



Reducing Impact of Risk

No one is free from risk, but if we promote good mental health and wellbeing which enhances resiliencies, then young carers we work are more likely to cope positively and avoid more serious problems. It is difficult to shelter young carers from all adversity. We often work with young carers who are in situations that are difficult to alter, but we can provide safe spaces for them and look at ways of helping them to deal with their life. For some young carers it may be that risk can be reduced by altering the situation, for example, working with family members to take on more of a caring role in certain circumstances allowing the young carer to attend school or go out with friends.

Reducing Negative Chain Reactions

Chain reactions, such as being excluded from school, often lead into seemingly unconnected areas of life, e.g. family arguments following exclusion from school may lead to young carer running away. Intervening early enough when young carer starts to talk about how they are feeling, or act out how they feel, can instil some coping strategies and give them space to work out what is going on and who or what they need to put in place to help. By doing this the young carer's natural resiliency can be allowed to blossom.

Promoting Self Esteem and Self Efficacy

Self-esteem is a sense of self-worth, and self-efficacy is a belief that one can “cope successfully with life's challenges”. As we all know this is easier said than done. Research has shown that intimate relationships and the accomplishment of tasks are essential in promoting self-esteem and self-efficacy. The most secure relationship for any child is a secure attachment to a parent (or primary care-giver). When this relationship is interrupted, such as parental illness, it can have an impact on the resilience of the young person. Helping them come to terms with this change and find coping strategies can promote resilience and positive self-concept.

Succeeding at tasks is also an important factor in resilience. Encouraging young carers when they have completed a task, however small, is a great way of promoting self-esteem. Even if the task is not related to specific group work, encouragement should always be given for completion of the task.

Providing Opportunities

Chances to be involved in experiences such as academic work, employment training and positive social experiences are all important in promoting and aiding resilience. Such activities give the young person skills, such as literacy skills or social interaction skills. They also give a young person a sense of hope for the future and that there is some meaning in life. Without this young people learn that there is very little meaning in life and they can give up on hope and see no way out of situations. As workers we can make young carers aware of life opportunities and help them figure out which resources best suit their needs.