

Caring for young relatives - Family or friend (kinship) carers

What is family, friend or kinship care?

Family or friend care, also known as kinship care is when grandparents or other family members step in to raise a relative's or friend's child. This usually happens when the child's parents are no longer able to care for their child.

Many people do not realise that they are a carer, as they feel that it is something that they should do. The care arrangements may be very informal or in some cases the carer can formally foster or become the legal guardian of the child or young person.

Emotional and practical support for carers

Financial, practical and emotional support is available to carers to help them look after themselves and the person that they care for. There are a number of organisations that can help carers.

Family and Friends Team at **Newcastle City Council** give advice and guidance to family and friends carers in your caring role. Phone **0191 277 2430** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or email **CorporateParentingAdmin@newcastle.gov.uk**.

Newcastle Carers can offer information and support if you care for a child or young person who is ill, disabled, has mental health or has substance misuse problems.

Kinship (previously known as Grandparents plus) offer support to grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and family friends who step up to raise children when their parents can't. They have an information and advice service and peer support. Email, call or connect with them on Facebook.

The Relative Experience Project gives help and support to grandparents and their family members who are bringing up a relative's child, often in very difficult circumstances. They have Kinship Carer support groups.

Barnardo's offer counselling and support services. They can help with:

- parenting advice
- mental health
- bereavement
- family stress or break-down

- neglect
- back to school
- discrimination
- barriers to accessing and using services
- [Wellness Recovery project](#) for woman and children who have been victims of, and affected by, domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Newcastle Young People's Support Team
- [Young Dads Work](#), an early intervention and prevention service to young dads and parents and children at risk of entering the safeguarding or looked after arena
- [Boloh](#) a free telephone helpline and web chat for adult asylum seekers or a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic parents or carers. Their advisors speak English, Urdu and Hindi. They provide advice, signposting and emotional support. They can help with advice about respiratory problems and Hong Kong nationals settling in the UK.

The [Lifting Neighbourhoods Together](#) project has a kinship carers support group in Walker

Financial support

If you care for a child or young person you may be able to claim [Child Benefit](#).

If you are of working age and caring for a child you may be able to claim [Universal Credit](#).

[Kinship](#) has more information about Financial Issues you may be facing as the carer bringing up a relative's or friend's child

Child maintenance

Child maintenance is paid to cover the living costs of a child that you care for. It's usually paid to the person the child lives with and carries out most of the day to day care. The parent (or parents) who doesn't live with the child usually pays child maintenance.

[Read more about Child Maintenance from Citizens Advice](#)

[Child Maintenance Service \(CMS\)](#) is a government service for separated parents to make financial arrangements for their children. Both parents are responsible for paying for your child's living costs, even if they don't live with or see their child. The website explains your options and includes information about family-based arrangements. The CMS can:

- [work out how much each parent pays](#)
 - [arrange payments](#) and take action if a parent does not pay
 - sort out [disagreements about parentage](#)
 - try to find the other parent if you do not know where they are
 - keep your location and personal information private, for example, if you've [experienced domestic abuse or controlling behaviour](#).
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Benefits advice

It can be useful to speak with someone about the benefits you may be entitled to and how they may impact upon your other benefits. Local independent advice services include:

- [Citizens Advice Newcastle](#)
- [Newcastle Welfare Rights Service](#). They have [self help material](#) on their website.

Visit newcastle.gov.uk for more benefit advice services available across Newcastle.

[Benefits for families on a low income](#) factsheets from [Kinship](#)

Adoption

You might like to consider adoption. This is where you undergo a process to give a child a stable and permanent home.

[Adopt North East](#) support people through the process of adoption.

Children and young people's information

When caring for babies, children or young people you may find these pages on InformationNOW useful:

[Children's health](#) read more on common illnesses, vaccinations and health services in Newcastle

[Children's activities](#) find out more about places to go to help keep little ones entertained

[Sexual health](#) read more about free support services for young people

[The NHS Healthy Start Scheme](#) is for people who have children under the age of 4 (or are more than 10 weeks pregnant) who receive certain benefits. Kinship and family carers receiving certain benefits can also apply on behalf of the child they care for. You get a free prepaid card that's topped up every 4 weeks to buy: milk, fruit and vegetables. You can also collect free vitamins from [locations listed here](#). You can use the card in shops that accept Mastercard payments and sell at least one of these Healthy Start foods.

[Children and Families Newcastle Early Help Team](#) can help your family to stay on track. Being a parent or carer can be a tough job and sometimes we all need a bit of help. You can ask for help with an ongoing problem or get help to prevent one from happening. You don't need to face challenges on your own. They have hubs in Newcastle where you can help information, help, training and advice.

[Moving from Children's to Adult's Social Care](#) usually happens when a young person reaches the age of 18. Everyone is different. Your Social Work Team will work with you to understand what support you need and when is the right time for you to move to Adult Social Care support, if you still need it. Read more on InformationNOW.



[Children's and Families Newcastle](#) is the website for children and families and children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) in Newcastle. You can find services and activities such as:

- children's activities such as: baby and toddler groups, events, or youth groups
 - childcare providers and nurseries
 - schools
 - pregnancy or family support services
 - The Local Offer: services for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
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Addiction support

Support is available if the parent who can no longer care for their child has addiction problems. These pages on InformationNOW may be useful

- [Drugs and Alcohol](#)
 - [Addictions](#)
 - [Mental health support in Newcastle](#)
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Family and relationship support

There are services that can offer mediation, counselling and support if there has been a family breakdown. Read more on InformationNOW:

- [Family and relationship problems](#)
 - [Grandparenting issues](#)
 - [Separation and divorce](#)
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Am I a carer?

You are a carer if you give unpaid care and support to someone who can't manage without your help. This could be a family member, friend, partner or neighbour. The person you look after may have:

- a disability or learning disability
- a long term or life limiting illness
- mental health difficulties
- alcohol or drug related problems

Help is available for carers in Newcastle. This includes benefits advice, carers support, taking a break so you can rest and more.

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Useful Organisations

Newcastle Carers

Email: info@newcastlecarers.org.uk

Website: www.newcastlecarers.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 275 5060

Address: 135-139 Shields Road, NE6 1DN

Citizens Advice Newcastle (CAN)

Email: citycab@newcastlecab.org.uk

Website: <http://citizensadvice-newcastle.org.uk>

Telephone: 0808 223 1133

Address: 4th Floor, City Library, NE1 8AX

Newcastle Welfare Rights Service

Email: welfare.rights@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: www.newcastle.gov.uk/welfare/rights

Telephone: 0191 277 2627

Address: **POSTAL ADDRESS ONLY - No face-to-face advice is given here, NE7 7LX

Kinship – formerly Grandparents Plus

Email: info@kinship.org.uk

Website: www.kinship.org.uk

Telephone: 03300 167 235

Address: The Foundry , SE11 5RR

The Relative Experience Kinship project

Website: www.familylives.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 284 4060

Address: Spaceworks, NE7 7LX

Adopt North East

Email: adoptnortheast@northtyneside.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.adoptnortheast.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0191 643 5000

Address: Balliol Pembroke Wing , NE12 8QP

Newcastle City Council

Website: www.newcastle.gov.uk

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Address: Civic Centre, NE1 8QH

Child Maintenance Service (CMS)

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/child-maintenance-service>

Telephone: 0800 171 2345

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Healthy Start Scheme

Email: healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

Website: <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk>

Telephone: 0800 171 2345

Address: Healthy Start, NE1 6SN

Children and Families Newcastle Early Help at Newcastle City Council

Website: <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/care-and-support/children/getting-help-children-and-families/early-help-your-family>

Telephone: 0191 211 5805

Related Articles

[Home adaptations, equipment and aids](#)

[Looking after someone](#)

[Needs Assessment with Adult Social Care](#)

[Financial Assessments with Adult Social Care](#)

[Carer's Allowance](#)

[Pension Credit](#)

[Child Benefit](#)

[Children's activities](#)

[Adult abuse](#)

[Support for addictions and harmful behaviours](#)

[Family and relationship problems](#)

[Grandparent issues](#)

[Separation and divorce](#)

[Employment and Support Allowance \(ESA\)](#)

[Personal budgets for care and support](#)

[Getting advice about your landlord or housing issues](#)

[Moving in with relatives](#)

[Feeling lonely?](#)

[Carers Wellbeing Fund](#)

[Alcohol](#)

[Carers assessments with Adult Social Care](#)

[Introduction to Adult Social Care](#)

[Moving from Childrens to Adults Social Care](#)