

It's Okay to Seek Help

A 45-minute session for high school students aged 12-18 years.



Objectives

- Breaking down the stigma around mental health challenges and accessing services.
- Acknowledging that young carers are at higher risk of compassion fatigue and burn out and building confidence to seek help early.
- Influencing early intervention help seeking by informing young people about what supports are available to them in their community.

Resources

- Pens and texta's
- 4 large pieces of coloured paper.
- Community resources (hard copy or printed from online).
- Laptop for the 'Young Carers' video.

Session Times	Session Activity	Resources
5 minutes	<p>Activity 1 - Why We Should Ask for Help Sometimes</p> <p>Step 1: Explain that young carers are so used to giving and caring for the person they are caring for. While caring does allow someone to gain skills, strengths and empathy beyond their years, it can sometimes make the person feel tired, overwhelmed, even angry. When we experience repetitive burnout, this can also lead to 'compassion fatigue'. Compassion fatigue is a term which means that over time we gradually lose empathy or compassion from constantly helping others.</p> <p>This can overall impact on your own mental and emotional wellbeing, affect your schooling and/or work and can also negatively impact on your friend and family relationships.</p>	
25 minutes	<p>Activity 2 - Where to go when we think we need help</p> <p>Step 1: Instructor gets 4 large pieces of coloured paper and writes the following questions - (1 question on each piece of paper).</p> <p>Question 1 - What are some signs that someone may be feeling overwhelmed?</p> <p>Question 2 - How should a person ask for help?</p> <p>Question 3 - Who can a person ask for help?</p> <p>Question 4 - How could they feel better from seeking additional support or what could be achieved?</p> <p>Step 2: Get the conversation going with question one 'Signs that someone should ask for help'. Consider how being a young carer can impact on mental, physical and emotional wellbeing. Discuss examples to prompt students, this can include our thoughts, feelings and behaviours. For example, someone may feel lonely, sad, overwhelmed, exhausted, burnt out, clouded head.</p>	<p>4 large pieces of paper (recommended to use the 'Pos-It' Giant Pad).</p> <p>Pens and texta's.</p>

Also, consider the physical impacts for instance, feeling anxious and giving butterflies in my tummy, wanting to vomit and wanting to sleep a lot. Also, discuss signs in the home and school to look out for, for instance; running late to school or attendance lowering, no time to get homework done, not being interested in hobbies you used to, feeling like no one at home is listening to your needs.

Step 3: Continue the conversation with question two: 'How can someone ask for help?' Consider what questions, conversation pointers or language someone might use when asking for help as a young carer.

Prompts for students if they need pointers:

- I feel...
- Can we please talk about...
- At a good time can we please chat?
- I am upset and need someone to talk to.

Step 4: At question 3: 'Who can a person ask for help?' Discuss the idea that we should be able to count at least 5 support people on our hand. Write these down on the pieces of paper. Explain to students that it is important that when they need help, they should know who they can go to. This may look like a family member, friends, teachers, chaplain, community/sports club, hobbies, neighbour, service provider, kids helpline (1800 55 1800) and the emergency services (000). Ask the students to be specific about the individual people and the roles in their lives. If they are struggling to find people in their family and community network, ensure them that they have people there for them within the school or community. Eg. The teacher, the chaplain, student services, community sports club, emergency services and kids helpline.

All 3 activities may take shorter or longer than needed. Let the conversations flow and allow the students to share.

20 minutes

Activity 3 - Exploring Supports in Your Community

Step 1: Spend a few minutes to show the group how the Young Carers Team at Carers WA can support them. You can play a short, animated video on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0m8JFYu99Y>

Step 2: Spend the remaining time exploring the support places discussed and providing resources and/or looking online at different supports within your local community. To get you going here is a list of some support services for young people to look up.

- Youth Centres in your local government area
- ReachOut
- BeyondBlue
- Lifeline
- Headspace
- Kids Helpline
- Youth Focus
- Salvation Army
- Anglicare
- Mission Australia
- Youth Futures
- YWA
- PCYC

Some additional resources and videos that you may find useful for yourself or for the session include:

- Kids Helpline "How to ask for help" Video
- Generation Next "How schools can encourage Help-Seeking in young people" Video
- Brene' Brown "The Power of Vulnerability" Video
- "Brene' Brown on Empathy" Video

Laptop for the 'Young Carers' Video.

Community resources (hard copy or printed from online).