Young carer awareness-raising in schools

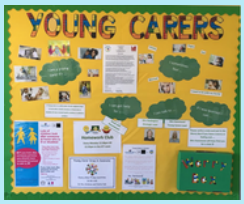
This pack contains ideas, links and resources which aim to:

- Raise awareness about young carers among the **whole school community** - pupils, families, staff and governing bodies alike.
- Reduce stigma and help normalise caring, physical and learning disability, physical and mental illness, and substance misuse. .

Including...

- Displays, webpages and posters
- Assemblies and lesson resources
- Films
- Young Carer Awareness Days
- Staff awareness and training
- Parent and carer awareness
- Books about young carers
- Information about famous young carers
- Quotes from young carers

Display or send out information about young carers, including in-school and external support and contact details of the Young Carer Lead.



- Create a notice board display in the main reception area. Find some example display boards at the end of this pack or just do a quick search online. You could also project information on electronic screens.
- Display information around school, in student planners, and even in toilets.
- Have clear and accessible information on your school website via a dedicated webpage, Example school webpages from: Manchester (secondary), Kent and Sheffield! (primaries)
- Raise awareness with parent/carers via newsletters, a letter home, or other communication methods. See SYC's parental engagement resource on the members area of the website for more tips (ask Shuna for access).

Display posters around school

- Download posters about young carers from Google images and adapt (check whether you have permission first).
- Posters from Twinkle, Young Carers in Schools, and Caring Together.
- Barnet Young Carers offer free posters and other young carer resources via their order form here.
- Or create your own poster! If you have a young carer group, perhaps they could design one! You could...

...Show photos of famous young carers (see here) and include quotes from young carers (here), making sure you include the positives of caring.

...Include recent statistics (e.g. from the the Carers Trust report here (2024)

- Sheffield Young Carers has posters and fliers (both physical and digital) for young people and their families about their service. Just get in touch.

Run assemblies and lessons (e.g. in PSHE/ tutor time) about young carers, disability, physical and mental illness, alcohol and substance misuse etc.



- If you have a young carers group in school, they might like to plan, run of give ideas for an assembly (but ensure that they and their families feel comfortable that everyone in school knows they are a young carer, after talking through the potential consequences of this).
- SYC has scripted young carer assemblies for both **primary and secondary** age pupils that you can use on the YCSN members area of their website. Contact Shuna for access. You could also print some of the slides off to put around school.
- Twinkle has loads of downloadable resources and activities on young carers for primary age you could use in lessons and one-to-ones here.
- Young Carers National Voice - brilliant young carers assembly and tutor activity resource pack for **KS2-4.**
- Resources from Global Neuro YCARE, including a beautiful film around ALS/MND, accompanying education packet with conversation guide, and colouring book with activities addressing caregiving, death and dying - for **primary** aged children.
- Carers Trust lesson resources for **primary and secondary schools**
- Carers Federation lesson resources for **Key stages 1-4,** including lots of lesson ideas and case studies.
- You can order free booklets and postcards to support the identification of young carers in **primary and secondary schools**, from Barnet Young Carers here.
- Centre 33 has lesson plans and resource packs for **primary, secondary and young adults.**
- Young Carers in Schools young carer quiz, as well as a huge range of resources and links, from posters to assembly and lesson plans for **primary and secondary**, and staff training templates on their website here,
- Young Carers Alliance has resources you can use in lessons here for **primary and secondary.**
- Gloucestershire Young Carers have lots of resources, including a Carer Aware PSHE lesson, presentation, and Aware You Care postcard activity, mostly for **secondary age.**
- Glasgow City carers lesson plans about family diversity, illness, disability, and young carers for **secondary schools.**

Substance misuse

- SYC's Finding My Way booklet: A practical, compassionate workbook designed specifically for professionals working on a 1:1 basis with young people affected by addiction in the family, You can order a copy from information@sycp.org.uk.
- Adfam: A guide for identifying young people affected by parental substance misuse.
- NIHR: A children's storybook for children affected by substance misuse.

Visit the resources page of SYC's website which lists resources, services, and websites that are relevant to young carers. These are grouped by theme and searchable by the menu on the right-hand side.

Show a film in an assembly, lesson or tutor group

All ages

- * Who Am I? Powerful animated poem created by young carers in Sheffield and recorded by young carers from across the UK.
- 'We Care do you?' (for primary) and 'Our Stories' (Secondary) and other SYC films by young carers here. (Please ensure that no pupils, siblings or family members of pupils appear in these films before showing them).
- Plenty of Newsround films about young carers

Primary only

- Young Carers animation aimed at EYFS and Key Stage One Pupils (part of an awareness-raising resource pack also available through Caring Together).
- A short film aimed at primary aged children.
- Arlo's New Friends, Manchester Young Carers short film aimed at helping primary-age young carers share their experiences.
- The A-Z of being a young carer - by YMCA Young Carers, Isle of White
- Four animations made by young carers from Newcastle Carers.
- Sara is a refugee. Sara is a carer. Are you? Newcastle Carers.

Secondary only

- What is a Young Carer? - Action for Children
- *A day in the Life of a Young Carer - a short but powerful film about being a young carer.
- Give Us A Break - Gloucestershire Young Carers and Everyman Theatre animation:
- Young carers are not alone animation - Carer Gateway
- *Being a young carer - Barnardo's Action with Young Carers –
- *Paris' story: My Life as a Young Carer - West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership
- Rida's Story – Carers in Bedfordshire
- *Young Carers: Who are they? Centre 33
- *Toya's story, Ryan's story, Eloise's Story, Lily's Story, Emma's story - Centre 33

For films for both **post-16 and younger young carers**, see their respective resource packs

For families of young carers

- SYC Family Project film – this is a really powerful film made by parents in SYC's service that we recommend showing to parents/carers.

Celebrate and raise awareness around key dates such as:

Young Carers Action Day (Spring term)
Carers Week (Summer term)
Carers Rights Day (Autumn term)

Click on the links for downloadable resources and ideas.



- Have information stands at events and coffee mornings and invite parents and carers. Show the Family Project film
- Hold sponsored activities, or fundraising events such as raffles, dress-down Fridays, or cake stalls to raise the profile of carers, but also help raise money to support them.
- If you have a young carers group in school, ask them to help run/plan an event, or ask them for ideas.

Training and resources for staff

- Have a **Young Carers Lead** in school, with support from an SLT Lead, and make sure all staff know who this is.
- Join more than 110 schools and services in SYC's Young Carers Schools Network. Come along to our termly meetings, sign up to our mailing list to to hear about news, resources, practical tools and opportunities, and get access to the **members area of our website with even more identification and support resources** (ask Shuna for login details if you are already a member).
- Sign up to our **free e-learning module** 'Young Carers: Identifying and supporting young people with caring responsibilities in Sheffield.' (it takes 60-90 minutes to complete). Embed into all new staff inductions.
- Sign up to **SYC's multi-agency training** and keep an eye out for other regular training opportunities on our website.
- Run your own in-house training session using the **staff training template and/pr case studies on the members area of our website,** and/or any of the resources in this pack.
- **Share a film** in a staff meeting or send in a staff bulletin: You could use a film from the previous page (those with a * are most suitable) or one of the following:
  - Young Carers in Education - SYC film
  - Who Cares in School - film by Young Carers Voice, Bristol and South Glos. Young Carers
- Sheffield Young Carers **resources to support young carers**
- Young Carers in Schools **staff awareness resources here.**
- Young Carers National Voice Education Resource – this **poster** was created by young carers for education professionals about what young carers find useful in school and college. Please share in your staff rooms or intranet.
- Young Carers in Schools **staffroom noticeboard poster.**
- Keep talking about young carers in **staff and governors' meetings** - regularly review progress of young carers alongside other potentially vulnerable groups of pupils.
- Sign up to the **SYC e-newsletter** for updates on events, opportunities and free resources.
- Follow us on **social media** and help us spread the word about young carers!
- Other **useful websites**: Young Carers National Voice, Young Carers in Schools, The Children's Society

Add books about young carers to your school reading list



- Young carers will be excited to see themselves in a book!
- Other young people will understand what it means to be a carer.
- Some children will read it and realise that they are a carer, even if they didn't know before.
- You could also include books that feature characters with a disability, physical or mental illness, or drug or alcohol issues, whether or not they contain young carers, to explore these issues.

For younger readers (3-7 years)

The Pond by Nicola Davies: The Pond is a touching picture book about a young boy and his family, overcoming the loss of his father through a small pond in the garden.

Me and my sister by Rosie Robbins: A picture book celebrating the highs and lows of having a much loved but differently abled sibling. Through the eyes of the brother, we find out how he and his autistic sister are both very different, but also very similar in other ways.

Grandad's Medal by Phil Earle: Marvin loves going on his adventures with his granddad - all without leaving the house. But when Grandad must go on his final adventure alone, Marvin has to be braver than he's ever been before.

The Building Boy by Ross Montgomery and David Litchfield: When the boy's grandma dies, he finds all of her old building materials in the garden shed – the girders and cement and bricks and builds a giant iron woman with soft tissue hands. And when he's finished, she comes to life!

Stewart's Tree by Cathy Campbell: This colourful picture book for children aged 3+ offers a comforting story for grieving families, helping to explain sibling loss shortly after birth. Includes a guide to bereavement written by qualified clinicians.

Goodbye Grandma by Melanie Walsh: When a little boy is told that his grandma has died, he isn't really sure what death means. In this reassuring lift-the-flap book with bold and colourful illustrations, he asks his mum important questions about death and bereavement.

Winkl

Travels with my Granny by Juliet Rix and Christopher Corr: A sensitive introduction to old-age confusion and dementia, through the loving and imaginative relationship between Granny and her grandchild - and their colourful journeys.

Talking is not my thing by Rosie Robbins: The autistic sister in this sibling pair is non verbal, but she finds plenty of ways to communicate and have fun with her brother.

Book list courtesy of West Sussex Young Carers

- **Twinkle, Twinkle Arti, by Danielle Slade:** A freely available book to help facilitate conversations between trusted adults and children who experience parental alcohol or drug use, co-produced by SPHR researchers from Fuse. You can access the book and video here, or contact Deborah.Smart@newcastle.ac.uk for a hard copy.
- **Young Carers Books Partnership Comic, by Rab Ferguson and Ana Graça.** You can find more details on how to request printed copies of the comic, or access and circulate a PDF copy here.
- **A series of illustrations and a downloadable booklet by Ana Graça.**showcasing the daily tasks young carers do

Middle grade books



The Late Crew, award-winning book **by Rab Ferguson** - and now its sequel: **The Copycat Creature**

- You can pre-order and get discounts on both books here.
- The author has teamed up with the Carers Trust to create downloadable presentation and worksheets based around the book.
- Rab is also happy to attend schools to deliver workshops around the books, and make up aliens!
- To find out more, email thelatecrew@outlook.com or visit www.thelatecrew.co.uk or watch Rab's video for professionals here. .

The Illustrated Mum, by Jacqueline Wilson – aimed at 9-12 year olds.

- This is a moving, yet unsentimental account of two sisters coming to terms with their mother's Bipolar Disorder. Written with warmth, humour and understanding.
- Jacqueline has other books out about young carers too, including **Lola Rose** about a girl whose mother has cancer, and **Love Frankie** about a girl who helps her mum with Multiple Sclerosis.

Toby and the silver blood witches, by Sally Doherty: The first in the award-winning Toby Bean trilogy, aimed at 9-12 year olds.

- With a young carer at its centre, Toby and the Silver Blood Witches is a heartfelt story against a backdrop of action, fantasy and wonder.
- Ten percent of author profits go to the ME Association.
- Resources for schools who are studying the book can be found here

Can I tell you about being a young carer, by Jo Aldridge - Non-fiction

- Part of the best-selling Can I Tell You about... series, this book raises awareness about children who live with and care for parents or other relatives in the home. It describes what young carers like Carly do, and the practical and emotional impact caring can have on home and school life, both positive and negative. It also explains what support is available for young carers.

And lots more! See The Book Trust: Books that Feature Young Carers and West Sussex Young Carers for more information on:

- **Who Let the Gods Out,** by Maz Evans
- **Charlie Changes into a Chicken,** by Sam Copeland (sibling with cancer)
- **The Letter with the Golden Stamp,** by Onjali Q Rauf
- **The Boy whose Wishes Came True,** by Helen Rutter
- **A Library of Lemons,** by Jo Cotterill
- **What's That in Dog Years?** by Ben Davis
- **Fish Boy,** by Chloe Daykin
- **The Rollercoaster Boy,** by Lisa Thompson (father with mental illness)
- **Ella on the Outside,** by Cath Howe
- **Running on Empty,** by S E Durrant (parents with learning difficulties)
- **The Boy in the Tower,** by Polly Ho-Yen
- **Moon Pie** by Simon Mason
- **Echo's Sister** by Paul Mosher (sibling with a life-threatening illness)
- **Aubrey and the Terrible Yoot** by Horatio Clare
- **A bad day for Jayden** by Tony Bradman

Teen and young adult books (12+)



I am the Minotaur, by Anthony McGowan
This is an emotionally charged story about Matthew, a young carer, that unflinchingly tackles very challenging themes of poverty, neglect and bullying. Yet it is also full of hope as Matthew finds that friendship and change can be found in unexpected places.

Boy 21 by Matthew Quick
Basketball has always been an escape for Finley. He lives in grey, broken Belmont, a town ruled by the Irish Mob, drugs, violence, and racially charged rivalries. At home, he takes care of his disabled grandfather. He's always dreamed of getting out somehow with his girlfriend, Erin.

Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow by Siobhan Curham
Fourteen-year-old Stevie lives in Lewes with her beloved vinyl collection, her mum, and her mum's depression. When Stevie's mum's disability benefits are cut, Stevie and her mother are plunged into a life of poverty. But irrepressible Stevie is determined not to be beaten.

You Don't Care by Luisa Plaja
Jordan likes Hannah even though his friend says she's bad news. Hannah likes Jordan, but she has to look after her dad and sister. She can't always find time to go out and have fun. Does Jordan care more about what his friend says than he does about Hannah?

The Names They Gave Us by Emery Lord
Lucy Hansson's mums cancer reappears, Lucy falters - in her faith and in her ability to cope. Can Lucy set aside her problems and discover what grace really means?

Tender by Evie Ainsworth
Marty pretends his mum's grip on reality isn't slipping by the day. Daisy pretends her parents aren't burning out while they look after her incurably ill brother. They both pretend they're fine. But the thing about pretending is, at some point, it has to stop. And then what?

Red Sky in the Morning by Elizabeth Laird
Anna will never forget the night her brother was born. The doctors say Ben is profoundly disabled and will never lead a normal life. Her family struggles to come to terms with their baby, but for Anna it's love at first sight.

Holding Up the Universe by Jennifer Niven
Since her mum's death, Libby's been picking up the pieces in the privacy of her home, dealing with her heartbroken father and her own grief. Now, Libby's ready: for high school, for new friends, for love and for every possibility life has to offer.

More books:

- **Guidebook for young carers** by Mike Raynor. Non-fiction for young carers, adult carers, and adults who work with young carers.
- **The Impossible Knife of Memory** by Laurie Halse Anderson
- **Looking After Mum** by Roy Apps
- **The Best Medicine** by Christine Hamill (mother with breast cancer)

Book list courtesy of West Sussex Young Carers

Famous young carers

You could make up some posters about these or talk about them in assembly/ class.

Jack Grealish (footballer from Premier League club Manchester City and the England national team).

- Jack helped care for his sister who has cerebral palsy. They are very close and he calls her his 'best friend.'
- Here is a video of Jack surprising his biggest fan, a young aspiring footballer with cerebral palsy, and a news story about him and his relationship with his sister, after a 'special' post-goal victory dance at the World Cup (November 22).

Vicky Pattison (British television personality, media personality and author).

- Vicky grew up with her dad and his alcoholism/addiction issues
- She has made a documentary on this called 'Vicky Pattison: Dad, Alcohol and Me.'
- She is a patron for Nacoa, a charity that helps young people who are affected by their parents drinking.

Joe Wicks (Fitness coach / PE with Joe)

- Joe has spoken about his mother's mental health issues and his father's addiction in a BBC documentary called 'Joe Wicks: Facing my Childhood.'

Aitch (rap artist)

- Aitch helped to care for his sister who has Downs Syndrome.
- He dedicated his song 'My G' (featuring Ed Sheeran) to her.
- He is an Ambassador for the Downs Syndrome Association and recently skydived in honour of his sister.

Millie Bright (Footballer, England and Chelsea captain)

- Millie supported her mother through depression and anxiety and has spoken about about her own mental health struggles.
- She has recently become an ambassador for the children's mental health charity Young Minds. Here is a short article about her.

Amy Willerton (TV host and model)

- Amy grew up with her brother who was born with a condition known as mosaicism and is severely disabled
- Amy has spoken in interviews on how close she and her brother are, and called for more support for carers. She said: "I would never change anything about Ross (brother) who's taught us so much... All I'd change is the amount of support available for carers because there are so many families like ours who work so hard and deserve so much more help."

Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg (Footballer on loan from Tottenham Hotspur and Denmark national team captain).

- Pierre was a young carer for his father who had cancer. Hojbjerg was roughly 17/18 when he was caring for his father whilst playing football and living in Germany.
- Here is a video from BBC Sport where Hojbjerg talks about his caring experience (he starts talking about caring roughly around 2:55).

Princess and Junior Andre (social media personalities)

Carers for their half-brother who is blind and autistic and has Prader-Willi syndrome.

Jo Whiley (Radio DJ).

- Jo cared for sister who had a rare genetic disorder and diabetes.
- In this article, she opens up about her experiences.

Jade Ewen (Sugababes)

- Jade was a young carer for her dad who is blind and partially deaf and her mum who is partially blind and has other health and mobility issues. She also took on a caring role for her siblings.
- Here is an article about her caring role and in a Newsround report, speaking about how she balanced her school life, with being a young carer, and the extra pressures and responsibilities that involved, including how important it is for young carers to look after themselves too.

Jesse Lingard (footballer who played for Premier League club Nottingham Forest and the England national team).

- Jesse cared for his mother who has mental health difficulties, as well as his two young siblings who moved in with him while his mother sought help.
- He has also struggled with his own mental health.
- Here is a documentary about Jesse's experiences.

Oritsé Williams (singer and former JLS band member).

- Oritse was a young carer for his mum who has Multiple Sclerosis (MS).
- He has opened up about his caring role recently. Here is a short but inspiring interview.

Tulisa (NDubz).

- Tulisa cared for her mum who has severe mental health problems.
- Here is an hour-long documentary film called 'My Mum and Me', (BBC 2010).

(The late) **Dave Myers** (Hairy Biker - TV Chef).

- Dave cared for his mother with Multiple Sclerosis from the age of 8. That, he says, is why he learned to cook.
- "I was a young carer by default, but when you're a kid it just happens. You don't question it, you just are.'
- Dave opens up about his experiences as a young carer here.

Ms Dynamite (Rapper / singer songwriter).

- Niomi was a young carer for her mum who had cancer, and her siblings. Explains the mixed feelings of many young carers well: "There were times when I absolutely loved taking care of my brothers and sisters. Then there were other times when I just wanted to be a teenager and it was a real responsibility and a pressure and a chore and I hated it."
- Here is a very candid article about her experiences.

Richard McCourt (TV Presenter Dick from Dick and Dom).

- Richard cared for his mum with dementia

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen (Interior Designer and TV Presenter).

- Laurence was a young carer for his mum who had multiple sclerosis after his dad died when Laurence was nine.

My Family, Mental Illness... and Me is a podcast by Our Time exploring what it was like for celebrities and non-celebrities growing up in a family where a parent has a mental illness.

Quotes from young carers

'Being a young carer is not a choice. It's just what we do.'

'I wouldn't say that my caring role impacts on my life; I'd say that it is my life.'

'Caring never stops. Especially when it's time to sleep, your brain constantly worries about how tomorrow will be, hospital appointments, money etc. It's in overdrive.'

'When you live with the family you care for...there is no 'off' time. You are always available to help at all times.'

'Caring isn't just the time I'm physically spending with the people I care for; it's also the free time I spend worrying.'

'There is a lot of pressure on me, to the detriment of my own health, wellbeing, success, happiness and future.'

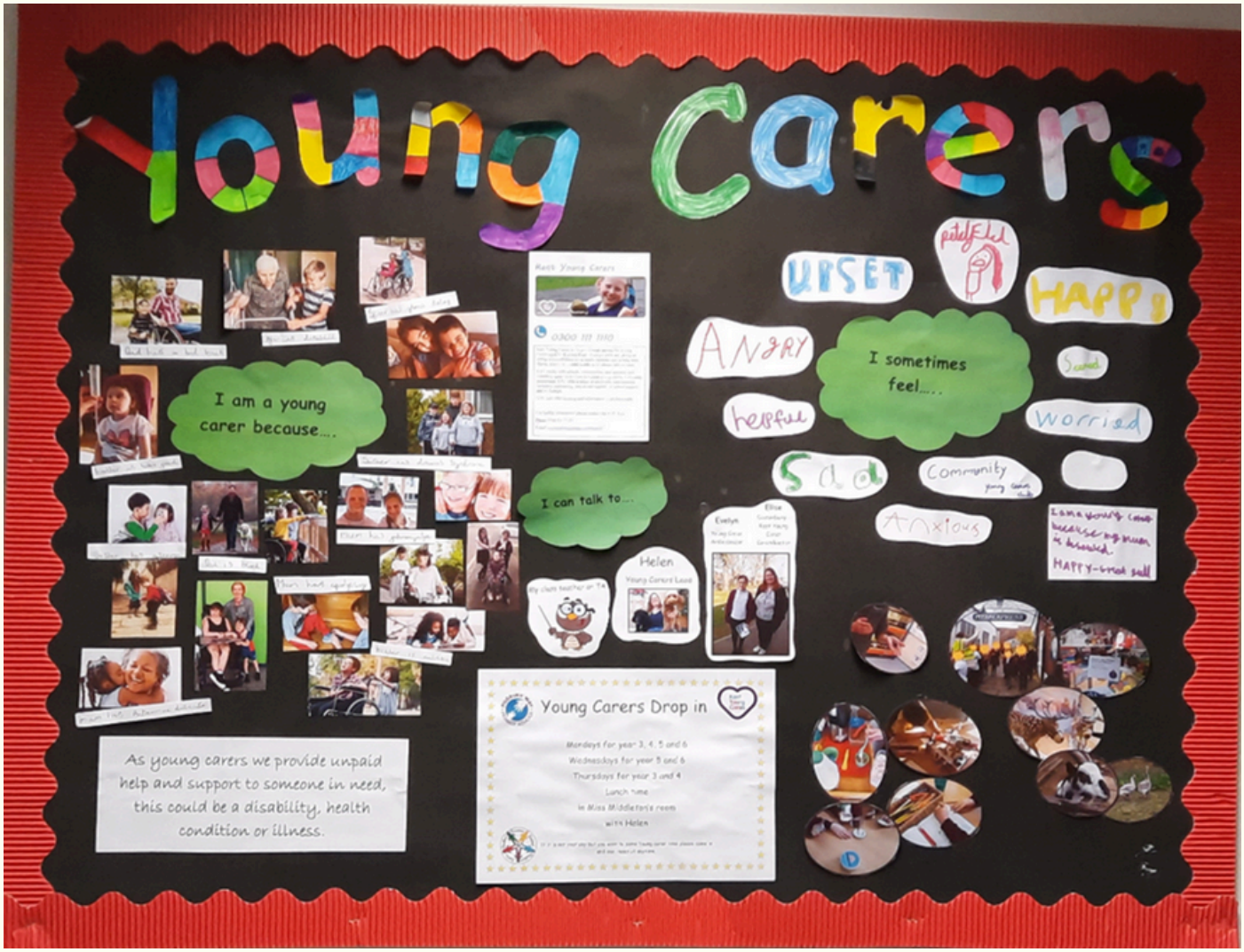
'I spend more time worrying about the person I care for because I'm not always there to help.'

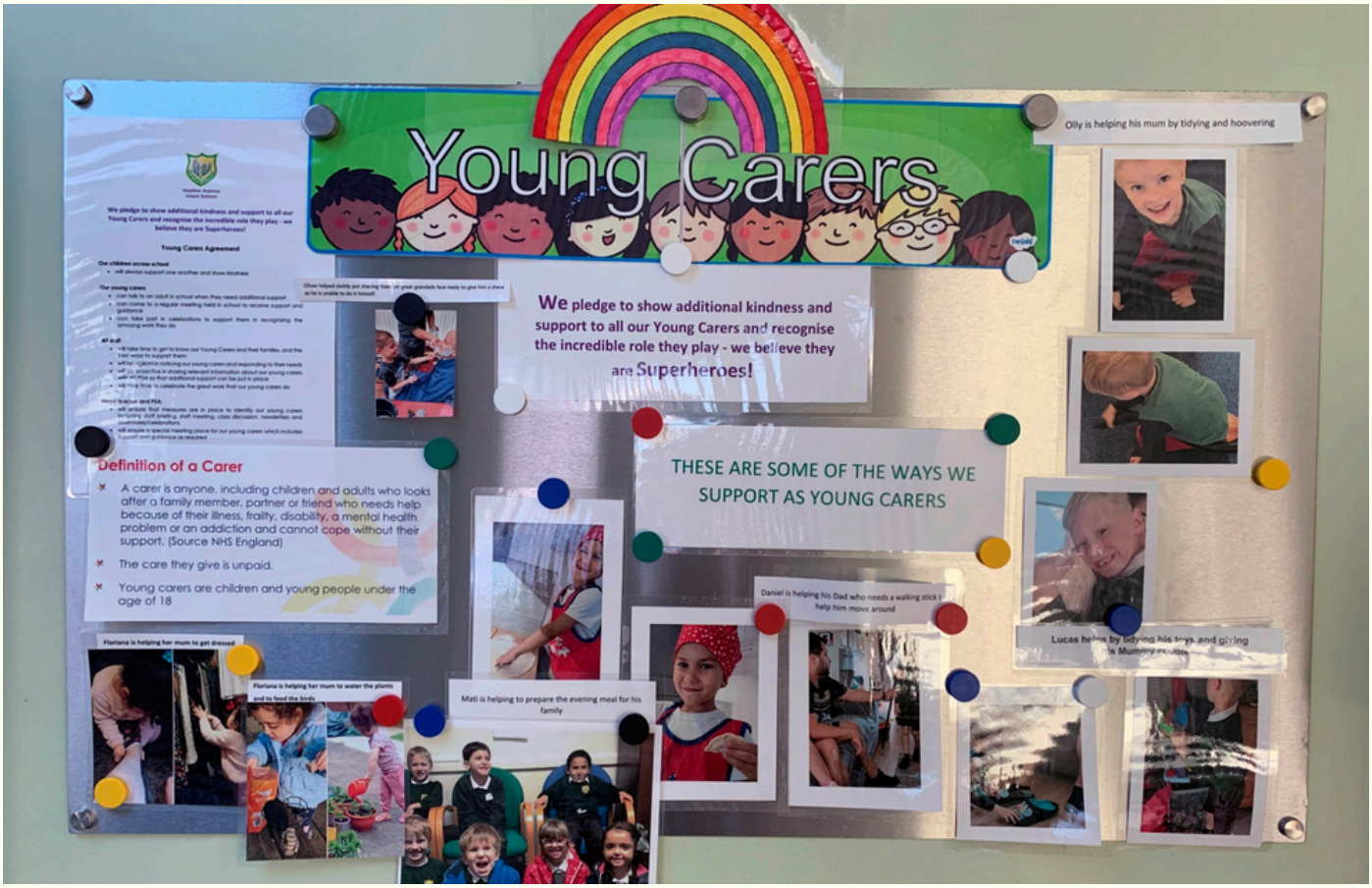
'Being a young carer means you have to work twice as hard as everyone else every single day.'

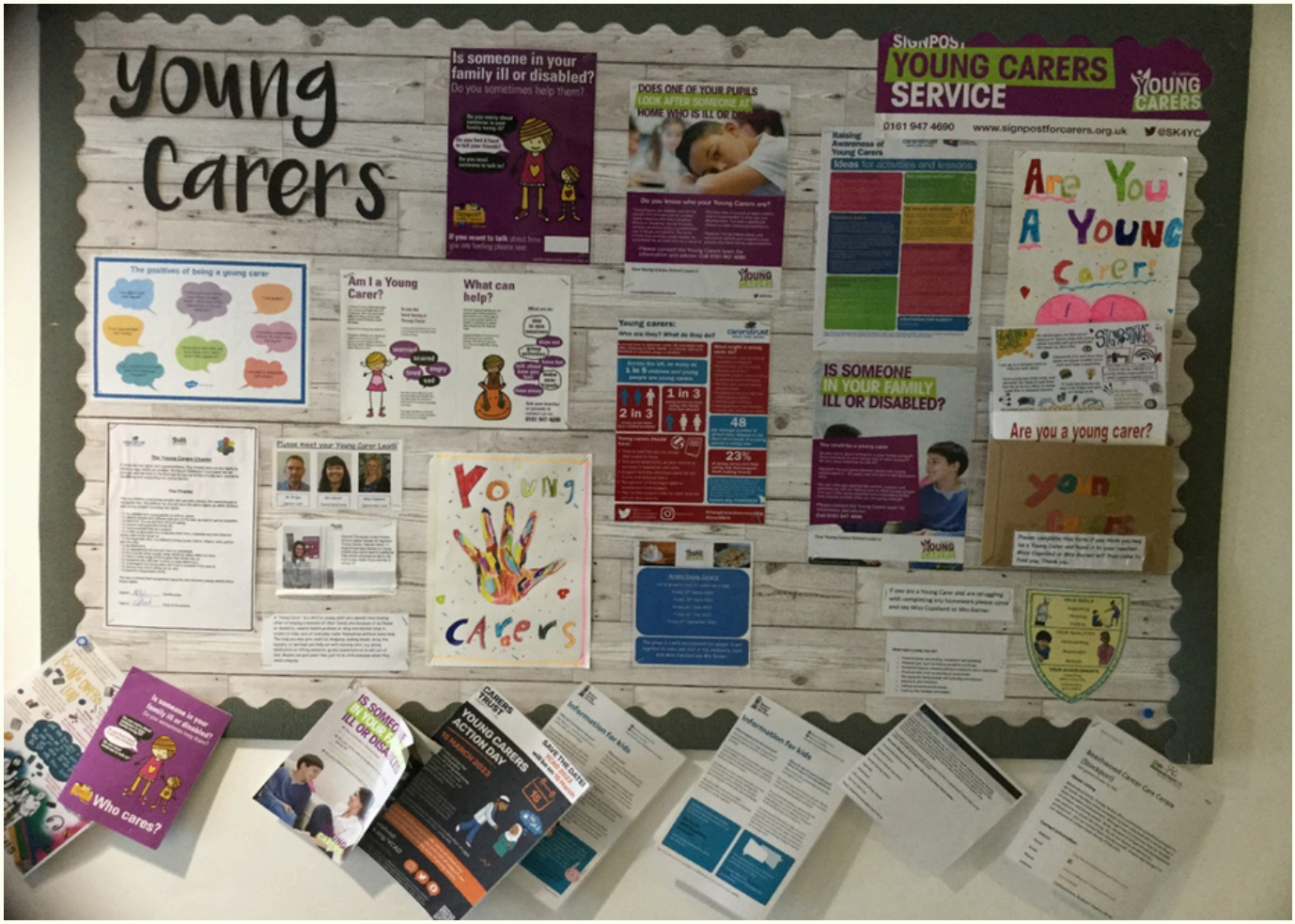
'I've been a carer my whole life; it's just who I am.'

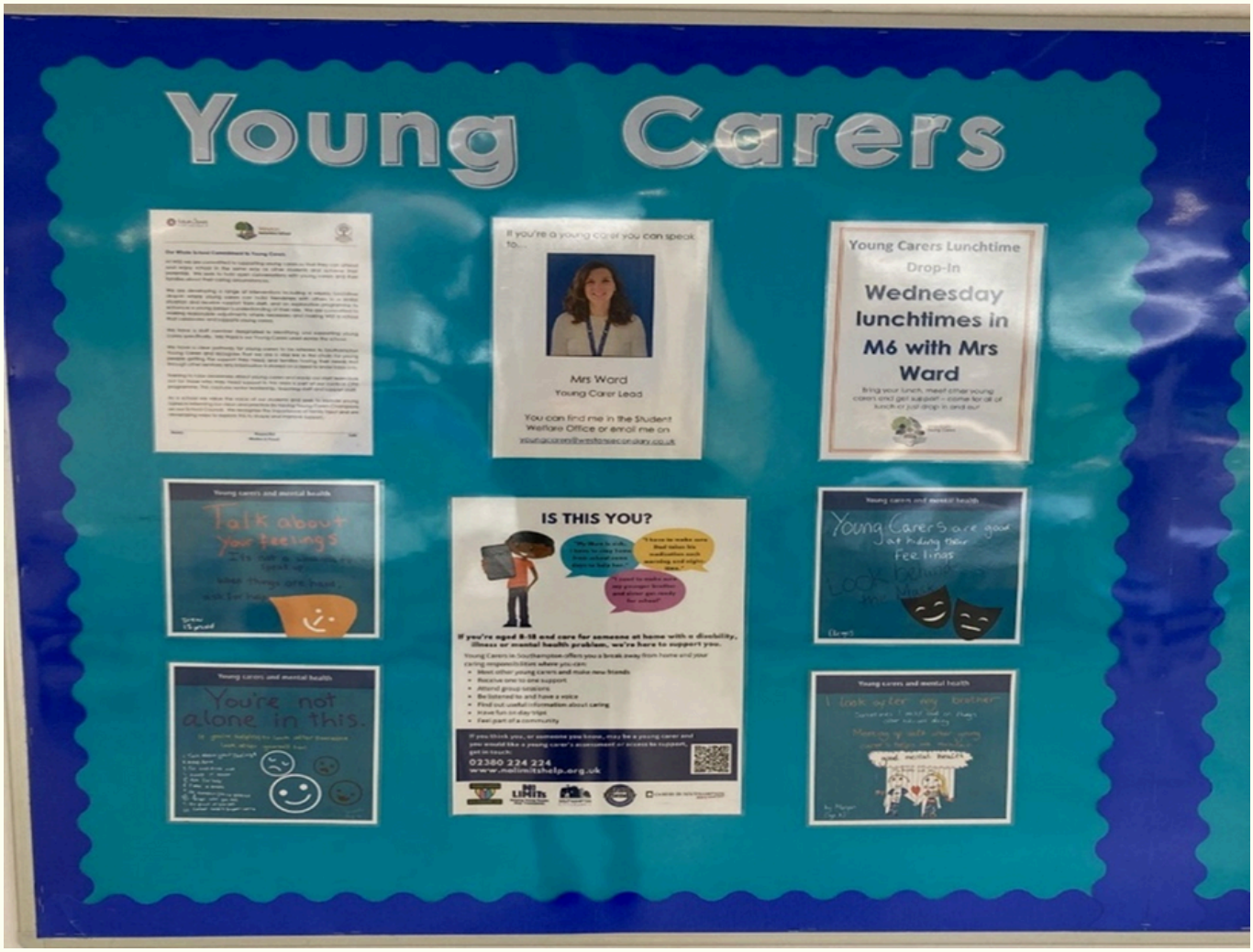
All quotes from the Carers Trust report: The Voices and Experiences of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers from across the UK, March 2023

Display Board examples






Young Carers
Is someone in your family ill or disabled?
Do you sometimes help them?
SignPOST
YOUNG CARERS SERVICE
0161 947 4690
www.signpostforcarers.org.uk
@SK4YC
Are You A Young Carer?
Am I a Young Carer?
What can help?
IS SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY ILL OR DISABLED?
Are you a young carer?
Young Carers
Who cares?


Young Carers
Mrs Ward
Young Carer Lead
Young Carers Lunchtime
Drop-In
Wednesday lunchtimes in M6 with Mrs Ward
IS THIS YOU?
Talk about your feelings
You're not alone in this.
Young Carers are good at hiding their feelings

As part of the Sheffield Young Carers Education Networks' good practice-sharing, members have kindly shared some of the resources they have created in their settings, including lesson plans and tutorials, staff training PowerPoints, display boards and digital displays, even games and support resources. If you would like to see any of these, please ask Shuna.

Thank you so much for supporting young carers in your school.
If there is anything else that we can help with please get in touch:

Tel: 0114 258 4595
Mob: 07923254043
shuna.beckett@sycp.org.uk
www.sheffieldyoungcarers.org.uk

And let us know how you get on!

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