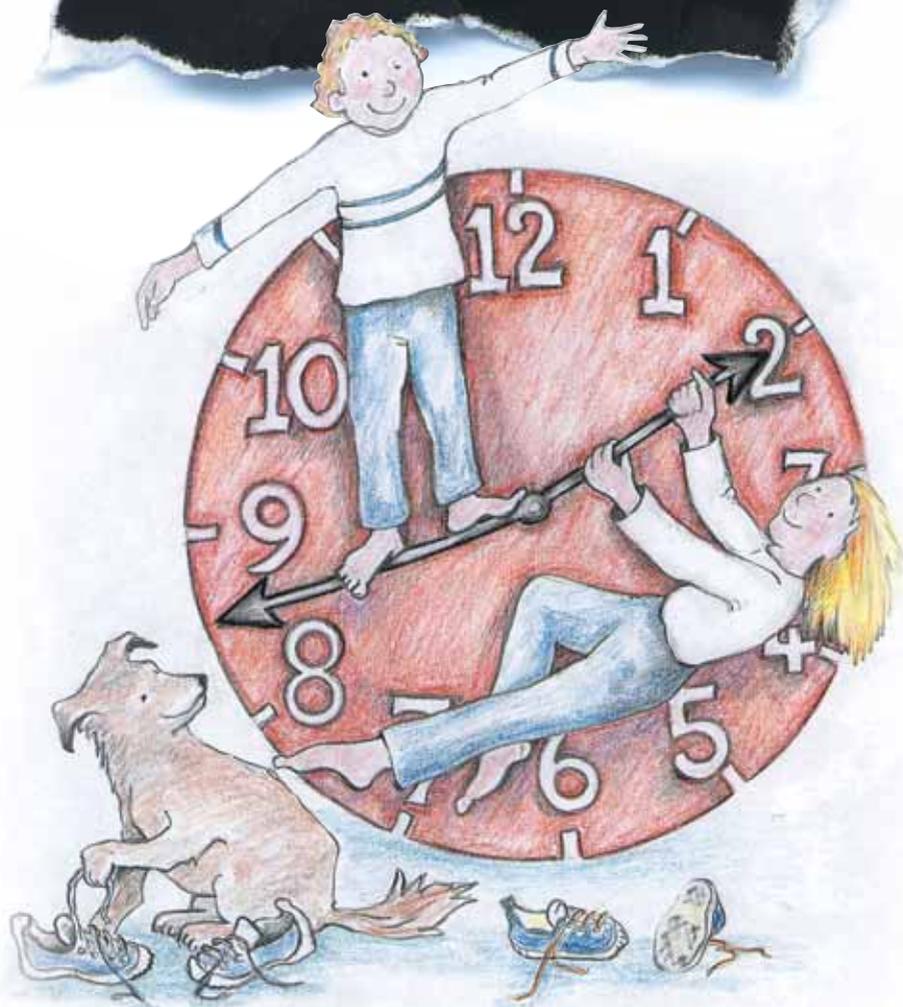


CARING AROUND THE CLOCK



A CARER'S LIFE

Everyone on this earth
cares for someone
from time to time.
There are also people
who care for us

Our parents

Grandparents

Friends

Brothers and sisters



Doctors



Child Minders



Nurses



Playgroup Leaders



Teachers



Health Visitors



Social workers

**As we grow older, we learn to do
more and more things for ourselves**

DRESSING OURSELVES COOKING A MEAL

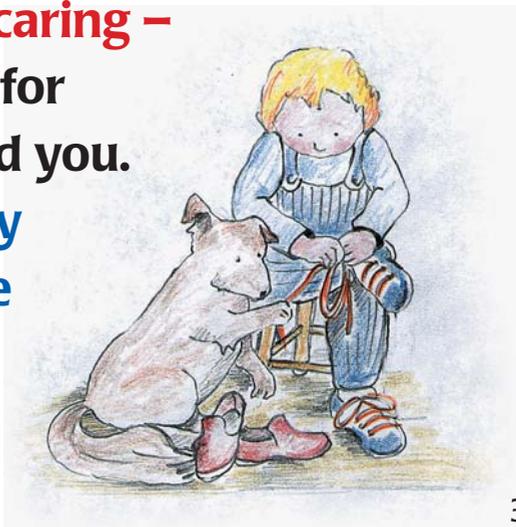
This is called becoming independent and being able to do our own thing without asking for help. Sometimes we like to do jobs for the people we love or others that we like or with whom we get on well.

Perhaps you are the one in the family that lays up the table for breakfast.....

.....puts the rubbish out or nips down to the local shop if you have run out of milk.....

.....or give your mate a hand with his paper round.

**This is called caring –
watching out for
people around you.
They probably
do exactly the
same for you.**



Some people, however, will be called
CARERS with a capital **C**.

Other people may leave it to them to care
24–7 for someone who is ill.

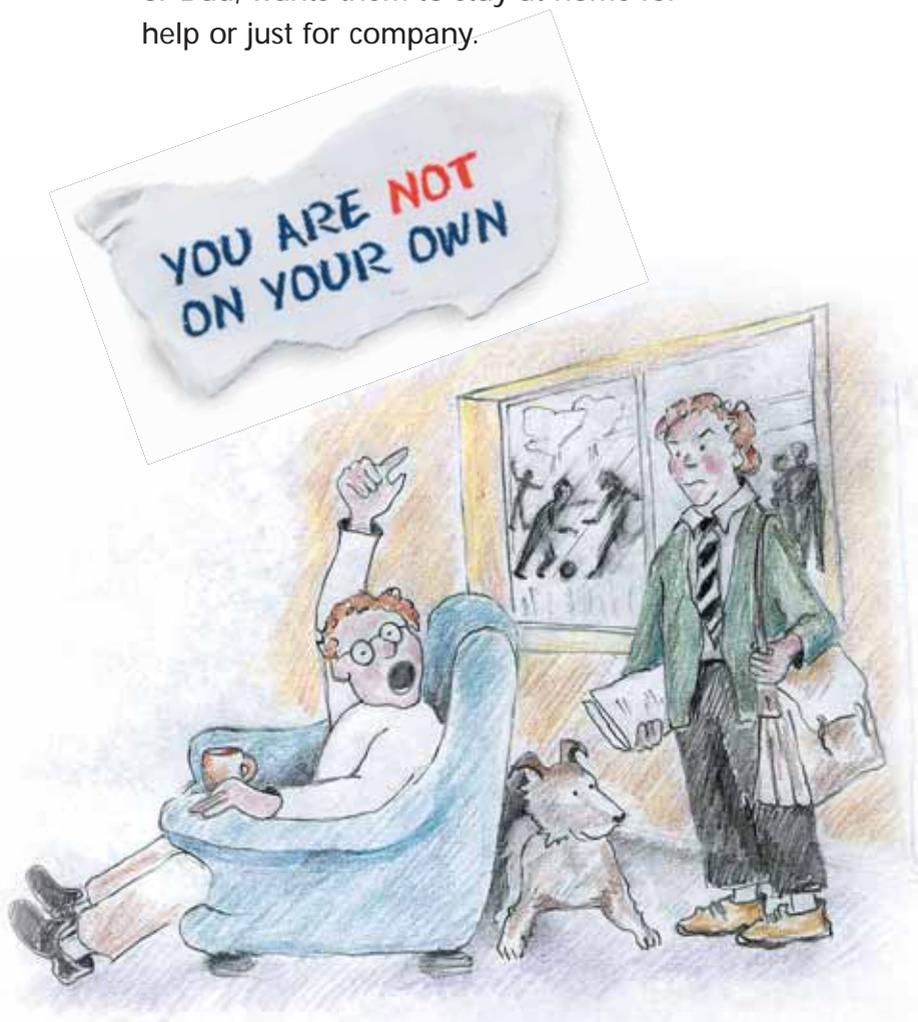
If that **CARER** is someone of your own age
they probably find that they start to lose
touch with their gang of friends.

They don't know what is going on
any more.....



.....and even find sometimes that they cannot get their homework done and have the teachers on their backs.

Some **CARERS** even find that they can't get to school regularly any more because the person who is ill, usually their Mum or Dad, wants them to stay at home for help or just for company.



If that person is you
then there is **someone**
that can **help you**.

This person
is called a



**KEY
WORKER**

A 'Key Worker' is so called because they hold the key to getting help for you, your Mum or Dad and see that they are looked after well so that you can go to school regularly, chill out with your mates and see-off the dreaded homework

THERE IS NO NEED TO BE A 24-7 CARER -

HELP IS AT HAND

There is very good treatment around for depression and similar illnesses but you can't get effective treatment unless you go to see the doctor.

Any good doctor will recognise what needs to be done and will prescribe medication (usually tablets) and then find someone that your Mum or Dad can talk to, to sort out the problem.

This person may be called a



HOW CAN YOU TELL WHO TO YOU IS SUFFERING

THESE ARE SOME OF THE SIGNS



- They seem to have no energy or motivation.
- Often they have sad, miserable thoughts and feel hopeless.
- They feel guilty about things that are not their fault and seem unable to cope with life.
- Sometimes they sleep a lot to shut out the world or have difficulty in sleeping.
- They may go off eating and lose weight or comfort eat and put on a lot of weight.
- They experience panic attacks, feel anxious and do not want to be with other people.
- Even simple tasks are difficult to complete and the person seems to move and speak much more slowly than usual.

GETTING HELP FROM SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU: CAN YOU GET HELP FROM DEPRESSION?



If they say that they are no use to anyone, tell them that **they are needed** and wanted, then **persuade them to see a doctor**



SOME DO'S AND DON'TS FOR YOUNG CARERS

DO get help from other people that you are close to.

It may be a grandparent, uncle or aunt or a neighbour that you know well and trust.

This is not being disloyal to your parent.

DO make time for yourself so that you can see your friends and do the things that interest you.

Everyone needs time to do what they want.

This is not being selfish.

DO go to school regularly.

If you are having problems in leaving your parent on their own then tell a teacher that you feel you can trust.

They can help you.

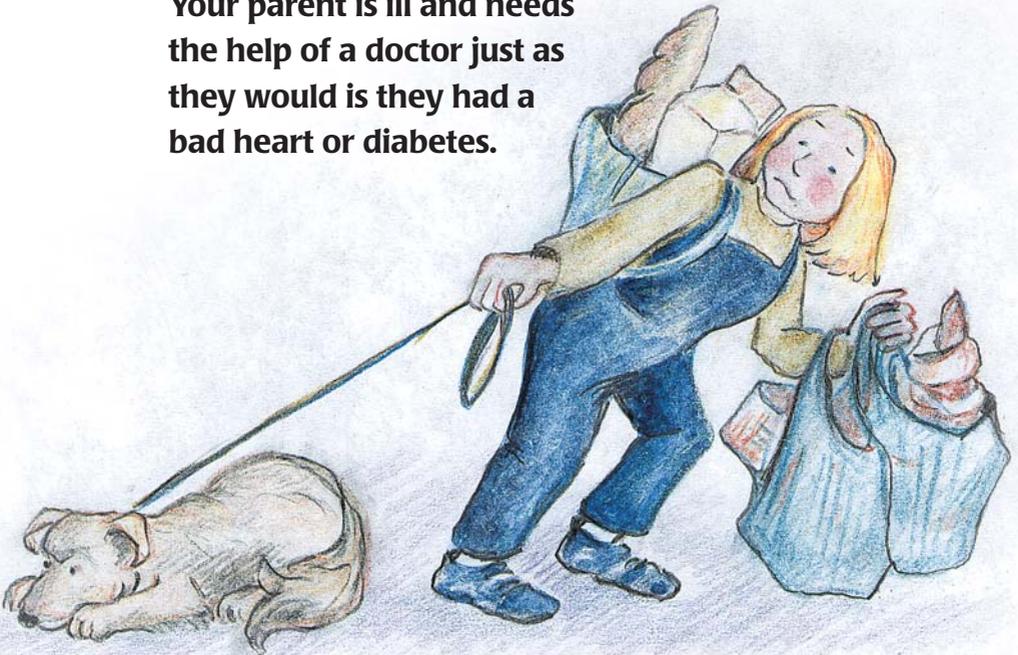
DO let other people know if things are getting on top of you and you are starting to feel that you cannot cope any longer.



DON'T BLAME YOURSELF

Depression is an illness just like other illnesses that doctors need to treat.

Your parent is ill and needs the help of a doctor just as they would if they had a bad heart or diabetes.



Depression hit me without any warning five years ago.

Overnight I changed from someone with a zest for life, a career and a good social life into a person for whom life no longer held any meaning.

I had a boy, Adam who was then nearly ten and a girl, Lisa, who was seven. We lived in a small village among good friends and neighbours and I had returned to teaching. Life seemed good.

Then I discovered that I was expecting another baby and I was not sure whether I was pleased about this or not. I loved my job and the wonderful child-minder that had looked after Adam and Lisa was not available any more as she had another job.

When baby Huw was born we were all thrilled with him and, for the first few days friends dropped in to see him and said how gorgeous he was. Then, after six days I started to feel dreadful. I was exhausted, miserable and had no interest in Huw whatsoever. I just wished that someone would take Huw away for a while and look after him so that I could sleep. **That was all that I wanted to do – sleep, sleep, sleep. I didn't want to see anyone, even my other children and I just felt that I was living a nightmare.**

My family and friends could not understand what was happening to me as I seemed to have everything that I wanted; a lovely family, nice house, friends and a job that I liked.

They could see no cause for my depression whatsoever.

Some told me to *"Pull myself together"* or *"Think what you are doing to your family."*

Eventually my sister, who was a health visitor sat down with me and gently explained that she thought that I was suffering from post natal depression which needed to be treated, as it was an illness. She came with me to see my doctor who talked to me and then prescribed medication for me to take. She also put me in touch with a counsellor who was attached to her practice and I was able to talk to him. Gradually my depression lifted and I started to get better.

Occasionally I still get patches of depression, particularly when I start missing my husband who no longer lives with us. Then I realise that I am relying on my older children too much for company and need to get my own life back again. I can always talk to my sister who is always supportive and encouraging.

Depression created huge problems for me and my family because I did not go for help when I needed it. I now go to the doctor when there is a problem and life seems good again.

ADAM'S STORY

When I knew that my mother was expecting another baby I wasn't particularly excited as I didn't fancy having to share my bedroom if it was another boy. However, when Huw was born I thought he was great.

My mother came home from hospital with Huw and came to see me play football for my school, just as she always did. Then, suddenly, she changed.

My sister and I got up for school one day, but my mother just stayed in bed. I got the breakfast for Lisa and myself but couldn't find my PE kit so I went without it. We just caught the school bus but I got told-off in school because I had forgotten my homework. I also missed PE, which is my favourite lesson.

When we got home Mum was still in bed and Huw was crying, We didn't know what to do and so we watched TV until Dad came home from work. He got us a meal but then he went upstairs and I heard him telling my Mum off because nothing had been done.

ADAM'S STORY

Nobody realised that my Mum had an **illness called depression** until my aunt, who is a health visitor, came to see her and persuaded her to go and see her doctor. Now **she is well again** and back teaching. We also do all the things together that we used to do before she had depression.



WHERE TO GET HELP...

Write the name
and telephone
number of your
Key Worker
here...



Write the name
and telephone
number of your
Doctor
here...



Childline Number

0800 1111

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ENLIGHTEN

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