Action for Carers Surrey

HEON
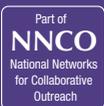HIGHER EDUCATION
OUTREACH NETWORK

SUPPORTING STUDENT CARERS IN FURTHER EDUCATION

A GUIDE FOR COLLEGE STAFF, FROM THEIR STUDENTS

One in twelve of your students is looking after someone. Who is looking out for them?

"People think if there are two parents everything's OK and caring for a family member is just an excuse. But disabilities affect everyone in the family."

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WHAT ARE WE ASKING FOR? ?

» Appoint a member of staff as a **Single Point of Contact** to look out for us and co-ordinate our support with our tutors
» Train all staff on the needs of student carers (see back page!)
» Ask this simple question on enrolment and bursary application forms and in your induction meetings: **"Are you looking after someone?"**
» Give us space on forms, and confidential places, to explain about our caring roles
» Prominently promote information about your **'carer-friendly' support** in print, on-line and on your walls. It's often difficult for us to disclose our circumstances to you, so frankly, we need to know what you offer as an incentive! For example, let's start with free printing credits…

FUNDING
To help us get started £

» Give us clear, simple information on financial support – no jargon please!
» Put information on Free College Meals on the canteen notice boards

> The small amount of money I earned was needed to cover train fares, food and equipment yet fell short of even those basics.

> I found out about college bursaries in my 2nd year. There was no space on the form to explain my special circumstances.

> I could have probably done a bit better if I'd maybe asked for more help like revision guides because I didn't really have the money. I didn't really know what help you could get. I couldn't trek to see any other universities without money.

FLEXIBILITY
To help us stay and succeed

» Help us manage our workloads with tutor time and workspaces
» Consider adjusting our timetables, if necessary
» Make it clear how we can request deadline extensions
» Adopt flexible attendance rates on bursaries for carers (because you know some things are out of our control)

> I was often up in the night because my mum was upset and screaming and shouting so I needed to calm her down. Then I'd get a migraine and have to take the next day off college. When I returned I'd be told 'headaches are no excuse'.

> "They knew about my home life & depression; I was told to re-do a piece of work. No support offered. They were telling me to do the impossible. I just accepted that as a 'fail'."

> If there's too much work you should be able to sit with your tutor and figure out a timetable of how to structure and work through assignments

FUTURE PLANNING
To help us choose a way forward

» Help us plan for our futures with career advisor sessions that take our caring roles into consideration
» Help us to connect with social care services – that can reduce our caring roles and remove obstacles to our progression

> Careers advisers should have training in the specific issues facing carers so that they can help us make informed practical decisions.

> Obviously, living away from home is really not a reality for me unless I know the person I care for is going to be okay.

> You shouldn't place limits on us or make assumptions about what we can achieve.

All recommendations and quotes have been provided by young adult carers in Surrey.

» For a 1-minute glimpse into life as a young adult carer
Search **'SEE US: YOUNG ADULT CARERS'** on YouTube

» For online support and information for carers aged 16-24 visit:
www.matter.carers.org

» Visit the HEON website for a bank of resources and useful links on the topic:
www.heon.org.uk/resources/young-adult-carer-resources

SUPPORT
Need help in identifying and supporting student carers?

For
» staff training and advice
» talks to students
» connecting carers with each other

write to: **YAC@ACTIONFORCARERS.ORG.UK**

This guidance was developed by young adult carers following the
"See Us: Young Adult Carers in Education" seminar, hosted in March 2016 by:

www.actionforcarers.org.uk   **www.HEON.org.uk**