



YOUNG CARERS - WHAT NEXT

ACCOMPANYING RESOURCE TO CARERS SA'S
GOOD PRACTICE FORUM: YOUNG CARERS – WHAT NEXT?
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Part 1: Young carers: Definitions and context

Who are young carers?

Young carers are children and young people up to 25 years of age who help care in families where someone has an illness, a disability, a mental health issue, an alcohol or other drug problem, or who is frail aged.

Young carers can be found in all communities, and they often find themselves excluded from personal and social opportunities, including education, which inhibits their own development and future potential. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012), there are an estimated 25,700 young carers under the age of 25 in South Australia.

What do young carers do?

Tasks undertaken by young carers vary depending on the nature of the caring role. They may include:

- practical tasks such as cooking, housework and shopping
- managing the family budget, collecting benefits and prescriptions
- physical care such as lifting
- personal care such as dressing, washing and toileting
- giving medication or physiotherapy
- ensuring safety
- looking after younger siblings
- assisting with communication
- organising or providing transport
- assisting with attendance at social events
- providing emotional support and companionship

Some young carers provide care for more than one person. Persons receiving care may be:

- biological, adoptive, foster or step parents
- a sibling or siblings
- grandparents
- other extended family members
- friends.

What are the impacts of caring?

Caring can profoundly impact a young person's wellbeing and put them in need of support. Potential impacts include:

- problems at school, i.e. with attendance, homework and grades
- becoming isolated from their peers and other family members
- lack of time for play, leisure or sport
- conflict between the needs of the person they care for and their own needs, which may lead to feelings of guilt and resentment
- developing their own physical or emotional health issues
- appearing mature beyond what is typical for their age whilst struggling with their own developmental needs
- being at odds with peer groups and friends their own age as a result of added responsibilities, time constraints and having to operate at more mature levels
- problems moving into adulthood, i.e. finding work, living on their own and establishing intimate relationships
- conflicting emotions about their role and family relationships
- feeling obligated to hold back on their own development, future plans and lifestyle choices.

Carers SA's 2016 Young Carers Assessment Research Project

Carer support teams who work with young carers are very well aware of the impact and consequences of caring roles but also of the positive contributions young carers make and how rewarding many of them see their role.

Young Carers Data Snapshot 2016

174
assessed
young carers

Age range:
7-23 years
Average age:
14.64 years

Caring for:
Parent (59%)
Sibling (39%)



Conditions of care recipients:
Disability (**50%**)
Mental health issues (**23%**)
Comorbidity [disability and mental health] (**27%**)

Caring tasks



46% interpret, sign or use another form of communication for the person they care for.

96% lift or carry heavy things.



96% keep an eye on the person they care for.



31% help with bathing or showering.

32% help the person they care for wash.

45% help with dressing/undressing.

65% take the person they care for out.

Behaviour/ impacts of caring

52% have trouble staying awake.



67% cannot stop thinking about what they have to do.



59% have to do things that upset them

38% do not think they matter.

Feelings



52% feel they are very lonely.



40%

feel so sad they can hardly stand it.



45% feel like running away.



81% often feel stressed.

57% feel they cannot cope.



Almost **1 in 5** feel that life doesn't seem worth living.

In addition to knowing what individual young carers' experiences are, Carers SA was interested in researching the extent of impact that a caring role has on the population of young carers in South Australia.

Carers SA's 2016 **Young Carers Assessment Research Project** evaluated 174 individual, age appropriate young carer assessments that investigated caring tasks, roles and the impact of caring on young carers based on the Saul Becker's *Young Carer Assessment Tool – Manual for Measures of Caring Activities and Outcomes for Children and Young People*.¹ Young carers between 7 and 23 years old (average age: 14.64, mean age: 15 yrs) from across metropolitan and regional areas² in South Australia participated in these assessments.

The summary results of the research give a valuable and at times confronting insight into the life experience of young carers in South Australia. They have prompted Carers SA to investigate improvements to service access pathways for young carers, including collaborative and supported referral options.

Why are young carers so rarely identified and supported?

In her article “*So that’s how I found out I was a young carer and that I actually had been a carer most of my life’: Identifying and supporting hidden young carers*”, Ciara Smyth’s (et al. 2011) explains why young carers remain ‘hidden’:

“A common theme in the literature on care-giving is the issue of ‘hidden’ carers, that is, people who undertake caring roles and responsibilities, yet do not identify themselves as carers. One reason people do not recognise themselves as carers relates to the nature of the caring relationship. When providing care for a family member, intra-familial bonds of love and reciprocity do not encourage parties to view the relationship as anything other than a ‘normal’ familial relationship. The lack of self-identification amongst young carers is complicated further by societal norms surrounding care-giving. Whereas adults are expected to provide care to other adults and children, young people are not expected to be care-givers but rather care recipients. As a result, many young carers remain ‘hidden’ and beyond the reach of services and supports designed to help them in their caring role. “

When there is a person within the family needing care, a young person may take on the role of sole or primary carer or may help other adults or siblings with caring tasks. Some choose to take on the task voluntarily, others are informally nominated as a carer, or ‘grow’ into a caring role; and in some cases, taking on a caring role is demanded. The majority of young carers however just grow into the role as part of the responsibilities shared by the family unit.

There is a number of reasons why young carers may remain unidentified:

- They may not classify themselves as a “young carer”, for example, a child has grown into a caring role from a young age and the topic has not been discussed or questioned.
- They may not understand that they could benefit from services, particularly where the condition of the cared-for person is episodic and the caring role unpredictable.
- They may fear being judged or misunderstood by their peers, teachers or service providers.
- A parent or guardian may discourage or disallow a young carer accessing services, retreats or special young carer events. Such decisions may be based on privacy concerns, fears of a child protection intervention, cultural norms, an incorrect assessment or even denial of existing circumstances.
- Families may fear the stigma associated with the cared-for person’s condition, for example where there is a mental illness or substance dependency.

¹ Available at: <http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/ManualforMeasuringCaringActivities&Outcomes.pdf>

² Young carers from Adelaide, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Berri, Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier regions participated.

- Services specifically for young carers are few and far between. Most service providers tend to focus on the person who is cared-for and often fail to identify care relationships within the family, especially when it comes to children.
- Specific services for young carers are often not well advertised or known across the wider community, health, education and social service networks.

“I have never told friends or teachers about my caring role, because it’s private and I’d rather keep it secret.”

Young carer

Part 2: Identification

Identifying who young carers are

Young carers often don't identify themselves to outsiders; however, there are potential identifying signs that teachers, healthcare and social service professionals can look for. When several of these identifying signs are observed, it might be worth asking the young person whether they are providing care to a friend or member of their family.

It is important to note that some of the signs listed below may also be displayed by young people who do not have a caring role.

POTENTIAL IDENTIFYING SIGNS

- A child or young person appears to have maturity beyond his/her years
- Specific knowledge well beyond peer levels about conditions requiring support

At school:

- Regular or increasing lateness or absence for no apparent reason
- Difficulties joining extracurricular activities
- Reluctance talking about home life
- Frequent contact with home during school hours
- Concentration problems, anxiety, tiredness, withdrawal
- Under-achievement, late or incomplete homework, or a sudden unexplained drop in attainment
- Being more confident with adults than their peers
- Irritability or angry outbursts as a sign of strain they are under at home
- Not having lunch or lunch money
- Being bullied, sometimes explicitly linked to a family member's disability, health issue or substance dependency
- Parents not engaging with the school or not attending school events.

In healthcare

- Adult patient is routinely accompanied by their child to medical appointments
- Young patient suffers from fatigue, anxiety or depression and there is no medical explanation
- Young patient suffers from physical problem that can be attributed to heavy lifting i.e. back pain
- Young person shows an understanding of disability/illness beyond their age
- Young person asks questions or speaks on behalf of their parent during medical appointments
- Young person regularly schedules appointments on their parent's behalf.

In social /community support services, i.e. disability

- During home visits, the client's child is frequently at home during school hours
- An adult client with children appears to accomplish more at home than could be expected under their circumstances
- The child of an adult client regularly schedules appointments and/or advocates on the client's behalf.
- The child is unusually knowledgeable about their parent's (or another person's) condition.

Identifying what young carers need

It can be hard to identify young carers in a school or healthcare setting, particularly because they rarely come forward. Once a young carer has been identified, the next step is determining the impact of the caring role and what support (if any) is required. This can be challenging, because services specifically for young carers are few and far between. Chances are, mainstream as well as specialist services will need to be combined to provide the support needed.

When assessing the needs of a young carer, consideration should be given to:

- the amount, nature and type of care which the young carer provides
- the impact of the caring role on the young carer's wellbeing, education, social and emotional development
- whether any of the young carer's needs for support could be met by providing support to the person(s) receiving care, or to another family member
- whether any of the caring tasks the young carer is performing are **excessive** or **inappropriate**.

IDENTIFYING INAPPROPRIATE CARING

In determining whether or not any of the young carer's responsibilities are inappropriate, the impact on the young carer should be considered, for example whether the caring role limits educational opportunities, whether the young carer is prevented from building relationships and friendships, and how caring affects their physical and emotional wellbeing. It is also important to consider whether any of the caring tasks are "inappropriate" in view of their personal circumstances, i.e. their family relationships, cultural norms, values and expectations.

Inappropriate tasks (based on the age, ability or skills of the young carer) could include:

- personal care such as bathing and toileting
- strenuous physical tasks such as lifting
- administering medication
- maintaining the family budget
- providing mature emotional support to the adult e.g. if, in effect, the child is "parenting their parent".
- any task that puts at risk the safety of the young carer or the person cared for

IDENTIFYING EXCESSIVE CARING

Similarly, it needs to be determined whether a young carer is giving excessive care. For example, a young person may carry out relatively minor tasks, but the time these take up could place significant restrictions on their life, for example interfere with their school attendance, or socially isolate them.

It is important to recognise that young carers may have responsibilities in addition to looking after the person(s) receiving care, for example looking after younger siblings (with or without care needs).

Furthermore, it needs to be ensured that the overall levels of responsibilities of the young carer are not beyond what is age appropriate.

Young carers in transition to adulthood

Young people go through various developmental stages which are reflected in significant transitions, for example entering school, going through puberty, developing intimate relationships, leaving school, and commencing employment and/or further education. When supporting a young carer, it is imperative to plan for these transitions by considering whether the person:

- is able and/or willing to care now and after the transition
- continues or commences further education, training or employment, or wishes to do so
- participates or wishes to participate in recreation or social activities
- wants to make lifestyle choices, for example moving out or travelling.

Part 3: Support

Where a young carer needs support and protection, service providers who become aware of it should seek a conversation with the young carer and relevant family members (where feasible and appropriate). They should also consider consulting with other professionals.

Local carer support providers can give advice and generate referrals to:

- dedicated young carer services
- other community services, i.e. youth and allied health
- assistance available through local councils i.e. community transport or home maintenance
- advocacy support
- financial assistance and concessions
- supports for children at risk of abuse.

Carers SA's Carer Advisory and Counselling Service (Freecall 1800 242 636) can assist with information for and about young carers, and can link young carers with their local carer support organisations.

Referrals

When referring a young carer to a service, a number of questions may arise:

- What is the amount, nature and type of care they provide?
- What is the impact of the caring role on their wellbeing, education, social and emotional development?
- Are any of the caring tasks they perform excessive or inappropriate?
- Has a needs assessment of the person cared for been carried out, and if not, who can do this?
- Can any of the young carer's needs be met by providing support to the person cared for or to another family member?

When referring an adult with a disability, illness or substance dependency to a service, different questions may be raised:

- Is there a child in the family (including extended family members) who may be providing care?
- What can be offered to help the whole family?
- Does the parent need support in their parenting role?
- Can significant changes be anticipated that will affect the family

Promoting young carers' wellbeing

The concept of wellbeing involves taking into account how a wide range of factors will affect how an individual chooses to live their life. These factors include:

- how they are treated by others
- how well they are physically, mentally, emotionally and socially
- how well they are protected from abuse and neglect
- how much control they have over day-to-day decisions
- their participation in work, education, training or recreation
- their financial and living situation
- how well they are supported by their family and friends.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORTING THE WELLBEING OF YOUNG CARERS

Information provision

- Promote more open discussion and provide accessible literature about disability, chronic illness, mental health and how to access help.
- Inform children about how caring issues can affect families, in age-appropriate terms, regardless of whether they are caring or not.
- Raise awareness of young carers amongst colleagues and other professional, including how to identify them and whom to refer them to for support.

Peer support

- Explore peer support arrangements for young carers, for example at the local school, youth or community centre.

Timely whole family support

- Work with the family to support them in talking about and coming to terms with an illness or disability. Offering timely, well-structured and flexible support to the person in need of care could prevent a child undertaking inappropriate levels of care.

Coping strategies

- Consider what coping strategies might help children and families deal with any stigma they feel or experience.

Working with other agencies

- Providers focusing on the person being cared for (for example in the disability, education or healthcare sectors), could link connect with young carer projects so their service is better understood by young carers.
- Work with service providers, schools and media to promote an understanding of issues with stigma attached, such as mental illness and substance dependency.
- Promote an understanding of the emotional needs of young carers.

(Taken from *Emotional Support for Young Carers (2006)*. The Children's Society and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, published by The Royal College of Psychiatrists)

Part 4: How can we play our part in supporting young carers?

The carer support sector

Local young carer services: A small number of dedicated young carer services which are conducted by specialist carer support organisations (like Carers SA) provide dedicated safe, quality support to children and young adults in caring roles. These organisations apply their expertise regarding carers and young carers' issues to the services they provide.

Carer support organisations in South Australia

Region	Organisation
Adelaide Hills	Carers and Disability Link ; ph: 8389 7383; www.carerwellness.org.au
Barossa	Carers and Disability Link ; ph: 8562 4000; www.carerslinkbv.org
Eastern Metro & CBD	Carer Support ; ph: 8379 5777; www.carersupport.org.au
Eyre Peninsula	Carers SA ; ph: 1800 242 636; www.carers-sa.asn.au
Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island	Carers SA ; ph: 1800 242 636; www.carers-sa.asn.au
Mid-North	SA Country Carers ; ph: 1300 686 405; www.sacountrycarers.org.au
Northern Country	Carers SA ; ph: 1800 242 636; www.carers-sa.asn.au
Northern Metro	Northern Carers Network ; ph: 8284 0388; www.ncnw.org.au
River Murray Mallee	Carers SA ; ph: 1800 242 636; www.carers-sa.asn.au
South-East Country	Carers SA ; ph: 1800 242 636; www.carers-sa.asn.au
Southern Metro	Carer Support ; ph: 8379 5777; www.carersupport.org.au
Western Metro	Carers SA ; ph: 1800 242 636; www.carers-sa.asn.au
Yorke Peninsula	Carers and Disability Link ; ph: 8821 2444; www.carerslinkyp.org

As well as referring young carers to their local carer support organisation, education, health and social service practitioners can keep an eye out for young carers in their own work, and offer support where possible.

The health sector

Health is likely to be the first agency that a family turns to for help with an illness or disability. This means healthcare professionals play a pivotal role when it comes to identifying care situations early.

A pathway for identifying and supporting carers may include:

- Asking a patient whether they are providing care, or someone is providing care for them
- Asking whether there are any children in the household who are providing care
- Offering some assistance, for example by:
 - referring the carer to Carers SA's Carer Advisory and Counselling Service (1800 242 636)
 - involving the carer in planning, especially around hospital admissions/discharges
 - offering carers flexible appointments or phone consultations
 - providing advice on the cared-for person's medication and other relevant information.

Mental health

Mental illness is often episodic. The situation at home can fluctuate from a normal secure home life to periods of instability, confusion and emotional upheaval. Changes in the behaviour of parents with mental illness can be traumatic for the children, all the more so if they are trying to take on caring responsibilities.

Children caring for a parent with a mental illness can feel a great sense of responsibility and loyalty to their parent, and some go to great lengths to conceal the illness and its effects and to make up excuses for their behaviour.

Young carers may be responsible for administering medication to parents who have serious mental health issues. This can compromise the safety of both the young carer and the parent.

Some young carers may be supporting parents who have a dependency on drugs or alcohol in addition to experiencing a mental illness.

Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

The roles and responsibilities of child and parent can become confused, and young carers may feel they are responsible for their parent's behaviour and mood changes. Some young carers report developing feelings of guilt and/or anger. They may be afraid that what happens at home becomes public knowledge and become isolated from other children. Through their parent, they may come in contact and mix with other drug users. Some may have inappropriately high levels of responsibility for the social or personal care of their parents and act as "replacement parents" for younger siblings.

The education sector

Schools

For some young carers, school is the only environment outside of the family home where they spend significant time. This means schools play an important role not just in identifying young carers, but also in providing developmental (social, emotional and academic) support.

Suggestions on how schools can support young carers:³

- Recognise that our responsibility as carers can affect our education and schoolwork.
- Find out about us, what we need and how we are not like other students.
- Take time to find out about individual problems at home.
- Sometimes we're too embarrassed to tell you ourselves.
- Don't automatically punish us if we're late. Sometimes we can't help being late because we're helping out at home.
- Provide more support such as lunchtime drop-ins or homework clubs.
- Be flexible – give us more time and help to do homework or coursework.
- Include information about young carers in health and social studies, and other related subjects.
- Let us phone our parents if we need to find out if they are okay.

³ The Children's Society (2013). Supporting pupils who are young carers: Information for teachers and school staff. The Children's Society, London.

- Make sure there is a clear and up to date community notice board which has support information for us and where else we can get help in the community.
- Ensure teachers are offered information and training on young carers and caring issues.

Tertiary education providers

The transition to tertiary education is a major step for young carers. Here are some suggestions for early support strategies to improve the transition experience and retention of young carers.

- Create a carer friendly work environment which will
 - support staff in caring roles
 - provide a strong supportive culture that is aware of the unpredictability that is often associated with caring role requirements
 - be conducive of a flexible and family friendly environment
 - establish social networks for carers on campus.
- Offer student transition support services, peer support or mentoring programs that assist young carers in finding their feet quickly when first entering university. The first few weeks of inclusive activities and peer network building are particularly important for students facing isolation and disadvantage like young carers.
- Encourage young carers to access student advisory services.
- Advertise extra support available to young carers in their courses.
- Provide flexibility and technical support for young carers to study remotely/from home, for example online access to video lectures, skyping into lectures.
- Provide flexibility with deadlines for submissions, especially when caring emergencies arise during critical study times.
- Promote the national Young Carers Bursary Programme within the student community.
- Provide financial support, for example by including “young carers” as an eligibility criterion for scholarships, university grant programs or other benevolent grant/support opportunities.
- Inform and refer young carers to Carers SA’s 1800 242 636 Carer Advisory and Counselling Service.

The disability sector

Generally, disability service providers tend to be aware when clients have family members and/or friends who provide unpaid assistance, particularly where the carer is a parent, spouse or legal guardian. However, providers’ awareness of young carers is usually limited to those settings where a young person is an obvious and identifiable primary carer, or where children or young adults willingly identify themselves as carers; and as we know, many young carers don’t do this. Young carers may not know how important it is for support workers to know about their role as a carer.

Disability providers often go into their clients’ homes and are therefore well placed to identify young carers who would otherwise be missed. So when supporting a person with a disability, consider the following:

- Be aware that in households where children are present, these children may be young carers. This includes siblings of a child with a disability.
- Ask family members, including children, about caring responsibilities; never assume.
- When a young carer is identified, inform them that support is available for them, and where possible assist with referrals and/or information.
- Acknowledge young carers and include them in discussions about care arrangements.
- Recognise the impact on the young carer of decisions that support workers and the person being cared for make.
- Tell young carers what will happen in emergency situations. If a parent/guardian is being taken to hospital, find out what other supports are in place for the child/children.

- Consider the cultural and/or religious background of the person being cared for, and any expectations this may place on the young carer.

If the person being cared for has been deemed eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), chances are the family is still trying to find its way through the new system. This can place additional responsibility on the young carer, and support workers can assist in a number of ways:

- Encourage the young carer and/or the NDIS planner to complete an **NDIS Carer Statement** as part of the planning process. If the planning process has already been completed without the statement, encourage the family to request that a statement is added.
- Encourage the family to inform themselves about what carers are entitled to within the NDIS planning and review processes. Carer support organisations can provide information about this.
- Encourage the person being cared for to challenge any NDIS Planner who asks them to sign off on a plan which would result in a young person carrying out tasks that they aren't willing or able to carry out, or that are excessive or inappropriate for their age.

The justice sector

In relation to young carers, the justice system seldom comes to mind as an area requiring specific attention. However, there are instances when it is important to consider care relationships in judicial proceedings, for example:

- A young carer is facing charges, fines or jail time: This can jeopardise their ability to continue providing care and leave the person cared for without essential support.
- A person cared for by a young carer is facing charges, fines or jail time: This can put significant strain on the care relationship and require the young carer to provide additional assistance, for example providing transport to hearings or other appointments, filling out forms, and communicating with officials.

Judicial staff, i.e. case workers, judges and parole officers, could consider the following:

- When a young person enters the criminal justice system, determine whether they provide care to someone. If so, make court staff and service providers involved with the family aware of it.
- When an older person enters the criminal justice system, determine whether they are receiving care from a young person. If so, ensure that any additional assistance, for example case coordination, transport and interpreting, is provided by professionals and not placed on the young carer.
- When an older person who has been incarcerated is released, assess whether a child/young person will be expected to provide care. This may be likely where the person:
 - received care prior to their incarceration
 - has care needs that may need to be attended to by family or friends
 - is moving into a household with children/young people.

Part 5: Towards a model of support

The Model

Can South Australia lead the change?

We know that young carers and their families can benefit from supports currently available, be it social/emotional support or respite. However, a consistent young carer service model that targets young carers' overall resilience and wellbeing is yet to be created.

South Australia could be a leader in this, and Carers SA has a plan to make it happen; however, we need support from across services and community sector if we want the model to succeed.

Carers SA is developing a consolidated young carer support model. It is planned to involve a cyclical assessment/planning/implementation and re-assessment process that is embedded in the young carer's child development and caring journey. It is envisaged that the program will involve:

1. Pre-contact young carer engagement strategies
2. Contact
3. Initial Assessment
4. Goal setting leading to Action Plan (incl. referral to services and supports across networks)
5. Early intervention strategies around key transitions points in the young carer's life
6. Re-Assessments, goal and intervention updates
7. Overall program evaluation strategies

Pressure points

With appropriate funding, the new model will support young carer programs that are **systemic** (not treat young carers in isolation from their environment), seek referral pathways that are **collaborative**, and supports that are **holistic** (that support young carers within and outside of their caring role). Therefore, the program will rely on sector, service and community collaboration, sharing information and providing joined-up supports. Key pressure points will include:

- Identifying young carers who might need support but have not yet engaged with services
- Understanding a young carer's entire life situation, not only those issues directly associated with their caring role
- Having referral pathways if/when issues emerge that do not relate directly to their caring role, for example issues at school, at work or with their friends
- Developing a multi-disciplinary approaches to transition planning
- Obtaining flexible funding that is not tied to the needs of the person cared for.

Food for thought:

What is your and your organisation's capacity in linking with Carers SA to develop these processes and provide support to young carers entering the program?

Part 6: Information and resources

Support for young carers

Specialist support for young carers, including information, referral, counselling, young carer groups and retreats, are provided by local carer support organisations. For contact details of your local provider please refer to the table on page 12. Alternatively, call **Carers SA's Carer Advisory and Counselling Service on 1800 242 636** and our staff will help you find services in your area.

Respite for young carers

Respite for carers is available through Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres; however. So if you are a young carer looking for respite, call **Carers SA's Carer Advisory and Counselling Service on 1800 242 636**. Our staff can help you find out what is available for you in your area.

Useful phone numbers

Carer Advisory and Counselling Service: 1800 242 636

Information and advice to carers and their families about carer supports and services in their local area.

National Carer Gateway: 1800 422 737

Information and referrals for carers nationally.

Kids' Helpline: 1800 551 800

Confidential counselling for young people up to age 25, available 24/7. An online chat option is available from 8am to 12am (midnight) 7 days a week: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/kids/get-help/webchat-counselling>

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Confidential assistance for people struggling with a personal crisis or suicidal thoughts, available 24/7. An online chat option is available from 7pm to 4am 7 nights a week: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/Get-Help/Online-Services/crisis-chat>

Beyondblue: 1300 224 636

Information and support for people suffering from depression, available 24/7. An online chat option is available 3pm to 12am (midnight) 7 days a week.

Healthdirect: 1800 022 222

A 24/7 telephone health advice line staffed by nurses to provide expert health advice and information.

Emergency services: 000

For police, fire and ambulance services.

Useful websites

Carers Australia young carers website: www.youngcarers.net.au

Information and support for young carers. Includes a comprehensive resources and links section.

Carers NSW Young Carers website – Links section: www.youngcarersnsw.org.au/helpful-info

Lots of useful information for young carers, including phone numbers, links to other websites, apps, videos, brochures and articles. Some of the information is NSW specific, however, the majority isn't. The Carers NSW website also has an excellent resource section on the NDIS.

Carers SA website: <http://carers-sa.asn.au>

Information about supports available in SA. Includes a section for young carers.

Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI) website: www.copmi.net.au

Information and videos for children and teenagers who have a parent with a mental illness.

National Carer Gateway website

<https://www.carergateway.gov.au>

A national online and phone service that provides information and referrals for carers. It includes an **online service finder** to connect carers with local support services. There is also a section on **Centrelink payments** for carers including young carers.

National Disability Insurance Scheme website: www.ndis.gov.au

Information about the NDIS. Includes a section for families and carers.

ReachOut website: www.reachout.com

Information for young people on a range of topics

SA Government Carers Website: www.sa.gov.au/carers

Information for carers. Features a “Carer Support Finder” online search map covering SA.

SA Government Crisis Helplines website: www.sa.gov.au/topics/emergencies-and-safety/safety-at-home-and-in-the-community/crisis-helplines

A comprehensive list of crisis helplines available in SA.

Young Carer Bursary Programme Website: <http://bursaries.youngcarers.net.au>

Some young carers are missing out on education or training because of the pressures they face.

Bursaries are available to reduce these pressures and support young carers to complete or return to education or training.

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