



# Upopolis Island

Kids' Health Links Foundation

**YOUTH OF ADULT PATIENTS (YAP) Island - <https://island.upopolis.com/>**

## **UPOPOLIS YAP ISLAND: A SPACE FOR YOUTH TO CONNECT WHOSE PARENT OR CAREGIVER ARE LIVING WITH A SERIOUS MEDICAL ILLNESS**

Upopolis YAP Island is an online private group within the Upopolis platform for youth aged 13-23 who have a parent or caregiver who is living or has recently been diagnosed, with a serious medical illness. Statistics show that 31% of women and 20% of males diagnosed with cancer are a parent or caregiver of a Canadian youth - and this is only one of the dozens of serious illnesses that adults endure. The Upopolis YAP Island can function as an accessible form of moderated support for youth who would benefit from connecting with peers experiencing a similar situation, while accessing resources and psychosocial support from Certified Child Life Specialists.

Upopolis YAP Island provides:

- A sense of belonging to a safe, secure, private online community so youth can connect with other youth and professionals while navigating their caregiver's illness
- Age-appropriate information designed to help youth understand their caregiver's diagnosis
- Affirmation via shared experiences with peers
- Easily accessible content that offers tips, activities, and resources to help youth cope with the feelings and experiences associated with having a sick caregiver

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF YAP ISLAND?**

- Monitored daily by a Certified Child Life Specialist, a professional with experience and education in supporting youth who are coping with serious situations, and the effects of this on the family
- Fully accessible on any device with internet or data access
- Provides an opportunity to directly connect with others who are experiencing a caregiver who is sick; sharing experiences helps youth process their feelings and provides them with a sense of control as they support others
- Opportunity to ask a child life specialist questions related to their experience
- Access to programming and group workshops

**To refer a youth, visit [www.upopolis.com](http://www.upopolis.com) and Click Professionals - Refer a Youth**



### EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH WITH A SICK CAREGIVER

**Believe that peers or those around them don't understand what they are going through.**

**Possible feelings of isolation, loneliness, sadness, guilt, anger and/or fear.**

**Barriers to accessing support.**

**Loss of control over different aspects of their lives.**

### YAP ISLAND BENEFITS

The YAP island connects youth going through similar experiences.

Youth can write their own posts and blogs, ask questions, and live chat/private message other youth on our site.

The YAP island offers free virtual workshops and weekly programming on the platform.

Participation is open-ended, which offer youth autonomy in the duration of time they wish to access the platform for support.

### OUTCOMES

Youth may feel less isolated and more empowered by connecting with others who also have a caregiver who is ill.

Youth can share experiences, which helps them realize their feelings are understood and valid.

Connection to peer support, resources, and professionals from anywhere in the world.

Youth's needs are met in their own way, giving them back a sense of control and autonomy.

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Social support can influence outcomes for youth by addressing isolation, promoting a positive outlook, and helping to reinforce learning. Upopolis and the YAP Island remove barriers that limit involvement due to location by providing access to a peer support network that is entirely online.

### OUTREACH

The Upopolis YAP Island is a therapeutic modality. Professionals and organizations can offer this platform as a resource to their clients to further support coping. They can also implement it in their practice, allowing them to support their in-person and remote clients in a new way.

