging in normal childhood activities;
- Taking on more responsibilities than they can manage;
- Expressing feelings of being overwhelmed or being unable to cope;
- Emotional distress e.g. stress anxiety and other emotional difficulties.

Educational Impact

- Frequent absences or lateness to school;
- Decline in academic performance;
- Lack of concentration or falling asleep in class;
- Missing out on extracurricular activities.

Physical Health

- Physical exhaustion or signs of self-neglect e.g. poor hygiene);
- Reoccurring physical ailments due to stress, exhaustion or overexertion;
- Limited opportunities for rest and/or play.

**Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.*

Do I need to tell the young carer that I have referred them for Wellbeing Support?

It is encouraged that you speak with the young person about Wellbeing Support and discuss your observations and/or concerns about their wellbeing with them. It is also advised that a young carer is supported to understand what Wellbeing Support is, and how Wellbeing support can help them.

Who is eligible to receive Young Carer Wellbeing Support?

- **Registered with Carers in Bedfordshire;**
- **A resident of Bedford, Bedfordshire;**
- A young carer aged 4 to 17 years old;
- Family is dependent support for young carer to help a loved one function or support household;
- Caring role is impacting the young person's health, wellbeing and development;
- Caring role is impacting the young person's emotional and physical wellbeing, and/or their wellbeing at school;
- Young person is not receiving any current/ongoing support for their wellbeing.

How do I know whether Wellbeing support or counseling support is needed for a young carer?

Wellbeing	Counselling
Struggling with mild to moderate level anxiety, low mood, guilt and stress	Struggling with long term psychological issues, i.e. trauma, mental health which are not managed correctly
Low levels of suicidal ideation (i.e. often wanting to end life but no plans or infrequent suicidal thoughts)	High levels of suicidal ideation (i.e. plans to end life, extremely frequent suicidal ideation)
Short-term support (6-10 sessions).	Varied

**If a carer is experiencing mild to moderate levels of low wellbeing AND is also struggling with trauma, it is best to explore both options.*