

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

Balancing care and coming of age



En partenariat avec :



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When my little brother Matéo was born intellectually disabled, everything changed for me. To help him, I had to grow up fast!



In the beginning, it was just little things. But the older we got, the more my help was needed.



I also help my mom a lot around the house.



These tasks would often get in the way of my own activities or make me late for work.



I didn't want to ask for help, but I finally spoke about it to my boss.

You okay? You've been late a lot recently and that's not like you.

Yeah... I take care of my brother and so with work, school and everything else, I just can't keep up.



Turns out he'd gone through something similar when he was young, so he suggested I come here. I can see that many other young people in this group support someone. That helps me feel less alone and see myself as more than just someone who takes care of their brother.



If you support someone, speak up and don't be afraid to ask for help! Remember, caring for others starts with caring for yourself.

Who is this comic for?

This comic **raises awareness about the lived experience of young adults with caregiving responsibilities.**

Perhaps you recognize yourself in it—or someone close to you!

What is young caregiving?

“Young caregiving” refers to situations where a child, teen or young adult helps look after someone in their immediate circle who needs support, whether due to disability, chronic illness, addiction issues or mental health challenges. That person is normally a family member, like a parent, sibling or grandparent, though it can also be a close friend.

Young people who take on this role are known as young caregivers (or young carers).

In practical terms, **young caregiving** can involve:

- Helping a loved one dress, get around, feed themselves, bathe or take their meds.
- Providing emotional support (soothing, listening to or reassuring them).
- Accompanying them to their medical appointments.
- Translating information into the person's mother tongue when communicating with professionals.
- Taking on a major share of the household chores (cleaning, meal preparation, shopping, etc.).
- Helping them financially (lending them money, paying their bills).

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Think this could be you?

You could be a young caregiver if:



- Someone you're close to lives with chronic illness, a disability, dependency issues or mental health challenges.
- You help this person with daily tasks, self-care or medical treatment.
- You often worry about their health or well-being.

While helping a loved one can be meaningful,

it can also be challenging.

Below are a few signs that you may need support:

- You're short on time or energy for yourself, your friends or your hobbies.
- You have to take time off school or work to provide care or be with the person.
- The situation makes you feel stressed out, tired, guilty, angry or lonely.
- You feel as though you have a lot of responsibilities for your age.
- You have trouble setting boundaries.
- You don't talk about what you're going through with friends or family.
- You learned to put the needs of others before your own.
- The decisions you make (or have made) revolve around the needs of the person you assist—for example, withdrawing from school or choosing to live nearby.



You're not alone.

Whether you're a caregiver today or had been one in your childhood or teens, there are resources you can turn to who will listen, help and support.

Where can you get help?



From someone you trust

This could be a friend, family member, someone you know through college or university, or a trusted professional or practitioner.

Appui proches aidants

Caregiver Support Helpline for caregivers and their families



Phone:
1 855 852-7784



[Live chat](#)



cap santé mentale

CAP santé mentale service for family and friends of people living with mental health challenges



Phone:
1 855 272-7837



[Find a member organization in your region](#)
(in french only)

AIRE OUVERTE

Aire-ouverte services (ages 12 to 25)

[Find an Aire-ouverte centre](#)



Services available through your local CLSC

[Find a CLSC](#)

You don't recognize yourself in this role,
but would like to be an ally?

FINDING OUT

Finding out more about caregiving and young carers. ↗

LISTENING

Listening without judging.

ENCOURAGING

Encouraging the person to take care of themselves and ask for help as needed.

RECOGNIZING

Recognizing that this role can have lasting effects, even after it ends.

TALKING

Talking about young caregiving to those around you to help make the topic better known and understood.

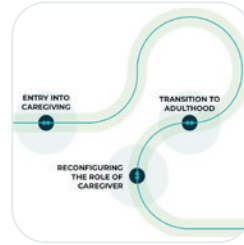


These actions help build a supportive environment for young adults who currently or have previously provided care to someone they know.

To find out more



Watch the video, [Vous connaissez sûrement des jeunes proches aidants](#) (in French)



See the [Trajectory of young caregivers](#).



Catch the [young caregivers episode of the podcast, Des histoires qui résonnent](#) (in French)



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