

# TALKING TOOL

## YOUNG PEOPLE

Centre 33

We understand some young people may feel worried or apprehensive to talk about or acknowledge that they are a young carer and we understand this needs to be approached sensitively and without judgement.

This is a tool to support you to start the conversation with young people about the possibility of them being a young carer

Choose a time and place where you can talk confidentially.

Check that both you and the young person has enough time to talk, you may want to think about scheduling a meeting beforehand.

Explain your role within the school and why you are interested to find out more. If you are the young carers champion you could explain what this role is, highlighting that you support lots of other young people and their families in similar situations at school.

Try not to be judgemental or accusing, be prepared to explore the situation with the young person and offer support.

Respect cultural differences for instance, being aware that different cultures may have different views and experiences of caring.

Have information and literature on what support can be offered to young carers, both in school and from external services for the young person to take home and think about.

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Be caring and supportive, offer reassurance if necessary, some young people maybe worried about what will happen if professionals find out that they are providing care. They may worry that this will mean other professionals will become involved in their life and what impact that could have on their family.

Start and finish the conversation with something positive. Highlighting the positive ways, the young person's attributes from being a young carer are seen at school, as well as the challenges.

You could say that you have noticed that their young person always shows empathy towards their classmates, or that they appear to understand and want to help when another person is not feeling at their best. Or if the young person provides practical support around the home, consider highlighting the positive in this before exploring the challenges that this may bring.

Respectfully ask if the young person is providing any help for a family member. Consider asking if there is anyone in the house that could not manage without the young person's help? Although lots of young people identify as a young carer, we know some families and young people may not choose to identify in this way, this question can help to open a conversation about this

Do ask questions, be curious, you could be the person that opens doors for the young person to receive the support that they need.

Young people and their families often tell us how important it is to recognise the positive impacts of caring as well as being offered support with the challenges.

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Ask them if they have any concerns, let them talk about how they are feeling.

Keep talking to the young person, after the meeting, this can help to build a relationship with them outside of a formal meeting, it can also be useful to check in with them to build up a picture of the family's needs and caring role, and how this may change.