



Speaking from Experience Families & Chronic Illness

Transcript for chapter 4 of 8: Support

Shiralee (age 22, cared for father): It took me hard because I was young and I didn't know how to cope. And I just started to talk to my mates - they helped me. My cousin helped me through it. And one of my Aboriginal Liaison Officers helped me through school.

Jandarmarra (age 11, cared for grandmother): There's an Aboriginal Worker. His name's Terry Johnson. And he asks me, "Do I want a cup of hot chocolate or something?" And then we talk it out. And that's when he just talks to me a lot about a lot of things. And so I say... and I answer them. And he asks me how I feel when Nan's not around, when Nan's sick and all that. And I answer him like I'm answering them now. And then that's when he sends me off to class and says, "Good work, kiddo", or something like that.

Jessica and Alister (age 17 and 18, respectively, both cared for grandfather): The teachers helped as well. They were there through everything, especially our AA teacher; she helped us through a lot. She used to pull us out of class and just make sure we were alright, and how the day was at the end of the day. Yeah, so school was hard but at the same time the teachers' help made it easier.

Shiralee: They were trying to help me to get into it more, instead of just sitting back and thinking about all the time that I didn't have to spend with him. Just trying to interact more with them, with the teachers and kids. It would be better off, for them.

Sheridan (age 16, parents with illness): I get help from all kinds of people, if I speak up. I've gotten help from teachers, counsellors, and just really amazing people have really helped me through this stuff.

Jandarmarra: Yeah, I talk to about, just one main friend. Her name's Bernie, and I talk to her a lot, because I always go up to her house every day. When I feel sad, she goes, "What's up?" and I go, "Oh nothing, I feel sad and all that." And then I start to explain to her and she's like the only one who understands me.

Simon (age 18, Shiralee's brother): I had one friend, but, he knows what I was going through, but he didn't lose anybody in his family. He just knew it was a hard time for me, so, that was pretty good.

Jandarmarra: She's like my bestest friend and she's always going to be there for me while I get older. Because she promised that she will look after me when I get in high school. And she looks out for me.

Shiralee: It is hard to talk to people about it. But it would be better to talk to people but it might take a while. Eventually it will come out to talk about it to other people, like who you're close to and all that kind of stuff.

Lisa (age 14, cared for grandmother): Keeping it inside just doesn't help, it doesn't help at all. And you just can't deal with it.

Jessica and Alister: My choice to have my own time was just to go and sit in my room, just to be by myself. That was my time. Or I'd sit there and just want to be with the family. Even if I'm not talking to them, just having them around and being by myself. Yeah... that's the way I spent my time.

Aaron (age 17, cared for grandparents): I used to just grab my iPod, start listening to it, or if I was getting a bit angry or something, go out and punch a punching bag.



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Sheridan: Having a positive attitude helps you to get through the tough times a lot. But, don't get me wrong, it really is hard to get the positive attitude. It's taken me literally years, and I've only really shined by, yeah, just the past two to three years. I've been struggling that whole time. It's literally not easy, but you can do it, you really can.