Revealing The Term Young Carers

Young carers are children or young people up to and including the age of 25 who care or help to care for somebody with an illness, a disability, a mental health issue, chronic condition or terminal illness.

Young carers may help care for a parent, a sibling, a grandparent, other relatives and even friends who may have a disability.

Because they are looking after someone else, young carers usually have more responsibilities than other young people their age and while many say that caring is something that they enjoy and feel proud of they also say that caring can affect how they feel, how much time they get to spend with friends, or their school work, and that often they need some help.

There are different types of support services that young carers can access that can provide help for young carers and two of these are respite care and counselling.

Respite care is a service for carers that gives both the young carer and the person they care for a break. A caring break can give you time to do everyday activities and might help you deal with stress, recharge and look after yourself a bit. Respite care can be provided informally by family or friends, or formally by a respite service. Some people may choose respite at home, while others prefer community or centre-based services.

Respite care gives young carers a break from caring and gives them time to focus on their needs such as their social, emotional, cultural and spiritual needs. Respite care provides time for a young carer to fulfil their social needs as they have time to relax and spend time with friends and family, emotional needs as they can relax, destress and clear their minds, their cultural needs if they follow a certain religion or have any cultural practices that they usually do not have time for and their spiritual needs as they are usually taking care of someone else they can relax and focus on themselves and You might find that talking to someone who doesn’t know you or your family can help a lot.

Respite care is a service that has many helpful benefits to both carer, and the person being cared for as it allows for time away from each other to focus on themselves and be able to relax without having to worry about others.

Caring for another person can be a rewarding experience, but it can also be difficult as it can mean you do not have as much time for yourself, hanging out with friends and studying. This can be stressful and frustrating for a young carer as they feel that they don’t have time for themselves and that their life can only revolve around the person that they are caring for so they can struggle with maintaining friendships and relationships and start falling behind in school. Sometimes they might feel isolated from others as they constantly look after the disabled person. But it is important that a young carer should have someone to talk to about any problems or situations that they are going through as even carers have to be cared for to ensure that they are emotionally and spiritually well.

There are many counselling services available for young carers whether it is in person or via phone, and although some young carers might find it daunting, embarrassing or scary sharing their problems with others sometimes it is helpful for them to speak to someone who is removed from their situation.

Talking with counsellors has many benefits to young carers as they gain emotional support and as they feel that they are being heard, understood and validated they gain a sense of wellbeing and self-identity. Some counselling sessions can be group sessions so as they interact and learn the stories of other young carers that are going through similar situations as them and share experiences with one another, they feel less isolated and feel that they are part of a community.

Young carers spend most of their time taking care of others and need time to take care of themselves, this is why support services such as respite care and counselling are so important.