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Young Caretakers' Health, Well-Being, and Future Prospects

Dr. Xia zun cha*

Food tech Department, WWSC, KTH
Royal Institute of Technology, China

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Young caregivers are those under the age of 18 who provide care, aid, or support to a family member. It's impossible to say how many young caregivers there are in Scotland right now: the 2011 Scottish census found that 1.4 percent of those under the age of 16 had caring duties, while the Scottish Health Survey in 2012–2013 found that 4% of those aged 4–15 had caring responsibilities. Adults who offer unpaid care have worse health outcomes than their non-caring counterparts, according to both self-reported and objective measurements. These disparities might be attributable to a variety of variables, including physical effort, changes in health as a result of health behaviours including food and exercise, and physiological impacts of psychological distress. Young caregivers have also reported a variety of physical health difficulties related to their caring obligations, such as weariness, exhaustion, and backache, and project workers who interact with them have noticed evidence of the influence of caring on both young carers' food and activity.

Young adult caregivers are also more likely than non-carers to have poor mental health and well-being. In Scotland, 4% of young adult carers have a mental health issue, compared to 1% of non-carers. Becker and Becker discovered that young caretakers expressed concern, stress, anxiety, despair, anger, upset, resentment, and resignation in a UK research. Others have discovered that teenage caregivers were much more melancholy, had lower self-esteem⁸, and reported being less cheerful than their non-caring peers.

The link between being a young caregiver and the influence on mental health and well-being is complex. The type of disease or handicap, the frequency and length of care, and the types of duties performed, as well as the family's socioeconomic condition and the type and frequency of social assistance received, can all have an impact. Furthermore, some young carers have indicated that caring has brought them closer to their families, a sense of duty, and a source of practical life skills. Caring may have an even greater influence on a young person's educational involvement and achievement, which is an important social predictor of

health. A longitudinal study of young caregivers discovered that they missed school due to caring duties, had much worse success on the General Certificate of Secondary Education, and were more likely to drop out of school and out of job or training.

Butler and Asbury discovered that young carers who gave emotional support to others had bad school experiences, including low attendance, bullying, stigma, and feelings of loneliness. Young carers were also more likely to say that they were scared to go to school 'sometimes' or 'often' because of bullying in a separate research when compared to non-carers. ⁸ Some young carers have also been discovered to have 'narrow horizons,' in which their ability to think about the future is hampered by their caring obligations. For young caregivers, these experiences may make the transition from school to further education or the labour market more difficult. The current study uses data from a population survey of schoolchildren in Glasgow, Scotland, to summarise the findings of studies on young carers' health, well-being, and future aspirations. The article's main goals are to look at the prevalence of young caregivers and to see whether there are any disparities between them and their non-caring peers in terms of physical, emotional, and mental health, as well as post-school expectations.

*Corresponding author:

Dr. Xia zun cha

 Xiazuncha@gmail.comFood tech Department, WWSC, KTH Royal
Institute of Technology, China

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