

# Supporting **Young Carers and Young Adult Carers** in Suffolk



A MULTI-AGENCY STRATEGY FOR SUFFOLK  
2010 - 2013



### **Credit**

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# Improving outcomes

for Young Carers, including  
Young Adult Carers, and their Families

Improving outcomes



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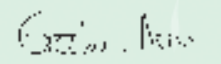
# Young Carers Strategy – Foreword



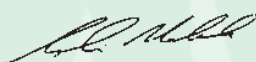
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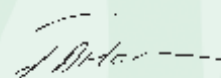
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The national strategy launched in July 2008 *Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities* emphasises the key objective that young carers do not undertake inappropriate caring roles and that they can achieve and enjoy life alongside their peer group; making real choices now and for the future.

Caring can start at a very young age. If left unrecognised and unsupported by universal and targeted services, young carers can experience anxieties, a lower level of academic achievement, reduced social networks and restricted career opportunities. Young adult carers can experience particular difficulties making the transition into adulthood, and may need focussed support to realise the educational and employment opportunities many other young people may take for granted.

In Suffolk, the Children's Trust Partnership and Adult & Community Services, together with the Children's Plan, the *Think Family* initiative and the *Parenting Strategy*, value and support every child to achieve against the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes. This strategy, along with the associated Delivery Plan, outlines the requirements on all universal, targeted and specialist services working with families to identify and offer appropriate support to young carers and young adult carers and their families to optimise best outcomes for all concerned.

The strategy builds on the innovative approach taken in 1994 to support young carers by the Young Carers Team at Suffolk Family Carers along with organisations in the statutory and voluntary sector, and embraces the protocol *Working Together to Support Young Carers – A Model Local Memorandum of Understanding between Statutory Directors for Children's Services and Adult Social Services ADCS /ADASS*, December 2009. The model's overriding priority is prevention; ensuring young carers are actively protected from excessive or inappropriate caring and that parenting roles are supported.

The robust multi-agency partnership working across all agencies to develop this strategy in the statutory and voluntary sectors, and children's and adult services is testimony to the priority and conviction in Suffolk to make a difference to the lives of young carers and young adult carers.

We would like to thank all those involved in the development of the strategy not least those young carers and young adult carers who have given their time and expertise to inform the direction of work to support others in the same position as themselves. We look forward to working together to ensure best possible outcomes for all our young carers and young adult carers in Suffolk.

# Improving Outcomes for Young Carers, including Young Adult Carers, and their Families

## 1. SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

This Strategy is designed to improve the outcomes of Young Carers, and Young Adult Carers aged 5 to 24 years, and for their families. Most references in the text to 'Young Carers' can be readily applied to Young Adult Carers, as can the five Every Child Matters outcomes<sup>1</sup>.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

- Young Carers are children and young people first, who have a right to take part in everyday experiences, and they must never be regarded primarily as carers.
- Young Carers have the right to choose not to be a Carer, or reduce the amount of care they provide.
- No child, or young adult, should be disadvantaged because of taking on caring responsibilities for another member of their family.

## 3. DESIRED OUTCOMES

The following outcomes have been informed by 'Every Child Matters', 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say'<sup>2</sup>, national research, and local consultation. Our vision is that they will have been achieved by 2013:

- Young Carers and their families will be supported by a comprehensive and integrated range of universal, targeted and specialist services, so that they do not have to take on unwanted or inappropriate caring roles or tasks.
- All children and young people in Suffolk who are, or may become Young Carers will be identified quickly, and have their needs assessed. They will be empowered to make real choices about their lives and how much care they provide.
- Young Carers and their families will feel that 'the system is on their side', and feel confident about identifying themselves to, and sharing information with staff that can help and support them.
- Young Carers will feel they have 'a life of their own'.
- The needs of Young Adult Carers aged 16-24 will be better understood, and support and services will be in place to ensure they have real choices.

In the longer term, as more Young Carers are safeguarded from inappropriate caring, and more families are better supported by universal services, targeted and specialist services will be deployed more effectively.

<sup>1</sup> ECM outcomes (DCSF) Being Healthy, Achieving Economic Wellbeing, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution, and Staying Safe

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health 2006

## 4. INTRODUCTION

### This Strategy

This is the first Strategy specifically for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers aged 5 – 24 in Suffolk. It has been developed by a multi-agency Steering Group comprising representatives of the key statutory and voluntary agencies<sup>3</sup>. It follows the recommendations made in 2008 by the Suffolk County Council Service Transformation and Localities Scrutiny Committee<sup>4</sup>, who asked to receive evidence and information on the arrangements for support to Young Carers.

Copies of the draft version of the Strategy were widely circulated amongst the partner agencies for comments between January and April 2009, and local Young Carers and Young Adult Carers have also been consulted and involved.

- complements the Suffolk Multi-Agency Strategy for Family Carers of all ages 2010 - 2013<sup>5</sup>.
- builds upon the Suffolk ACCORD protocol 2007<sup>6</sup>.
- reflects the aspirations of the National Carers Strategy published by the Government in June 2008<sup>7</sup> which was developed following widespread consultation with Carers of all ages.

It should be commissioned and delivered in accordance with the guidance in 'Commissioning for Carers' and 'Working Together to Support Young Carers - a model local memorandum of understanding between statutory Directors for Children's Services and Adult Social Services<sup>8</sup>.

Some significant progress has already been made. For example,

- the appointment to a new post of 'Young Carers Champion' by Suffolk Children and Young People Directorate
- the adoption by some schools of 'Young Carers' policies,
- the appointment, by Suffolk Family Carers to a new post of Transitions Project Manager
- the appointment, by Suffolk Children and Young Peoples Services of a new ACCORD Co-ordinator

<sup>3</sup> For list of participants see appendix 4

<sup>4</sup> Now called the Customer Service Scrutiny Committee

<sup>5</sup> Developed and monitored by the Carers Partnership Board

<sup>6</sup> Adults and Childrens Services Co-ordination (ACCORD) for good outcomes with families where a parent has a disability and/or additional support needs. Developed and agreed by SCC, Suffolk Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, and Waveney Mental Health NHS Trust

<sup>7</sup> 'Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities. DoH 2008

<sup>8</sup> 'Commissioning for Carers' Jointly published in September 2009 by ADASS, NHS Confederation, PRTC, Carers UK, Crossroads, IDeA, LGA, Afiya Trust and 'Working Together To Support Young Carers' published in December 2009 by ADASS & ADCS

Awareness of the needs of Young Carers has also grown, partly as a result of the work of the Steering Group. Other proposals being developed include plans for staff training on Young Carers issues, and inclusion of Young Carers in draft Practice Guidance.

The main priorities for action required to implement this Strategy are set out in section 13. A multi-agency Implementation Group will continue to oversee and monitor progress, and also identify further work required through the development of a complementary Delivery Plan based around the five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes.

Since this Strategy was commissioned, national research<sup>9</sup> and the initial findings of the Suffolk Young Adult Carers Transitions Support Service<sup>10</sup>, have begun to highlight the needs of Young Adult Carers aged between 16-24. These and other studies underline the importance of supporting Young Carers aged 16-18 through their transition into adulthood, and suggest that as young adults they are likely to find extended, age appropriate 'young carer services' more relevant and acceptable than those normally provided by 'adult' services, which many perceive as being for older people.

The scope of this Strategy and the associated Delivery Plan have therefore been extended to include these Young Adult Carers where it is appropriate to do so, to help raise awareness and improve understanding of this group of Carers.



<sup>9</sup> Young Adult Carers in the UK: experiences, needs and services for carers aged 16-24. Becker and Becker 2009

<sup>10</sup> Part of Suffolk Family Carers



## 5. SUMMARY

Research indicates that extensive or inappropriate caring can result in negative outcomes for school attendance, educational achievement, and emotional and physical wellbeing. 27% of Young Carers aged 11-18 are experiencing educational difficulties, one in five miss school because of caring responsibilities<sup>11</sup>.

Young Carers are not a homogeneous group. Their reasons for taking on such a role are often complex, and their needs vary widely.

National consultation<sup>12</sup> found that Young Carers said consistently that their top priority was better support for their family and the person they care for. They expressed particular concerns about the lack of high quality and reliable support, feeling they had little choice other than to fill the gap. Although there can be no legal requirement or expectation that children or young people do provide care, the consultation also found that many Young Carers didn't want to stop caring altogether. However they do want real choices about how much they care, and for how long, so as to have a life of their own.

The 2001 Census<sup>13</sup> identified 1603 Young Carers in Suffolk aged 5-17 years, and 1820 Young Adult Carers aged between 18-24. However, this is likely to be a significant underestimate of the current numbers. Very little data is currently collected on Young Carers in Suffolk.

Many Young Carers remain 'hidden' and therefore unsupported, often because they are reluctant to share information with teachers or social workers, or because professionals from various agencies fail to recognise them or record their needs. Even if they do, they either don't know how best to help, or don't know about other services that could help.

Although all Young Carers aged 16 and over are entitled to a separate Carers Assessment, they are less likely than other carers to be offered one<sup>14</sup>.

Some Young Carers may be 'in hiding', for fear of what might happen to them or their families if they were discovered. Many Young Carers are only revealed, and referrals only made when a crisis occurs and the child is thought to be at risk, rather than before the need arises.

Currently there are very few targeted or specialist services for Young Carers in Suffolk, with significant gaps across age groups and inequalities in different areas. If more Young Carers were to be identified and assessed as needing support there is not the coverage, capacity or skills to respond effectively.

<sup>11</sup> Dearden and Becker, Young Carers in the UK 2004

<sup>12</sup> Large scale events in 2007 for Young Carers organised to inform the National Carers Strategy. HMG June 2008

<sup>13</sup> Census 2001 Office for National Statistics

<sup>14</sup> Working on the interface: identifying professional responses to families with mental health and childcare needs. Stanley et al 2008



This Strategy sets out proposals for the development of a new tiered and integrated service model which balances the needs of the Young Carer with those of their family. Or in other words, putting Young Carers first, without putting the person they care for second. It therefore requires the contribution of commissioners and providers of both adults' and children's services.

Delivery of this Strategy will require additional resources and the development of new and different services. But much can also be achieved through

- greater staff awareness and skills training
- improvements to current processes and procedures, especially assessment and data collection, in both adult and children's services
- closer co-operation between all agencies and professionals working with Young Carers and their families



## 6. THE OVERALL AIMS OF THIS STRATEGY

6.

### 6.1 To ensure that all Young Carers in Suffolk

Receive the support they need to learn, develop and thrive, and achieve against all five of the Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being

They are identified early so their needs can be assessed, and they can be safeguarded from taking on or continuing unwanted tasks, or inappropriate responsibilities; they feel recognised and valued for what they do; and have the same access to education, healthcare, social and recreational opportunities and career choices as their peers.

### 6.2 To ensure that commissioners and providers of both adults' and children's services work together to train and resource staff properly so they can:

- Identify and support Young Carers to enable them to achieve the 5 ECM outcomes.
- Assess and address the needs of whole families, as well as the individual members.
- Listen to parents, and be careful not to undermine their parenting roles and skills.
- Contribute towards an integrated multi-agency service model that is based on 'active prevention', and is both child focused and family orientated.





## 7. DEFINITIONS

### 7.1 Young Carers

Most children and young people are expected to help out in and around the home. This may include practical tasks such as cleaning or shopping, or looking after a younger sibling. When trying to distinguish Young Carers from other children it is therefore important to focus on tasks and responsibilities over and above these 'normal' expectations.

The reasons that children and young people feel it necessary to take on additional and sometimes inappropriate caring roles are likely to be complex, and dynamic. They may be to do with the size and structure of the family unit, income, culture, or gender. Other key influences will include the type, severity and duration of the illness or disability, and of course the quality and levels of care and support that is (or isn't) provided by statutory services, or other members of the family.

**So we can say that what Young Carers provide is; in addition to the everyday tasks, responsibilities, or emotional demands considered normal or acceptable for their age, and often at a level which would be provided by an adult.**

The other crucial factor in trying to define Young Carers is whether or not these tasks, responsibilities, and demands have an impact on their achievement of the five ECM outcomes. We know that there can be some positives in being a Young Carer, and many are rightly proud of what they do and the contribution they make. But the benefits of caring do not justify leaving them unsupported. So, in planning this strategy we have focused on the potentially negative physical and emotional effects of their caring responsibilities on them and their families.

Here again it is difficult to be specific, because the amount or type of caring does not necessarily predict the impact. We also know that there is not always a clear correlation between the severity of the illness, disability or addiction, and the resulting negative outcomes for Young Carers. For example, constant anxiety about the condition or prognosis of the person they care for may have just as big an impact as extra physical tasks. Young Carers are also likely to worry that they may inherit the condition of the person they care for such as alcoholism, mental health problems, or multiple sclerosis.

Some Young Carers, especially those with a brother or sister who has a disability, can miss out on many aspects of a normal family life because their sibling is the focus of their parents' attention, which leaves little time or energy for them. This can result in attention seeking behaviour, or conversely, 'always having to appear good'.



Just like adults, children's resilience, tolerance, and ability to cope with adversity and stress varies widely, and changes over time.

All these effects can be magnified when compounded by wider social disadvantage or exclusion such as unemployment, poverty, poor housing, rural isolation, or ill health amongst other family members. Evidence from the 2001 census showed the prevalence of Young Carers was higher in areas of deprivation, and this has been confirmed in the recent study by OFSTED<sup>15</sup>.

Each situation has its own complexity and underlines the importance of a thorough assessment of all family members to identify their individual needs.

There are no neat or tidy definitions of Young Carers, but for the purpose of this strategy we propose the following:

Young Carers are children and young people whose lives are in some way different or restricted because they provide, or intend to provide, practical or emotional support to someone else. The person they care for is often a parent, a brother or a sister, but could be another relative or friend. A young carer may be dealing with a range of situations, such as disability, chronic illness, mental health difficulties, or problems with drugs or alcohol misuse.

## 7.2 Young Adult Carers

Much of the description of Young Carers above also applies to Young Adult Carers. But we know from national research<sup>16</sup> and local studies that many Young Carers experience additional difficulties from their late teens onwards. As well as making the transition from adolescence to adulthood, many find themselves with the real dilemma of whether they can reduce or stop caring, and perhaps leave home, to pursue their studies, careers, or relationships.

Those who have received services also have to face the additional complication of having to access them from adults' services once they are 18. In practice many Young Adult Carers simply get 'lost in transition' and receive even less support than before. Very few of those interviewed for the Becker national research sought support from adult services. Others struggled to take up further education, and were more likely to be unemployed or have poorly paid jobs.

<sup>15</sup> Supporting Young Carers.  
OFSTED June 2009

<sup>16</sup> Becker and Becker, Young  
adult carers in the UK:  
experiences, needs and services  
for carers aged 16 – 24. 2009





## 8. IDENTIFYING YOUNG CARERS

Young Carers are not a homogenous group, and identifying them can be difficult. Some Young Carers may be reluctant to disclose their situation to their friends, school, or other professionals because they:

- are worried they will become stigmatised or bullied
- fear they won't be taken seriously
- feel resentful, angry or guilty towards their parent or sibling
- feel protective and loyal to their parent
- worry that they might be taken into care, or their parent might be taken into hospital, or arrested
- are embarrassed or ashamed
- are suspicious of outside help

They, or their families, may not consider they are doing anything unusual, and therefore don't see themselves as carers and don't relate to the term Young Carer. Many don't know that they are entitled to an assessment of their own needs<sup>17</sup>, or that there is any help available.

Others may have been told, sometimes by the parent, not to tell anyone. This may be because their parents are not wanting any outside interference, perhaps through shame or embarrassment or through fear because they are taking illegal drugs.

Despite this concealment, any professional who has made a proper assessment of a customer's / client's / patient's family or network should have the necessary information to know if there may be a Young Carer present. Indeed, inappropriate caring responsibilities of young people are rarely inevitable, but are often a result of a failure by professionals to identify Young Carers and safeguard them.

17 A carer who is aged under 16 may request a carer's assessment under the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995, and this request must be granted, whenever the person they care for is assessed or reassessed for community care



For other organisations, especially schools and colleges, there are other signs that, whilst not conclusive, may combine to indicate that a pupil may be a Young Carer, such as:

- persistent tiredness, distraction, or lack of concentration
- disruptive behaviour
- frequent absences from school without adequate explanation
- low self esteem, or excessive attention seeking
- late, rushed or non existent home work or course work
- underachievement of potential
- not engaging in out of school activities
- failure of parents to respond to communications, or attend meetings at school
- inappropriate uniform/poor personal hygiene

Feelings of anger, depression, panic and loss are also common amongst children who live with a close family member who is physically or mentally unwell, is disabled, has a sensory impairment, misuses alcohol or drugs, or is dying.

However despite all these clues, most Young Carers remain unrecognised, and therefore unsupported, by many of the staff working with and around them.





## 9. HOW MANY YOUNG CARERS ARE THERE?

### 9.1 National data

The 2001 census estimated there were 175,000 Young Carers under 18 in the UK. The majority cared for up to 19 hours a week. Across England 22,000 (16%) were reported to be caring between 20 and 50 hours a week<sup>18</sup>.

The Young Carers Research Group at Loughborough University surveyed 87 projects and 6,178 Young Carers. This is still the most comprehensive source of information about the caring responsibilities of those under 18. They reported in '*Young Carers in the UK in 2004*'<sup>19</sup> that 114,000 Young Carers were aged between 5 and 14, and

- 36% of Young Carers had been caring for 2 years or less
- 44% for 3-5 years
- 18% for 6-10 years
- 3% for over 10 years

Of those included in the 2004 research

- 56% were girls, and 44% were boys
- Their average age was 12 years old
- 84% were white
- 56% were living in single-parent families
- 27% of Young Carers of secondary school age were experiencing difficulties in attending and achieving at school
- 30% of Young Carers were supporting parents with mental health needs
- 15% were from ethnic minorities

Young Carers in the UK showed that nearly a third provide care for someone with a mental health problem, usually a parent, and most commonly a mother.

They also found that 29% of the Young Carers in their study cared for someone misusing alcohol or drugs.

The report of the Inquiry by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs<sup>20</sup>, stated that parental problem drug misuse causes serious harm to children at every age from conception to adulthood, and estimated there are between 250,000 and 350,000 children of problem drug users in the UK.

Figures from the 2001 census identified 229,318 Young Adult Carers in the UK, 5.3% of the age group.

<sup>18</sup> Census 2001. Office for National Statistics

<sup>19</sup> Dearden and Becker, Young Carers in the UK; the 2004 Report

<sup>20</sup> ACMD Hidden Harm 2003



## 9.2 Local data

The National Census data showed that in 2001 there were

- 1070 Young Carers aged 5-15 years in Suffolk – 527 female and 543 male; and
- 2353 Young Adult Carers aged between 16-24 in Suffolk – 1292 female and 1061 male.

These figures do not represent the true picture given what we know about

- hidden carers
- the stigma associated with mental health issues, sensory impairment, and drug or alcohol problems
- the likelihood of under-reporting amongst 'the hard to reach'
- the under-representation, and even lower visibility of minority ethnic groups

For example, work with 126 pupils in an average sized Suffolk secondary school resulted in 26 coming forward thinking they may be Young Carers. A recent study in central Ipswich has already revealed 112 Carers aged between 16 and 24<sup>21</sup>.

Suffolk Drugs and Alcohol Team (DAAT) estimate there are 3,200 children aged under 19 living with parental substance misuse (although not all of these would necessarily be considered as Young Carers).

Very little data is currently collected about Young Carers by statutory agencies as they tend to focus on the adult, or the sibling with additional needs. For example, no data is available on the number of children in families, where the parent is supported by adult services, or the impact of being a Young Carer on school attendance, achievement or exclusion. In fact, we know very little about the vast majority of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in Suffolk.





## 10. WHAT SORT OF TASKS DO YOUNG CARERS UNDERTAKE?

In many situations the Young Carer is the main, or only, carer for their parent and / or sibling. Some take on responsibilities for the whole family, including parenting roles for their siblings, and sometimes for themselves. In others, they may have lesser responsibility, but the impact on their lives and outcomes may still be just as great, depending on a wide range of other factors.

Tasks undertaken by Young Carers may include one or more of the following:

- intimate personal care, including dressing, bathing and toileting
- giving emotional support to a parent
- managing the family budget
- practical support including lifting
- giving medication
- additional housework, cooking, shopping and other errands
- managing the behaviour of younger or older siblings
- communicating or interpreting for an adult or sibling
- staying in to keep a parent or sibling company – rather than going out with friends
- taking responsibility in social situations e.g. accompanying an adult or sibling in a wheelchair

The needs of the person cared for, and therefore the demands on the Young Carer can often change, sometimes quickly, occasionally dramatically. For example, an acute episode of mental illness, an alcohol binge or drug overdose, or the terminal phase of a physical illness. This inevitably has a big impact on the Young Carer and requires at the very least understanding, and sometimes immediate additional support.



## 11. WHAT YOUNG CARERS WANT

National consultation <sup>22</sup> found that Young Carers said consistently that their top priority was better support for their family and the person they cared for. They expressed particular concerns about the lack of high quality and reliable support, feeling they had little choice other than to fill the gap. The consultation also found that many Young Carers didn't want to stop caring altogether. However they do want a life of their own, with time to study, to be with friends, and be able to have the aspirations and opportunities to progress as others do.

This will be achieved if they have:

- a choice of people to talk to and support them in their caring role
- regular breaks from caring
- accurate information and timely advice about the condition and prognosis of the person they are caring for, especially when this is a parent, so they can understand what is happening and what may happen in the future
- appropriate involvement in the assessment process and planning of services for the person they care for, and also for themselves
- support, services, and equipment to help them provide the types and levels of care that are appropriate for their age and abilities,
- to have quality time with their family and fun with their friends
- understanding, flexibility and easy access to help from staff in schools, colleges, Connexions, youth and health services
- opportunities to follow and enjoy their personal interests without feelings of guilt or anxiety
- access to support from and social activities with other Young Carers, and others who understand their situation
- welfare rights and benefits advice e.g. Carers Allowance, and Educational Maintenance Allowance
- decent housing
- specialist support and help to make decisions about continuing to care and exit strategies

Suffolk Young Carers <sup>23</sup> undertook local consultation with 24 Young Carers aged between 10 -15 in February 2009 to find out their priorities. They endorsed all the suggestions above, and greatly valued the services they currently receive. They also added a specific request for access to Young Carers social clubs, holidays and breaks from caring.

<sup>22</sup> Large scale events in 2007 for Young Carers organised to inform the National Carers Strategy. HMG June 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Part of Suffolk Family Carers



Very few of the Young Carers felt supported at school. In addition to 'easy and regular contact with someone understanding to talk to', they suggested;

- drop-ins, or clubs in schools so they could meet others in the same situation as them.
- being able to take time out when they were feeling particularly upset or stressed
- support during the school holidays
- publicity and resources in their school so that teachers and other pupils could better understand about Young Carers
- access to a phone so they can contact the person they care for
- support with homework

Some, but not all, of the Young Carers thought that their teachers should know about their home circumstances. This reflected mixed views on the positives and negatives of the wider issue of information sharing between professionals in different agencies. What was clear was that Young Carers should always be asked for their consent before information is shared, and that it should be kept confidential to those who need to know.





Young Adult Carers in Suffolk were also given the opportunity to highlight their priorities. They endorsed the issues previously raised by Young Carers and raised the following priority areas where they felt additional support is required:

## Job seeking and flexible employment practices:

- careers advice up to the age of 24 years (still a youth) – sensitive to the implications of caring but not reinforcing caring as the only career option
- information and advice about flexible training opportunities
- support to secure employment such as job search, interview skills, CV's, confidence building
- carer friendly employment practices and support in the workplace

## Psychological and emotional support:

- guidance and support to access counselling services
- confidence and self-esteem building opportunities
- substance misuse information and support
- sexual health information and support
- self harm awareness and support
- eating disorder information and support
- conflict resolution/anger management







## 12. PROPOSED SERVICE MODEL

Not all Young Carers will have the same needs or be at the same degree of risk of achieving poor outcomes. Those that do need services will require a clear pathway to and through a range of different types and levels of support. This Strategy therefore proposes the development, by both commissioners and providers, of a multi-agency service model with an integrated approach which broadly reflects the continuum of need across:

- Universal services
- Targeted services
- Specialist services

**Universal services** are those that are available to all children and young people, and their families. They therefore include:

- all schools, further education colleges, and universities
- youth and connexions services
- primary, community and acute health care services, including health visitors, school nurses, GPs, community nurses, and hospitals
- advice and information services
- culture, leisure, and sport

The key task for these services will be to ensure that all relevant staff are able to identify Young Carers, and also be proactive in encouraging them, and/or their families, to identify themselves. Staff should also have the training and understanding to provide them with basic support, age appropriate information and advice and have the knowledge and confidence to know how, when, and where to signpost them to other services, or refer them or their families for further help or assessment.

Young Carers, and their families, should be able to access **Targeted services** designed to help prevent and protect them against inappropriate caring responsibilities, and minimise any harmful effects. These could be from both children's services and adult services, and will include all universal services plus; Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Services,



plus all community voluntary and private organisations, working with people who have:

- long term conditions or acute illness,
- physical and sensory disabilities,
- learning disabilities,
- mental illness or mental health problems,
- drug or alcohol problems
- all services working with parents caring for a child with additional needs who has a sibling who may be or become a Young Carer

Although these services are already provided in Suffolk, few currently prioritise the needs and outcomes of Young Carers and their families. These services will therefore need to develop additional capacity and services to meet the unmet need that will inevitably emerge from raised awareness, increased identification, and subsequent assessments.

Those Young Carers and their families assessed as having the greatest needs will require further additional help and support from **Specialist services**. These could be from both children's and adult services, in both the statutory and voluntary sector. They will include all targeted services plus other services such as

- regular breaks from caring
- planned leisure activities
- meeting with other Young Carers who understand their situation
- befriending and mentoring
- counselling
- support with reducing self-harm, and eating disorders
- coping strategies
- anger and anxiety management
- support prior to and following a bereavement
- careers advice

Again, these services are available, but the capacity is very limited and currently only a very small proportion of Young Carers receive the support they need.



**13.**  
**DELIVERY**  
**PLAN**

The Delivery Plan (Appendix 1) is integral to the multi-agency strategy document; detailing the objectives identified to facilitate the desired outcomes for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers. The desired outcomes have been informed by ‘Every Child Matters’, ‘Our Health, Our Care, Our Say’ national research and local consultation. The Strategy and Delivery Plan will influence the direction for partners whether through policy development, commissioning (in accordance with the guidance in ‘Commissioning for Carers’ 2009), funding or direct service provision.

In addition, the 11 priorities agreed by the Children’s Trust Partnership Board for the Children & Young Peoples Plan 2 (CYPP) have also been identified on the Young Carers Strategy Delivery Plan.

The Delivery Plan focuses on 3 key sections with associated over-arching outcomes:

**Work Force Development**  
**Outcome:**

All staff working with families in Suffolk across all organisations and sectors has a knowledge and understanding of Young Carers, identifying Carers Champions and embedding a proactive Young Carer sensitive philosophy into service delivery.

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**Support for Young Carers**  
**Outcome:**

Young Carers are identified and supported as appropriate across all organisations and sectors enabling them to optimise their achievement in relation to the Every Child Matters outcomes.

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**Raising Awareness**  
**Outcome:**

Young Carers are ‘Everyone’s Business’; they are recognised, acknowledged and supported throughout Suffolk.

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## 14. NEXT STEPS

The vision outlined in this strategy and the activities captured in the Delivery Plan, will be overseen by a multi-agency Implementation Group. They will initiate and co-ordinate:

- a series of countywide multi-agency task groups based around the five ECM outcomes and /or specific themes, such as staff training, assessment, and data collection and analysis
- activity within all relevant statutory agencies and community/ voluntary agencies co-ordinated by a designated management lead
- local activity led and supported by Young Carers Champions identified in every school, college, and Community Cluster
- links with the continuing development of the ACCORD protocol

Activity, developments and outcomes which support the Strategy will be monitored by a Young Carers Leads Group which will, in time, replace the current Implementation Group. They will also develop ways of engaging and involving Young Carers and Young Adult Carers. The Leads Group will report annually on progress to the Children's Trust, the Think Family Programme Board, the DAAT, and the Family Carers Partnership Board.

It is our aim to develop and build capacity and skills to respond to the diverse range of needs presented by Young Carers. To raise awareness of these services we will launch a publicity campaign aimed at Young Carers, Young Adult Carers, and their families to overcome any barriers to disclosure and encourage them to identify themselves and seek support.

This campaign, together with all the supporting information and guidance, will be offered in a variety of formats including Easy Read and Braille, in recognition that some may themselves have a disability, and will also be available through a translation service.







# Appendices



## Appendices

	PAGES
1. Delivery Plan	25-35
2. Common Assessment Framework	36
3. Role description for Carers Champion Developed by Include Project, The Children's Society & The Princess Royal Trust for Carers	39-46
4. Membership and contact details of the Steering Group and the wider consultative network	47

### For further information:

- National Carers Website [www.youngcarers.net/](http://www.youngcarers.net/) & [www.carers.org/professionals](http://www.carers.org/professionals)
- Suffolk ACCORD [www.suffolk.gov.uk/CareAndHealth/ChildrenAndFamilies/ACCORD.htm](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/CareAndHealth/ChildrenAndFamilies/ACCORD.htm)
- National Carers Strategy: [www.dh.gov.uk/en/publicationsandstatistics/publications/publicationspolicyandguidance/DH\\_085345](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/publicationsandstatistics/publications/publicationspolicyandguidance/DH_085345)
- Social Care Institute for Excellence Research Briefing 24: [www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing24/index.asp](http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing24/index.asp)
- Services provided by Suffolk Young Carers: <http://www.suffolk-carers.org.uk/>
- Royal College of General Practitioners, and PRTC 2007: <http://www.carers.org/press/a-guide-is-launched-to-help-gps-support-unpaid-family-carers,4081,NW.html>
- Think Family DCSF 2009: <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00685-2009>
- Putting People First Dept of Health 2008: [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_089665](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_089665)
- Suffolk Children's Trust 2008: [www.transformingsuffolk.co.uk/partnerships/delivery-partnerships/childrens-trust](http://www.transformingsuffolk.co.uk/partnerships/delivery-partnerships/childrens-trust)
- Young Adult Carers <http://static.carers.org/files/1738-yac-report-3846.pdf>
- Multi-Agency Strategy to Support Family Carers 2010-2013 <http://www.suffolk-carers.org.uk/>
- Commissioning for Carers <http://www.idea.gov.uk>
- Working together to Support Young carers – a Local Memorandum of Understanding between Statutory Directors for Children's Services and Adult Social Services <http://www.adass.org.uk>



# Supporting Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in Suffolk

A MULTI-AGENCY STRATEGY FOR  
SUFFOLK  
2010 - 2013

## DELIVERY PLAN

### PRINCIPLES

- Young Carers are children and young people first, who have a right to take part in everyday experiences, and they must never be regarded primarily as carers.
- Young Carers have the right to choose not to be a Carer, or reduce the amount of care they provide.
- No child or young adult should be disadvantaged because of taking on caring responsibilities for another member of their family.



## DESIRED OUTCOMES

This Strategy is designed to improve the outcomes of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers aged 5 to 24 years, and for their families. The Strategy complements the Suffolk Multi-Agency Strategy for Family Carers of all ages 2010–2013, and builds on the Suffolk ACCORD protocol 2007. The Young Carers Strategy reflects the aspirations of the National Carers Strategy ‘Carers at the heart of the 21st century families and communities’. This Delivery Plan is integral to the multi-agency strategy document; detailing the objectives identified to facilitate the desired outcomes for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers. The desired outcomes have been informed by ‘Every Child Matters’, ‘Our Health, Our Care, Our Say’, national research and local consultation. The Strategy and Delivery Plan will influence the direction for partners whether through policy development, commissioning (in accordance with the guidance in ‘Commissioning for Carers’ 2009), funding or direct service provision.

The 11 priorities agreed by the Children’s Trust Partnership Board for the Children & Young Peoples Plan 2 (CYPP) have also been identified on the Young Carers Strategy Delivery Plan.

Young Carers and their families will be supported by a comprehensive and integrated range of universal, targeted and specialist services, so that they do not have to take on unwanted or inappropriate caring tasks.	YC01
All Children and Young People in Suffolk who are, or may become Young Carers will be identified quickly, and have their needs assessed. They will be empowered to make real choices about their lives and how much they care.	YC02
Young Carers and their families will feel that ‘the system is on their side’, and feel confident about identifying themselves to, and sharing information with staff that can help and support them.	YC03
Young Carers will feel they ‘have a life of their own’.	YC04
The needs of Young Adult Carers aged 16 – 24 will be better understood, and support and services will be in place to ensure they have real choices.	YC05





## THE DELIVERY PLAN FOCUSES ON 3 KEY SECTIONS WITH ASSOCIATED OVER - ARCHING OUTCOMES:

- **Work Force Development**

Outcome:

All staff working with families in Suffolk across all organisations and sectors have a knowledge and understanding of Young Carers, identifying Carers Champions and embedding a proactive Young Carer sensitive philosophy into service delivery.

- **Support for Young Carers**

Outcome:

Young Carers are identified and supported as appropriate across all organisations and sectors enabling them to optimise their achievement in relation to the Every Child Matters outcomes.

- **Raising Awareness**

Outcome:

Young Carers are 'Everyone's Business' they are recognised, acknowledged and supported throughout Suffolk.



## Work Force Development

What we are doing now:

- ✓ Multi-Agency Training Steering Group assembled to review and support training needs in relation to Young Carers
- ✓ Young Carers Training course integral to CYP Multi-Agency Training Programme
- ✓ Suffolk County Council 'New Starter Training Course' will include delivery of Young Carers element.
- ✓ Suffolk Family Carers Young Carers Team have identified Support & Advocacy Team member to be named link for specific cluster / schools.
- ✓ Information article for School Governors produced providing an overview of the Strategy and the importance of the role for schools.





Planned Action for Development	How we know we've achieved this	Lead	Measures/targets Milestones	Resources	Links to other outcomes
Young Carers Training Module to be developed to be used in all partners generic training programmes for staff	Module developed and approved by all partners for inclusion in training programmes.	CYP SCC	Module to be developed January 2010  Monitor delivery within partner agencies generic training programmes	Within existing resources	YC01, YC02 CYPP2 1-11
Young Carers Training Multi-Agency Staff Training provided via CYP Work Force Development programme to be reviewed and developed to meet needs / demand	Course content reviewed following evaluation from completed courses  Course content developed as required  Course attended by all partners including; School staff, Connexions Advisors; ACS & CYP staff; Parent Support Advisors; Health & Education staff	CYP SCC SFC	Evaluation of feedback from Young Carers Training courses scheduled for Spring 2010  Course take-up and feedback will inform future delivery and development of Young Carers Courses.	CYP Workforce Development	YC01, YC02 CYPP2 1-11
Designated Carers Champion / Lead within multi-agency / key service areas	All key service areas have identified Carers Champion / Lead  Network of carers Champions / Leads established.	CYP SCC	Carers Champions/Leads to be identified during 2010/11  Network to be established September 2010	Within existing resources	YC01-YC05 CYPP2 1-11
Support Schools and Colleges to identify a Young Carers Champion / Lead (School Lead for Young Carers and their Families – The Children's Society Include project)	Designated member of staff as Young Carers Champion / Lead within each school / college	CYP SCC	Young Carers Champion / lead identified for each school / college by September 2011	Within existing resources	YC02, YC03 BH2 SS4 EA6&7
Extend membership of professionals Best Practice Family Support Forum to CYP Professionals	Raise awareness of Forum and purpose of meeting amongst CYP Managers and staff – encourage representation from CYP	CYP ACS SCC	Suffolk-wide CYP representation at Best Practice Forum.	Within existing resources	YC01, YC02 CYPP2 1-11

## Support for Young Carers

### What we are doing now:

- ✓ Young Carers Practice Guidance integral to ACCORD
- ✓ Agreement for ACCORD Champions to also be designated as Young Carers Champions
- ✓ New ACCORD Coordinator post to have Young Carers responsibilities integral to role
- ✓ Information article for School Governors produced providing an overview of the Strategy and the importance of the role for schools.
- ✓ Agreement for Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to be used for Young Carers identified requiring additional support
- ✓ CAF database updated to enable 'Young Carers' option as reason for CAF
- ✓ Contact Point will automatically be updated with Young Carers Details and lead professional name following a CAF
- ✓ Multi-Agency agreement to adopt 'Manual for Measures of Caring Activities for Young Carers' (Joseph, Becker & Becker)
- ✓ Equality Impact Assessment approved July 2009 ensuring strategic direction is inclusive
- ✓ Healthy Schools Enhancement Model enables schools to identify Young Carers as a priority group – National guidance for schools produced
- ✓ Additional Think Family Pathfinder funding secured to support Young Carers of Parents misusing Substances (2009 – 2011)
- ✓ Extended Schools Pathfinder currently being delivered supporting Young Carers to attend extra-curricular activities
- ✓ Care Programme Approach Guidance (Mental Health) updated to reflect the need for consideration of impacts and support for Young Carers
- ✓ Suffolk Sport – County Sport Partnership have identified Young Carers as a priority group to be supported in participating in sport and leisure opportunities.
- ✓ Additional Young Carers Transitional posts recruited to help support and identify needs of Young Carers aged 16 & 17 years
- ✓ Mapping of provision for specialist support for siblings Young Carers undertaken – pilot support group commencing Spring 2010
- ✓ Suffolk Family Carers funded by SCC to provide support to Young Carers including support groups; advocacy; activities and residential breaks
- ✓ Young Carers Emergency Planning project – Links with development of ACS project to ensure tools appropriate for Young Carers (when identified as main carer)





Planned Action for Development	How we know we've achieved this	Lead	Measures/targets Milestones	Resources	Links to other outcomes
Young Carers identified and supported as appropriate across all partner organisations	<p>Young Carers being identified and supported informing service development and need.</p> <p>Clear responsibilities of all staff under safeguarding children procedures to make referrals where children are considered to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.</p>	CYPS CC	<p>Build on ACCORD protocol to ensure consideration and identification by professionals – ACS / CYP and all partner agencies</p> <p>Interagency process and definition for identifying and responding to Young Carers being utilised effectively.</p> <p>Numbers of Young Carers being identified and supported</p>	Within existing resources	YC01-05 CYPP2 1-11
Build on links with other strategies / work streams to ensure Young Carers are integral to planning and service delivery; have their needs identified and supported and are able to have choice in relation to education, employment and leisure opportunities and their caring role and do not take on unwanted or inappropriate caring roles or tasks.	<p>Young Carers will directly benefit from and be supported by multi-agency universal and targeted services across all agencies.</p> <p>Young Carers will be specifically identified within organisations work plans and strategies across all partner organisations.</p>	CYP SCC	Partner organisations development strategies and service plans are reviewed to ensure the needs and issues of Young Carers (including their own health and well-being) are integral in relation to identification and support.	Within existing resources	YC01-05 CYPP2 1-11
Develop joint / partnership approach in relation to support for Young Carers in transition 16 – 24 years encompassing universal, targeted and specialist services.	Joint approach / agreements between Adult and Children's services in relation to supporting Young Carers in transition	ACS CYP SFC	ACS & CYP Joint approach to transitions services for 2010/11	Within existing resources	YC05 BH2 SS3-5 EA6&7 PC8-10 EW11
Develop specialist support for Young Carers that have siblings with additional needs	<p>Support and information available for sibling Young Carers</p> <p>Support groups running county wide</p>	CYP SCC SPCN	<p>Pilot Support Group to commence in Spring 2010</p> <p>Evaluation and service development proposals 2011</p>	Within existing resources	YC02 BH2 SS4 EA7 PC8



Planned Action for Development	How we know we've achieved this	Lead	Measures/targets Milestones	Resources	Links to other outcomes
Accessible, appropriate support / opportunities available for Young Carers from seldom served groups	<p>Increased numbers of Young Carers identified from seldom served groups and accessing breaks</p> <p>Accessible and appropriate information, advice and support provided</p> <p>Breaks provided are deemed as appropriate (in line with EIA ethos)</p>	SCC ACS CYP	<p>Evaluation of Department of Health Demonstration project (2009/11)</p> <p>Increased access of support and respite opportunities by Young Carers from seldom served groups.</p>	2 years DH Funding	YC01-YC03 CYPP2 1-11
Optimise benefits of Activities Unlimited website in relation to Young Carers	<p>Support and advice for Young Carers (siblings) available on site</p> <p>Information regarding breaks for Young Carers included on site</p>	CYP SCC	Support and advice to be available Summer 2010	Within existing resources	YC03 CYPP2 1-11
Assist partners in optimising external funding opportunities for Young Carers in Suffolk	Provide advice & support to partners applying for external funding opportunities	CYP SCC	Successful applications and additional funding available to support Young Carers in Suffolk	Within existing resources	YC01-YC05 CYPP2 1-11
Provide Emergency Planning service for Young Carers that are identified as the main carer.	Young Carers will be provided with Emergency Plans	CYP SCC	<p>Number of Emergency Plans recorded</p> <p>Evaluation of response when activated</p>	Within existing resources	YC03 BH2
Establishment of Regional Young Carer Network	Network and timetable of meetings identified	ERO	<p>Regional response to needs of Young Carers</p> <p>Shared good practice</p>	Within existing resources	YC01-YC05 CYPP2 1-11



## Raising Awareness

### What we are doing now:

- ✓ Young Carers Steering Group established
- ✓ Appointment of Young Carers Champion – CYP SCC
- ✓ Consultations of draft Young Carers Strategy document during 2008/09
- ✓ Strategy consultation event for Young Carers facilitated by Suffolk Family Carers February 2009
- ✓ SCC funded the making of a Young Carers DVD produced by Suffolk Family Carers and featuring Young Carers from Suffolk
- ✓ Young Carers article produced for the Governors' Spring Term Newsletter
- ✓ CYP representation on Family Carers Partnership Board
- ✓ Networking across all agencies
- ✓ Information and advice provided to CYP Teams
- ✓ CYP Carers Information Bulletin produced and circulated to staff
- ✓ SCC has web page specifically for Young Carers and The Source website has a Young Carers page with links to Facebook and Activities Unlimited website
- ✓ CYP carers stand at the Suffolk Show 2009 and Carers Rights Day 4th December 2009 – Suffolk wide initiative highlighting the rights of Family Carers
- ✓ Information and advice regarding Young Carers available at Gypsy and Traveller Information Event – Ipswich 2009
- ✓ New Co-ordinator post for ACCORD appointed
- ✓ Additional funding provided to Suffolk Family Carers for Transitions (article featured in Suffolk Family Carers Annual Review)
- ✓ Training event held for professionals regarding identifying and supporting Siblings of Children with additional needs
- ✓ Young Carer Article produced for No Limits, Unlimited magazine
- ✓ Increase in staff resources to CYP Carers Team enhancing information and advice to professionals
- ✓ Young Carer issues highlighted with partners at Suffolk Summit – 2009

Planned Action for Development	How we know we've achieved this	Lead	Measures/targets Milestones	Resources	Links to other outcomes
Multi-agency working to increase awareness of Young Carers and their potential needs	<p>Joined up multi-agency approach in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce development</li> <li>• Identification of Young Carers</li> <li>• Referral pathway</li> <li>• Support provided</li> <li>• Designated Carers Champion / Lead</li> </ul>	CYP SCC	Joined up multi-agency approach being delivered in relation to identifying and supporting Young Carers.	Within existing resources	YC01-YC05 CYPP2 1-11
Increase Young Carer involvement / participation in raising awareness of their needs	Young Carers views / needs are integral to service planning and development	CYP SCC	<p>Regional Network developed and established; engaging with Young Carers.</p> <p>Consultation events for Young Carers held on a regular basis</p> <p>Multi-agency partners to provide evidence of consultation / inclusion of Young Carers within their service planning</p>	Within existing resources	YC03 CYPP2 1-11
Ensure Young Carers needs are reflected in local and national events	<p>Young Carers issues identified in local and national events</p> <p>Needs identified are considered and supported</p>	CYP SCC	<p>Suffolk Show 2011 to include information and advice for Young Carers</p> <p>Carers Rights Day (national) to include Young Carers Rights in Suffolk-wide initiative</p> <p>Suffolk Summit –Young Carer issues to continue to be integral to Leadership partnership</p>	Within existing resources	YC03 CYPP2 1-11
Optimise use of existing websites for information-sharing in relation to Young Carers	Ensure support and advice available on local web sites including Info link and provide links to national information sites e.g. YC.net / NHS Choices -Carers Direct etc.	CYP SCC	All local websites to either include Young Carer Information or to provide links	Within existing resources	YC03 CYPP2 1-11



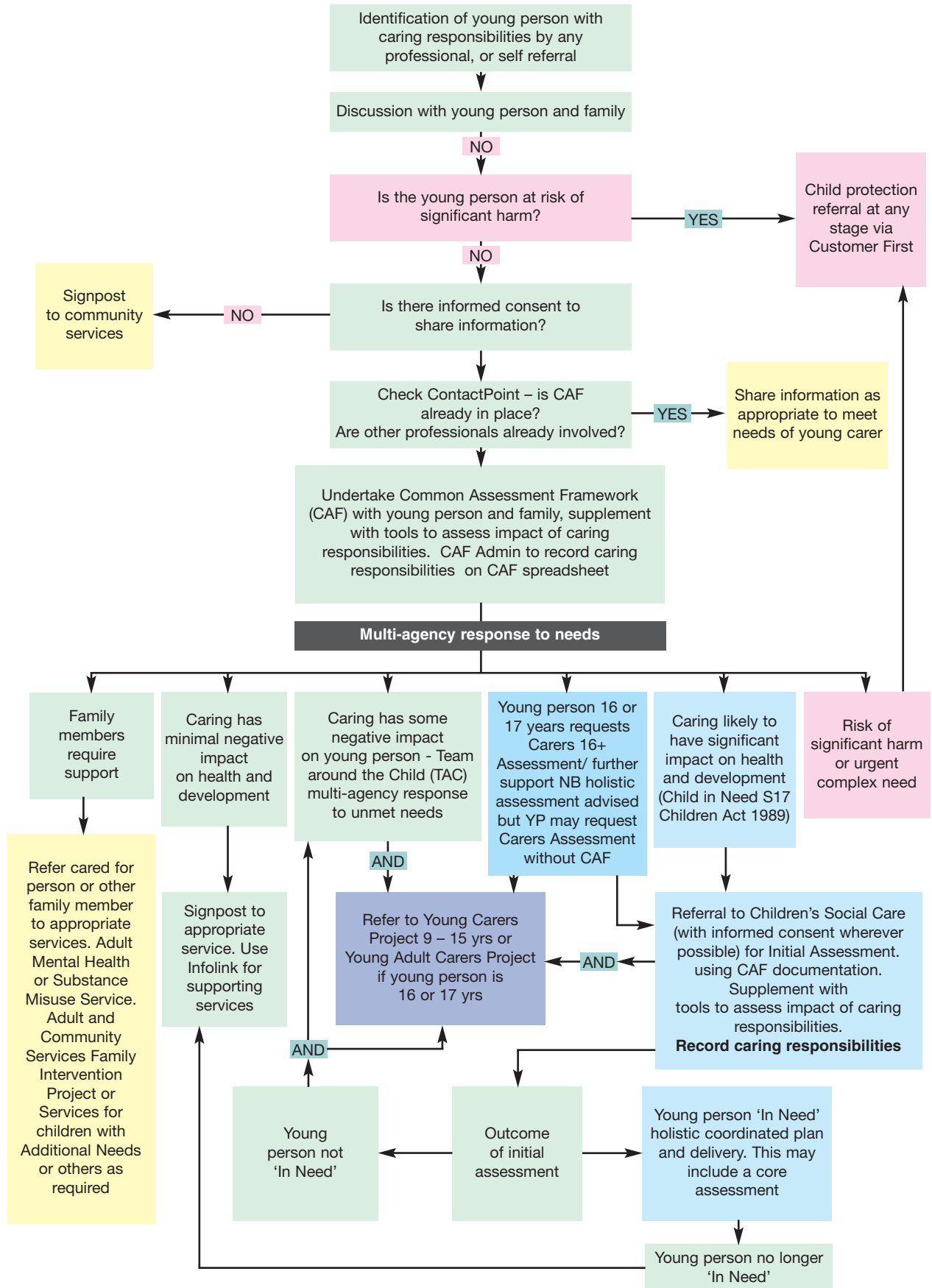


Planned Action for Development	How we know we've achieved this	Lead	Measures/targets Milestones	Resources	Links to other outcomes
Suffolk Young Carers Website to be developed	Suffolk Young Carers Website established.	CYP SCC	Consultation with Young Carers to enable them to inform site content.  Framework developed.  Website developed and in operation.	Additional resources to be identified	YC03 CYPP2 1-11
Suffolk Young Carers Facebook	Suffolk Young Carers Facebook established	CYP SCC	Consultation with Young Carers in relation access/content Launch of Suffolk Young Carers Facebook	Additional resources to be identified	YC03 CYPP2 1-11
CYP Carers E Bulletin to be produced for staff, with specific advice and support regarding Young Carers	Produced and circulated internally and externally	CYP SCC	Increased circulation  Positive feedback from professionals  Contributions / articles provided by professionals	Within existing resources	YC01-YC05 CYPP2 1-11

Supported Outcomes		
<b>CYPP2</b>	Children & Young Peoples Plan 2 - 2009/11	Priority
<b>BH</b>	Be Healthy	1 & 2
<b>SS</b>	Stay Safe	3 - 5
<b>EA</b>	Enjoy & Achieve	6 & 7
<b>PC</b>	Make a Positive Contribution	8 - 10
<b>EW</b>	Achieve Economic Wellbeing	11

## RESPONDING TO YOUNG CARERS

Identification, information sharing and responding to young people with caring responsibilities





## DEFINITIONS

Young Carer	Young Carers are children and young people whose lives are in some way different or restricted because they provide, or intend to provide, practical or emotional support to someone else. The person they care for is often a parent, a brother or a sister, but could be another relative or friend. A young carer may be dealing with a range of situations, such as disability, chronic illness, mental health difficulties, or problems with drugs or alcohol misuse. From Suffolk Strategy for young carers. Available on Suffolk County Council website/young carers from May 2010.
Common Assessment Framework (CAF)	The Common Assessment Framework – a framework designed to enable any professional to undertake a holistic assessment of a child or young person's needs to inform appropriate service delivery at an early stage. A consensual process that is carried out with the child/young person and the family. <a href="http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/caf">www.suffolk.gov.uk/caf</a>
Lead Professional	The Lead Professional within the CAF process is a professional within the Team around the Child who acts as a single point of contact for the family, coordinates the agreed actions of all those working with the child and feeds back to the CAF coordinator following the review of the actions delivered <a href="http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/caf">www.suffolk.gov.uk/caf</a> (Leaflet under Guidance)
Informed Consent to Share Information	Informed consent to share information is where the person concerned knows and understands how the information they give will be recorded, used and shared and they give explicit agreement for this. Informed consent is essential for the Common Assessment Framework and for most referrals for specialist services. The exception is where information must be shared to protect a vulnerable person or for legal reasons. Further details <a href="http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/informationsharing">www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/informationsharing</a>
ContactPoint	ContactPoint is a national online directory which authorised users can access to find out which other professionals are working with a child about whom they have concerns. It is operational in Suffolk and practitioner roll-out commenced in 2010. For more information <a href="http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/contactpoint">www.suffolk.gov.uk/contactpoint</a>
Children's Social Care (CSC)	The specialist service within the range of services to support children. CSC has the lead responsibility for co-ordinating the support for children with high or complex needs who are In Need (CIN) or subject to Child Protection procedures or Looked After.
Child In Need (CIN)	A child is taken to be In Need if, due to complex needs: "He is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority, and his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services, or he is disabled". (Children Act 1989 S.17) <a href="http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/CareAndHealth/ChildrenAndFamilies/GoodPractice/FamilySupport">www.suffolk.gov.uk/CareAndHealth/ChildrenAndFamilies/GoodPractice/FamilySupport</a>
Safeguarding and child protection	The Local Authority has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are In Need. This includes a duty to investigate, make relevant enquiries and take necessary action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found in their area is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm'. (Children Act 1989 S.47). Further information about safeguarding is at: <a href="http://www.onesuffolk.co.uk/scb">www.onesuffolk.co.uk/scb</a>



## Initial Assessment

A brief assessment or screening undertaken by Children's Social Care following referral, to determine if the child is In Need and the further action needed. (DCSF 2008)

## Core Assessment

An in depth multi-agency holistic assessment led by Children's Social Care of the child's needs and circumstances and the capacity of their parents/carers to respond appropriately to these needs within the wider family and community network as a basis for decision-making and determining further actions.

[www.suffolk.gov.uk/CareAndHealth/ChildrenAndFamilies/GoodPractice/ReferralAssessment](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/CareAndHealth/ChildrenAndFamilies/GoodPractice/ReferralAssessment)

## Carer's Assessment

All carers, regardless of age have a right to an assessment and to be informed of their rights by the Local Authority under The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004. Children (aged under 18) who are carers should be offered a holistic assessment under the Common Assessment Framework and/or as a child In Need under the Children Act 1989. This assessment must consider their rights to education, leisure and work. (Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004). 16 and 17 year olds have the right to have a Carers Assessment without a CAF.

## Tools to assess impact of caring

Tools can help to evaluate the effect of caring on the young person's health or development. They should be used as part of a holistic assessment of the child's circumstances not in isolation. A range of tools are available for assessment and evaluation work with young carers. They are to be used as part of holistic assessment. Tools are at: [www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers) and <http://static.carers.org/files/2248-yc-outcomes-manual-sb-4047.pdf>

## Suffolk Young Carers Projects

The Young Carers project provides support and activities for young people 9-15 years whose lives are affected by their caring role. The Young Adult Carers project supports young people 16-24 years. Further information at: <http://suffolk-carers.org.uk/>

## Good Outcomes for children

The aim of all professional support for children is to improve the outcomes for them in terms of their health and development and for them to be safe, healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing. <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/about/aims>

## Services to support the cared for person and families of Young Carers

Assessments of young carers and their families should be holistic and include the support required by the cared for person and other family members both in their own right and to reduce negative effects of caring on the young person. The services needed may include those provided by adult mental health or substance misuse services, Adult and Community Services, Family Intervention Projects or services for children with additional needs. And others as required.





# School Lead for Young Carers and their Families

## An exemplar job description

*"It is the responsibility of all services working with children, young people and families to respect parent and carer rights, and to support them in their child-rearing as they need it."*

Articles 5, 18 and 26 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Rationale

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*27% of young carers aged 11–18 are experiencing educational difficulties.*

*1 in 5 young carers miss school because of caring responsibilities.<sup>1</sup>*

Advice and guidance from the DCSF to schools and local authorities on managing behaviour and attendance, tells schools in England that young carers are at ‘particular risk’ and that schools should consider designating a member of staff to have responsibility for young carers.<sup>2</sup>

Principle 4 from the *Key Principles of Practice* (The Children’s Society 2008)<sup>3</sup> recommends that:

“Schools and colleges take responsibility to identify young carers at an early stage and have a named staff member with lead responsibility for young carers:

- a) to ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers; and
- b) to be responsible for promoting and co-ordinating the support they need and liaising with other agencies as appropriate.”

The Children’s Society and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers believe significant, positive and lasting changes can be made to the lives of young carers and their families if every school designates a committed and well informed School Lead for Young Carers who has the ability to inspire, lead and support all staff, governors, pupils and parents to recognise and meet the needs of young carers.

This paper can be used as an exemplar job description to set out the role of a School Lead for Young Carers and their Families. It will enable schools to identify a member of staff who is best suited to this position and serve as a useful tool to assess current school practice with young carers and implement a whole school and curriculum framework to support this vulnerable group. It has been developed using government statutory guidance and advice, current good practice in schools as identified by The Children’s Society’s Include Project and young carers “Top Ten Tips for Schools”.<sup>4</sup>

This template should be modified to suit your school and state to whom the post holder is responsible. In quantifying the post the school should consider whether it should carry an additional Teacher Learning Responsibility (TLR) point.

It is recommended for the School Lead to pull together a small team of appropriate staff members to support them with this role.

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# School Lead for Young Carers and their Families: an exemplar job description

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## Duties and responsibilities

### Leadership, management and strategic development

As an active member of the school Leadership Team you will:

- Ensure whole school commitment in meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school
- Ensure the Head Teacher and Governing Body are fully informed about the strengths and areas for improvement in the teaching and learning of young carers ensuring that staffing and resource needs are highlighted
- Lead, manage and develop whole school policy and practice with young carers and a clear action plan (see the PRTC exemplar school policy)<sup>7</sup>
- Monitor the effectiveness of relevant existing policies such as anti-bullying and review them on a regular basis to ensure that the needs of young carers are recognised and met within them
- Participate fully in whole school evaluation of the barriers faced by young carers in relation to the five outcomes of Every Child Matters (See The Princess Royal Trust for Carers Guidance: Delivering Every Child Matters for young carers)<sup>8</sup>
- Monitor school practice and evaluate its impact on the well-being of all young carers. Report strengths, weaknesses and recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team for inclusion in the school development plan
- Identify those young carers at risk of falling into the "Not in Education, Employment or Training" (NEET) category and take appropriate actions to address this<sup>9</sup>
- Identify, through the school enrolment process for new pupils, whether:
  1. The pupil has parents or other family members who have disabilities or other long term physical or mental health problems?
  2. The pupil helps to look after them and what impact this has on his / her education?
- Offer support to the young person and their family during the transition process, with sharing information with their new School / College Lead for young carers and their families
- Use and evaluate data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers. Highlight barriers to achievement such as low attendance rates, issues with attitudes to well-being, learning, and behaviour etc. and work with appropriate colleagues to address these

### Teaching and learning in relation to young carers

- Encourage and support a school-wide commitment towards inclusion for all pupils and create a positive environment that addresses learning barriers faced by young carers
- Where appropriate, support the development of a personalised curriculum that takes into account the needs and aspirations of the young carer
- Ensure personal plans recognise the child's / young person's specific needs as a young carer"
- Ensure educational provision is made for those young carers whose attendance and education has been interrupted and take steps to reduce / remove such instances

### Teaching and learning in relation to all pupils

- Use relevant aspects of the curriculum (The National Healthy School Programme, SEAL, PHSCE, RRR etc) to encourage positive approaches by all teachers and staff working with young carers"
- Ensure the curriculum promotes a full understanding, acceptance of and respect for the issues such as caring, disability and impairment (e.g. ensure there is a range of books (including novels) with a young carers' theme) (See [www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com) or [www.carers.org/professionals](http://www.carers.org/professionals))
- Encourage the effective use of the PSHCE curriculum to explore the roles and responsibilities of young carers and the impact these can have. Use opportunities such as PSHCE lessons as vehicles to promote positive images of disability and challenge stereotypes

### Professional development

- Support colleagues to understand and appreciate how SEAL relates to young carers and their families
- Ensure training on young carers' issues (including the needs of young carers from all communities such as refugee and asylum seeking families) is included in all staff inductions and incorporated into ongoing professional development (Be aware that training sessions may raise issues for any staff who were young carers themselves.)
- Keep up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families. Inform staff of these developments as and when necessary"
- Lead on, develop and enhance the practice of other staff by supporting them in recognising young carers and their needs
- Liaise with school nurses and Healthy Schools Coordinator



### **Pastoral support for pupils**

- Ensure that all pupils (and staff) are fully aware that there is an identified School Lead with special responsibility for young carers and how the support can be accessed
- Encourage young carers to self-identify, by paying due regard to confidentiality, their right to privacy and the sharing of information when appropriate
- Encourage pupils to discuss any barriers they may face – e.g. around homework and extra curricular / extended schools activities
- Investigate and use creative approaches such as peer support and support groups to meet the needs of young carers

### **Supporting disabled parents**

- Evaluate how accessible the school is to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties. Put processes in place to address any barriers
- Be aware of the legal requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995<sup>9</sup> and how it relates to school transport and disabled parents, disseminating this information as appropriate
- Advise on how young carers can communicate between home and school during school time, e.g. discreet phone home card (Top Ten Tips for Teachers)<sup>4</sup>
- Encourage parents to discuss any barriers they may face and any additional help they may need in supporting their child so that they may engage fully in their child's education, e.g. around homework and extra curricular / extended schools activities

### **Communication**

- Ensure that young carers and their families receive coordinated support by communicating effectively with internal and external support agencies – working in partnership where appropriate e.g. GPs, Young Carers Projects<sup>14</sup>, Behaviour and Education Support Teams
- Ensure school noticeboards display up to date information, additional support and resources for young carers and their families
- Advertise the contact details of young carers projects and other support agencies in the local area e.g. community notice board
- Provide translated materials or interpreters to involve parents who do not speak English in their child's education
- Be aware of the legal requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and how it relates to communication with disabled parents, such as sending home letters in audio format



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## Resources

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### Essential resources

- *A (Schools) Resource Pack for People Working with Young Carers* (The Princess Royal Trust for Carers 2006)  
[www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/education,3064,PP.html](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/education,3064,PP.html)
- *Young Carers: Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities* (2007) The Princess Royal Trust for Carers  
[www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/education,3064,PP.html](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/education,3064,PP.html)
- *Delivering Every Child Matters for young carers* (2006) The Princess Royal Trust for Carers  
[www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/policy-and-planning,3062,PP.html](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/policy-and-planning,3062,PP.html)
- *Listening to Young Carers* DVD
- *Identifying and Monitoring Young Carers in Schools and Colleges*
- *Young carers, parents and their families: Key Principles of Practice*
- *The Whole Family Pathway*
- Supporting young carers Education Leaflet
- Supporting pupils, Substance Misuse Leaflet
- Supporting Young People When A Loved One Has Died (Info for Teachers and School Staff)
- Carers at the Heart of 21st-century Families and Communities
- LanguageLine: [www.languageLine.co.uk](http://www.languageLine.co.uk)

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## References

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- <sup>1</sup> Dearden, C. and Becker, S. (2004) *Young Carers in the UK: The 2004 Report*.
- <sup>2</sup> [www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolattendance/uploads/Locating%20Guidance.doc](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolattendance/uploads/Locating%20Guidance.doc)
- <sup>3</sup> Frank, J. and McLarnon, J. (2008) *Young carers, parents and their families: Key Principles of Practice. Supportive practice guidance for those working directly with, or commission services for, young carers and their families*. London: The Children's Society
- <sup>4</sup> 'Young Carers Festival 2006, Young Carers give Top Ten Tips for Schools', in Frank, J. and McLarnon, J. (2008) *Young carers, parents and their families: Key Principles of Practice. Supportive practice guidance for those working directly with, or commission services for, young carers and their families*.
- <sup>5</sup> Department of Health (2008) *Carers at the heart of 21st-century families and communities, 'A caring system on your side. A life of your own'*
- <sup>6</sup> Leadbitter, H. (2008) *The Whole Family Pathway*. Published by The Children's Society in partnership with The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Disabled Parents Network. [www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer)
- <sup>7</sup> In *Young Carers: Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities* (2007) The Princess Royal Trust for Carers [www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/education,3064,PP.html](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/education,3064,PP.html)
- <sup>8</sup> *Delivering Every Child Matters for young carers* (2006) The Princess Royal Trust for Carers [www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/policy-and-planning,3062,PP.html](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/policy-and-planning,3062,PP.html)
- <sup>9</sup> [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ete/neet/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ete/neet/) and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers Guidance: *Delivering Every Child Matters for young carers* [www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/policy-and-planning,3062,PP.html](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers/policy-and-planning,3062,PP.html)
- <sup>10</sup> Department of Children, Schools and Families Personalised Learning website [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/personalisedlearning/](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/personalisedlearning/)
- <sup>11</sup> 'Who Carers about the Carer?' Zealander J (The Children's Society) Published in *Teaching and Citizenship* Issue 27 Autumn 2008
- <sup>12</sup> [www.carers.org/professionals](http://www.carers.org/professionals)
- <sup>13</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050)
- <sup>14</sup> Local Young Carers Projects listing at [www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/showPage.php?file=projects.htm](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/showPage.php?file=projects.htm)
- <sup>15</sup> Department of Health (2008) *Carers at the heart of 21st-century families and communities, 'A caring system on your side. A life of your own'*

The Children's Society's Include Project supports children and young people who care for parents or siblings who suffer from chronic illness or disability. We campaign for change and promote best practice with central and local government and work in partnership with social workers, teachers and health care professionals to deliver solutions that consider the needs of the whole family.

The Children's Society's Include Project offers information, training and support to both statutory and voluntary sectors who work with young carers and their families. More information and a range of resources, including a Good Practice Guide for Practitioners are available at [www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)

Call us to find out if we can meet any of your training and support requirements.

#### How to contact us

##### The Children's Society Include Project

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Website: [www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer)

##### The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

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Telephone: 0844 800 4361

Fax: 0844 800 4362

Email: [info@carers.org](mailto:info@carers.org)

Websites: [www.carers.org/professionals](http://www.carers.org/professionals)

[www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)

This information is available  
in other formats.

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The Princess Royal Trust for Carers is a registered charity number 544299/5





## Young Carers Strategy Group

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Bengali

بەم زانیاری یان ئێوە بۆ ئەوەی ئەوە بخوێنێت و بۆ ئەوەی ئەوە بخوێنێت و بۆ ئەوەی ئەوە بخوێنێت و بۆ ئەوەی ئەوە بخوێنێت

Kurdish

如果你需要其他語言來幫助你了解這些資訊，請撥以下電話。

Chinese

اگر شما نیاز دارید که این اطلاعات را به زبان دیگری درک کنید، لطفاً به شماره زیر تماس بگیرید.

Farsi

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