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Young adult carers campaigning for better education

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Young adult carers

- UK campaign programme funded by Co-operative
- 14-25 year olds
- Care for someone in their family or a friend because of ill-health, disability, mental health needs or an addiction.
- Carers Trust used estimate of young adult carers from census data, which counted 375,000 young adult carers in the UK.



Young adult carers and education

- ❑ Local campaigning in schools, colleges and universities
- ❑ National campaigning led by UK charity, Carers Trust
- ❑ In education they felt that they were often invisible



Invisible students but 1 in 12 school children in the UK

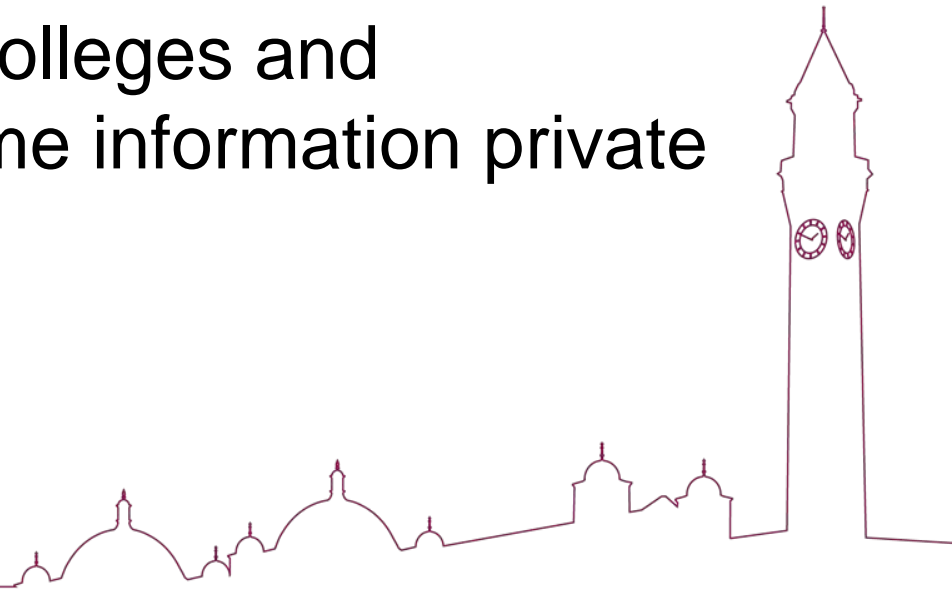


BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-11757907> accessed 25 May 2017



Educational context of feeling invisible

- Educational system operates on the assumption that young people are not carers.
- Silence about care in a school context discourages discussion.
- The power of schools, colleges and universities to make some information private and some public.



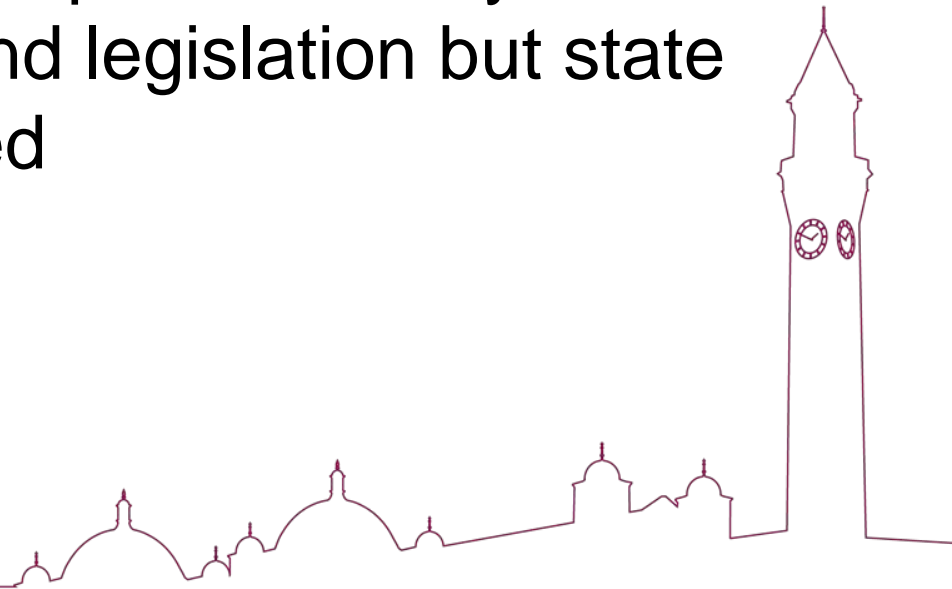
Care as private

- Historical organisation of economic and social life that encourages unpaid care by women in the home (Gillis; Davidoff and Hall)
- Political arguments against welfare state intervention in family and care (Lister; Siim)
- Privacy and the cared-for body (Twigg)
- Entrance to education defined by child being independent from care during school hours



Care as public

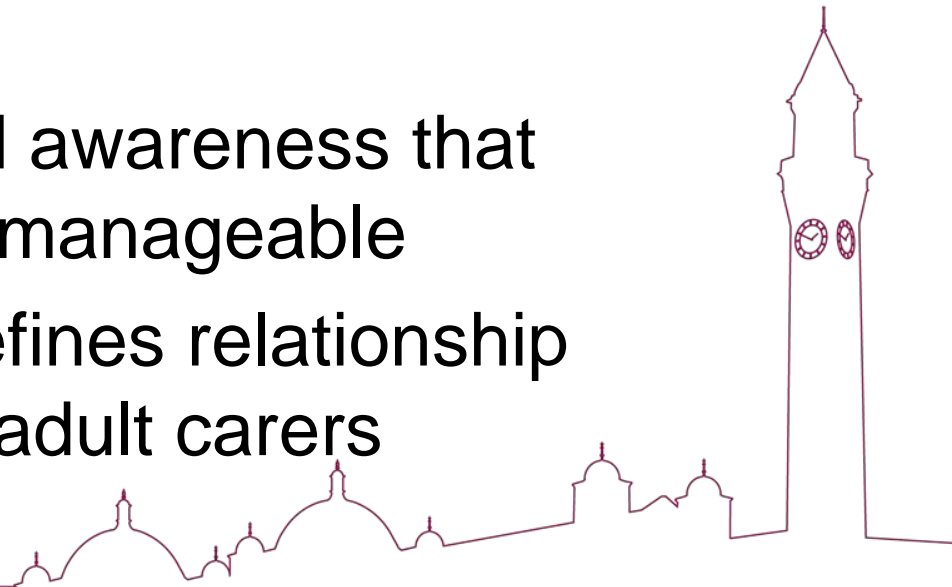
- Some public provision of social care and childcare
- Disability rights campaigning
- Recognition of 'carers' as public identity through infrastructure and legislation but state involvement is still limited



Campaigns creating visibility

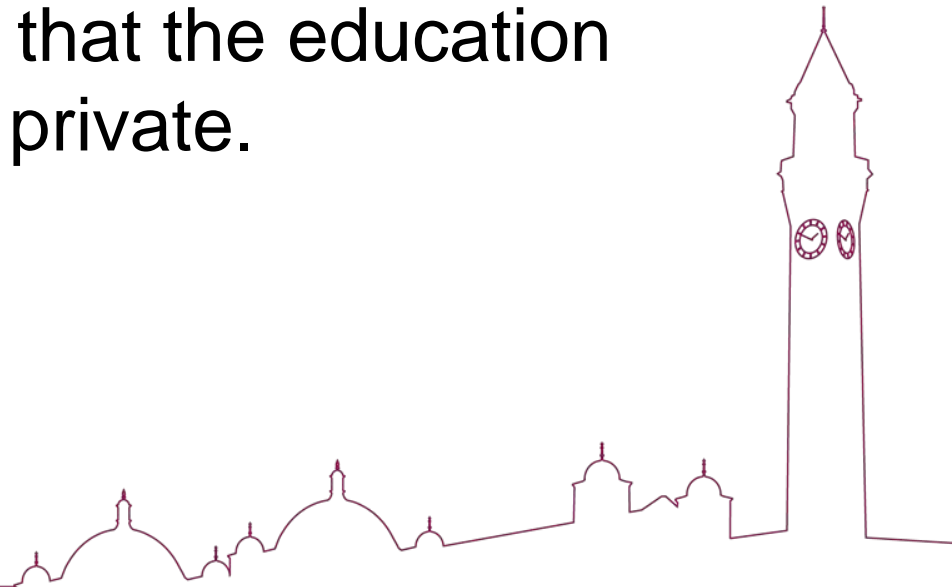
The campaigns challenged the way that the established separation of public and private impacted on their education.

- Securing agreement for formal mechanisms to share information
- Creating a language and awareness that made the visibility of care manageable
- New legislation that redefines relationship between state and young adult carers



Conclusion

- ❑ Campaigning models a difference approach to public and private.
- ❑ Young adult carers created their own solutions to problems of invisibility, which sought to alter the ways that the education system used public and private.



References

Alexander (2014) *Time to be Heard: A Call for Recognition and Support for Young Adult Carers* (Carers Trust)

Davidoff and Hall (1995) 'My own fireside': the creation of the middle-class home'

Dearden and Becker (1998) *Young Carers in the UK: A Profile*

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Lister (2003) *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*

Siim (2000) *Gender and Citizenship: Politics and Agency in France, Britain and Denmark*

Twigg (2000) *Bathing, the Body and Community Care*

Warner (2002) *Publics and Counterpublics*



Thank you

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