

Edinburgh Young Carers: How to support young carers during lockdown



01

Ways to help on
down days

02

7 Ways to help
with caring

03

How to support
home learning

04

Mental Wellness
for young carers

05

Mental Health
resources

06

Mental Health
resources

07

APPS that make
a difference

08

Contact List



WAYS TO HELP ON DOWN DAYS

EVERYONE GETS DOWN DAYS, HERE ARE SOME TOP TIPS TO HELP YOURSELF AND YOUR STUDENTS



It's ok

Down days happen! Sometimes we just don't have the motivation, it all gets very overwhelming, and we get frustrated. It is important to acknowledge this and explain that it's ok.



Routine is key

Speak to students about what they plan to do for the rest of the day and make a plan with times for each activity. If they need a rest day then make a plan for tomorrow. It is never too late to plan a routine.



Encourage them to talk

We know that reaching out to others helps but sometimes this is a skill that needs to be taught. Encourage the children to choose a friend, pick a time and to draft the conversation. Also, empower them with phrases to change the subject and end difficult conversations such as 'I'm not ready to talk about this', 'Can we talk about this?' 'What do you think about..?'



You Can be a role model

When replying to the question 'How are you doing?' try not to respond with 'I'm Ok'. Vary your responses and give something tangible, this will make children realise that is ok.



Clean up social media

We are all spending more time on social media but sometimes we end up comparing our lives to that of influencers and young people can feel enormous pressure to follow people who aren't positive for their mental health. Talk about who young people follow, how does it make them feel and empower them with strategies to unfollow .

7 WAYS TO HELP WITH CARING

Young carers spend a lot more time caring during lockdown. But how can you support them with their caring role? Here are some top tips which can really make a difference.



Ask really clear questions about access to food. E.g what have you had for lunch? Make referrals to foodbanks and contact EYC for more information about a young carer card to help with access supermarkets during key worker times.



Contact EYC about accessing clothing vouchers to keep out the winter chill.



Give advanced notice about deadlines and provide extra flexibility to help with the demands of caring. Ensure all staff are aware of young people with caring responsibilities and deadlines reflect this.

TALK TO YOUNG CARER SERVICES

We are still here and can provide support, link you in with other services and listen when things are getting tough.



WE CARE

Are your young carers getting a bit disillusioned by school work? Would another project or challenge help keep them focused? Then why not sign up for the We Care Award? A key element of the award is working with young people and now may be the perfect time to ask them what your school could change and improve in time for their return.

CONTACT EXTERNAL SUPPORT



During the first lockdown, only 1% of young carers and young adult carers received help in the home from a paid carer or personal assistant (Carers Trust). This help is available and if the young person is really struggling, contact EYC to link in with home care support.

HOW TO SUPPORT HOME LEARNING



ACCESSING HUBS

Are you worried about social exclusion of your young carers? Concerned that their caring hours have increased and prefer to see young people in person? Young carers are classed as vulnerable children and have access to hubs. Contact EYC for more guidance.

If young people can not access hubs, then consider a virtual drop-in time for people to come along and chat. This could be open to children and parents.



A TRUSTED PERSON

Provide the young people with one trusted person who will check-in, monitor their wellbeing and have a complete idea of what is happening at home.



WEEKLY CHECK INS

Are you struggling to motivate children online? Consider weekly phone check-ins to discuss the situation at home, answer questions about learning and be a friendly voice on the phone. Contact EYC about guidance on check-in questionnaires.



DIGITALLY EXCLUDED

Do you have students who don't have access to laptops, printers or decent wifi?

Contact your young carers service or <https://connecting.scot/>

Paper-based learning packs can also be distributed by staff members or collected from local shops.

Remind parents that the BBC is providing educational provision on CBBC for primary and secondary pupils



MENTAL WELLNESS FOR YOUNG CARERS

Tips to share: taking care of your mental health at home



Keep a Thoughts Diary and share this with a trusted adult to begin to understand how you are feeling

1



Encourage regular breaks when looking at a screen, your phone or doing school work



Work with the young people to create an inner best friend who acts as their cheerleader and says only kind things about you



Use Young Minds conversation questions to structure your check in

3



2

Use 'Tricky conversation starters' to empower children to talk about things they are finding difficult

Share photos of animals and bond with pets. It really does help!



4

Teach the 'STOPP' technique to help sooth anxiety and worry

Work with the young people to create an individual affirmation- a comforting phrase they can say every day



Mental Health Resources

1

Day & Time	Thoughts	Support	Challenge	Best friend	Balanced thought
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were your thoughts? • Rate how much you believe them? 	<p>What evidence supports your thoughts?</p>	<p>What evidence challenges these thoughts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would they say to me if they heard me thinking this? • What would I say to them if they thought this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a more balanced thought? • Rate how much you believe this thought .

2

I am worried about...

Today has been a hard day because..

Things are difficult at the moment

Can we talk about how I am feeling..

Covid is scaring me because

When this happens I feel....

3



<https://youngminds.org.uk/media/4175/conversation-starter-self-isolation.pdf>

4

☒ **S**TOPP

☒ **T**ake a breath

☒ **O**bserve – What am I reacting to? What am I thinking and feeling?

☒ **P**ull back & Put in some Perspective – What's the bigger picture? What would someone else make of this situation? What advice would I give a friend?

☒ **P**ractise what works – What can I do about this? What's within my control? What would help? What's the best thing to do – for the situation, for others, for me?

Thank you to the Development Workers at EYC for helping me to put this section together.

APPS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Thank you to Laura- Drug and Alcohol Development Worker, EYC for putting this list together

1 MINDFUL GNATS

An app to help young people develop mindfulness and relaxation skills

2 MINDSHIFT

MindShift is a free app designed to help teens and young adults cope with anxiety. It can help you change how you think about anxiety. Rather than trying to avoid anxiety, you can make an important shift and face it

3 MOOD TRACKER

A website/app which lets you track moods and sleep patterns helping to manage depression, anxiety or bipolar disorder

4 MOODGYM

MoodGYM is a free, fun, interactive program to help young people with low mood. Based on cognitive behaviour and interpersonal therapy

5 WOEBOT

A free therapy chatbox that was created by a clinical psychologist. It uses one of the best-researched approaches to deliver scripted responses to users



6 STRESS AND ANXIETY COMPANION

Helps users handle stress and anxiety on-the-go. It provides tools like breathing exercises, relaxing music and games. Goal is to help users change negative thoughts to help them better cope with life's ups and downs

7 FOR ME

Is a free app from Childline. It offers counselling, group message boards, and advice

8 CALM HARM

Is a free app with password protection that provides a range of techniques to relieve emotional distress. It's particularly helpful if you often use self-harm to cope

CONTACT LIST

Anxiety UK

03444 775 774 (helpline)

07537 416 905 (text)

anxietyuk.org.uk

Advice and support for people living with anxiety

Beat

0808 801 0711 (youthline)

0808 801 0811 (studentline)

beateatingdisorders.co.uk

Under 18s helpline, webchat and online support groups for people with eating disorders

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)

0800 58 58 58

thecalmzone.net

Provides listening services, information and support for anyone who needs to talk, including a web chat

Hope Again

0808 808 1677

hopeagain.org.uk

Support for young people when someone dies

kooth.com

Counsellors available until 10pm every day. Free, safe and anonymous online counselling

meandmymind.nhs.uk

Advice and support for young people struggling with unusual experiences, such as hearing voices

No Panic

0330 606 1174

nopanic.org.uk/no-panic-youth-hub. Charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)

Papyrus HOPELINEUK

0800 068 41 41

07786 209697 (text)

pat@papyrus-uk.org

papyrus-uk.org

Confidential support for under-35s at risk of suicide and others who are concerned about them. Open daily

Safeline

0808 800 5007

safeline.org.uk

Young people's helpline, helping survivors of sexual abuse and rape

The Mix

0808 808 4994

85258

(crisis messenger service, text THEMIX)

themix.org.uk

Support and advice for under 25s, including a helpline, crisis messenger service and webchat

Young Stonewall

0800 050 2020

youngstonewall.org.uk

Information and support for all young lesbian, gay, bi and trans people



EDINBURGH
YOUNG
CARERS

Contact Jennifer Lewis
School Project Manager
Edinburgh Young Carers

jennifer.lewis@youngcarers.org.uk

