

## **Initial assessment of Young Person's Caring Role**

The following tool was developed by Fiona Becker, Saul Becker, Stephen Joseph and Steve Regel to assist professionals in determining the level of a young person's caring role. It can be used to assist in care planning and ensuring that a young carers' role is not inappropriate or too demanding.

## **Multidimensional Assessment of Caring Activities (MACA-YC18)**

The Multidimensional Assessment of Caring Activities (MACA-YC18) is a questionnaire to be completed by young carers (an 18-item self-report measure) that can be used to provide an index (or score) of the total amount of caring activity undertaken by a child or young person, as well as six subscale scores for:

- (1) domestic tasks,
- (2) household management,
- (3) personal care,
- (4) emotional care,
- (5) sibling care, and
- (6) financial/practical care.

The MACA-YC18 was designed as a very short, easy to use, psychometric instrument able to provide an index of the extent of caring activities that the young person is currently engaged in (Joseph, Becker, Becker and Regel, 2009). The MACA-YC18 is recommended for:

- Use in surveys of the amount of caring activity undertaken by children and young people.
- To compare different groups of children and young people on the amount of caring activity.
- To use before and after interventions to examine what sort of interventions are helpful in reducing caring burden.
- To examine the association between caring activity and other factors – such as age and gender.
- To use in a one-to-one context by professionals who want to understand the types of caring tasks undertaken, but where time is short.

### **How to use the MACA-YC18**

Care has been taken to ensure that the wording is appropriate for most children and young people so that they will be able to complete the MACA-YC18 by themselves. Although it may be appropriate sometimes to help with explanations, we recommend that children and young people are given the opportunity to complete the MACA-YC18 by themselves whenever possible. When it is necessary to provide explanations this should be carried out by the professional involved. We do not recommend that the MACA-YC18 be completed in the presence of the person who is being supported. Young carers' responses on the MACA-YC18 should always be treated in confidence and used in line with an appropriate professional Code of Ethics and within an organisation's child protection and confidentiality policies.

### **Scoring for the MACA-YC18**

For the MACA-YC18 each of the items are rated on a 3-point scale, 'Never', 'Some of the time', and 'A lot of the time'.

For scoring purposes:

'Never' = 0

'Some of the time' = 1

'A lot of the time' = 2

### **Overall Score of Caring Activity**

The MACA-YC18 can be used to provide an overall summary score (index) of caring activity by totalling all 18 items. The lowest the young person can score is 0 and the highest the young person can score is 36. For example, if the young person ticks 'never' for each of the 18 items, they would get a total score of 0 but if they ticked 'a lot of the time' for each of the items, they would get a score of 36. Of course, most children and young people will score somewhere in between these two extremes. The average score is around 14.

### **Interpretation of scores on the MACA-YC18**

Higher scores indicate greater levels of caring activity. The following categories are useful:

0 No caring activity recorded

1-9 Low amount of caring activity

10-13 Moderate amount

14-17 High amount

18 and above Very high amount of caring activity

# The caring jobs I do

Below are some jobs that young carers do to help. Think about the help you have provided **over the last month**.

Please read each one and put an **X** in the

box to show how often you have done each of the jobs in the last month.

Jobs I do	NEVER	SOME OF THE TIME	A LOT OF THE TIME
1. Clean your own bedroom			
2. Clean other rooms			
3. Wash up dishes or put dishes in a dishwasher			
4. Decorate rooms			
5. Take responsibility for shopping for food			
6. Help with lifting or carrying heavy things			
7. Help with financial matters such as dealing with bills, banking money, collecting benefits			
8. Work part time to bring money in			
9. Interpret, sign or use another communication system for the person you care for			
10. Help the person you care for to dress or undress			
11. Help the person you care for to have a wash			
12. Help the person you care for to have a bath or shower			
13. Keep the person you care for company e.g. sitting with them, reading to them, talking to them			
14. Keep an eye on the person you care for to make sure they are alright			
15. Take the person you care for out e.g. for a walk or to see friends or relatives			
16. Take brothers or sisters to school			
17. Look after brothers or sisters whilst another adult is near by			
18. Look after brothers or sisters on your own			