

Young Caregivers in Canada



Lead.
Support.
Empower.

Who are Young Caregivers?

Young caregivers are children, youth, and young adults ages 5 to 25 who provide care for a family member due to a chronic illness, disability, mental health concern or substance misuse.

Young caregivers help their family members in various ways by caring for their siblings or providing personal, emotional, or financial support to a parent or grandparent. When compared to non-caregiving peers, research reveals that young caregivers are at a greater risk of stress and depressive symptoms, low self-esteem, high anxiety levels, loneliness and isolation, difficulty relating to peers, self-harm and even suicidal ideation.



14 TO 27 HOURS OF CARE PER WEEK

In Ontario, young caregivers provide between 14 and 27 hours of care on average per week. This is the equivalent to a part-time job¹.



1.25 MILLION

There are an estimated 1.25 million young caregivers in Canada.² This data excludes Northern Canada and children under the age of 15, leaving out a significant number of children and youth who provide care for a loved one.



THE NEED FOR SUPPORTS

Supports such as friendships are lost due to the lack of free time because of caregiving. When friendships are lost, it leads to limited emotional support.

What is our role in the young caregiver journey?

Young caregivers are not typically recognized by family doctors, teachers and other professionals in their community and life. Young caregivers, therefore, go unidentified and unsupported, putting their own mental health and wellbeing at risk. Together, parents, family doctors, and teachers can:

- Support young caregivers' academic performance and life at school
- Address feelings of isolation, especially after young caregivers spent more time at home during the pandemic
- Identify the unidentified and unsupported

¹ Chalmers, 2008, 2017; Stamatopoulos, 2018

² General Social Survey, 2012; Stamatopoulos

To learn more about how you can help provide support to a young caregiver, visit [YoungCaregivers.ca/KnowledgeCentre](https://www.YoungCaregivers.ca/KnowledgeCentre)