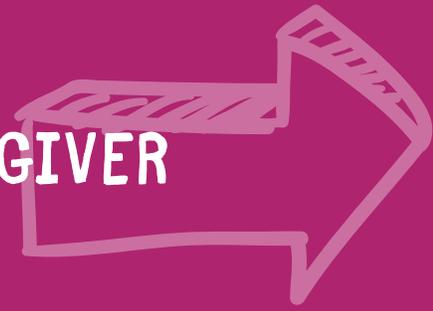


WHERE TO REFER A YOUNG CAREGIVER



SOCIAL WORKERS

Research shows that young caregivers who are supported have much higher levels of overall wellbeing as they grow. To provide this, at times a referral to an external resource may need to be done. However, how do we know where to refer them? Use the questions below to decide whether to refer the youth to Young Caregivers Association or a more urgent support such as Children's Aid or Emergency Mental Health Services.

Is the child the *only primary caregiver* in the family with no additional supports (such as parents, extended family, family friends)?

If **yes**, are they being heavily impacted in their daily living such as:

- Missing school regularly
- Poor hygiene
- Inability to purchase groceries/personal care products
- Inability to attend their own appointments (healthcare or mental health)

If the child is the only primary caregiver, such as caring for a single parent, find out if there are any additional supports for them such as family, friends, nurses, etc. If there are no additional supports, and this is causing the wellbeing of the child to be impacted as noted above, while you can still make a referral to the Young Caregivers Association, it is recommended to make an additional call to more urgent support services such as Children's Aid.

Does the child take on *potentially dangerous activities* as part of their caregiving role?

If **yes**, are these activities age-appropriate for the individual, such as:

- Mowing the lawn
- Engaging in errands independently
- Administering medication
- Performing first aid when necessary

If these are age-appropriate tasks, do they require additional training that the child has not received?

If the child is taking on additional tasks that are deemed to be out of their age bracket, and dangerous, this is when you may want to contact additional services beyond the Young Caregivers Association.

However, if the asks are not age appropriate, but not dangerous, such as paying bills, assisting with grocery shopping, or assisting with translation, this may not warrant a more urgent service. It is normal for young caregivers to take on more mature roles, and if they are not putting the child in any danger, and the child continues to be supported throughout these tasks, then a referral to the Young Caregivers Association can be made.

Is the child struggling with additional mental health concerns, such as anxiety, depression, grief and loss, emotional regulation, self esteem, body image, etc.?

If **yes**, are they located within the province of Ontario?

While you are welcome to provide a referral to the Young Caregivers Association regardless of the answer to this question, it is important to know the current limitations on what services can be provided. If a young caregiver is located outside of Ontario, they are welcome to register and engage in our recreation and respite-based services, however they will not be able to access the individual counselling and therapy. If this is something that they are looking for in regard to support, it is recommended to provide a referral to both the Young Caregivers Association and a local mental health support organization.

To learn more about how you can help provide support to a young caregiver, visit YoungCaregivers.ca/KnowledgeCentre

