

CAN I GO TO
UNI IF I LOOK
AFTER SOMEONE
AT HOME?

Yes. we care



A GUIDE FOR YOUNG
CARERS CONSIDERING
HIGHER EDUCATION

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IS THIS BOOKLET FOR ME?

Do you help to look after someone at home?
Are you thinking about your future?
Uni could be for you!

Are you a young person who looks after someone who has

- a long term physical illness?
- a physical or learning disability?
- mental health problems?
- drug / alcohol problems?

If you are and you're thinking about higher education, then this booklet is definitely for you.

Going to university or college can open up many more career opportunities to you. You can gain the skills you need to help you achieve your dream job and earn more money in your adult working life. A degree also gives you the chance to make lasting friendships, adapt more quickly to a changing world and have greater confidence.

Higher education might not be for everyone but your caring responsibilities should never prevent you from realising your ambitions. It's a big decision to make, so knowing what help is out there can make you feel more confident.

This booklet will tell you about the support you can get to help you achieve your higher education goals and how other young carers currently studying for a degree feel about higher education.

We care about you

HELP WHEN YOU'RE AT SCHOOL




If you think you're a young carer and would like more support, the best thing to do is let someone know. Lots of schools and colleges have great support for young carers but if they don't know they can't help.

You can also get a **Young Carers Assessment** to help you get support. This is a way for you to tell a worker about your caring, so you can plan things together that will make your life easier. For more information, contact your local council and ask about getting a young carers assessment.

Deciding whether and where to go to university - and what subject to study - are big choices to make. Most schools will have links with universities to give you the chance to find out more, visit a university or hear from staff and students visiting your school.

You can also get help from your local young carers service. Search online to find one near you.



It's your choice, but telling people about your caring role means you can access more help and support.

HELP WHEN YOU'RE IN SIXTH FORM OR COLLEGE

Getting into higher education can feel difficult if you also have caring responsibilities at home. Lots of universities and colleges offer schemes to help young carers get there – in Sheffield this includes:

The Compact Scheme at Sheffield Hallam University

Compact provides extra support if you face barriers to going to university, including if you have caring responsibilities. It's available when you apply to Sheffield Hallam University and you'll be able to

- ➔ get in touch with a named contact for all your enquiries and questions
- ➔ go on exclusive visits to the university
- ➔ receive emails about Sheffield Hallam life
- ➔ receive help with interviews for higher education
- ➔ receive special consideration during the admissions process (in exceptional circumstances only)

For more information contact the Compact team on **0114 225 4231** or email compact@shu.ac.uk.

Discover-Post 16 Outreach at the University of Sheffield

The Discover programmes give participants the opportunity to find out what it's like to study and work in subject specific areas across the whole University. These include medicine, law and many others. Each of these programmes also provide practical help with study techniques, application support and an introduction to life at the University. If you're accepted onto the scheme you'll receive an adjusted offer of up to **two grades lower than usual**.

For more information contact the Outreach Team on **0114 222 1027** or email outreach@sheffield.ac.uk.

If you want to study outside Sheffield, ask any university or college what they do for young carers. They probably run similar schemes too.

Sarah, studies Primary Teaching

"Before I applied to uni, I was worried about them not being flexible if I needed to stay at home with my mum and about how I'd keep up with the workload with everything going on at home. And once I started, everyone was talking about going out for Fresher's Week but I just wanted to be at home – it felt like 'who will be my friend if I don't go to fresher's nights out?'."

But the fact that I could state I was a carer when I applied helped me to know they were thinking about us carers. They added me to a carers Facebook group before I started, so I knew there were other student carers and that I had a way to message uni staff who are there to help us. They did a group chat session so people could ask questions and get help. My lecturers know I'm a carer too and they let me pop out to answer my phone if I need to, which helps me feel more relaxed.

My advice is to tell someone you're a carer before you start uni so you get the support you need straight away. And try not to worry – I've been able to do it – you can too!"

Sarah's mum Bev

"Before Sarah started, I felt really anxious because I panic when I'm on my own and Sarah was my main support. I was worried how she'd cope too.

Sometimes when I'm really low she doesn't want to leave me and that makes me feel guilty. But I feel really positive now. She's completed her first year and I feel so proud of her – in spite of everything, she's managed really well and got really good grades.

If you're a parent worried about your son or daughter going to uni, my advice is to talk to someone. It can be really hard to ask for help but don't sit in silence. You'd be surprised how many people offer help if you actually ask for it!"



CARING ABOUT YOU

Do I have to tell anyone I'm a young carer when I apply to college or university?

It's always your decision, but it could definitely benefit you if you do. Universities and colleges often have lots of support for young carers, including personal support or financial help. If they know about your caring responsibilities, they could tell you this before you arrive, so it feels less scary and more manageable. Being a young carer will also give you lots of useful experiences and qualities that make your application stronger.

- ➔ You can write about your caring role to support and enhance your personal statement.
- ➔ You can tick a box on the UCAS form (by 2018) to show that you are a young carer.
- ➔ If you feel your caring role has impacted on your Year 13 exam results, you can let the university or college know and they may be able to give you extra consideration.



When I was applying to university I looked to see if there was any support on offer for carers in case I needed to get things off my chest. I told Sheffield Hallam about my caring responsibilities in my interview and I was offered support from the start.

My advice to anyone with caring responsibilities who is considering applying for university would be to go for it, don't underestimate yourself. There will always be someone to help and support you.

Autumn-Rose, studies Nursing



CARING ABOUT YOU

How can I afford to care and study at the same time?

Many universities and colleges offer financial help for young carers, to help you with the costs of studying, transport or arranging some respite care. These are often called bursaries, grants or scholarships.

They are totally different to loans because you don't need to pay them back. They can make a real difference to your daily routine. For example, the University of Sheffield currently gives carers **£4,500** per year of study (2017 entry). Check before you apply to the university you are interested in.



The bursary does help a lot with travel expenses. Sometimes my mum will ring me late at night, and I know I can afford to travel back home to see her and make sure she's okay.

My advice would be to do your research about what support your universities are offering. Make sure you are realistic about your goals and aims but do not let the caring hold you back.

**Josh, studying Economics with Finance
Lives away from home**



Help with being away from home

The idea of leaving the person you care for can be worrying, whether you go into university for classes during the day or if you choose to move away to study. **But you have the right to study if you want to.** Some ways to help this feel easier could be

- contacting your local city council to request a carers assessment, so they know your home situation is changing and can check your family are getting the right support so you can study
- contacting your local young carers or adult carers services to see if they can offer any advice
- speaking to staff at the university you want to apply to - if they know you are a carer, they will know that sometimes you might need to rush home for emergencies.



CARING ABOUT YOU

What if something goes wrong while I'm studying?

Caring is part of everyday life and it can be really rewarding. You may find you cope really well most of the time, but sometimes it's good to know where to get help if you need it. For example, if the person you care for urgently needs you while you are away from home. Wherever and whatever you study, there will be someone available to give you the time and space you need to talk things through.



Young carer advisers at a local university

You are the expert in your life and we're ready to listen, whether you need help planning your studies, emotional support, or emergency help.





You've always got support. Your lecturers will give you extensions if you need it."



"A lot of people who are carers think it can't be done. I went through a phase when I thought 'I can't manage university and caring at the same time'. But I did it and I think a lot of people can also do it. I think we can do it!



Asma, studies Health and Human sciences
Lives at home

WHAT NEXT?



Studying for a degree is a great experience that can change your life.

To make sure you benefit...

- 1 Do your research.** Every university and college is different and many offer help to young carers before you even start studying there. Make sure you find out what support you can get.
- 2 Go to open days.** If this is difficult because of caring, find out if the university or college can offer financial help towards travel costs or see if you can speak to someone on the phone or arrange a separate visit instead.
- 3 Work hard to get the best results you can.** If you haven't already, let someone at school or college know about your caring so they can support you to achieve your best.
- 4 Had a crisis during your exams?** Call the university or college to let them know. They might be able to take this into account.
- 5 Be proud about being a young carer.** It's an amazing thing you do and it will have taught you a lot. It could also really help your personal statement if you include the skills and experience caring has given you.
- 6 Go into higher education and get the funding, degree and career that you deserve!**





**They all did it
– you can too!**



Many thanks to all the young carers, school staff, and staff at Sheffield Young Carers for their contribution to the development of this booklet.

Our special thanks goes to Autumn-Rose, Asma, Josh, Sarah and Bev for sharing their stories. If you want to know more about some of their experiences, watch the young adult carers video on the University of Sheffield Outreach YouTube Channel.



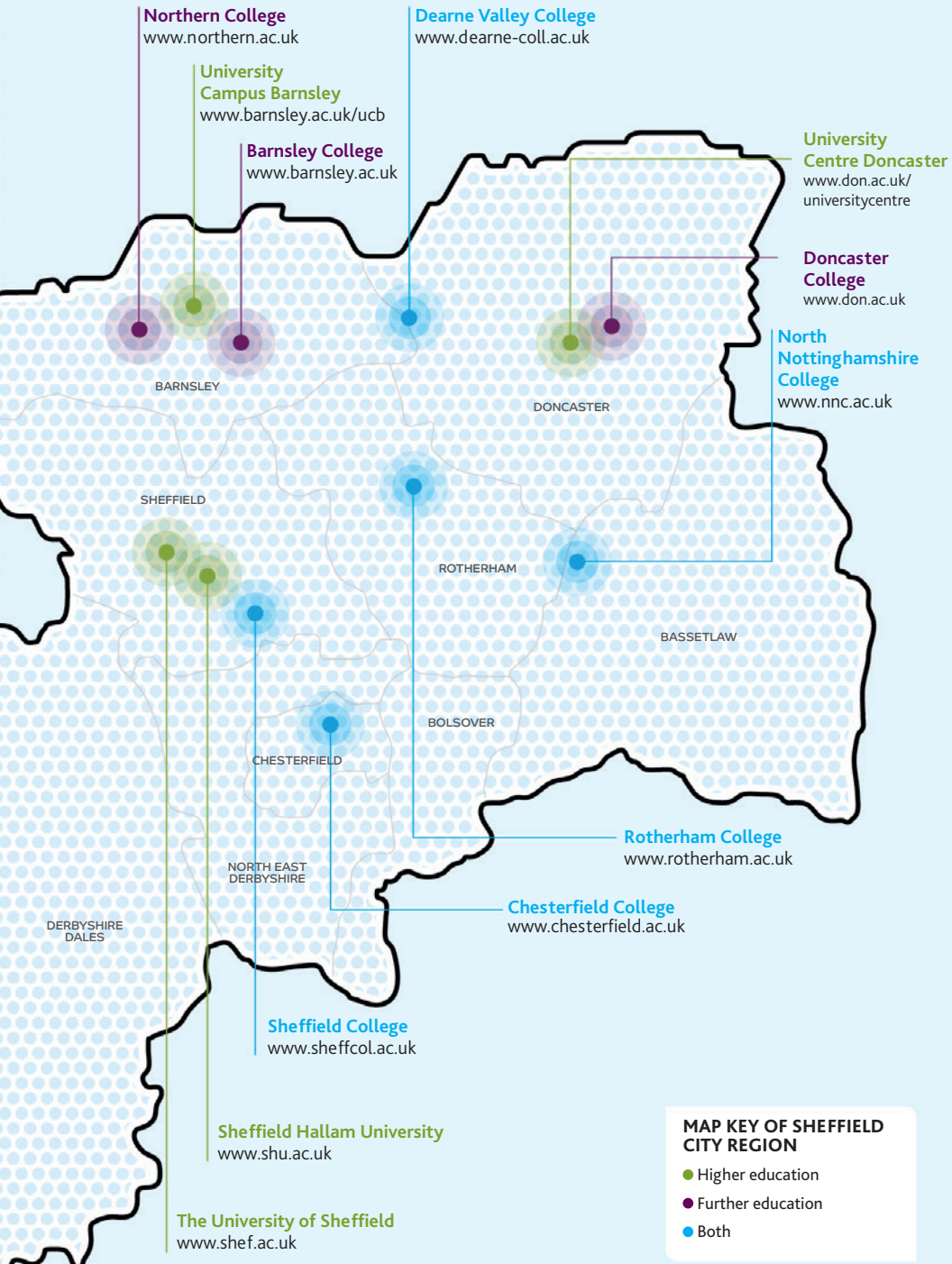
CONTACTS

Universities and colleges have specially trained advisers who can provide support for young carers. You can usually find them within the Student Services teams. Have a look at our website www.yeswecare.uk for more information on how to find them.

Barnsley College	studentservices@barnsley.ac.uk
University Campus Barnsley	studentservices@barnsley.ac.uk
Chesterfield College	studentservices@chesterfield.ac.uk
Dearne Valley College	learn@dearne-coll.ac.uk
Doncaster College	financial.support@don.ac.uk
University Campus Doncaster	financial.support@don.ac.uk
Northern College	studentservices@northern.ac.uk
North Nottinghamshire College	contact@nnc.ac.uk
Rotherham College	info@rotherham.ac.uk
Sheffield College	studentservices@sheffcol.ac.uk
Sheffield Hallam University	care@shu.ac.uk
The University of Sheffield	support@sheffield.ac.uk

Other support services

There are many other support services available for young carers. Please visit our website www.yeswecare.uk to find your local service for your area, as well as links to online sources of information and support.



MAP KEY OF SHEFFIELD CITY REGION

- Higher education
- Further education
- Both



yes we care

www.yeswecare.uk



HIGHER
EDUCATION
PROGRESSION
PARTNERSHIP

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