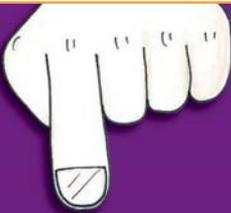


Information for young  
carers living in  
Rhondda Cynon Taf



# DO YOU CARE?

## Young Carers in Rhondda Cynon Taf



March 2007

**Don't think this guide is for you?**

Many people do not see themselves as young carers. As a result, they often don't realise that there is practical help and emotional support available for them.



STRONG HERITAGE | STRONG FUTURE  
RHONDDA CYNON TAF  
TREFADAETH GADARN | DYFODOL SICR



Rhondda Cynon Taf  
Iechyd, Gofal Cymdeithasol a Lles  
Health, Social Care & Well-being  
Rhondda Cynon Taf

# do you care?



A young carer may do one or more of these things or may give other types of support.

# What is a young carer?

Young carers are children and young people whose lives are in some way restricted because they provide care, assistance or support to another family member. The person they care for is often a parent but can be a sibling, grandparent or other relative who needs care, support or supervision because of disability, chronic illness, mental health difficulties or problems with drugs or alcohol misuse.

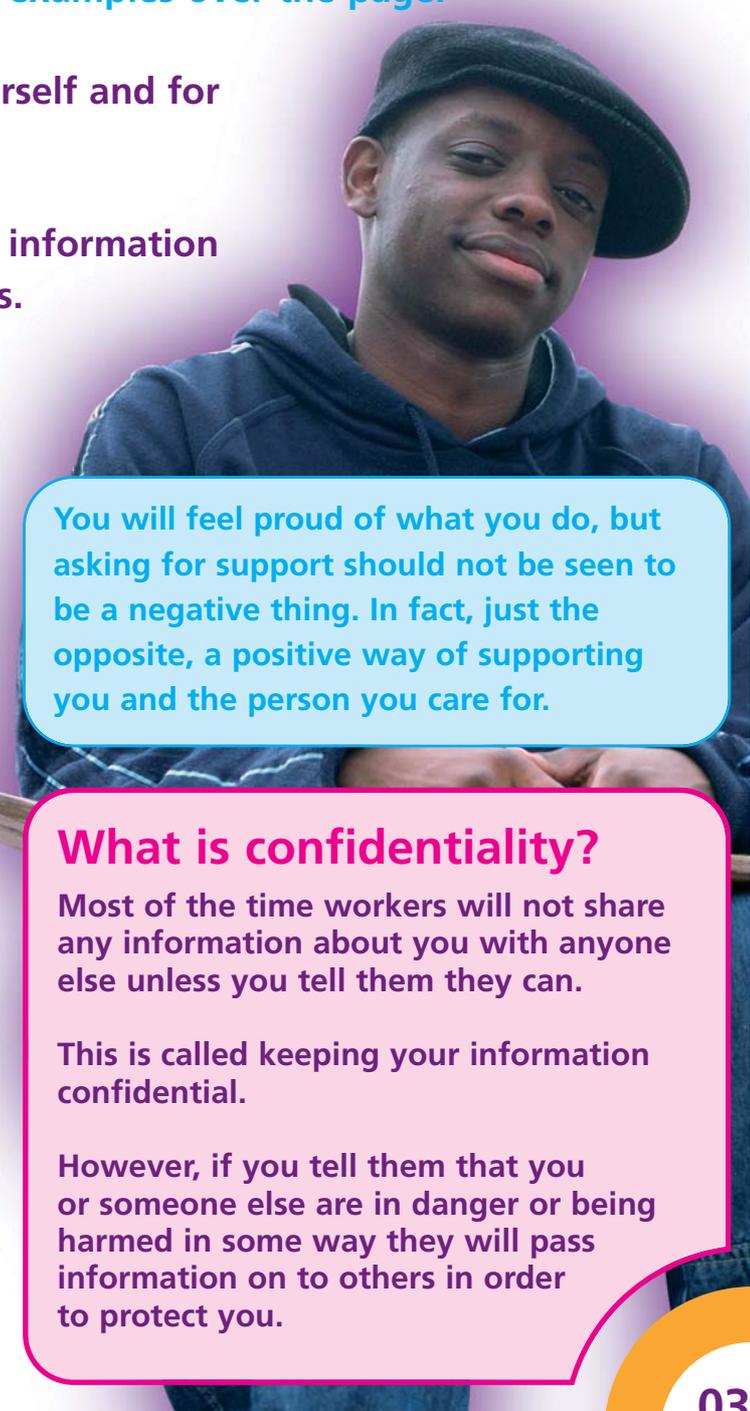
Caring for other people at home can affect how you feel, and how much free time you have. This will be looked at later in the guide, but if you are still not sure that you are a young carer read the examples over the page.

**The guide is...** a way for you to help yourself and for others to help you.

**The guide isn't...** a way for others to get information about you and use it against your wishes.

## Contents

Does this sound like you?	Page 4
The help you give	Page 6
Your feelings	Page 8
Time and relationships	Page 10
Learning and working	Page 12
Looking after yourself	Page 14
Hopes and dreams	Page 16
Getting informed	Page 18
Your rights	Page 20
Who can help?	Page 25



You will feel proud of what you do, but asking for support should not be seen to be a negative thing. In fact, just the opposite, a positive way of supporting you and the person you care for.

### What is confidentiality?

Most of the time workers will not share any information about you with anyone else unless you tell them they can.

This is called keeping your information confidential.

However, if you tell them that you or someone else are in danger or being harmed in some way they will pass information on to others in order to protect you.

# Does this sound like you?

Here are some examples of the different types of situation young carers find themselves in.

## Bethan's story

Bethan is ten years old. Sometimes her mam gets sad and drinks too much. Bethan has to cook her own tea when her mam is sad. She's too embarrassed to take friends home in case her mam's not well. She doesn't mind doing all this because she likes helping her mam. Bethan is a young carer.

### What happened next?

Bethan told her doctor about her worries about her mam and together they agreed that it was a good idea for him to talk to her mam. After speaking to Bethan's mam the doctor contacted the Community Mental Health Team, on her behalf. The Team were able to arrange some counselling and support for her.



## Paul's story

Paul is sixteen years old. His brother has an illness which means he often gets very sick. Paul has to help his dad look after his brother. He cooks meals for his brother and looks after him when their dad is at work. Paul has his exams this year but he doesn't get much time to study. Paul likes caring for his brother but he knows that he needs to pass his exams. Paul is a young carer.

### What happened next?

Paul was asked to speak to a teacher, called Dave, at school. Dave then spoke to Paul's dad about services that could help the family. For example, Community and Children's Services can provide care for Paul's brother to enable Paul to have the time he needs to study.

After this, Dave spoke to Louise, the Education Welfare Officer at Paul's school. She talked to Paul's teachers so that they understood his situation, and arranged for a quiet place for Paul to study. She also gave information about Paul's brother's illness.



## Kerry's story

Kerry is twelve years old. Her mam is ill, so Kerry has to look after her. Kerry has to do the shopping and take her brother to school. She can't go to school sometimes because she's too busy. Kerry is a young carer.

### What happened next?

An Education Welfare Officer called Clare, visited Kerry and her mam to talk about what things might help Kerry at school. After this, Clare spoke to Kerry's Head of Year who made sure that teachers were aware of Kerry's situation and arranged for a private place for her to telephone home at lunchtimes to make sure her mam is okay.

Clare spoke to Community and Children's Services, with Kerry's mam's permission. They praised Kerry for all the help she gives. To support her mam they arranged for help with shopping, housework and personal tasks like bathing and dressing.

Childminders now collect Kerry's brother from school two days a week so Kerry can go to the Young Carer's Project. Kerry still collects him on the other days as she enjoys doing it.

## Gareth's story

Gareth is fifteen years old. He helps look after his mam and his gran. His mam has a back injury and his gran has severe arthritis. He does everything for them. He's scared to talk to anyone about it, in case they put him into care. Gareth is a young carer.

### What happened next?

Gareth popped into Chequers, who provide information and advice for young people in the Cynon area, when he was at the shops on a Saturday. There he spoke to a Chequers Personal Adviser called Andy who explained that Community and Children's Services are not there to take Gareth into care but to help him and his family. After this, it was arranged for Gareth's gran to go to a day centre three times a week. They also arranged for his mam to have a Carelink Lifeline as well as a home carer to help her. The alarm is linked to a service which will come out to help Gareth's mam if something happens to her and she can't manage on her own. Gareth can now go out with his friends without worrying about what is happening at home.

## Remember!

Many people do not see themselves as young carers. They think of themselves as a family member, for example, a brother, sister, daughter or son and presume all families provide this sort of support. As a result they often don't realise that there is practical help and emotional support available for them.

# the help you give...

Everyone's home situation is different. The things you do to help out at home will depend on the illness, problems or needs of your relative. For example, you may help them to do things they can't do for themselves. Or you might help look after others in your family because your relative can't do this themselves, for example, looking after your brothers or sisters because your mam is ill. You may even find that you help by simply listening and being caring rather than doing anything practical.

## Remember!

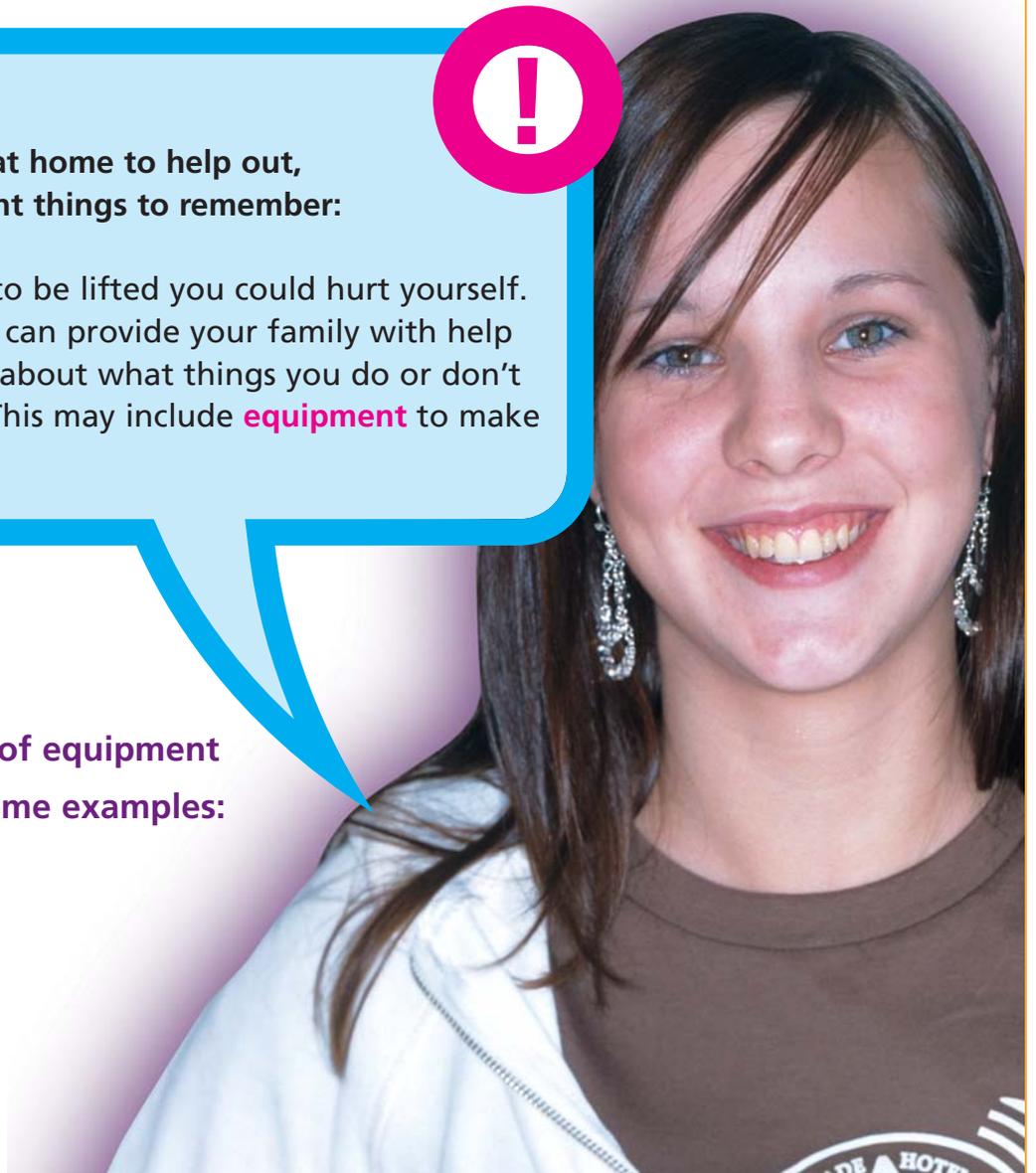
Whatever tasks you do at home to help out, there are a few important things to remember:

- If your relative needs to be lifted you could hurt yourself.
- There are people who can provide your family with help and give you a choice about what things you do or don't want to do at home. This may include **equipment** to make things easier at home.

## Equipment

There are different types of equipment that can help. Here are some examples:

- A hoist
- A walk-in shower
- A stairlift
- Carelink Lifeline





# your feelings

Although you might feel as if you are the only one in your situation, you might be interested to know that there are at least 175,000 young carers in the UK. That's over twice the capacity of the Cardiff Wales Millennium Stadium. **You are not alone!**

Although everyone's situation is special to them and their family, many young carers have similar feelings and experiences. **You are not different or strange.**

You might feel proud of what you do at home or you might feel angry, sad or frustrated. You may even feel all of these things at different times. You might feel that your friends or others don't understand what you're going through. **Coping with your feelings on your own can be tough.**

You might think that talking never solved anything but you'd be surprised. Talking to someone you trust about your feelings can really help. There are lots of people who can help. Who you choose will depend on who you feel you can trust and who you are happy to tell about what goes on at home.

## Remember!



There are people who can help you but they may not realise what you are going through if you don't tell them about it.

There may be opportunities in your local area for young carers to meet up with each other for support and social activities. This can be really helpful as it gives people a chance to talk to others, particularly if there is no-one at home that they can talk to, and to have some fun. To find out about this kind of support contact the Carers Support Project. Find their details and more about different types of people that offer support in 'Who can help?' starting from page 25.



# time & relationships

**Being a young carer may take up a lot of your time or a little. Either way, it means that you have less time to do the things you want.**

Not having enough time for yourself may make you feel unhappy or even angry with your relative or the people around you. It can also creep up on you so that you don't even notice that you have less time for friends or homework or simply to watch your favourite TV programme.

You might feel that spending your time looking after someone is the most important thing you can do. It is important, but so are you! You need time to keep up the important relationships in your life, like friends and family. You need time to have fun, to relax and just be yourself. You need time for your education so that you don't fall behind or feel you can't keep up. And you need time to be able to talk to others about how you are feeling.





# learning & working

**Young carers are all ages.** Some might be in school or college or they might be at work.

As a young carer you might feel that there simply isn't enough time or you don't have the energy to spend on getting qualifications or having a job.

**Remember!** Everyone has the right to have an education and to go to work and you are no different! You don't have to be the main carer for the rest of your life.

It's bound to seem hard trying to keep up with other people who don't have to care for someone. However, if you talk to someone in charge about what you do at home, such as a teacher or your boss, this will help them to understand what you can and can't manage and to hopefully find ways to help you. For example, they may be able to put your family in touch with a service who can provide support to ease the burden. Or it could be something simple like giving you the time to make calls home, extra time to do your homework or more flexible hours at work.

## Remember!

If you don't tell anyone about what you do at home, they will not be able to help you. This is also very important if you are being picked on or bullied by people who think you're different because you are a young carer. You should never put up with bullying, always tell a responsible adult and ask for help!



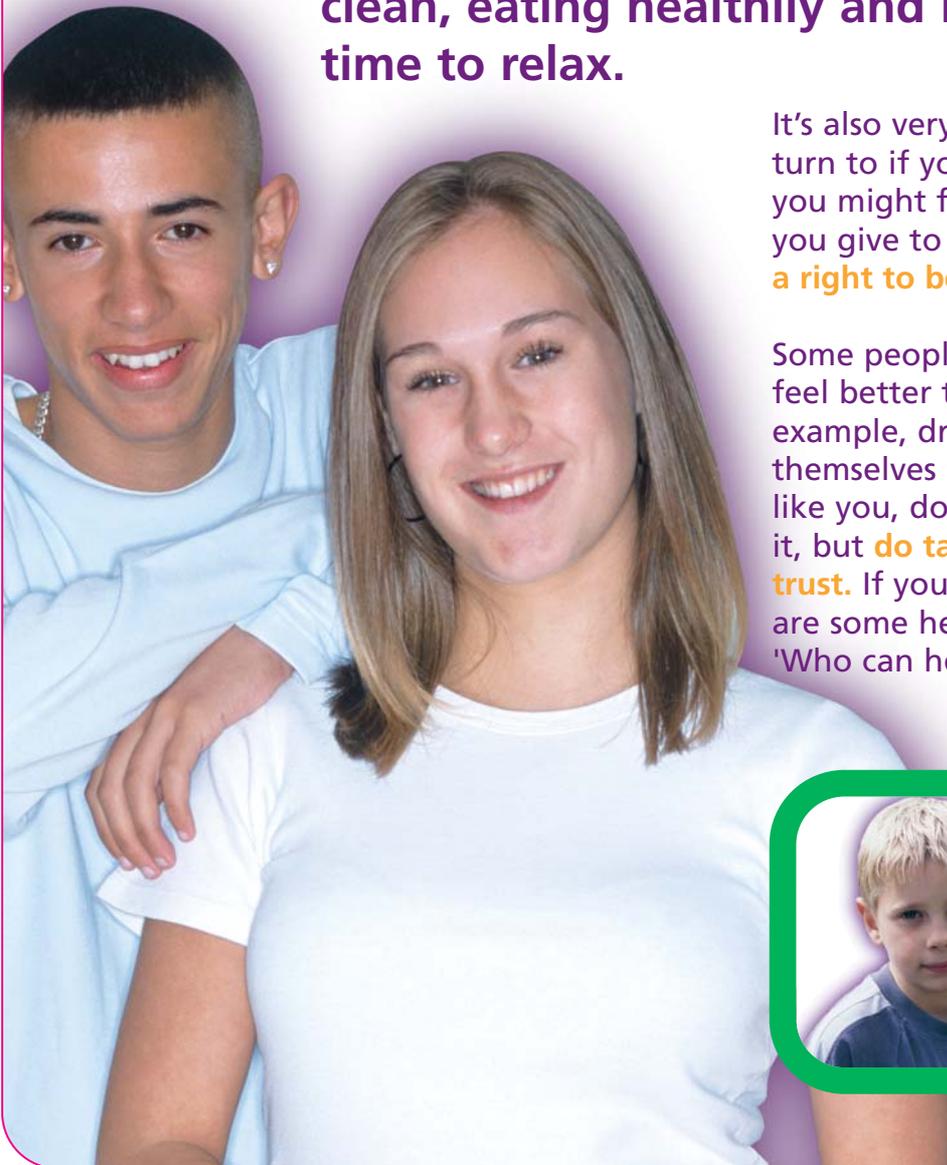


# looking after yourself

When you're looking after other people it's very easy to forget about looking after yourself. However, it's very important that you have time just for you to look after yourself properly, for example, going to the doctor or dentist, keeping clean, eating healthily and regularly, and having time to relax.

It's also very important to have someone to turn to if you feel ill or stressed. Although you might find it hard to see past the care you give to others... **remember, you have a right to be cared for too!**

Some people find ways to make themselves feel better that aren't good for them, for example, drinking, taking drugs or hurting themselves (called 'self harm'). If this sounds like you, don't be ashamed or feel bad about it, but **do talk about it to an adult that you trust**. If you're not sure who to turn to, there are some helpful telephone numbers in 'Who can help?' starting from page 25.





# hopes & dreams

Everyone should have hopes and dreams. They are the things that help us plan ahead and strive for the things we really want out of life.

## Do you have hopes and dreams?



Or do you find it difficult to plan ahead because it's hard to think beyond the day-to-day tasks you do? You may even feel that there is no point having dreams because you can't get away from the situation you are in.

These feelings are not unusual and many young carers experience them. But remember, everybody is entitled to have hopes and dreams.

You don't have to try and work out how to achieve your goals all by yourself. There are people who can help you. For example, Community and Children's Services may be able to provide services to help your relative so you don't have to, and a Careers Adviser or Careers Teacher can help you plan how to achieve your career goals. You can find out more about Community and Children's Services, the Careers Service and other people who can help support you and your family by turning to 'Who can help?' starting from page 25.



Information is one of the most important things you can have. It can help you make choices and to know where to go for help.

# getting informed

Information can help you with lots of things. For example, finding out about your relative's illness, disability or health problem; finding out who can help you and your family; and finding out what other kinds of help are available.

There are lots of places you can go for information. If you look from page 24, there is a list of helpful places that can give you information.





This section talks about rights to **benefits** and **services**. To get either of these for yourself, the person you care for or your family, you will need something called an 'assessment'.



## Remember!

An assessment is a way of gathering information to find out what help someone needs or is entitled to.

# your rights

Lots of different types of workers can carry out assessments. For example, Social Workers, Advisers from the Careers Service, Education Welfare Officers, Benefit Advice Workers and Nurses.

Community and Children's Services are required by law to carry out an assessment before they can give someone services to help them. They help lots of different people. Some examples are people who have mental health or drug and alcohol problems, children not attending school and people who are in hospital or in a hospice (this is a place where people who have life threatening illnesses are cared for).

## For example...

A person with physical disabilities might be assessed by the Adult Team to find out what help they need.

This could be equipment to help them in their home, such as handrails, or arranging for someone called a home care worker to help them with things such as shopping, getting out of bed, getting dressed or making a meal.

# What rights

## do carers have?

Carers of all ages have a legal right to have an assessment at the same time that the person they care for is being assessed. This right is provided by laws called the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 and Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004.

If you are a young carer aged 16 or over you have the right to have your own assessment whether the person you care for is being assessed or not. This right is provided by a law called the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000.

If you are a young carer aged under 16 your assessment is carried out under a law called the Children's Act 1989. You are then described as a 'child in need' and your assessment is carried out by Children's Services. Your assessment will look at the things you do and how they affect your development. Children's Services can provide help for you and your family to make sure that your development is not affected by being a young carer.

### For example...

Katy looks after her mam who has multiple sclerosis and is in a wheelchair. She sometimes has to miss school to stay at home and look after her mam. As a result, she is falling behind in her schoolwork.

Katy's mam contacted Community and Children's Services and a Social Worker came to the house to assess her and Katy.

Katy's mam now has home carers coming every day to help her manage at home. This means Katy can go to school and is getting help to catch up with her schoolwork.

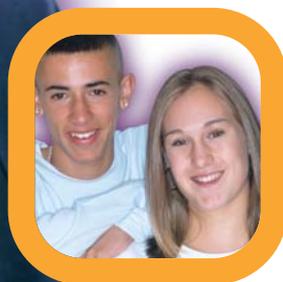
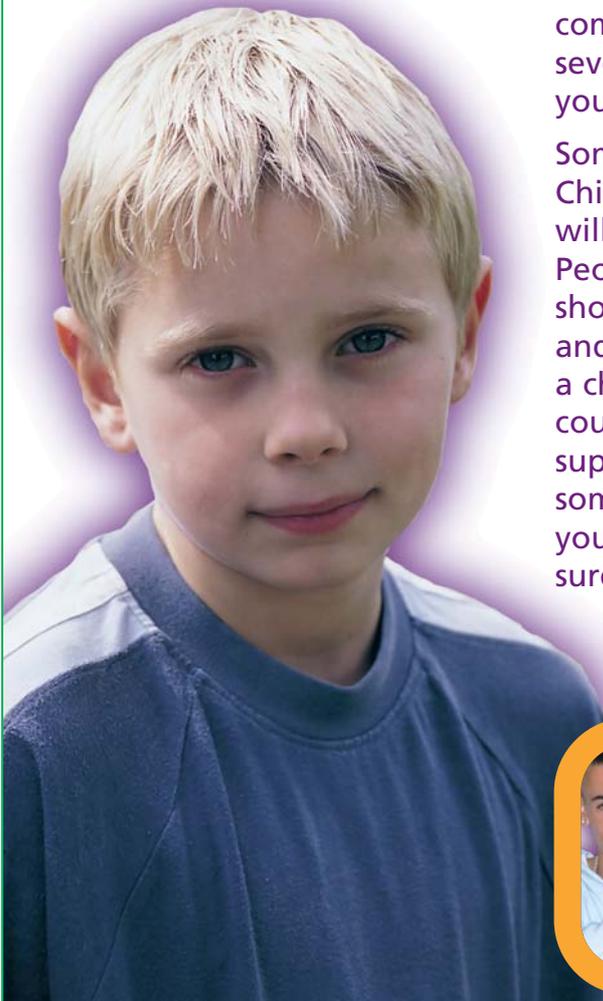


# Social Care Services for children and families

Many parents, carers and children worry that social workers may take children and young people away. In fact, most children and young people stay living at home with their parents. The Community and Children's Services Division will always try to help and support you and will always discuss any concerns with you as soon as possible.

You, or someone acting on your behalf, can ask Community and Children's Services for an appointment and they will complete a first assessment of what you might need within seven working days. You can find the contact details in your area in 'Who can help?' starting from page 25.

Sometimes, other people may contact Community and Children's Services if they are worried about you and they will want to talk to you about this and see if they can help. People such as Doctors, Support Workers or Teachers should always tell you before they contact the Community and Children's Services Division and explain why. If you are a child or young person with caring responsibilities local council Divisions can provide assessment and help, such as support services and advice, or put you in touch with someone who can help. If other people are worried about you, Community and Children's Services may need to make sure that you are safe and look at child protection issues.



# Benefits

Benefits are funds paid to people by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to ensure that they have enough money to live on. It's always worth checking to find out if you or your family are getting all the money you are entitled to.

## Ask yourself

- Am I and my family getting all the benefits we are entitled to?
- Do I or my family get any help or support?
- Would an assessment from Community and Children's Services Division help me or the person I care for at home?

## Things to do

- Talk to your family about applying for a benefits check. Look in 'Who can help?' starting from page 25 to find out who can check if you are entitled to any benefits.
- Talk to your family about asking Community and Children's Services for an assessment. If you are aged 16 years or over you could ask for a Carers Assessment. You can find the contact details for Community and Children's Services in 'Who can help?' starting from page 25.

## Getting help

There are different workers and services who might be able to help you or your family. Examples are your School Nurse, Education Welfare Officer, Play and Youth Workers, Teachers, Careers Service, Social Workers, Charities, Counsellors, Helplines including the Rhondda Cynon Taf Carersline Freephone 0808 100 1801 and websites.

If you're not sure how to get help or who can help, contact your local Carers Support Project. Find their details and more about different types of people and places that offer support in 'Who can help?' starting from page 25.



# where do I start?

## Carers

### Local help:

A good starting point is the:

- **Carers Support Project**

For general information your contact point should be the CarersLine:

**Freephone: 0808 100 1801**

**Freephone Minicom: 0808 100 1675**

**Email: [carerssupportproject@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk](mailto:carerssupportproject@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk)**

## Young Carers Projects

### For children aged 8 - 18:

- **Cynon Valley Young Carers Project**

Mountain Ash YMCA  
Duffryn Road  
Mountain Ash CF45 4DA  
**Tel: 01443 476777**

### For children aged 5 - 18:

- **Rhondda and Taff Ely Young Carers Project**

NCH Cymru  
293 Brithweunydd Road  
Trealaw  
Tonypanyd CF40 2NZ  
**Tel: 01443 433079**

Awareness raising, training, individual emotional support, advocacy for children aged 5 - 18. Time out from caring and a chance to be with other young people, plus you can ring them yourself.

### Useful websites for young carers:

- **[www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)**

A site for young carers and their families.

- **[www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)**

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers website for young carers.

- **Rhondda Cynon Taf Crossroads**

**Tel: 01443 480484**

**Website: [www.crossroads.org.uk](http://www.crossroads.org.uk)**

**Email: [info@rctcrossroads.org.uk](mailto:info@rctcrossroads.org.uk)**

Crossroads provides paid trained care support workers, who can offer respite to the carer. This allows the young carer or other family member to take a break from their caring role. The care worker will carry out most tasks usually done by the carer.

### Other help:

- **Carers Wales**

**Tel: 029 20 81 1370**

**[www.carerswales.org](http://www.carerswales.org)**



# who can help in Rhondda Cynon Taf?

## Benefits and Welfare Rights (Money)

### Local help:

Contact the Job Centre Plus office by ringing:

**Tel:** 01443 484700 or

**Website:** [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

If you think you might be entitled to Carers Allowance ring Disability and Carers Service:

**Tel:** 02920 586002

- **Citizens Advice Bureaus (CABs)**  
A free, independent and confidential advice and information service. On topics such as benefits, debt, health and housing.  
[www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)
- **Cynon Valley CAB**  
**Tel:** 01443 475633
- **Rhondda and Taff Ely CAB**  
**Tel:** 01443 409963

### Other help:

- **Benefits Enquiry Line**  
**Tel:** 0800 882200  
**Textphone:** 0800 243355

### Useful websites about benefits:

- **[www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)**  
A website with calculators to help show you what benefits you are entitled to.



## Bullying

There is nothing available locally but the following organisations can help:

- **Childline**  
Freepost NATN1111  
London E1 6BR  
**Tel:** 0800 1111  
**[www.childline.org.uk/extra/bullyingindex.asp](http://www.childline.org.uk/extra/bullyingindex.asp)**  
Offers online help and advice for children and young people. The website includes:
  - top tips for overcoming bullying;
  - a downloadable bullying diary - to keep track of when and how you are bullied;
  - young people's stories of what they have done to overcome bullying;
  - Information sheets aimed at all school pupils, parents, teachers and other professionals.
- **Kidscape**  
**Tel:** 08451 205 204  
**[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)**  
Kidscape has a helpline offering support and confidence building to bullied children and advice to their parents.
- **Samaritans**  
**Tel:** 08457 90 90 90  
**[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**  
If you're being bullied or anything else that's worrying you and feel you can't cope any longer and want to speak to someone about it then contact Samaritans.

### Useful website about bullying:

- **[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)**

## Community and Children's Social Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf

- **Cynon Community Care Office**  
Tel: 01685 875481 (also textphone)
- **Cynon Children's Services Office**  
Tel: 01685 888800
- **Disabled Children's Team**  
Tel: 01443 444300 (also textphone)  
Support for children and young people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities or sensory impairments, and their families.
- **Education Welfare Officers**  
they can be contacted by ringing **01443 744000**
- **Llantrisant Community Care Office**  
Tel: 01443 442100  
Textphone: 01443 425535
- **Rhondda Community and Children's Services Office**  
Tel: 01443 431513 (also textphone)
- **Sensory Services Team**  
Tel: 01443 431513 (also textphone)
- **Taff Ely Community and Children's Services Office**  
Tel: 01443 486731 (also textphone)
- **Emergency out of hours number: 01443 849944**

For more information about any of the above visit: [www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk](http://www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk)



## Counselling Services

*Local help:*

- **Chequers Youth Facility**  
For further details see Play and Youth Services
- **Eye to Eye Youth Counselling Service**  
Tel: 01443 204551  
Face to face counselling offered to young people 11 - 25 years. Counselling takes place in various places.

*Other help:*

See **Childline** (pages 25 and 30)

## Drug and alcohol services

*Local help:*

- **Ark Youth and Community Project**  
Tel: 01443 431441  
Support group for carers/parents of someone experiencing substance misuse – advocacy and mentoring service offered by appointment.
- **Community Drug and Alcohol Team**  
Tel: 01443 217026  
For anyone over 18, includes counselling, drug information, benefits advice etc.
- **Community Care Division's Substance Misuse Team**  
Tel: 01685 875481  
[www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk](http://www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk)  
Offers support and helps people over 18 with drug and alcohol problems and their families.
- **Treatment and Education Drug Services across Rhondda Cynon Taf (TEDS)**  
Tel: 01685 880090  
[www.teds.org.uk](http://www.teds.org.uk)  
For their specialist substance misuse service you can go through a professional.

*Other help:*

- **FRANK**

**Freephone:** 0800 77 66 00

**Textphone:** 0800 917 8765

**www.talktofrank.com**

For free confidential drugs information and advice 24 hours a day.



*Useful websites about substance misuse:*

- **www.adfam.org.uk**
- **www.al-anonuk.org.uk**

## Education, training and employment

*Local help:*

- **Careers Centres**

- **Tonypandy Careers Centre**  
232 Court Street  
Tonypandy CF40 2RF

**Tel:** 01443 432555 / 440688

- **Aberdare Careers Centre**  
34 Victoria Square  
Aberdare CF44 7LB

**Tel:** 01685 880000

- **Pontypridd Careers Centre**  
1 Penuel Lane  
Pontypridd CF37 4UF

**Tel:** 01443 484264

- **Education Service**

**Tel:** 01443 744000

Within the Education and Lifelong Learning Services Group, there are various sections including ones that can assist with Free School Meals, Clothing Grants, Lifelong Learning, Access and Inclusion Services.

- **Job Centre Plus offices**

advertise job vacancies and can help you find work. Ring **01443 484700** to find your nearest office or visit:

**www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk**

## Health

*Local help:*

To find your nearest Doctor (G.P), Dentist, Pharmacy or Optician contact:

- **Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Health Board**  
**Tel:** 01443 744800  
**www.rhonddacynontafflhb.wales.nhs.uk**

Advice on available health services in your area and your rights when using them. They can help if you want to complain about a health service.

- **Community Health Councils**  
**www.wales.nhs.uk/chc**
- **Merthyr Tydfil and Cynon Valley**  
**Tel:** 01685 384023 ext 213/4

- **Pontypridd and Rhondda**  
**Tel:** 01443 405830  
Covers the Rhondda and Taff Ely area

*Other help:*

- **NHS Direct**

**Tel:** 0845 4647

**www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk**

NHS Direct operates a 24-hour confidential nurse advice and health information service, on topics such as:

- What to do if you or your family are feeling ill;
- Particular health conditions;
- Local healthcare services, such as doctors, dentists or late night opening pharmacies;
- Self help and support organisations.

*Useful websites about health:*

- [www.riprap.org.uk](http://www.riprap.org.uk)  
A website for teenagers who have a parent who has cancer.
- [www.childrenfirst.nhs.uk](http://www.childrenfirst.nhs.uk)
- [www.welltown.gov.uk](http://www.welltown.gov.uk)  
for 5-7 year olds.
- [www.galaxy-h.gov.uk](http://www.galaxy-h.gov.uk)  
7-11 year olds.
- [www.lifebytes.gov.uk](http://www.lifebytes.gov.uk)  
for 11-14 year olds.
- [www.mindbodysoul.gov.uk](http://www.mindbodysoul.gov.uk)  
for 14-16 year olds.
- [www.teenagehealthfreak.org](http://www.teenagehealthfreak.org)  
for 11-16 years old.

## Mental Health services

*Local help:*

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**  
Tel: 01443 443008  
Offers a range of services for children and their parents that includes different types of therapy and treatment through medication. You usually need to be referred by a professional worker or your doctor. Covers the whole of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

*Other help:*

The following offer help, advice and information on mental health issues.

- **Mental Health Foundation**  
Tel: 020 7803 1100  
[www.mhf.org.uk](http://www.mhf.org.uk)
- **YoungMinds**  
Freephone: 0800 018 2138  
[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

*Useful websites about Mental Health:*

- [www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk)
- [www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk)
- [www.rethink.org/at-ease](http://www.rethink.org/at-ease)
- [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

## Play and Youth services

*Local help:*

- **Chequers Youth Facility**  
2 Canon Street  
Aberdare CF44 7AT  
Tel: 01685 872678  
[www.chequers.aberdareonline.co.uk](http://www.chequers.aberdareonline.co.uk)  
A drop-in centre where young people can get advice, information, guidance and counselling.
- **Children's Information Service**  
Tel: Freephone 0800 180 4151  
[www.rctednet.net/eydcp](http://www.rctednet.net/eydcp)  
Provides information about various childcare facilities plus out of school clubs and summer playschemes.
- **Penygraig Community Project (Valleys Kids)**  
1 Cross Street, Penygraig, Rhondda CF40 1LD  
Tel: 01443 420870  
[www.valleyskids.org](http://www.valleyskids.org)  
Offers youth clubs, afterschool and holiday play, youth theatre, creative dance, cultural events and adult classes.
- **Rhondda Cynon Taf Youth Forums**  
Tel: 01685 878398  
[www.funkydragon.org](http://www.funkydragon.org)  
Youth Forums provide the opportunity for young people to have a voice, raise their concerns and shape local services.
- **Rhondda Cynon Taf Youth Services**  
Tel: 01443 424400  
[www.rctyouthservice.co.uk](http://www.rctyouthservice.co.uk)  
There is a youth forum in each area of Rhondda Cynon and Taff Ely which delivers various youth work throughout. It produces an excellent contact booklet called ITK [In The Know]. Ring the above number for a copy
- **Viva! Project**  
Tel: 01443 480297  
Organise after school, weekend, holiday, leisure and training opportunities for young people with and without disabilities aged between 11 and 25.

## Voluntary Organisations

Voluntary organisations including charities are often run by volunteers. They may need volunteers or paid workers to provide different types of services.

To get in contact with the voluntary organisation that is suitable for you, contact:

- **Interlink**

**Tel:** 01443 485337 or

visit the Community Information Database (all libraries in Rhondda Cynon Taf offer free internet access to members of the library service)

[www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk/cid](http://www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk/cid)

## Youth Information Services

*There are 2 full-time, young people information workers covering the three areas. Rhondda Cynon and Taf. They can be contacted on 01443 424400*

- **Information Shop**

**Barnados Open Door Project**

21 Morgan Street

Pontypridd

Rhondda Cynon Taf CF37 2DS

**Tel:** 01443 486645

[www.barnados.org.uk](http://www.barnados.org.uk)

Provides information, advice, guidance, counselling, digi lab, plus support, signposting and advocacy/enabling help, for anyone aged 14 – 24.

*Other useful websites:*

- **[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)**

A website to help you use the web and chat rooms safely.

- **[www.thesite.org](http://www.thesite.org)**

Aims to offer all young adults support and guidance through life. Provides factsheets on key issues facing young people.



- **[www.rd4u.org.uk](http://www.rd4u.org.uk)**

Designed for young people by young people and supports people after the death of someone close.

**Freephone:** 0808 808 1677

**Minicom:** 0161 839 3915

- **[www.funkydragon.org](http://www.funkydragon.org)**

Funky Dragon is the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales which aims to make sure that the children and young people aged 0 to 25 get their voices heard on issues that affect them.

## Other Useful helplines

- **C.A.L.L.**

**Freephone:** 0800 132737

[www.callhelpline.org.uk](http://www.callhelpline.org.uk)

A listening support to those who feel the need to talk through their experiences and feelings.

- **Care Line**

**Tel:** 0845 1228622

Crisis telephone counselling service for people of all ages.

- **Childline**

**Tel:** Freephone 0800 1111

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Free 24 hour helpline for children and young people in distress.

- **Get Connected**

**Tel:** 0808 808 4994

[www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)

Free telephone and email service offering support to young people.

- **NHS Direct**

**Tel:** 0845 4647

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

Operates a 24-hour nurse advice and health information service.

- **NSPCC Cymru/Wales**

**Tel:** 0808 100 25 24

Bilingual Welsh/English helpline for anyone concerned about children at risk of abuse, including calls from children themselves.

**This guide is for you if you are a young carer living in Rhondda Cynon Taf**

### **What will the guide tell you about?**

It will give you information about the different kinds of things that you need to know about and the different types of help that may be available to you and your family.

### **How should you use the guide?**

You can use the guide yourself to learn more about yourself, the types of help you might need and how to get it. Or, you can work through the guide with someone you trust, such as a family member or a worker.

There are different types of worker that you might meet, for example, a Teacher, Health Worker, your boss, someone from the Children and Young People's Division, the local Young Carers Project and the Carers Support Project. If a worker helps you use the guide, they will respect your confidentiality.

The guide is arranged in sections. Each section is about a different topic and includes some things to think about as well as ideas for things to do, or places to go, that will help. There is also information about 'who can help' and how to contact them

### **Acknowledgements**

Originally published by Connexions Tyne and Wear and reproduced by kind permission. Special thanks go to Carers Centre Newcastle (a part of Newcastle Health City Project) who originated the project.