

Made by
young carers

Who Am I?

May I have your attention? A few minutes of your time,
Take a break from your life, I'll tell you how I live mine.
See this face? See this smile? See these eyes open wide?
It's a mask to disguise how I'm feeling inside,
I'm one in twelve in my city, yet it's hard to describe,
But just give me a moment, I promise, I'll try.
I'm a cook; a cleaner; a doctor; a healer,
A helper; a sitter; a supporter; a leader,
By my demeanour, it may not always be clear that I'm needed,
When my mum takes a fall, has a fit or a seizure,
When my brother breaks his toys and I pick up the pieces,
When his autism means that even though I pleaded,
He kicks and he screams and every day this is repeated,
But before bed, I still hug him, because I know he doesn't mean it.
And some might say that this sounds strange,
Why I have all these skills and I don't even get paid,
When I get home from school and make sure the table is laid,
Because my dad is upstairs, still in bed, still afraid,
Oh, I'm sorry, did I not mention?
That his mind is affected by stress and by tension,
Depression that means he requires my attention,
So my homework goes unwritten with no chance of extension.
I shop; I feed; I help shower and bathe,
I wash; I make sure that the beds are all made,
I talk; I listen; I cuddle; I play,
I make sure that the medicine is stored safely away.
And even though I know that those who love me understand,
It's hard to keep up friendships when I have to cancel plans,
When phone calls go unanswered, when they say they'll lend a hand,
Sometimes it feels that it's only me who can.
So thank you for listening,
To the words I have to say,
About how I live my life,
About what I do each day,
I hope; I dream; I wonder; I pray,
Because I'm a young carer,
And I wouldn't have it any other way.

This poem was created by young carers in Sheffield, then recorded by young carers from Young Carers National Voice. Thanks to all the young people who contributed.

Recorded version available [here](http://www.sheffieldyoungcarers.org.uk/news/ycad2022):
www.sheffieldyoungcarers.org.uk/news/ycad2022

