



14+

My Next Steps

Helping young carers prepare for further education, apprenticeships, and employment while balancing caring responsibilities and mental wellbeing



My future, my choices

Did you know?

Being a young carer doesn't mean you have to put your future on hold.

As a young carer you can:

- ✓ Get support with your caring role
- ✓ Have access to learn
- ✓ Plan your future
- ✓ Enjoy free time
- ✓ Take part in activities
- ✓ Build friendships

When I leave school I want to:

- ☐ Go to college
- ☐ Sixth form
- ☐ Start work
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Apprenticeship
- ☐ Not sure yet
- ☐ Other

My biggest hope for the future:

My biggest worry:



Know your rights

As a young carer in England, you have the right to:

- ✓ Have your caring role recognised
- ✓ Request a carers assessment
- ✓ Be involved with decisions that affect your life
- ✓ Have support that helps you achieve your goals



There are three laws that recognise young carers in England:

The Children Act 1989

The Care Act 2014

Health and Care Act 2022

More information about these acts can be found on the [Carers Trust](#) website.

These include the right for every young carer to have an assessment to better understand what support they need.

A specific assessment for older young carers (for example, young carers aged 16 and 17) is offered to discuss their needs and what support will be required when turning 18 (Imago also offer a 'Moving Forward' resource for 16+ school leavers)

The Government has also given local councils clear guidance on what they have to do to support young carers.



Scan for Carers Trust website

Understanding your options

We can often put a lot of pressure on ourselves to have it all 'figured out'. Before you make any decisions about what you may want to do when you finish school, have a look at your options.

SIXTH FORM

- Good if you want to extend your school learning to gain A-Level or BTEC qualifications



COLLEGE

- Good if you want to experience a more 'adult feel' and have access to a wider range of practical and vocational learning



APPRENTICESHIPS

- Good if you want to earn while you learn, gain skills to kick-start your career as well as gain further qualifications



SUPPORTED INTERNSHIPS

- Particularly beneficial to young people with SEND as more structured, work-based study

QUESTIONS TO ASK

What pastoral support is available?

How many hours/days will I attend?

Am I eligible for Carers Allowance?

What other financial support is available?

How will I fit this around my caring responsibilities?

What can I put in place to help me feel confident about this?



Applying for further education

Since 2023, college and UCAS applications include a question around whether you have caring responsibilities.

It is strongly advised for students to disclose their caring responsibilities during the application process to ensure they receive the right support such as; bursaries, workload adjustments, and wellbeing support.

For advice and guidance on how to apply for college or university as a young carer, head to the [UCAS](#) website

BEFORE YOU APPLY

Research:

- ✓ Entry requirements
- ✓ Course content
- ✓ Timetables
- ✓ Funding options
- ✓ Available support
- ✓ Work placements
- ✓ Travel

My top 3 courses

Course

Why I like it

Entry requirements

1

2

3



Scan for UCAS website. Not achieved the results you wanted? Why not take a look at the [clearing](#) process?

Writing a great personal statement

Writing a compelling personal statement when applying to a college or university can be key to being invited to interview or securing a place.

UCAS 'frames caring responsibilities not as a disadvantage, but as proof of exceptional maturity, time management, and resilience'

Young carers have so many transferable skills. From emotional support to practical, financial and administrative support. Colleges and universities will want to know!

Click or scan for guide



My personal statement planner:

Why this course interests me: _____

Experience I'm proud of: _____

Future goals: _____

Instead of "I help at home"
Try: "Supporting a family member has developed my organisational and problem-solving skills"

CV Builder

Even if you're not currently looking for work or training, having an up to date CV is useful to have.

Much like the college and university application process, this is a chance to showcase your lived experience, life skills and any achievements.

There are many free and useful CV builders online including one specifically for young people through Barclays:



 **BARCLAYS** | LifeSkills

My CV checklist

- ☐ Personal details
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Skills
- ☐ Achievements
- ☐ Volunteering
- ☐ Work experience
- ☐ References

My skills bank



Organisation



Communication



Support others



Calm under pressure



Solve problems



Work independently



Initiative



Adapt to change



Manage routines



How many examples can you give for each skill?
What else could you add to your bank?

Interview confidence

For many young carers, having responsibilities from such a young age will be second nature, so thinking of this as having valuable skills worth sharing in an interview may seem strange.

Think of your skills bank and try to reframe your experiences. Many employers, particularly the care and support sectors will value your skills highly.

“

Common questions...

- Tell me about yourself
- Why do you want this course/job?
- What are your strengths?
- Describe a challenge you've overcome



STAR method

- S** **Situation** - Talk about the situation that you were in
- T** **Task** - Explain the task that was set
- A** **Action** - What action you took and why
- R** **Result** - The result of your actions. If it was negative, explain what you learned from this

Practice examples...

Challenge:

What I did:

Outcome:



Take a look at the Carers Trust website for their interview tips for young carers



Effective communication

It's important to remember that your thoughts and feelings matter. Effective communication is key to achieving your full potential and involves creating a safe and non-judgemental space to express yourself.

Speaking up about what you need

It's ok to tell people:

"I'm a young carer"

"I may need flexibility"

"Can you please explain that differently?"

"I'm worried about balancing everything"

Communication tips...

Be honest

Ask questions

Take notes

Repeat back important information

Ask for help early

Reflection

What am I worried they might say?

What would I like them to understand?

Conversation starters with your cared for

"I've been thinking about what I might like to do and wanted to talk about it"

"I'm interested in applying for..."

"I'm worried about how things will work if I'm not here"

"Who else could help us when I'm at college or university?"



Money matters

Many of our young carers have said that it's the financial side of things that worries them most when leaving school. As a young carer, you may be eligible for additional financial support.

You might worry about

- £ Travel costs
- £ Equipment
- £ Lunches
- £ Not being able to work
- £ Supporting family budget

BUT REMEMBER

You may be entitled to:

- College bursaries
- Hardship funds/grants
- Carers Allowance
- Travel support
- Free meals

Young Minds says...



Talk to someone you trust

This can feel really tough and awkward, but most people have been worried about money at one point or another. They might be able to offer you advice that you hadn't thought of before.



Think about who you follow online

Social media can sometimes make you feel worse about your situation. Like if you see people on your feed buying lots of new things, doing 'hauls' and showing off their successes. Try to follow accounts that make you feel good, and remember that not everything you see on social media is real.



Make a list of what's important

Keep a list of what's important for you to spend money on to help you focus on what you need. You could also write down longer-term goals for your money to help you remember what's most important to you.



Plan ahead

If your mood tends to influence your spending habits, it can help to set limits on your accounts or have a plan in place for when you notice your mood shifting. Distract yourself with activities that make you feel good or create a self-soothe box to help ground you in those moments.

Questions to ask...

- “ What financial support is available to me?
- “ How do I apply?
- “ What evidence do I need?



Volunteering your way to work

If you're not sure what you want to do when you leave school, that's ok, there are plenty of options available to you.

It might be that you find your calling during work experience or you can find out what groups there are locally to volunteer i.e. cadets, sport clubs and events, retail, animal welfare or through the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Volunteering can...

- Help build confidence
- Feel rewarding
- Develop new skills
- Help you explore career options
- Strengthen college or job applications
- Lead to an employment offer
- Expand your social network



Take a look at our YouTube channel to watch a short video about how your transferable skills in volunteering could lead to work



Common questions during a volunteer interview...

- “ What impact do you hope to make here?
- “ What are you passionate about?
- “ What skills can you bring to the team?
- “ How do you adapt or handle unexpected challenges?



Take a look at the Do-it website to find volunteer opportunities near you



Wellbeing check-in

It's totally normal to feel overwhelmed sometimes. Especially if going through transition, exams, staying connected with friends as well as your caring responsibilities. It's important to take time for you!

Take a look at our wellbeing tips on the [Imago](#) website

What I can do when I feel overwhelmed...

MY SUPPORT NETWORK

Family: _____

Friend: _____

Professional: _____

Carer service: _____



Breathing techniques...

BOX BREATHING

Breathe in as you count 1, 2, 3, 4

Hold as you count 1, 2, 3, 4

Breathe out as you count 1, 2, 3, 4

Hold as you count 1, 2, 3, 4

Keep your counting even and trace your finger along the 4 edges of the box or anything with 4 sides if that helps you to keep focus

Repeat 3 times

NOSE BREATHING

Breathe in through your nose
Give a big sigh and drop your shoulders downwards as you breathe out through your mouth

Repeat 4 times



Scan for our wellbeing resource

Transition action plan



Any form of transition or change can be scary and something many young carers especially experience a lot of the time.

Providing care to a loved one can be unpredictable and mean managing emotions is difficult and often confusing.

However, change can also be a good thing if we learn how to control how we react to it.

Describe a big change you are facing at the moment	What worries you about this change?
What positive things could come from this?	What actions can you take to help this feel more of a positive change?

Take breaks, get sleep, stay hydrated and focus on what you can control

This month I will:

- ☐ Research my options
- ☐ Attend an open day
- ☐ Update my CV
- ☐ Practice interview questions



Useful sites, apps and services

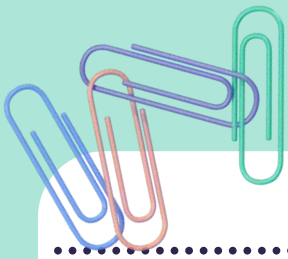
- ➔ **Young Minds**: practical advice and mental health support for young people
- ➔ **Childline**: online and telephone support for young people
- ➔ **Health for Teens**: health information and advice
- ➔ **Sibs**: for brothers and sisters of disabled children and adults
- ➔ **Beat**: website dedicated to eating disorders
- ➔ **Samaritans**: support for anyone in emotional distress
- ➔ **Stem 4**: supporting teenage mental health
- ➔ **National Autistic Society**: leading UK charity for people with autism and their families
- ➔ **The Mix**: support for under 25s



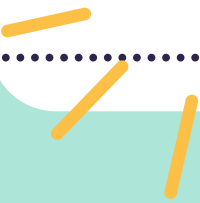
Apps



Notes



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, spanning the width of the page.



Our community

If you are under 16yrs and want to get in touch, speak to your support coordinator, young carer champion/school, or a parent/guardian who can contact our team.

If you want to know more about Imago services or download further resources, visit our website:



Visit our YouTube channel



Parents/guardians can follow us on our socials for news and updates in your area:



Imago Facebook



Imago Instagram



Passionate about making positive change for carers?

Why not consider joining our Youth (up to 17yrs) or Adult (18+) Shadow Board.

Speak to your Support Coordinator or school!

