



Carers Alert Thermometer for Young Carers (CAT-YC) Staff Guidance

Eligibility Criteria

The CAT-YC is was originally designed for use with young people aged 11-18, who are providing unpaid care for at least one family member at home based on the findings of a research study involving 267 young carers and the staff working with them between October 2017 and April 2019. It is now being piloted in primary and secondary schools. The language may be adapted for younger children, but please ensure that all topics for Q1 to Q10 are covered.

Procedure

STEP 1: IDENTIFICATION

Ask the young person if they help look after someone at home who would otherwise struggle to manage without their support.

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE CAT-YC

Section 1: Complete the young person's details section

Section 2: a) Identify the caring role. Complete questions A and B together, ticking the box.

b) Screen needs - Complete the screening section of Q1 to Q10, circling the level of need or perceived need for any alerts which could impact on the care being provided or on the young carer's own well-being. Please provide one response for all questions. Add up their need alert score for each column using the levels below.

😊 NONE (Score 0), 😊 LOW need (Score 1), 😐 MEDIUM need (Score 2), 😞 HIGH need (Score 3)

Section 3: Indicate the total score for need on the thermometer and/or write it in the box.

C - Check if there is anything else the young person wants to talk about and make notes if needed

D – Complete question D, circling one number on the scale.

Section 4 & 5: Make a plan with the young carer, prioritising the young carer's top three alerts for action and noting the agreed next steps to be taken and by whom. If any of the alerts can be supported immediately, such as provision of information or signposting to sources of support, these actions should be taken.

Any HIGH needs identified should be prioritised.

Section 6: Next Review Set a review date and person responsible for follow up.

Section 7: Storage and Sharing of the CAT-YC

Discuss with the young carer where the CAT-YC will be stored and who their information can be shared with. This may include referral to other organisations e.g. Barnardo's, use of their anonymous (nameless) information to inform service development and to help with the evaluation run by Edge Hill University e.g. sending us nameless types of alerts identified and any gaps in service provision to meet them. **The consent section should be completed to indicate the young person's choices and be signed and dated by them or be clear who is signing on their behalf e.g. a teacher, youth worker.** If they are under 16, consider whether you need to obtain parent/legal guardian's consent, according to organisational policies.

TRAIGE – when triaging any CAT-YCs received please ensure that decisions are based on (i) the total score and (ii) any HIGH needs identified which should be prioritised for action as soon as possible regardless of the overall score.

Please refer to any appropriate Safeguarding Policies if required.

CAT-YC Research Team Contact Details: If you would like more information about the pilot study or have any questions or comments about completing the CAT-YC, please contact the CAT research team on CAT@edgehill.ac.uk