

Higher and further education

"My dream is to go to university and it has always been in my head that I wouldn't go to university too close (to home) because it was my way of gaining independence. However, I am not sure I can go because it means leaving home and there isn't the support there for everyone else if I go."

Who is this chapter for?

- School lead or staff interested in becoming/establishing a school lead within your school.
- Transition lead
- Year head
- Young carers' services
- Colleges and universities
- Careers services

This chapter will support schools to:

- put in place support to enable young adult carers to access the college, university or the workplace that they choose.
- ensure young carers do not miss out on EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) payments due to their caring responsibilities.
- support young carers to achieve qualifications and a career path of their choosing.
- ensure caring experiences, skills and other strengths gained are positively acknowledged and included in young carers' CVs.

Synopsis

Further Education (FE) colleges should be aware of young carers' issues and have policies and practices in place to support them so that young carers are not disadvantaged and are enabled to have equal opportunities to attend courses if they wish. Flexibility and/or support with coursework demands may be needed at times for some young carers.



Good practice in transition from secondary school to further education

As with the transition from primary to secondary school, further education colleges should also be aware of any young carer moving up from secondary school. Schools should, therefore, pass on any relevant information as appropriate or encourage and support young carers and their families to volunteer this information.

Young carers may need more intense support when moving on from school into further education or the workplace or with living on their own and establishing relationships. The majority of young carers' services offer support to young carers up to the age of 18 and some offer specific programmes of work to support transition issues.

Schools and colleges should also ensure extra support is available, or that the young carer is linked into other service providers, such as health, careers, benefits agency, adult social care or adult carers' services (at age 18) to support them at this potentially difficult period.

A young carer moving away from home, perhaps to college or university, should trigger a review of the care needed for the person who needs care.

Note that at the time of writing, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and The Children's Society were unaware of any UK university with support in place for young adult carers.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

EMA is a weekly payment of up to £30 per week for eligible learners attending a valid learning programme. It is paid directly to the young person and can help with the day-to-day costs of staying in learning.

EMA guidance advises learning providers to consider whether a young person has any caring responsibilities that have an on-going effect on their attendance and where necessary providers should explore solutions personally with the young person.¹

Thinking about the future

Although many young carers have acquired specific skills from their caring role, careers advice should not hastily encourage young carers into pursuing a career related to caring. It is likely that young carers need additional support in realising the breadth of options available to them and broadening their horizons. It is important for someone to be available to listen to possible concerns a young carer may have about their future, moving away from home and their aspirations.

Other chapters within this resource to help you understand this topic

- 4** Barriers to learning faced by young carers
- 28** Support for the whole family: signposting, referrals and partnership work
- 31** Transition from primary to secondary school



Key resources

→ **Andy's story (a university student)**

www.youngcarers.net/who_can_help_me/89/240

→ **Young Adult Carers in the UK: Experiences, Needs and Services for Carers aged 16-24**

The research is a 'mixed-methods' investigation and includes a literature review, secondary analysis of 2001 Census data, a survey of 25 young carers projects, a survey of 13 adult carers services, five focus groups with 29 young carers aged 16 and 17, discussions with staff at focus group sites, and in-depth interviews with 25 young adult carers aged 18-24 across Britain.

www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/articles/young-adult-carers-research,4382,PR.html

→ **Young Adult Carers Access to Education and Training**

Policy briefing paper and a project summary report, produced by NIACE with funding from the Nuffield Foundation, to raise awareness of the issues around access to education and training for young adult carers, aged 16 - 25, as they go through key transitions.

www.niace.org.uk/current-work/young-adult-carers-access-to-education-and-training

¹Frank, J. & McLarnon, J. (2008). *Young carers, parents and their families: Key principles of practice*. The Children's Society