

TALK TO US

OFF
THE **RECORD**

Young Carers Count

Counting Young Carers in Croydon Schools



December 2022

Young Carers Service
www.talkofftherecord.org

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From Spring 2023, the school census will begin to officially record how many pupils are young carers. Therefore, we have put together this document to help you prepare for the census change and to identify and support your young carers.

What does it mean to be a **young carer**?

A young carer is someone aged under 18 who provides care for a family member who has a health condition; such as illness, disability, mental ill health, additional needs or alcohol/substance dependency. The kinds of support young carers provide might include (but is not limited to) practical help around the house, attending appointments with or translating for the cared for, helping someone with personal care such as dressing, washing or administering medicine, providing emotional support or keeping an eye on siblings. Here is a link to the MACA form and how to use it. The MACA is a screening tool to help determine if someone has a caring role and the types of caring they do: [Manual for Measures of Caring Activities and Outcomes for Children and Young People](#)

How the Census will work:

Schools will be asked to record the numbers of young carers and also specify how they were identified to the school. The following code set (CS118) will be used on the Census to record this data. When filling in the section for young carers there will be three letters to identify them 'N, P' and 'S'. 'N' stands for 'Not declared', which will cover pupils who do not have a caring role or where a caring role isn't known. 'P' will indicate they are a young carer and were identified by a parent or guardian. 'S' will be used if they were identified by the school. Our service has been advised that if school is informed of a pupil's caring role via another professional or outside agency, they can use 'S' as the indicator.

The Census will go out in January 2023 and be due back in February.

The results of the Census should be externally available from March.

Statistics we have about **young carers** and why the Census is important

This census will allow schools, local councils and support services like ours to gather accurate and up-to-date information about how many young people have caring responsibilities. Furthermore, with each future Census, we can monitor attendance, punctuality and attainment levels for young carers, leading to an even deeper understanding of the impact of caring on school.

What we do know so far about how caring affects young people's education:

- >> Charities estimate that between 1 in 5 (*Carers Trust*) to 1 in 12 (*BBC 2010*) pupils at secondary school have a caring role. That equates to two or more in every classroom. This means that every school, regardless of the type of school or the area it is based in, will have young carers in it and therefore needs to make an effort to identify and spread awareness among its staff, pupils and parents.
- >> According to the Childrens Society, 39% of young carers say that nobody in school is aware of their caring role. This means that they still remain an often-hidden vulnerable group.
- >> Around a quarter of young carers report being bullied at school. (*Carers Trust 2013*)
- >> Around 27% of young carers have difficulty balancing their caring role with schoolwork. This includes having to be absent from or late to school frequently.
- >> Caring can impact attainment, with the average GCSE grade difference between young carers and other pupils being nine B's and nine C's.

What can schools do to help identify and support their **young carers**

At the bottom of this document, I have included some links to further resources and information about the Young Carers in Schools Award, which was designed by the Carers Trust and Children's Society as a tool to help improve procedures and awareness about young carers. **Here is a list of the top ten things we, as Croydon's Young Carers Service, recommend:**

- 1** Make contact with your local Young Carers Service to find out what they do, any knowledge or advice they might have and how they could work with your school or family.
- 2** Have regular training sessions on young carers to keep every staff member aware of who young carers are, the challenges they face and how to support them.
- 3** Discuss young carers in assemblies and/or PSHE lessons. This helps reduce stigma and makes it easier for pupils to self-identify.
- 4** Make young carers a part of school policy documents and review existing policies to ensure that they can be applicable and fair.
- 5** Make young carers part of the school's culture through noticeboards, information on the website, info stalls on fundraising or open days, or maybe have student Young Carer Ambassadors.
- 6** Communicating about young carers to parents/guardians. This could be through letters or emails sent out to families or it could be a topic raised at parent's evenings. This can help families realise their child might have a caring role and to feel more at ease about self-identifying.
- 7** Having a senior staff member who oversees young carers support in the school can ensure it remains a priority and streamline referrals and queries.
- 8** Create a school identification process.
- 9** Providing young carers with support in school can massively improve their chances in education. Often just having a drop in space they can go to or a peer support group can make a huge difference. Encouraging some flexibility around homework or punctuality rules for young carers can help them balance their caring role and school better.
- 10** Keep an eye out for any young people who you think might be young carers.

Croydon Young Carers Service

- Complete an official young carers assessment with the young person and their family
- Respite (trips and activities)
- Art and Play therapy & emotional support
- Educational support
- Young Adult Carers support (18-25's)
- Work with other professionals
- Partnership work with other organisations
- Outreach/awareness raising

How to refer to Croydon Young Carers Service:

There is a referral form on our webpage Young Carers Service (talkofftherecord.org) To find out more about Off the Record, the charity we are part of, you can visit this [link](#).

How we can support your school with this census change

We are very keen to roll out support for young carers across schools in Croydon, as having the right interventions in place at school can make a massive difference to their wellbeing and future outcomes. We can offer the following:

- >> Speak with any schools who would like some advice around improving or implementing support for young carers. We are also happy to speak with any schools who want to refer a family but would like some further information first.
- >> Deliver assemblies about young carers or work with teachers to collaborate on a young carers focused PSHE lesson.
- >> Deliver staff training about young carers and present to school governors.
- >> Provide information about other services in the borough who schools can signpost families to.

We are a consent-based service, so if you want to know if any young carers at your school are registered with us, you need you to have their name and date of birth and consent from the family. Whenever new young carers are registered with us, we try our best to get consent to pass that information on to schools and will do so where appropriate.

Useful links

Info about the Young Carers in Schools Award:

[What is the award? – Young Carers in Schools](#)

Carers Trust website, to learn more about young carers:

[About Us - Caring as a Young Carer | Carers Trust](#)

Our Time website with a Guide to the Schools Census and some helpful materials schools can use:

[Guide to counting young carers on the school census | Our Time](#)

Caring Together website with school census information:

[School census - Caring Together](#)

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