

# Influencing CHANGE Toolkit

The  
Children's  
Society

How to:  
**INFLUENCE  
PEOPLE**

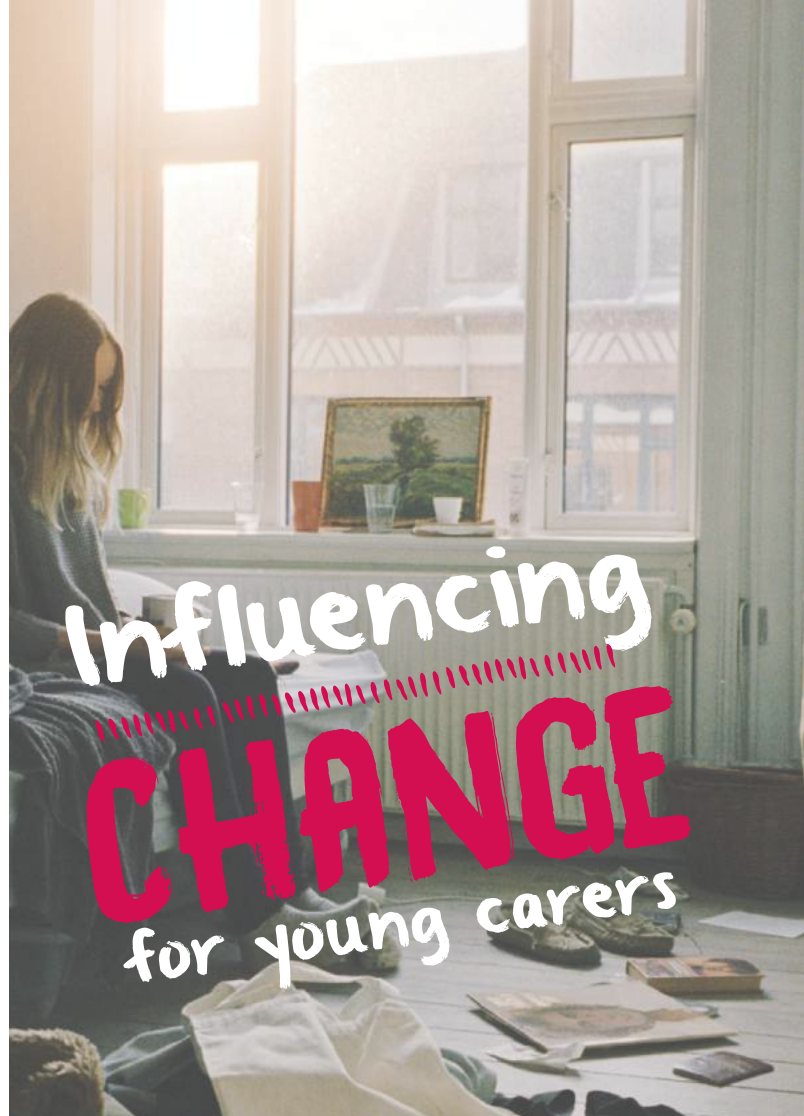
Influencing people means having an effect on them, changing or modifying their view.

In order to influence change, we need to influence the people who are in a position to make that change happen. Who you need to influence depends on your issue.

For example, if you wanted to change how young carers are recognised in your school the people you need to influence and set up a conversation with are your teachers and Headteacher.

There are six key questions we have covered in this section that you need to answer when thinking about influencing people.

Don't worry, we've included some activities to help you get started planning your influencing project!



## 1. WHO DO YOU WANT TO INFLUENCE?

Depending on what you would like to change, there may be many different people you need to influence in order to gain support for your project. Think about all of the people who could be helpful in getting your message out there. You can make your list here:





## 2. WHAT CAN THEY DO TO INFLUENCE CHANGE?

### Agree to get involved

For example, your Headteacher agreeing to send out information to all teachers about what a young carers' home life is like to create more awareness in your school.

### Give permission for you to use a public space:

For example, your Headteacher giving permission for you to use your school field to hold a fundraising event.

### Publicly support your issue in the local media

For example, your local MP having a photograph taken at an event raising awareness of young carer issues.

### Sign a petition for your project

For example, your GP or School Nurse agreeing to sign a petition calling for more awareness of young carers' mental health needs.

### 3. HOW CAN I FIND MY LOCAL POLITICIAN'S?

Before you can start influencing your local politicians, you need to find out who they are. You can find out who your local MP's and Councillors are, and how to contact them by typing your postcode in at:

[www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com)

Once you've found your local politicians, note them down here:

**MP's**

**Councillors**

### 4. WHO CAN THEY INFLUENCE?

Your Councillors represent your city. They are responsible for local services, whilst your MP also represents you in the House of Commons in London, the place where laws are agreed for the whole of the UK.

#### MPs (or Members of Parliament)

should act as community champions, so they can raise awareness of issues facing young carers on a local and national level.

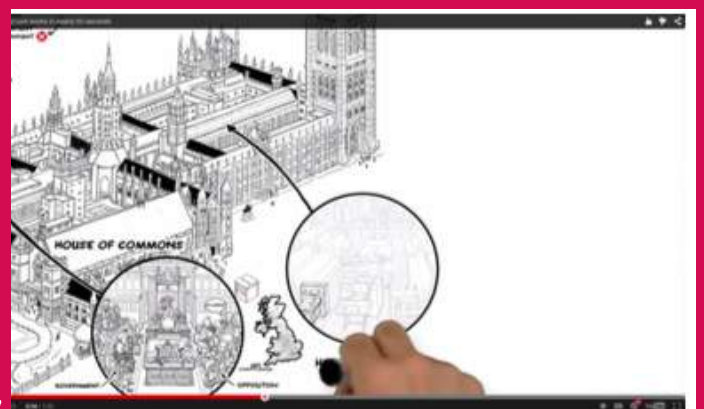
#### Councillors

make decisions about how your local community is run, so they should also support young carers to influence change and speak up on their behalf.

**Parliament  
explained in  
almost 60  
Seconds:**

For more information about how Parliament works in the UK, watch this YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/GbLTwQwXqWc>



## 5. WHY WOULD THEY LISTEN TO ME?

Politicians and your MP's have been chosen to represent YOU! They have a legal duty to listen to the concerns of people who live in their area.



## 6. HOW DO I GET IN TOUCH?

It's up to you how you decide to contact Politicians. You can get in touch with them by...

Email

Letter

face to face

Once you have made initial contact with them, you can then go on to send them:

**A Petition**

(For more information see  
Section 3: HOW TO: Use  
Signatures)

**An Invitation  
to an Event**

(For more information see  
Section 2: HOW TO: Put on an  
Event).

However you decide to contact them, use the top tips to help influence the change you want to see. You can use this space to write down your plan to contact your local Politicians:



# INFLUENCING PEOPLE

## Top Tips

- \* Tell them that you're a young carer in their constituency (the area they're responsible for).
- \* If you're a YCiF Champion, mention it and tell them what this means!
- \* Explain why the issue is important to you as a young carer.
- \* Always be polite.
- \* Try to keep it as short and to the point as possible!
- \* Ask the people you contact to do something specific to help Influence Change, local Politicians are usually keen to participate (especially if the local press is involved!)
- \* Simple requests work best, for example:
  - asking them to sign a petition
  - discuss the issue further with you
  - set out a plan to tackle the issue locally
  - asking them to speak at, or attend an event you are holding
- \* End by thanking the person for their time.
- \* Remember to ask for a reply and what the best time is for a follow up conversation.

Don't forget to write a story on the YCiF Network as evidence of any influencing work you do to earn your badge!

Get recognition for your new skills through YCiF open badges!

You can earn open badges through the YCiF network to recognise the skills you develop through your influencing work. Check out the badge missions in the badge library, then earn badges by documenting your activities through photos, videos and text.



1. How can you find out who your local Politicians are?

2. 'It is your local Councillors who represent your issues in the House of Commons.' - is this statement true or false?

True

False

3. Who would you need to influence if your project was to allow young carers to have their mobile phones during lesson time?

A. your GP

B. Head teacher

C. School Nurse

4. Can you remember three tips for getting in contact with your local Politicians?

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5. 'When I contact local Politicians in my area, I should make sure I tell them why my influencing work is important and how it affects my role as a young carer.' - is this statement true or false?

True

False

TEST YOUR  
KNOWLEDGE

#### Answers:

1. Head to [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com) and enter your postcode.
2. False, local Councillors are responsible for sorting out local issues; it is MP's who take your issue to The House of Commons.
3. The best person to influence is B) Your Headteacher.
4. Choose from: Identify yourself as a young person in their constituency (or area), ask them to do something specific to help, end by thanking them for their time, ask for a reply or follow up conversation, or always be polite, and try to keep it as short and to the point as possible!
5. True! You should make it clear how your issue impacts on your life.

We hope this section has helped you understand which people you need to influence in order to create a change. Gaining Support of the people with the power to implement change is an important part of achieving your aims.

How did you do when testing your knowledge? Are you ready to start working on an action plan to influence people?

If you got 4 or 5 questions correct, congratulations! You are ready to get out there and start influencing the people in suits!

If not, don't worry! Use this pack to improve your knowledge. Re-read the section and have another go at the activities before you start contacting people



## Useful Websites & Resources

### \* Find your Representatives

[www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com)

### \* Government Information on Petitions:

[www.gov.uk/petition-government](http://www.gov.uk/petition-government)

### \* How Government Works:

[www.gov.uk/government/get-involved](http://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved)

### \* Know Your Rights

[www.youngcarer.com/resources/ycif/know-your-rights](http://www.youngcarer.com/resources/ycif/know-your-rights)

Gaining support is an important part of achieving your goals