

## Publication

„You don't look for it" - A study of Swiss professionals' awareness of young carers and their support needs

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While political and public interest in providing support for family carers is growing, so called young carers and young adult carers-young persons under the ages of 18 and 25 respectively-mostly remain unrecognised. Yet, this vulnerable group is in need of special attention and support from professionals in order to get along with the situation of an ill family member and the caring duties they perform. This paper presents the results from a focus group study on the level of awareness among professionals from healthcare, education and social services concerning the topic of caring children, adolescents and young adults; and on the practice tools they consider necessary and helpful in order to support young carers and young adult carers. Twentyseven professionals from the German and Frenchspeaking parts of Switzerland participated in five focus groups. The focus groups were recorded and transcribed verbatim, and the transcripts were analysed using qualitative content analysis. Our findings show that the professionals have a low level of awareness of the issue of young carers and young adult carers and also highlight the professionals' willingness to engage with the subject. The results also show that professionals consider that practice tools (such as standardised questionnaires and check lists) could be important devices in providing support for young carers and young adult carers. These tools could be helpful in identifying this group, enabling them to identify themselves as such, and would ensure that they received appropriate support.

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