

Young Carer Case Studies

These young carer stories are designed to be used with the other resources produced for Young Carers Awareness Day.

The following four stories are either real, or based on the real story of a young carer.

Danny's story

Danny is 16 years old and a young adult carer who cares for his mum and cousin.

Danny has been a carer for a year and it changed his life overnight. Before, he could go out with his friends most days but now he often can't go out because he has to help his mum, make the dinner and tidy up, and make sure his mum takes her medicine.

When people ask him: 'if you had the chance not to be a young carer would you?' he always replies: "No, because it's a fab bond between me and my mum and I wouldn't change it for the world."

Danny also cooks dinner for his cousin who is blind but Danny doesn't always find cooking very easy.

Danny has had support from his local young carers service. Getting to know other young carers who are in similar situations has really helped him.

Marlon's story

Marlon is five and is an infant carer. He lives alone with his mum who has heart problems and low blood pressure.

He helps his mum with her personal care such as helping her get dressed in the morning. He also tries to cheer her up when she's feeling down as well as doing regular household cleaning, washing up, helping with cooking and carrying heavy shopping bags. He worries a lot about his mum's health and sits with her to keep her company and make sure she is okay.

Two years ago, after his Grandmother had died, Marlon and his mum had gradually become more and more isolated. Marlon didn't talk much or play with other children and had been wetting his bed.

His deputy head teacher noticed something was up and referred him for carers support from his local carers service. Now he is getting help with his poor health and is coming to terms with the loss of his grandmother.

He also takes part in monthly clubs and school holiday trips. He and his mum have also had some family support including bereavement counselling and a family short break.

Emma's Story

Emma, 13, cares for her mum and brother Aaron.

Emma's mum first went into hospital when Emma was eight, just after her youngest brother Aaron was born. Her mum was diagnosed with sarcoidosis, which affects the immune system. Her mum was in and out of hospital all the time. Visiting her was scary as she was always really pale and had loads of tubes connected to her.

Emma's stepdad works long hours. So as the eldest, she started to help tidy and do the washing up and laundry. When her mum was at home but feeling ill Emma would often take days off school to help look after her. Emma didn't tell most of her friends what was going on because she didn't want them to think she was different. But some people did make hurtful comments.

Aaron was diagnosed with autism when he was four. Emma says: "Now and again I'd get frustrated about not being able to go out with my friends or go shopping but I got used to things. I do get jealous of friends who have less to worry about, but I don't dwell on it – it's just part of my life. At school, people will mess about during their lessons and then do their work at home. But I can't do that – I try to get everything done at school.

"I think my home life has affected my personality because I have more things going on than your average 13-year-old."

Emma is concerned about what the future holds for Aaron but doesn't dwell on it too much. She prefers to concentrate on the present because she hasn't got the time to think about anything else.

Jake's story

Jake is ten years old and lives at home with his dad who has alcohol issues.

Jake takes on a lot of responsibility at home and the two of them have become isolated from other family members and their local community.

Jake constantly worries about his dad and had started to find himself becoming more and more anxious about his life and in particular his upcoming move to a new school.

However, he was able to attend a series of workshops run by his local carers service, which helped young carers to think about who they are, manage their feelings, and to look at their aspirations. He was able to speak about his feelings which helped him enormously. He was also thrilled to meet other young carers of the same age some of whom are already at his new school. They have been helping Jake feel a bit less worried about the next big step in his life.

Information

[Carers.org/YCAD2019](https://www.carers.org/YCAD2019)

