American Association of Caregiving Youth

WE CHAMPION, SUPPORT, AND CELEBRATE YOUTH WHO CARE FOR CHRONICALLY ILL, INJURED, ELDERLY, OR DISABLED FAMILY MEMBERS.

WHO ARE CAREGIVING YOUTH?

Caregiving Youth are young people ages 18 and under who provide ongoing care or assistance to a family member with a chronic health condition, physical limitation, mental health need, disability, or frailty due to aging.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Caregiving for a loved one can be demanding, challenging, and rewarding. Although children are often thought of as recipients of care rather than caregivers themselves, children around the world take on caregiving responsibilities every day. In the United States, Caregiving Youth often go unrecognized. Schools, healthcare providers, and communities do not routinely identify or support these young people, even as caregiving responsibilities can affect their education, friendships, and emotional well-being. Recognizing Caregiving Youth is the first step toward ensuring they receive the understanding, resources, and support they need.

LOCAL SUPPORT, NATIONAL IMPACT

- **American Association of Caregiving Youth (AACY)** is the first organization in the United States dedicated solely to addressing the issues faced by children and teens who provide care for ill, injured, elderly, or disabled family members, regardless of the diagnosis or condition. For over 20 years, AACY has been a national leader in advancing understanding of Caregiving Youth and delivering meaningful support through identification, services, and advocacy.
- AACY operates two core programs: the **Caregiving Youth Project (CYP)**, which provides direct services to middle and high school students in Palm Beach County, and the **Caregiving Youth Institute (CYI)**, which drives national awareness, research, policy, and systems-level change. CYI's work is rooted in the pillars of Connection, Advocacy, Research, and Education (C.A.R.E.), building multi-system solutions to support the more than 5.4 million Caregiving Youth across the country.
- Thanks to the leadership and advocacy actions of AACY, **Florida was the first to acknowledge Caregiving Youth in its 2019 Florida Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)** of public middle and high school students. Results indicated that 16.4% of high schoolers and 23.6% of middle schoolers provide care or more than 290,000 youth. The survey did not include students attending Florida Virtual, charter, private or home-schooled children.
- AACY has demonstrated that **academic and personal success outcomes are improved when Caregiving Youth are recognized and supported.** Across the past 12 graduating classes, 98.3% of AACY CYP seniors graduated; more than 85% of these students go on to post-secondary education, and many seek a career in health care, a needed labor force as the U.S. population ages. Our programs keep families together and have helped children: school performance, attendance, graduation rates, mental health, and well-being all improve with support from the Caregiving Youth Project.

5.4M

There are over 5.4M Caregiving Youth in the United States

- More than 70% assist a parent, grandparent, or great-grandparent.
- Many care for disabled siblings or other family members.
- 34% help more than one person in the household.

Importance of investing in Caregiving Youth in the United States

Improved well-being:
Caregiving can be a stressful and demanding role, especially for young people who are still developing physically and emotionally. Many Caregiving Youth face trauma or chronic stress that may contribute to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Providing support helps reduce these risks, alleviate stress, and improve overall well-being.

Academic success:
The stresses of caregiving affect a young person's academic performance and school attendance. Providing support and accommodations helps ensure they are able to attend school, learn, and thrive. No child should have to drop out of school or life because of family caregiving.

Reduced isolation:
Caregiving Youth may feel socially isolated. Providing support can help connect them with other caregivers, give them opportunities for respite and fun, and help them make friends.

Economic benefits:
Caregiving Youth assist with care that would otherwise need to be provided by paid caregivers. Supporting this population reduces the economic burden on the healthcare system and society. $8.5 billion was the 2012 estimated economic value of unpaid labor of Caregiving Youth in the US; today, the monetary value is much higher

Future caregivers:
Supporting Caregiving Youth can also help prepare them for future responsibilities and develop their life skills; many Caregiving Youth choose healthcare careers for their futures.

NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE & RECOGNITION

nyt mag · The Wall Street Journal · Los Angeles Times · Forbes · The New York Times · CNN Heroes · Fox News digital · caregiving · The Doctors · TIME · USA TODAY · VICE News · NBC · TODAY

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