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## What is this briefing about?

The briefing provides information on Young Carers and their needs.

### Who Are Young Carers?

A young carer is a person under 18 who provides care, assistance, or support to a family member who is ill, disabled, experiencing mental health difficulties, or affected by substance misuse.

Caring roles may include:

- Personal care (washing, dressing, lifting)
- Managing medication
- Household tasks (shopping, cleaning, cooking)
- Emotional support
- Translating or interpreting

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## Why Do Young Carers Matter?

Young carers often:

- Miss school or struggle with attendance
- Experience stress, isolation, or anxiety
- Have limited time for friendships or hobbies
- Feel overlooked by professionals
- Are one and a half times more likely to be from [black, Asian and minority ethnic \(BAME\) communities](#), and are twice as likely not to speak English as their first language.

Identifying and supporting them early improves well-being, education outcomes, and family support.

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## Legal Rights Carers?

**Children and Families Act 2014:** Young carers have the right to an assessment of their needs, regardless of who they care for.

**Care Act 2014:** Requires local authorities to consider the impact of caring on children when assessing adults.

**Children Act 1989 & 2004:** Duties to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

**Human Rights Act 1998 & UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):** Right to education, play, and protection from exploitation.

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## What is a young carer's needs assessment?

Local authorities must offer this assessment to:

- Understand the impact of caring on the child's life
- Consider school, social, and emotional wellbeing
- Explore whether they want to continue caring
- Identify and offer family support to reduce their caring burden and ensure their needs are being met and welfare promoted.

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## Further information: Support and Resources

- Local Authority Family Help and Family Hubs
- Charities like Barnardo's and Carers Trust
- School pastoral support
- GP or alternatively qualified referrals
- Adult carers' assessments (which may reduce child caring responsibilities)

**Key Message: Young carers have legal rights. Recognising and supporting them is not just good practice — it's a statutory duty.**

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## Roles of Professionals

All professionals should:

- Be alert to signs of a young carer
- Ask sensitively about home life and caring roles
- Refer to local young carers' services
- Ensure Young Carers' Needs Assessments are considered
- Use multi-agency support where needed [Supporting young carers and their families: An introductory guide for professionals.](#)
- Adopt a [whole family approach](#)
- Undertake transition planning where appropriate.

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## Signs a Child Might Be a Young Carer

- Frequent lateness or absences from school
- Tiredness, anxiety, or poor concentration
- Adult-like responsibilities or language
- Mentioning "looking after mum/dad"
- Not engaging in after-school activities or friendships
- Parents unwilling or not able to respond to contact or engage

