

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Help identify hidden young carers this National Carers Week

Educational institutions around the country are being encouraged to identify and support young carers in their classrooms with the help of a new toolkit from Australia's peak body for unpaid carers.

The [Young Carer toolkit](#), a part of the National Carers Week 2021 Caring for Carers resources, can help teachers and support staff recognise that a young person in their school may have caring responsibilities.

It is estimated that around 235,000 young Australians aged 12 to 25 fulfil a caring role for family or friends.

These young carers often juggle school, employment and their caring responsibilities which can range from household chores, cooking, assisting with medication, looking after younger siblings and providing emotional and advocacy support to the person they care for.

Carers Australia CEO, Liz Callaghan, said, "The COVID-19 pandemic has seen more people than ever fulfilling a caring role. This is particularly impacting young carers as they've been required to isolate at home with the person they care for, and deal with disrupted schooling."

"This is concerning as [research](#) shows that young carers are already more susceptible to social isolation, financial and educational disadvantage, unemployment and poorer physical and mental health."

Many young people with significant caring responsibilities do not see themselves as a young carer, so it's important that teachers and support staff know the signs that a young carer may be in their classroom.

This includes low attendance, being late to school or to hand in assignments with no clear explanation, poor attention, fatigue and being isolated from their peers.

"When young carers are supported, acknowledged and respected in their own right, they are able to achieve and participate more actively at school and in their community," said Ms Callaghan.

"We hope that this toolkit can go some way to ensuring that educational institutions are confident in reaching out to those students who may need a little extra support and connect them with the right services, including our [Young Carers Network](#)."



National Carers Week is an opportunity to recognise, celebrate and thank Australia's unpaid carers for all the incredible work they do.

As part of this year's 'Millions of Reasons to Care' theme, Carers Australia has created a range of Caring for Carers resources to empower the broader community to identify and support the carers in their lives.

The Caring for Carers resources can be found by visiting [carersweek.com.au](http://carersweek.com.au) and includes information for educational institutions, GPs and medical professionals, and workplaces.

#### **About Carers Australia and the National Carer Network**

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's carers, advocating to influence policies and services at a national level. The National Carer Network, which consists of Carers NSW, Carers ACT, Carers Victoria, Carers Tasmania, Carers SA, Carers WA, Carers NT, and Carers Queensland, deliver a range of essential carer services across states and territories.

#### **About carers**

An informal, unpaid carer is a family member or friend that cares for someone that has a disability, chronic or life-limiting illness, is frail aged, has a mental health illness, alcohol or other drug related issue. Informal carers are distinct from paid support workers who are colloquially also called carers but are fully employed and remunerated with all the benefits of employment. Conversely, family carers perform their caring duties without remuneration

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