The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom. In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. The activity is structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Students are encouraged to further reflect on the issues.

Core Skill Sets:

These icons identify the most relevant core skills students will develop using this resource. Learn more about the WE Learning Framework at www.WE.org/we-at-school/we-schools/learning-framework/.

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

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KEY TERMS

**Young carer**—Young adults who contribute to the well-being of those with long-term health conditions, disabilities or age related problems. Young Canadians assist family and friends with the tasks of daily living, transportation, home maintenance and other caregiving activities. The Federal Government classifies young carers as aged 15 to 29, although there are studies that suggest many youth, some as young as six, are engaged as carers across the country.
THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- **Themes:** Health, Local Issues, Values and Ethics
- **Course Connections:** Health and Physical Education, Language

MATERIALS

- Front board
- Paper and writing utensils
- Computer/tablet with Internet access

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Explore the daily lives and experiences of young carers
- Identify the physical and mental health implications of being a young carer

DISCUSS

1. How does being a “young carer” differ from helping around the house or doing chores?
2. What does Vivan Stamatopoulus mean when she says “these kids undergo trauma”?
3. What are the benefits of being a young carer? What are the consequences?
4. How can an increase in support help the physical and emotional well-being of young carers?

DIVE DEEPER

Show students the first ten minutes of “Young Carers Brighton—Documentary—September 2012” www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuN6CboN18s (15:02). Ask students to make a list of the responsibilities the young people in the video have at home while they watch the documentary clip. After watching the video, ask students to highlight the responsibilities from the list that they also have at home (e.g., washing the dishes) in one colour and the responsibilities they don’t have (e.g., administering medication) in another colour.

Discuss the following questions:

- Why do the young people in the documentary clip have so many responsibilities at home?
- Do you share any of the same responsibilities? How are your responsibilities similar or different?
- How does having these responsibilities affect the lives of the young people in the video? Consider their education, their physical and mental health, their social relationships etc.

As a class, read the Global Voices article “Young carers carry the burden” and discuss the questions in the Discuss section.

Tell students they will continue to investigate the stories and experiences of young carers and then write a series of five diary entries from the perspective of a young carer. Provide students with a variety of articles, books and videos from the Resource section for their investigation. Students may draw on their research to create diary entries that describe the daily life of a young carer, the emotions they might feel and the worries or concerns they might have. They may use personal experiences as well, but are not required to disclose that information.

Give students an opportunity to share their diaries and reflect on what they have learned about young carers and the physical and mental struggles they may face.

RESOURCES

“A Day in the Life of a Young Carer” www.youtube.com/watch?v=offFatYywBh-g (2:01)

Daughter by Ishbel Moore, Kids Can Press, September 1, 1999

“I’m a child carer” www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/jan/03/im-a-child-carer


“Meet Samuel, a nine-year-old young carer” www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IHQqrCs1s (4:21)

“Young caregivers give away much of their youth” www.vancouversun.com/Video+Young+caregivers+give+away+much+their+youth/7603031/story.html