

A NATIONAL PROTOCOL TO SUPPORT YOUNG CARERS IN SCHOOLS

Press Release

CARPI, 18 SEPTEMBER 2018 – Young carers are children and young persons under 18 who provide care, assistance or support to a family member who is disabled, has some chronic or terminal illness, addiction or mental health diseases.

Based on the findings of a research ISTAT (*Rapporto sulle condizioni di salute e ricorso ai servizi sanitari in Italia e nell'Unione Europea*), in Italy there are 391.000 young carers aged between 15 and 24 (data 2015).

Research evidence indicates that caring responsibilities during childhood and adolescence are a risk factor for psychophysical development and for social inclusion. Moreover, it is well known that caring responsibilities can be a risk factor also on educational attainment. Indeed, having to combine school with caring responsibilities may entail the following results: numerous absences, lateness, difficulty to focus, incapability to respect deadlines of homework and tests, problems in interacting with peers and school professionals. All this can lead to young carers eventually dropping out from education. Moreover, young carers are more likely to be victims of bullying than their peers without caring responsibilities.

In order to combat these negative impacts and to design multidisciplinary and interinstitutional support interventions, the first step is to identify those students who are young carers and recognise their special needs.

With these objectives in mind, the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research and organisations working with and for carers (the social cooperative Anziani e Non Solo/ANS, the social promotions associations CARER e COMIP, and the European Network EUROCARERS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding.