

Staff Guide to Gaining Consent for a Young Carer Referral



Referral form: www.carerswa.asn.au/young-carers

Calling a parent/guardian to get consent for a referral may be a daunting prospect. That's why Carers WA has prepared a step-by-step guide to help you navigate areas of sensitivity and respectfully seek consent.

Before you call:

1. Ensure the young person consents to the referral.
 - This can be done with the young person beside you assisting in making the call, or in a private conversation the day before or the day of the phone call. This will allow the young person to prepare to have a follow-up conversation with their parent/guardian at home.
 - If the young person consents to the referral, but does not want you to contact their parent/guardian please contact us on **1300 227 377** or through our online enquiry form at **www.carerswa.asn.au/young-carers/** for further advice.
2. Double check the parent/guardian information and contact details.
 - During school hours you may need to contact the parent/guardian's workplace. If you are calling a workplace do not identify yourself unless asked – then just use your name to assure privacy for the family.
3. Know the important information that you want to convey. You don't have to know everything about Carers WA or answer all the questions that come up - this is the role of Assessment and Planning Officers.
4. Have your calendar/schedule on hand. They may want to arrange to come speak with you in person.

When you call:

1. Introduce yourself and determine if this is a suitable time to chat. If not, then find out when would be better.
2. Start with something positive about the young person. Parents/guardians may have a negative experience of school, or think a call from the school means something bad has happened.
3. Identify why you are calling. Provide some general information about Carers WA and how we can help the young person achieve some of their goals.
4. Ask if they are happy for you to refer the young person.
 - a. If they are unsure or are not happy for a referral to be made, thank them for their time and provide Carers WA website and contact details for further information.
 - b. If they are happy for the referral, inform them that someone will be in touch just to register their details with Carers WA, followed by a more detailed call or meeting with an Assessment and Planning Officer.
5. End the call on something positive about the young person, your contact details if they need to discuss anything further, and Carers WA contact details if they have any further questions.

Tips:

- *Do not make assumptions. All young people's circumstances are different.*
- *Focus on the young person. Avoid referring to the young person as a young carer. The parent/guardian may not see the young person as a carer for a variety of reasons and could shut down the conversation or become defensiveness or angry.*
- *If the parent/guardian becomes defensive or angry, remain calm. If they remain hostile, you may need to call them back at a more suitable time.*
- *End the call on a positive or simply thank them for their time and offer to call them back on another day.*

Sample Script

Introduction

If calling the young person's home:

'Hello. This is (teacher name). I'm (young person name) teacher from (school). Is this (parent/guardian name)?'

If calling a workplace:

Hello. This is (teacher name). Can I speak with (parent/guardian name) please?

Permission

'Is this a good time to talk?'

Positive comments

'Firstly, (young person name) is doing a great job in (concrete positive example).'

Reason for calling

'I'm calling today as there is an organisation that we think (young person name) could be eligible to receive some support from.

They're called Carers WA and their youth team could support (young person name) achieve some of their goals in and out of school.

The service is completely free and can assist with things like career advice, resumes, getting their driver's license, getting equipment for school, and accessing sports or hobbies outside of school.

Would you be happy for us to make a referral for (young person name)?'

Happy for a referral

'That's great. So, what happens next is we'll pass on (young person name) details to Carers WA.

Someone from their youth team will then contact (young person name) to register them and see what their goals are, and put in place a plan to help (young person name) achieve those goals.

You can find out more information about Carers WA if you google them online, or you can call them on 1300 227 377 if you have any questions.

Thanks for your time today. It's great to have (young person name) at the school and (any other positive comments).

If there is anything you need or if you have any concerns or feedback in general, please do not hesitate to contact me.'

Not happy for a referral

'Ok, no problem. If you want, you can find out more information about Carers WA if you google them online, or you can call them on 1300 227 377.

Thanks for your time today. It's great to have (young person name) at the school and (any other positive comments).

If there is anything you need or if you have any concerns or feedback in general, please do not hesitate to contact me.'