

# PARENT/CARER SAFEGUARDING UPDATE COVID-19

Oasis Academy: Silvertown

01 July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Following a census in 2011 there were 166,000 formally identified young carers in the UK. However The Children's Society say that the figure is now more likely to be around 800,000. Caring responsibilities can be demanding, and due to COVID-19 young carers across the country will be experiencing increased stress and worry over those they're caring for. It's therefore really important that we identify young carers as early as possible so that we can provide additional help and support.

## Is my child a young carer?

Young carers can access support from school and other agencies and so it's important to recognise if young people have a caring role

- Do they need to stay at home a lot in case they are needed?
- Are they there for someone who needs emotional support because they are down or depressed?
- Do they need to be on hand to help someone with personal care like washing, toileting or getting dressed?
- Do they help out by running errands like shopping or do they need to do cleaning or cooking because someone can't manage?
- Are they looking after brothers and sisters because someone is not feeling up to it or they can't do this by themselves?

If the answer is "YES" to any of the questions, then your child has caring responsibilities.

If school is not already aware, please let Mrs. R Gill know as she oversees support for young carers in school

[romala.gill@oasissilvertown.org](mailto:romala.gill@oasissilvertown.org)



A 'young carer' is defined in section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014 as: '...a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person.'

This relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, frail elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances.



Phone our Carers Hub on 0300 303 1555

## Getting help

Sometimes caring for others can feel over-whelming and a young carer can experience the following:

- Stress due to too much responsibility  
*Physically tired*
- Constantly worried about their relative's health  
*Find it hard to cope with other people's moods*  
*Struggling to balance caring and school work*  
*Missing school due to caring responsibilities*
- Feeling embarrassed or angry about the situation
- Low self-esteem, anger or guilt
- Feeling socially isolated

Young Carers can miss on average 48 days of school per year due to their caring role, and they are more vulnerable to bullying. Even if a young person is coping well or has support from other relatives or family friends, it's important that they can get some support from others who understand their situation.

**Carers Line: 0117 965 2200**

## Young carers of parents who misuse substances

Between 250,000—350,000 children are affected by parents misusing drugs (The Children's Society) Children and young people in families affected by substance misuse can be very reluctant to let people know they are experiencing difficulties. This can be due to the stigma surrounding their parents' drug or alcohol misuse, the illegal nature of some drug use, and the fear of outside agencies' involvement

The caring roles undertaken by young carers in families affected by parental substance misuse can also include dealing with the aftermath of alcohol or substance misuse, hiding what happens at home and keeping secrets.

The chaotic and episodic nature of substance misuse may disrupt children's routines and relationships leading to behavioural and emotional problems

Many children in families affected by substance misuse can blame themselves for their parent's behaviour. It's vitally important that these young carers understand this is not their fault and that there is help and support out there.

