

Caring Lives: Young person's information sheet

IN BRIEF

The project: Caring Lives is a research project looking at the link between young carers and mental health. If you think you might be a young carer you can read on for more information on the project aims, how you can be involved, plus information on how this is a confidential project for young carers who take part.

The researcher: Ed Janes. I have worked with young people on research projects on young carers, children's rights and poverty. I have a background in youth work, and young person friendly methods will be central to the project.

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What makes someone a young carer?

A young carer is a child or young people (under 18) who takes on extra responsibilities at home because someone in their family is unwell. This can include an illness or disability, mental health issue, or a substance misuse problem.

We know from a Cardiff University survey last year that 1 in 6 young people in Wales see themselves as a young carer.

What is Caring Lives about?

Researchers have been studying young carers for about 25 years, and have found that being a young carer can affect education, social lives, physical health and mental health. BUT it is not all negative – research has also found that young carers are more independent and develop skills for later in life.

Caring Lives is focusing on young carers and their mental health (this includes areas like confidence, stress and mood). It will build a bigger picture of why caring affects young carers differently - this has not been looked at before.

Why is this research important?

This bigger picture will help us move from a focus on the effects of caring to thinking about possible solutions. It has the potential to change how young carers are supported by schools and other groups.

What does being involved mean?

Being a participant will mean meeting me 2-3 times in 2019. The first meeting will be in the Spring, with additional in the Summer and/or Autumn.

All the meetings will be activity-based and informal. We will chat about your family, the caring that you do, and if you feel affected by it.

What else do you need to know?

- This research is **confidential**: This means that your school will not know who is taking part, which is important if you do not want people to know that you are a young carer. I will book the meeting room in my name with Bedwas High School's Well-Being Team, the school's confidential support team.
- The sound from the meetings will be **audio-recorded**. This is to make sure that information is not lost. Your name and any names mentioned in the recordings will be removed.
- This project will need **parental consent** for everyone (including over 16s). If you are interested in taking part I will ask you for their contact details.
- The project will also need **your consent** that you had information about the project and agreed to take part. We will do this at the first meeting in Spring 2019.

Need more information?

I am happy to answer any questions if you are interested but want more information first. You can contact me by email: JanesE3@cardiff.ac.uk.

Want to take part?

You can also get involved by emailing me at JanesE3@cardiff.ac.uk. I will then be in touch about getting the consent of your parent.

Young carers research project

Our school is working with Cardiff University on a research project about how to best support young carers. Young carers are children and young people who help out at home because someone in their family is unwell.

Ed Janes came to our assembly last week to introduce the research and is looking for pupils to take part. This will mean meeting with him 2-3 times next year to talk about being a young carer. The meetings will be organised through the Well-Being Team and will be confidential - this means that other people in the school will not know you are involved.

With this email is a short information sheet about the project in more detail. If you're interested or have any questions you can contact Ed directly by email: JanesE3@cardiff.ac.uk.

If you're not sure you can always speak to Mr Crowley or Mrs Bird for confidential advice first.