

We find fun any way we can!

Hi, I'm Jesse. I am one of Australia's many young carers, and have been since a very young age. However, I was first acknowledged as a young carer four to five years ago when my Dad was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, commonly known as manic depression. This is my story...

Looking back on my life, I believe that I've been a young carer since I was about five years old. This is much longer than when NSW or Australia acknowledged me as a young carer.

Dad has bipolar as well as a physical disability. He was born in the 1950's, before the polio virus vaccine was available and contracted the disease as a 13 month old baby.

Before Dad was diagnosed with bipolar he used to swear a lot and would yell all the time. Life with Dad now is much better than before he was diagnosed as his moods are more stable and he isn't angry anymore.

It can be hard to have fun with Dad sometimes, due to him being on crutches, we can't just go out to the backyard and kick a footy around like most fathers and sons would. Instead Dad and I find fun in other ways, either through music (we perform live together), spending time together or doing the things that *he* can do with me.

Since being acknowledged as a young carer, I have attended camps and enjoyed each one thoroughly, making new friends and learning new skills. The camps are fun, you meet new people and share experiences and methods of coping and knowing how to just be yourself.

Jesse



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