

YOUNG CAREGIVERS IN AMERICAN CLASSROOMS

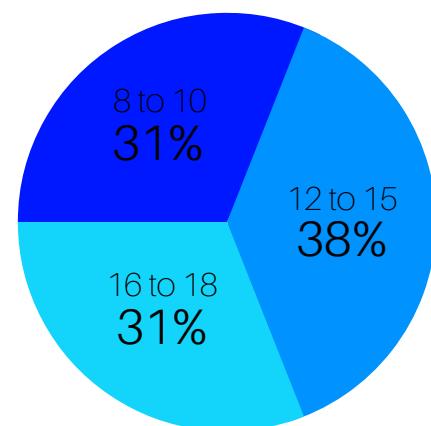
1.3 - 1.4 million children in the United States are caring for sick or disabled relatives

1 in 3 of these children are caring for a grandparent

1 in 10 are caring for a sibling

According to the National Alliance on Caregiving report released in 2005, 22% of high school dropouts leave school to care for family members

Young Caregivers by Age



Do you have a young caregiver in your classroom?

- Does your student have poor concentration?
- Is your student repeatedly late?
- Does your student have poor attendance?
- Does your student show extreme levels of exhaustion?
- Does your student have a short attention span?
- Does he/she engage during class?
- Do you notice any social isolation with this student?
- Is this student being bullied?

How can you be a support system?

- Be an adult they can talk to
- Offer a copy of the class notes
- Assign a homework buddy
- Talk to the administration - make them aware
- Offer a direct phone line for any questions, concerns, or to simply talk
- Increase young caregiver awareness to other staff members

Approaching a Young Caregiver

Start a conversation

Acknowledge there is a change in behavior and you are there to support them. Talk to the student about needing extra help with an assignment or subject, needing more time to work on schoolwork, express concern about schoolwork in a positive light, or express that you care for them and are there to support them however you can. Speak to them in a developmentally appropriate way,

Extend a helping hand

What can you do to support the student whether it be academically, socially, emotionally, etc.? If academic support is needed, you can offer extra attention or tutoring to the student. Some students may need someone to talk to and acknowledge they need help. Invite the student to participate in social events during school, as often they cannot attend after school clubs or events.

Provide other resources

You caregivers often feel isolated and do not know of resources that can support them while caregiving. Check with administration or your school district for counseling services, support groups, mentoring programs, health care services, community resources financial assistance, or other support services for specific needs.

Resources

www.thecaregiverspace.org

www.caregiver.org

www.apa.org

www.cancer.org

www.aacy.org

www.nhs.uk

www.palomarhealth.org

www.medschool.ucsd.edu

www.childrenssociety.org