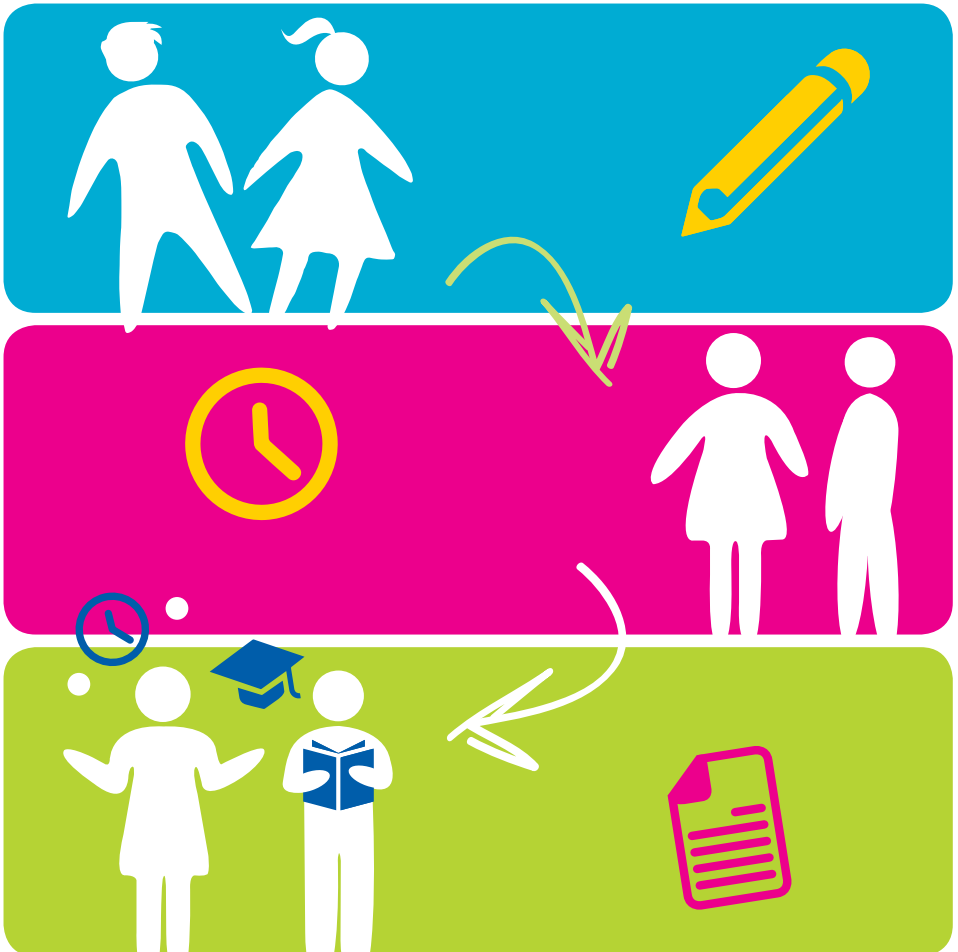


Know your Rights:

Support for Young Carers and
Young Adult Carers in England



Your notes



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About Carers Trust

Carers Trust is a major new charity for, with and about carers. We work to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, **unpaid**, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems.

We do this with a UK wide network of quality assured independent partners, through our unique online services and through the provision of grants to help carers get the extra help they need to live their own lives. With locally based Network Partners we are able to support carers in their homes through the provision of replacement care, and in the community with information, advice, emotional support, hands on practical help and access to much needed breaks. We offer specialist services for carers of people of all ages and conditions and a range of individually tailored support and group activities.

Who this guide is for

This guide is for young carers and young adult carers.

Carers are people who care, **unpaid**, for a family member or friend with an illness or disability, mental health condition or an addiction.

In this booklet, we've used the term **young carer** to describe someone who is under 18, as this is who the law says a young carer is.

We've also used the term **young adult carer** to describe someone who is 14–25.

There are different rights for young carers and young adult carers for them to get support depending on their age. In this guide you can find out about what rights you have and how to get more support.

The **first part** of this guide tells you about what an assessment is, and the different kinds of assessments the law says you can have, depending on your age.

The **second part** tells you about how the assessment works, and what happens after the assessment.

These are your rights

As a young carer or a young adult carer you have a right to be supported and to get the help you need.

You have these rights whether you look after someone every day or from time to time, or if you do a lot of or a little caring.

You shouldn't be doing a caring role that:

- Makes you feel worried, sad or lonely.
- Makes your health worse.
- Means that you miss out on time with friends.
- Means you do worse at school, college or university.
- Stops you getting a job or keeping a job.
- Stops you wanting to achieve your goals for the future.

Your needs are important. That is why there are laws that tell your council that they have to find out what support you need by asking you some questions. This is called an assessment.



What is an assessment?

'Assessment' means a discussion with you to find out information about:

- You.
- The caring you do.

The information is needed so that the person doing the assessment can make decisions with you about:

- Whether your situation is okay.
- If more support would help you and the person you care for.

An assessment for a young carer or a young adult carer isn't like an exam or about how good you are at supporting the person you care for. The focus is on whether the council is doing enough to support *you* so that you have the same chances as other people your age.

The assessment is free.

There are three types of assessments for young carers and young adult carers, depending on how old you are. You will find information about them in this booklet:

1. **Young carer's assessment for carers under 18.**
2. **Transition assessment for young adult carers before they are 18.**
3. **Carer's assessment for all carers aged 18 or over.**

There is more information about the person who will have the discussion with you and what the assessment will be like on page 15.



The right to a young carer's assessment for carers under 18

Who is a young carer's assessment for?

Young carers under 18 can get a young carer's assessment. That includes you whether you do lots of caring or not very much caring.

What happens at the assessment and what happens afterwards?

At the assessment, someone will ask you questions to help them build a picture of how your caring role is part of your life.

Afterwards the council must give a written report to you and your parent(s) that says:

- What you talked about.
- What will happen next.
- Whether the council thinks you, the person you care for or someone in your family should get help.

Later on, you will be told:

- What help the council will give.
- What help other services might be able to give.



You should also be told when the council will do a review in the future when you can say whether things have changed or stayed the same. There is more information on page 15.

Who says what about a young carer's assessment?

I say

I have a right to a young carer's assessment from my local authority under the Children and Families Act 2014.

A young carer worker says

I will help young carers to get the assessment they are entitled to.

The council says

The council will provide assessments for young carers as required by the Children and Families Act Part 5 Section 96 and in line with the Young Carers (Needs Assessments) Regulations 2015.



The right to a transition assessment for young adult carers before they are 18

What is a transition assessment and who is it for?

A transition assessment is separate to a young carer's assessment. It is about how the different services for children and for adults will affect you when you become 18.

Before you are 18, children's services from the council give you support if you need it. After you are 18, adult services might give you that support. Transition is the time when you and adult services decide together what should happen after you are 18.

There are different rights for carers under 18 and over 18 so someone who knows the local rules will explain how the support and services might change once you are 18.

There is no set age when the transition assessment should happen. It should happen well before you are 18. This is so that there is enough time to discuss and decide what support should be ready when you are 18.





For an assessment to go ahead you need to give your permission to the council or organisation doing the assessment. Sometimes the council may think you are not able to make that decision, or you are in danger. If this happens they may decide you need to have a transition assessment anyway.

What happens at the transition assessment?

The transition assessment will look at different parts of your life.

You will find more information about what happens at an assessment on page 15. We've also included the sort of things you can tell the person doing the assessment about your caring role.

There are some extra things that are discussed at a transition assessment. These are:

- Whether you want to:
 - continue providing care as a young adult carer
 - stop being a young adult carer
 - change your caring role.
- What support from the council would be helpful for you to achieve your goals after you turn 18.
- When you turn 18 you will be able to receive services to help you achieve your goals (this depends on what kinds of support you need and how much money you have).

What happens after the transition assessment?

After the assessment the council must give you and your parent(s) a written report that says what you talked about and what will happen next. It will say whether the council thinks:

- You should get help.
- The person you care for should get help.
- Or someone in your family should get help.

The assessment report must tell you if you will be able to receive support services from the council after you are 18 and if there would be a cost for those services. Some services are free to everyone, some you can choose to pay for and some are free if you have less money.



What help might I get?

Later on, you will be told what help the council will give, and what help other services might be able to give.

After the assessment the council may agree with you that they'll work with other people, for example staff at your college or the university you want to go to, so that they understand what they can do to help you.

Your assessment report

The council should give you information and advice. This information can be about how to help yourself stay well. They can also tell you about services in the area that may be helpful for you, for example young adult carer groups.

Who says what about a transition assessment?

I say

I have a right to a transition assessment as a young carer from my local authority under the Care Act 2014.

A young adult carer worker says

I will help young adult carers to get the transition assessment they are entitled to and for it to happen at the time when it will help them the most.

The council says

The council will provide transition assessments for young adult carers as set out in the Care Act 2014 Section 63–65 and following the Care and Support Statutory Guidance.



The right to a carer's assessment for all carers aged 18 or over

Who is a carer's assessment for?

All carers aged 18 and over who the council decides may benefit from services can have a carer's assessment. The aim is to find out whether their situation could be made better if they had information, support or services from the council. You don't have to have an assessment if you don't want one.

What happens at the carer's assessment?

At the assessment, someone from the council will ask you questions to help them build a picture of how your caring role has an effect on different parts of your life. You will find more information about what happens at an assessment on page 15. We've also included the sort of things you can tell the person doing the assessment about your caring role.

What happens after the carer's assessment?

After the assessment the council should give you a written report that says what was discussed and what



was decided about the council providing services. You can also ask for a copy of the report to go to the person you care for and anyone else you want.

Who says what about the right to a carer's assessment for someone aged 18 or over?

I say

I have a right to an assessment because I am a carer, as it says in the Care Act 2014. I can have an assessment even if the person I care for does not want one or does not get support themselves.

A young adult carer worker says

I will help a young adult carer aged 18 or over to get an assessment under the Care Act 2014 so that they can discuss their support needs and find out what is available from the council.

The council says

We will provide carers' assessments to young adult carers who are aged 18 or over in line with duties in the Care Act 2014 so that they can fulfil their aspirations in relation to their education, employment and health.

Your right to get support for you and your family together

What is the whole family approach?

When the council does the assessment, it has to think about what your support needs are as a young carer or young adult carer. At the same time the council has to think about supporting other people in your family.

This is called a whole family approach and it is meant to build up a proper understanding of how different people in the family affect and support each other. Without that the council is missing out on the whole picture of what is going on and it's harder to see what would help you and other family members.

Sometimes, the council may decide it is better not to think about supporting everyone with the whole family approach. This should only happen when there is a good reason not to look at the family as a whole.



What is a joint assessment?

As part of the whole family approach your assessment may be done at the same time as an assessment of the person you care for. This is called a joint assessment. That should only happen if everyone is happy with it, including you.

Even if you have a joint assessment you should still be able to talk separately from the other people who are involved so you can say things in private.



About the assessment

How do I get an assessment?

You might already be in contact with someone from the council, like a social worker, who knows that you are a carer, or thinks you might be one. If this is the case, they should tell you about having an assessment and set it up.

If no one offers you an assessment, then you can ask for one from the council's children's service or adult social services. If you are under 18, your parent(s) can also ask for you to have an assessment.

Getting the assessment set up so it fits with what you want

This is *your* assessment, so it's okay to say how you want it to be.

Finding the right time

It is okay to tell the council when would be a good time of the day or week for you and your family to have an assessment. For example, if you go to college on a Thursday, or your dad's medicine means he is often sleepy in the mornings, another day or afternoon would be better. You will be told when your assessment will happen. If you can't make it you will be able to arrange another time and date.





How long it will take

You can ask how long the council thinks it might last. It is okay to say you have other things to do, for example schoolwork. The time the assessment takes will vary, and it might need to take place over more than one day, perhaps if you or the person you care for gets tired, or can't concentrate, or if things are very complicated.

Where it will happen

The assessment might happen where you live, or in a young carer's centre. If you think a different place would be better you can tell the people organising the assessment so they can choose the place you want.

The person doing the assessment

You might want a certain type of person to do the assessment, for example, a man or a woman, or a person who understands your particular culture or background. It may not always be possible for the council to do this but it is okay to ask.

How many people will carry out the assessment?

There might be more than one person carrying out the assessment.

“The people who came to our house didn't put any pressure on us, they gave us the time needed to fully explain our specific situation in a way which was best for me.”

Tips from a young carer

Self-assessment

Sometimes you will be given the option to do the assessment by yourself. This is called a self-assessment. You don't have to have a self-assessment if you don't want to. Tell the person planning the assessment if you don't want a self-assessment.

People you might want to be involved

You can ask for people to be at the assessment. This might be someone who:

- Will help you speak up.
- Is good at saying things if you get stuck.
- Will help you be less worried.

You should be asked in advance who you would like to have at the assessment but if you're not asked then you can just say so – you don't have to wait to be asked.

There may be adults you can think of who know your situation really well, like a teacher, a doctor, a family friend or someone else. You can ask for them to talk about what they know about you at the assessment to help build a picture of your caring role and your life.

If you want someone with you but don't know an adult who could come along, then you can have an advocate. An advocate's job is to stick up for what you want. They can also help you get ready for the assessment before it takes place. If you would like to have an advocate you should ask the person who is planning the assessment.



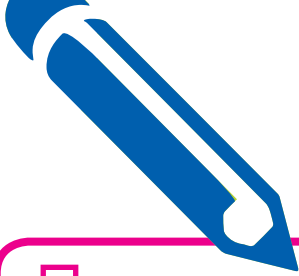
Things you can think about before the assessment

It is good to think about your assessment before it happens. The assessment is a time to talk about you, which can be difficult. It is important to tell the person doing the assessment about all the ways caring affects you.

Some of the things you might want to think about or add to a list (you can use the notes pages in this booklet):

- All the different ways you provide care and support, for example:
 - helping around the house
 - helping with medicine
 - getting food ready
 - cheering someone up when they are sad, worried or hear voices
 - getting someone to bed when they have had too much to drink or taken drugs
 - keeping an eye on or looking after your brother or sister.
- How your caring role can go up and down.
- The ways that caring affects you – good and bad.
- Whether it is different on some days. Maybe things feel different on school or work days than they do at holidays or weekends.





- If you think it is okay for you to carry on as a carer or should it change a bit or change completely. It is okay to say that you would like to stop being a carer or stop parts of it.
- The impact on your education (school, college or university and planning for your studies in the future).
- The impact on your paid job if you work or on your plans to look for one.
- How being a carer affects your health and your feelings.
- Whether you feel you have someone to talk to.
- What your dream life would be in ten years' time and how your plans will be affected if your caring role stays the same, gets less or more.
- What services help now and why they are good.
- What services you don't have but think would help you.

“Maybe just write down a list of the main points you'd like to discuss or the main jobs you do around the house. Maybe consider the type of support you'd like from them. Above all, just remember, they are there to help you so be honest.”

Tips from a young carer



You may have questions about what will happen after the assessment. You can also write these down or record them to remind you at the assessment. Some ideas are:

- What happens next?
- Will I be sent a record? When? Who gets sent a copy?
- What do I do if things get worse before I hear from you?
- What if things change or get worse in the future?

Ways to get ready before the assessment

To remind yourself of everything you want to say you can:

- Make a list (you can use the notes pages in this booklet).
- Draw a picture.
- Keep a diary for a few days.
- Record a video or audio.



At the assessment

This is your assessment so you can ask questions so it goes how you want.

The person doing the assessment might work for the council. Or the person might work for another organisation – like a charity – that the council has asked to do the assessment.

- When you are all talking, it's okay to ask people to slow down, or explain things, or to say that you would like a break.
- Sometimes it can feel hard to say to adults what you would like, but it is okay to do this. It will help everyone get the most out of the assessment.
- It's okay to say things are difficult, this doesn't mean you are being unfair to the person you care for or that you or they will get into trouble.
- It can sometimes be hard to say you don't want to keep caring.
- The person may write down what you are saying, to help them remember what you said.

The person you care for should have the chance to take part in the discussion. If you're under 18, your parent(s) should also be able to take part. This could happen with you or separately.

The law says the council has to look at what you and your family need and work out how you can be supported.



What to expect after the assessment



The council has to give a written copy of the assessment to you, and anyone else you ask them to, for example, your young carers support worker.

If you are under 18 the council has to give a written copy to your parent(s). Your parent(s) can also ask the council to give a copy to other people, for example a teacher at your school.

If you are worried about the written copy, or particular information, being shared with your parent(s) you should talk to the person doing the assessment and explain what you want.

The council has to decide what help they should be giving. This could involve giving help to the person that you look after, so that you do not have to do so much caring.

You will be told about the sort of help you can have and how to get that help. Help might include:

- Having someone to help the person you care for get up in the morning, so that you can get to school or work on time without having to help them.
- Time away from the person you care for so that you can do other things that aren't about caring.



Where to get support and information

Young carer and young adult carer services in your area

Carers Trust Network Partners support young carers and young adult carers in many parts of the UK. This includes offering:

- Practical and emotional support such as breaks and counselling.
- Clubs, activities and holidays.

To find a local Carers Trust service, call 0844 800 4361 or visit Carers.org.

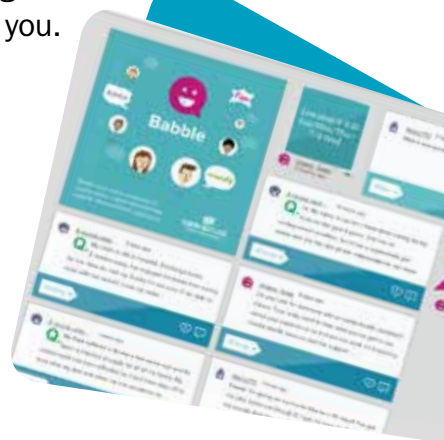
If you can't find a carers service in your local area then you can search for a young carer service online or get in touch with Carers Trust by emailing support@carers.org and we can search for you.

Babble



Visit babble.carers.org or email youngcarers@carers.org

Babble is Carers Trust's new online community where young carers under 18 can find others in a similar position, chat, have fun, share experiences and access information and support online from an expert team.





Matter

Visit matter.carers.org or email matter@carers.org

Matter is for carers aged 16–25. This online service enables young adult carers to post photos, update statuses, ask for help and share their thoughts and comments from wherever they are.



Carers.org

Visit Carers.org or email support@carers.org 

Carers.org is for adult carers, with users aged 18 to 80+, with a focus on sharing knowledge and finding solidarity, backed by access to expert and authoritative welfare information.



Office of the Children’s Commissioner advice and assistance line

They can help with questions you have about your rights, welfare and safety.

Email: advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Freephone: 0800 528 0731

The phone number is free from a landline, but may cost from a mobile.

The phone line is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Your notes





seven million
reasons to care

We have tried to ensure this booklet is accurate but it does not cover every detail of the law. Therefore, it might contain mistakes or some information may have been left out. There are legal Regulations and Guidance which explain how the law should work in more detail. If you are reading a printed copy of this booklet, you can check it is the latest copy online.

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Authors: Chloe Alexander and Laura Bennett

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Please note, identities and photos of carers have been changed in the interest of privacy.

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