





NHS
Leicestershire Partnership
NHS Trust







Young Carers Pack





Information for young carers living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Created by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) with support from Leicestershire Young Carers.

TRIANGLE OF CARE
MEMBER

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What is a young carer?

A young carer is someone under 18 who helps take care of a family member who is sick, has a disability, mental health problems or issues with drugs or alcohol. You might care for someone you don't live with.

Some young carers have been helping for a long time. Many started helping very quickly, like overnight.

There are lots of young carers. In England, about 800,000 young people aged 11 to 16 are young carers. Some don't even know they are young carers. Often, young people only realise they are young carers when they start secondary school and notice their home life is different from their friends. Sometimes, you might not think of yourself as a young carer because it just feels like helping your family.

Every young carer is different. They might help in different ways and care for different people but they are all still young carers.



"Whenever I think of a carer, I think of old people being cared for but it can be anyone" - Young carer

What a young carer might do

If you are a young carer, you might do some of these things:


Care for brothers, sisters, grandparents, parents or other family


Cook / wash up for the family


Clean the house


Do the laundry / change bed sheets and towels


Help your parents or brothers and sisters to wash themselves, get dressed or move about


Make sure the bills are paid


Help someone take their medication


Be there to talk to doctors, nurses, hospital staff or other healthcare workers with your family


Translating for them if they don't speak English or need BSL


Being an emotional support for your family member


Talk to other people, like the council or social workers, for your family

As a young carer, you have rights. **Click here** to learn more about young carers rights.

The facts

23% of young carers 'don't or do not often' have someone to talk to about their feelings.
Carers Trust

23% of young carers felt their caring role stopped them from making friends.
Action for Children

36% of young carers or young adult carers ' always' or 'usually' feel worried because of being a young carer or young adult carer.
Carers Trust

80% of young carers feel they are not receiving the support they need.
Action for Children

42% of young carers or young adult carers 'always' or 'usually' feel stressed.
Carers Trust

As many as **1 in 5** children in the UK are young carers.
Barnardo's

How being a young carer can feel

We know caring can be rewarding but tough.
It can be difficult to look after yourself and other people at the same time. It could make you tired, stressed or poorly. It can affect your own mental health.

It might mean that you fall behind with school because you have to miss days or you haven't got time to do homework because you are caring for your family.

If this is how you feel, you are not alone. There are people and services who can help you and you won't get into trouble for being a young carer.



This video has been made by us at the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland speaking to a young carer about their experiences.
Click **here** to watch it.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFX0ouaG4ZA

A local young carer's own words

**"They became a young carer at 11.
Their dad had strokes. Then cancer.
Their sister has additional needs and requires a lot of attention.
Most of their mum's time went to her.**

**So, she stepped up. Without asking for anything back.
She learnt to cope. To be independent.**

**Homework was a struggle. It sometimes did not get done.
Not our of laziness but out of stress and responsibility.**

**In lessons, their mind wandered.
Worried filled the silence "What if they need me and I'm not there?"**

**At school they kept their head down.
Didn't act out. Didn't speak up.**

They carried everything - invisibly.

Now look at her. She passed all her GCSEs. Got into the college she dreamed of and finished her first year with the highest grades possible.

**She's still caring.
Still walking through each day with more on her shoulders than most will ever know.**

Still becoming someone even she didn't expect to be. "

Written by a member of Leicestershire Young Carers

Ways to look after yourself

Looking after your physical health as a young carer is just as important as your mental health and wellbeing. It is important for you and also helps the person you care for.



Eating well

Shopping, meal planning and preparation are important for good nutrition and a healthy, daily routine. **Click here** for more information about nutrition and diet.
www.healthforteens.co.uk/lifestyle/nutrition-diet/



Sleeping well

When you're caring for someone, you may need to see to their needs during the night making it harder to get enough sleep. Sleep problems can affect your energy and concentration levels making it difficult to carry out your caring role. **Click here** for more information about healthy sleep hygiene.
www.healthforteens.co.uk/lifestyle/sleeping/



Moving well

Research has shown that regular physical activity can improve mood, self- esteem and quality of sleep. Having good physical fitness, strength and flexibility reduces the risk of physical injury and fatigue from the demands of caring. **Click here** for more information about exercise.
www.healthforteens.co.uk/lifestyle/exercise/
www.active-together.org/letsgetmoving



Growing up

A lot changes when you are a teenager and it can be hard to know where to find reliable information. **Click here** to check out Health for Teens for up to date information on all things related to being a teen.
www.healthforteens.co.uk/growing-up/

Tips from young carers to other young carers

"You can get caught up in the role of a young carer but you are still a child and it's important to take the time to be a child"

"Take time for yourself to avoid burnout"

"Take the time to do something you enjoy"

"Finding a hobby you enjoy can be helpful as you can have fun, have a break from your caring responsibilities and meet new friends"



This is a video made by young carers in Buckinghamshire, created by **Fixers UK** talking about how tough being a young carer can be. Click **here** to watch it.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSSzd7-HqpE

Ways professionals can help you

If you are a young carer, you can get help from professionals by:



Telling the doctor (GP) of the person you care for that you are their young carer. If you have a different GP, tell them too. They will put that you are a young carer on your medical records so services know and can help you. It can make things easier if you're registered with the same doctor as the person you care for.



Ask for a **Carer's Assessment** from the Local Authority – this means your council (with Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council or Rutland County Council).



If the person you care for has care and support needs, ask for a Care and Support **Needs Assessment** from the local council too. Care and support needs means any kind of help a person needs because of disabilities or health problems. **Click here** for more information on care assessments. **www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/arranging-care/care-needs-assessment**



Check if you can get financial support, sometimes called benefits or a **carers allowance**. **Click here** for more information about getting benefits **www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/**



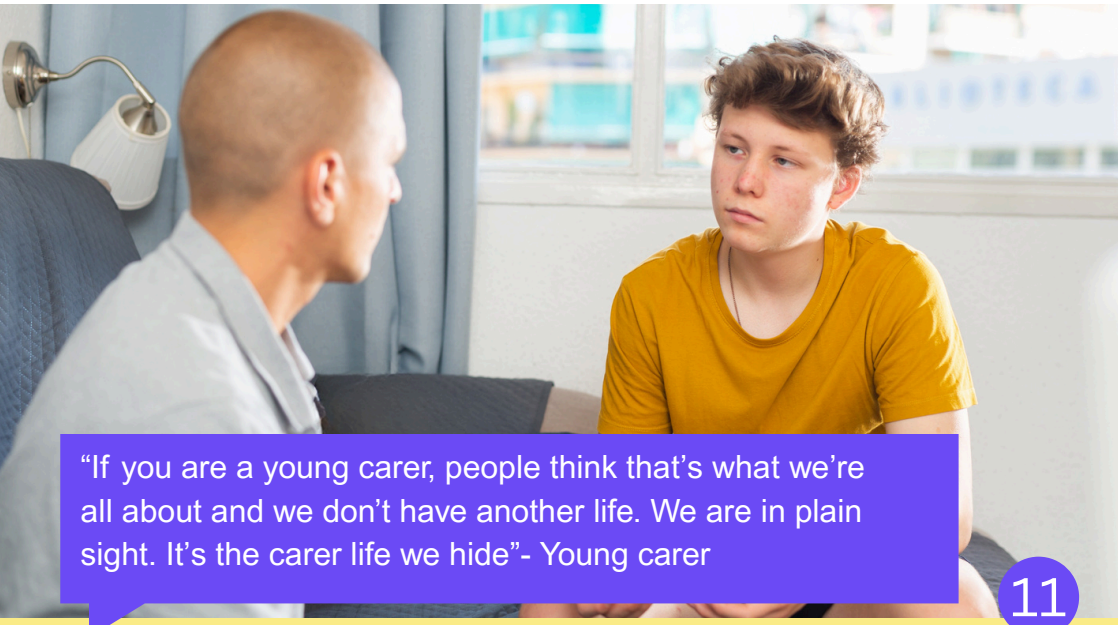
If you are at school/college, talk to your form tutor or pastoral care staff about the fact you are a young carer. They may be able to help you balance caring with your school work.

Ways professionals can help you

Councils offer in-person and online groups. To join these group you will need to self refer. Speak to the person at the council who is helping you with your young carer's passport application about these.

Caring can have a big impact on your own mental health. It's important to ask for support with looking after your mental health and wellbeing if you need it. **Click here to go to page 21 to learn more about mental health.**

If you need a break from caring, talk to your local carer support service about having a break. This is sometimes called **respite.**
Click here to learn more about carer's breaks and respite care
www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carer-breaks-and-respite-care/



"If you are a young carer, people think that's what we're all about and we don't have another life. We are in plain sight. It's the carer life we hide"- Young carer

Local support for young carers

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland have over 1 million people living here. What support you can access will depend on where you live. If you're not sure which area you live in, **click here** to view an interactive map of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. You can use the search bar on the left to search for where you live. Below the search bar, you will see a title called County. This will tell you whether you live in Leicester City, Leicestershire or Rutland. **If you're new to caring, these websites are a great place to start.**

Leicester City Council

Leicester City Council offer a variety of support for young carers living in Leicester City. You can call 0116 454 1004 and choose option 1 'City', then option 1 'Child'.
www.leicester.gov.uk/adult-social-care/support-young-carers

If you live in Leicester City, young carers can be supported via our: SEND and Early Help, Prevention and Social Care Offer; by contacting the number above; your local Children's Young Person or Family Centre or a Youth Centre you will be offered a Young Carers Assessment to help identify your needs, hopes and wishes. For Young Carers (13+) you will be offered a place to meet other young people who are carers. They organise activities including sports. Board games, gaming, and trips amongst other things. Some of you may need further or intense support, therefore you will be allocated either a Targeted Youth Support or a Family Support Worker. They can also hook you up with Connexions which is the careers service for young people aged between 16-18.

Once the Young Carers Assessment has been completed you will be offered a Young Carers ID and a free pass to any of the cities Leisure Centres. The ID will also give access to goodies such as vouchers and passes, when available.

For further information or for enquiries email **Young-CarersPlanning@leicester.gov.uk**

Leicestershire County Council

If you live in Leicestershire, you can contact **Leicestershire County Council** to access young carer's support. You can call 0116 305 0005 or complete their **online service form**.

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/social-care-and-supporting-families/help-for-young-carers/get-help-if-youre-a-young-carer

Leicestershire Young Carers

If you live in Leicester County, Leicestershire County Council run the **Children and Family Wellbeing Service** provides early help services to a child, young person or family, where they are having difficulties that cannot be supported by universal services, such as schools or GPs alone.

In the Youth and Justice Service, there is a Young Carers Team dedicated to support young carers in Leicestershire. They offer support to young carers 11-18 years old , an assessment of caring responsibilities, Young Carers Passport ID and 121 support where appropriate. There are also Young Carer youth groups in 5 locations in Leicestershire County Council areas, a Young Adult Carers 15+ virtual group and young carers can join CYCle to have a voice in decision making in the area.

All services are accessed through a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) or Self Referral for the Young Carers Team (including groups).

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/social-care-and-supporting-families/help-for-young-carers/how-to-tell-if-youre-a-young-carer

If you live in Rutland, you can contact **Rutland County Council** to access young carers information. You can call 01572 722 577 or visit their **website**. Rutland County Council can support you as much as possible with specialised help and advice.

www.rutland.gov.uk/children-young-people-families/services-young-people/young-carers

You can call their referral, assessment and intervention service on 01572 758 493 to ask for a young carers assessment. Someone from their team will come to your home to talk about your situation and work out how to help you.

Rutland County Council run three groups for young carers which allow you to: take time away from caring, get help for you and your family, get out to activities, find someone to talk to and meet other young carers.

The groups are:

- Little Stars - for young carers aged 5 to 8 - **www.bit.ly/3FrbnvD**
- Young Stars - for young carers aged 8 to 12 - **www.bit.ly/3TeH5BX**
- TOFU (Time Out for Us) - for young carers aged 13 and over - **www.bit.ly/3JGWLdV**

www.rutland.gov.uk/children-young-people-families/services-young-people/young-carers

TOGETHERNESS

Bringing the Solihull Approach to the world

Togetherness offers a range of accessible learning pathways to help everyone understand more about brain development and emotional wellbeing. Please use the access code: CURVE or provide your postcode.
https://togetherness.co.uk/

citizens advice LeicesterShire

Citizens Advice Leicestershire offers practical, up-to-date information and advice on a wide range of topics, including; debt, benefits and other problems.
Leicester City - 0808 2787970
Leicestershire - 0808 2787854
Rutland - 01572 723 494
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Leicester Community Advice and Law Centre

Leicester Community Advice and Law Centre is an independent, free and confidential advice service. Offers free legal advice for areas of law including debt, welfare benefits and housing. They can also advise on immigration. They will talk to over 18's about these issues but young carers are welcome to get in touch on behalf of an over 18.
Email: enquiries@leicesterlawcentre.org.uk
Phone: 0116 242 1120
www.leicesterlawcentre.org.uk

Local groups for young carers

In some areas, there are groups for young carers that meet up in person. This gives you a chance to get together with other young people who really get what it means to be a young carer. These groups do indoor and outdoor activities together and are often free to attend. To find out more, contact the groups using the details below.

YOUNG LEICESTERSHIRE

Young Leicestershire is a youth work organisation that runs young carers groups in certain areas of the city and county. You can self refer to this group if you are aged between 11-18 and are a young carer or a grown up can refer you.
To find out if the young carers group covers your area, you can email on **youngcarers@youngleicestershire.org.uk** or call on 0116 275 0489.
If the young carers group doesn't cover your area, Young Leicestershire still have lots of opportunities for young people, which you can check out **here**.
www.youngleicestershire.org.uk

HCYC

HCYC (Harborough District Children's and Young People's Charity) runs a free young carer's group which is open to young carers aged between 11 (Year 6) and 18.You must live in Harborough District to join the group. To find out more, contact them on 07502 365379 or email **info@hcyc.org.co.uk** or visit **https://speakout.org.uk/about-us/other-hcyc-projects/**
If you are under 11, they can still signpost you to help in other ways.

Carers passport

The Young Carers Passport is available and recognised throughout Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The passport enables access to services and support. It's available as a wallet-sized card with a lanyard or sometimes downloadable onto your smartphone.
Click here to learn more about carers passports.
www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/social-care-and-supporting-families/help-for-young-carers/get-help-if-youre-a-young-carer

Leicester City Council

If you live in Leicester City, you can email **Young-CarersPlanning@leicester.gov.uk** to access a young carers passport. For more information, visit **www.leicester.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/support-for-carers**

Leicestershire County Council

If you live in Leicestershire, you can contact **Leicestershire County Council** to access a young carers passport.
www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/social-care-and-supporting-families/help-for-young-carers/get-help-if-youre-a-young-carer

Rutland County Council

If you live in Rutland, you can contact **Rutland County Council** to access a young carers passport.
www.rutland.gov.uk/adult-social-care/supporting-carers



This is a video made by the Carers Trust about how a carers passport can help you.
Click **here** to watch it.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVwQnXi-6Zw

National support for young carers

Mobilise is an online service led by carers, for carers. They have information specifically for young carers too.
www.mobiliseonline.co.uk/

The **Carers Trust** is the largest network of organisations across the UK that specialises in the support and wellbeing of unpaid carers. They have a huge amount of resources designed just for young carers to give expert advice on a wide range of topics including education, employment, finance and much more.
https://carers.org/

The **Children's Society charity** has a collection of articles covering education, employment, paying bills and looking after an alcohol dependent adult.
www.childrenssociety.org.uk

If the person you care for has a disability, you might want to check out the **Sense charity.** They run activity sessions where you can meet other young carers.
www.sense.org.uk/our-services/support-for-children/support-for-young-carers-and-siblings/

Sidekick is a confidential text messaging services that has experience of supporting young carers. Sidekick is run by the charity Action for Children.
You can text 07888 868 059
Or email help@sidekick.actionforchildren.org.uk
They cover the whole of the UK and also have really good resources just for young carers on their website.
https://sidekick.actionforchildren.org.uk/

Carers UK is a charity dedicated to helping carers with a website packed with information including a section specifically for young carers.
www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/practical-support/support-for-young-carers/

POhWER can help you to speak up if you need to deal with the NHS or organisations that help with mental health. Email: pohwer@pohwer.net
Phone: 0300 456 2370
www.pohwer.net/east-midlands-and-yorkshire-and-the-humber



Moving into adult services

When you turn 18, you will need to access services as an adult. This doesn't happen automatically. You can refer yourself to VASL by:
Calling: 01858 468543
Emailing : maureen@supportforcarers.org
Click here to view the VASL leaflet.
www.supportforcarers.org

Local support for adults

If you are caring for someone who is over 18 who needs support to communicate with healthcare professionals, **LAMP** offers this service. They are an independent charity that provides **advocacy** to support people in communicating their needs to healthcare professionals such as GPs. They will listen to you and help you speak up to get what you need.
Email: info@lampdirect.org.uk
Phone: 0116 255 6286
www.lampadvocacy.co.uk

Age UK is a charity based in Leicestershire, who support those looking after someone 18 and over, offering an advice line, day clubs, befriending services, domestic help, home respite and more.
Email: info@ageukleics.org.uk
Phone: 0116 299 2278
www.ageuk.org.uk/leics/

Understanding mental health

It can be tricky to define mental health because it is made up of a range of different things. It covers how you feel emotionally, how you relate to the other people in your life, how you think about things and how you behave. These areas are all linked together to make up your mental health. It can sometimes be referred to as your state of mind.

Every person's mental state is different and can vary over time. We all experience good and tricky times in life and we react differently to these events.

If your loved one has been diagnosed with a mental health condition, you may want to find out more about how it could affect them. It can feel uncomfortable talking about mental health difficulties within your family.

There is a charity called Our Time which works just with young people who look after a person with a mental health condition. There is often stigma and shame around poor mental health so they have a range of resources to help support young carers and give them the tools they need. **Click here** to visit **https://ourtimecharity.org.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources/** to find out more.

You can visit the NHS website to learn more about mental health conditions: **www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions**



Click here to visit **www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKHT8NP5VW4** to watch a video about mental health illness which includes having a parent who might stay in hospital because of mental health needs.

Non-urgent mental health support

Tellmi allows an online safe and anonymous space for young people to discuss their feelings, seek support and receive counselling when necessary.
www.tellmi.help/what-is-tellmi

Young Minds is a mental health charity for younger people. They have guides to mental health conditions, medications, coping with life and much more. You can also text YM to 85258.
www.youngminds.org.uk

Feeling worried or low? Need to talk? Text **SHOUT** to 85258 for free and confidential support, 24/7. Texting the word 'SHOUT' to 85258 is anonymous and will not show up on your phone bill.
www.giveusashout.org

My Self Referral is a website available to children and young people (up to the age of 18 years old) who live in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland who want advice for their mental health
www.myselfreferral-llr.nhs.uk

Childline is a counselling service. They also have a free phone support service on 0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk

Switchboard - Provides a one-stop listening service for LGBTQIA+ people on the phone, you can call Switchboard on 0800 0119 100 or use their webchat service (both 10am– 10pm every day)
https://switchboard.lgbt/

Neurodiversity

If your issues are directly related to autism, you can ask advice from **Chat Autism** by texting 07312 277097. This is free.
https://chathealth.nhs.uk/

The ADHD Foundation is a charity that supports people of all ages with ADHD. They have lots of fact sheets and also cover other types on neurodivergence including autism, dyslexia, Tourette's Syndrome and tics.
www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/

Tourette's action is an website that provides information on Tourette's syndrome including online training and a resource library.
www.tourettes-action.org.uk

Eating Disorders

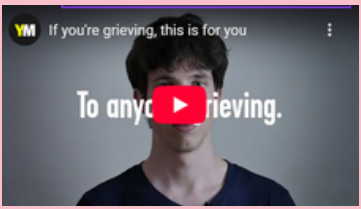
First Steps can provide help to anyone who is facing difficulties around their relationship with food and/or their body. They can support the whole family. You can refer yourself to this service.
www.firststepsed.co.uk/make-a-referral

Bereavement / supporting someone who is terminally ill resources

Loros provides free, high-quality, compassionate care and support to terminally ill adult patients, their family and carers across Leicestershire & Rutland. This is either when the person is an in-patients at their short stay wards or by visiting people in their own home.
Phone: 0116 231 3771
https://loros.co.uk/

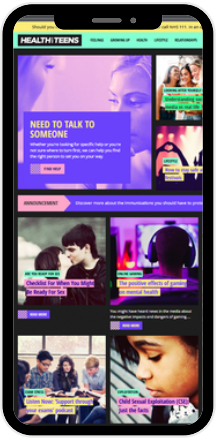
The Laura Centre offers provides free therapeutic support to families who have experienced the death of a child, parent or sibling. The Laura Centre offer a safe space to help young people express feelings, ask questions and find ways to cope with grief. They also help with anticipated loss. This is for families who are caring for someone with a terminal illness who will, at some point, die from that illness.
Phone: 0116 254 4341
https://thelauracentre.org.uk/

Cruse is a national charity that offers support to anyone who is grieving after the death of a loved one.
www.cruse.org.uk/



Click here to visit **www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-7c74-pUlk** to watch a video made by **Young Minds** called 'If you're grieving, this is for you' featuring people who have experienced grief.

Resources created by us at CAMHS



[Health for Teens](#) is a website for teenagers that offers a great choice of content and quizzes across all areas of your mental and physical health, from sexual health to mental health, growing up, lifestyle and much more.
This website is owned by [Leicestershire Partnership Trust](#) which is part of the NHS.
www.healthforteens.co.uk



Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Guide for Young People was created by [Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)](#).
This guide gives tips on self care, looking after your mental health and what to do in a crisis.
https://bit.ly/TheYoungPeoplesGuideCAMHS



Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) has its own section on Health for Teens? [Click here](#) to have a look!
https://bit.ly/CAMHSLeicester

Mobile apps for mental health support

Tellmi is a platform designed to support young people like you. It's a safe space where you can share your thoughts and feelings anonymously without any judgment, and get real support from other young people. If you're a young carer, Tellmi is especially helpful—it connects you with others who really get what you're going through, giving you the support you deserve.
In 2024/25,10.7% of Tellmi users were carers.
Find out how to download the app on **Tellmi's website**
www.tellmi.help/what-is-tellmi

Stay Alive is a suicide prevention app packed full of useful information and tools to help you **stay** safe in crisis.
www.stayalive.app

MindDoc App helps if you are struggling with emotional problems. It is a personalised mental health companion that checks on you daily.
www.minddoc.com/us/en

Calm app allows you to relax and fall asleep with meditations, music and more. There are meditations for stress, anxiety reduction and more.
www.calm.com/app

Calm Harm app provides some immediate activities and techniques to help you break the cycle of self-harm.
www.calmharm.co.uk

Urgent mental health support

If you need urgent mental health support, 24/7 support is available over the phone. Call **NHS 111**, selecting mental health crisis option 2. This number is open 24 hours a day and is totally free and confidential. You can also text 0748 063 5199 and we will aim to get back to you within 12 hours. If there is an immediate threat to life, dial 999. If you are deaf and have urgent mental health needs, you can use the NHS 111 British Sign Language service:
www.signvideo.co.uk/nhs111
Please note the NHS 111 line is not an emergency service.
https://111.nhs.uk/

The Mix has a crisis messenger text service, which provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK. If you're aged 25 or under, and are experiencing any painful emotion or are in crisis, you can text THEMIX to 85258.
www.themix.org.uk

If you need someone to talk to, you can call the **Samaritans** on 116 123 for free, many time, day or night. You can also speak to them online via a chat.
www.samaritans.org



Click here to visit **www.healthforteens.co.uk/leicestercity/how-to-get-additional-support-to-help-with-mental-health/** to watch a collection on videos about reaching out for mental health support.

The Anna Freud Crisis Messenger text service is a free, confidential, 24/7 text message support service for anyone who is feeling overwhelmed or is struggling to cope. If you need support, you can text AFC to 85258.
www.annafreud.org

The Leicestershire Partnership Trust website has an area dedicated to mental health support available in Leicestershire. They share who to contact in an emergency for urgent support and non urgent support.
www.leicspart.nhs.uk/mental-health/i-need-help-now/

Visit **www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-go-to-ae/** for more information about when to go to A&E.





Click here to visit **www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rgil2_hlbmU** to watch a video from **Mind, the mental health charity** about how to get help for your mental health.

What some of the words mean

Carer's Assessment
A check to see what help you might need. It's different from the needs assessment the person you care for might have, but you can ask to have them both done at the same time. **Click here or go to page 10 for more information.**

Carer's Allowance
If you are over 16 and spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone with an illness or disability, you may be eligible for extra money called Carer's Allowance.
Find out more here: **www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/carers-allowance** or **click here or go to page 10 for more information.**

Needs Assessment
A check to see what the person you care for might need.
Find out more here: **www.gov.uk/apply-needs-assessment-social-services** or **click here or go to page 10 for more information.**

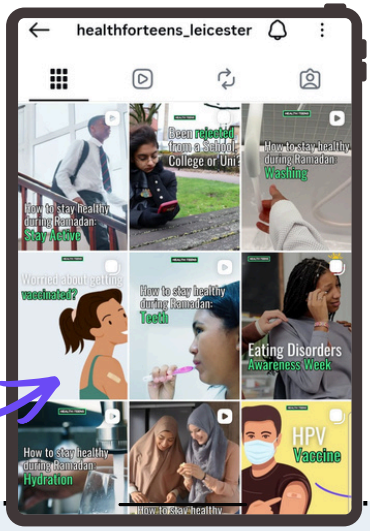
Respite
A short break from caring. The person you care for will be looked after by someone else. Find out more here: **www.bit.ly/2PrgSil** or **click here or go to page 11 for more information.**

Mental Health Advocacy
An advocate is someone who helps you say what you need and get support. Mental health advocacy means helping you to speak up about mental health of you or the person you care for.
Find out more here: **www.pohwer.net**

If you are accessing these links electronically you can use our accessibility toolbar, which is especially useful if you have a hidden disability such as dyslexia (or other reading difficulties), a visual impairment or English as a second language.

If you need help to understand this leaflet or would like it in a different language or format such as large print, braille or audio, please speak to a member of our staff.

Why not follow our social media account? Search for '**healthforteens_leicester**' on Instagram to stay up to date with our latest content.



Useful resources

These resources have been created by professionals who work in our Trust.

CAMHS resources for young people

lptnhs.com/CAMHSresources

Health for Teens CAMHS collection

lptnhs.com/CAMHSLeicester

CAMHS - Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT)

lptnhs.com/WhileYouWaitCAMHS

Mental health support (LPT)

lptnhs.com/MHSupport

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