Young Carers: What they can teach us about resilience.

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Young carers are children who take on a significant caring role in the family and have attracted research interest generally because such a role is considered developmentally inappropriate and likely to lead to social and psychological damage for the child. This is usually investigated through the concept of *‘parentification’* with a focus on the negative impact of being a ‘parent’ before their time. More recently researchers have recognised the resilience displayed by these children. The current paper explores the potential for learning about resilience that is presented from research with this group.

The research reported involves 5 studies using both qualitative and quantitative methods with over 1000 participants exploring a range of variables including emotional intelligence, support giving, resilience and attachment.

Qualitative analysis demonstrates a high level of responsibility and caring among the young people and this is confirmed in quantitative data. The latter shows that while young carers show high levels of parentification they also show high levels of general support giving, resilience and emotional intelligence. The paper will argue that this specific group of young people are a rich source of information on how residence can be developed.