



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Rhondda Cynon Taf's Young Carers Service

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to update members on the RCT Young Carers Service and Annual Report 2017-18.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Scrutiny Committee considers the attached report and the work undertaken by the Young Carers Service.

4. BACKGROUND

The Young Carers Service sits within the wider Carers Support Project that focuses on adult carers and are increasingly working together to support carers of all ages.

The Young Carers Service works to the five key aims of the Strategy:

- Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions.
- Providing up to date, relevant timely information, advice & assistance to Carers of all ages.
- Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of carers of all ages.
- Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice and control over their lives.
- Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages.

The Young Carers Service sits within the Local Authority's responsibilities under the Social Service and Wellbeing Act Wales (2014) and this has seen practice develop within the service with new systems being embedded over 2015-16.

5. CURRENT POSITION

The Young Carers Service is currently staffed with 3 posts and in addition commissions Action for Children to provide direct support. There are currently 298 young carers known to the service and receiving information and support.

2018 saw a 30% increase in referrals from schools and college campuses during the first 3 quarters which is a result of how successful the rollout of the Schools Award has been. The Award has been highlighted as good practice among Local Authorities and has received positive feedback from Estyn.

The demand for sibling support is currently higher than this relatively small service can respond to and there are 30+ young people on the waiting list. Negotiations are taking place with Action for Children to provide support for siblings as part of their contract with RCT and this will offer more resource and stability of service to this group of young people going forward.

With the support of a small additional grant from Welsh Government this year the Young Carers Service has been able to fund an extra residential trip for young carers, a provision that they have identified as being of the greatest benefit to them from the feedback they have given. The money has also been used to support whole family activities, as identified by parent carers, and has provided short breaks and time outs for young carers and parent carers alike.

This year saw our third Young Carers Recognition evening which was held to celebrate Young Carers Awareness Day and this was a well attended and very successful event.

Young Carers were the focus of the 2017-18 Carers Champion Conference held at Nantgarw College, with the young carers themselves sharing their personal stories and experiences

6. NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

During 2017-18 there has been a review and restructure of carers services within RCT, with the carer's support project set to become an all age service from 1st March 2019. Young carer's assessment will now be undertaken within the new Information Advice and Assistance Team with a dedicated assessment worker for young carers and siblings.

The carers support workers within the project will maintain a responsibility for the rollout of the Schools Award as well as engaging

with other services and the Action for Children service will be co located within the project to facilitate closer, more responsive working.

We have had confirmation of funding for the Young Adult Carers worker for the next financial year which is great news for our young adults as they are consistently feeding back how much they value the peer support from the service.

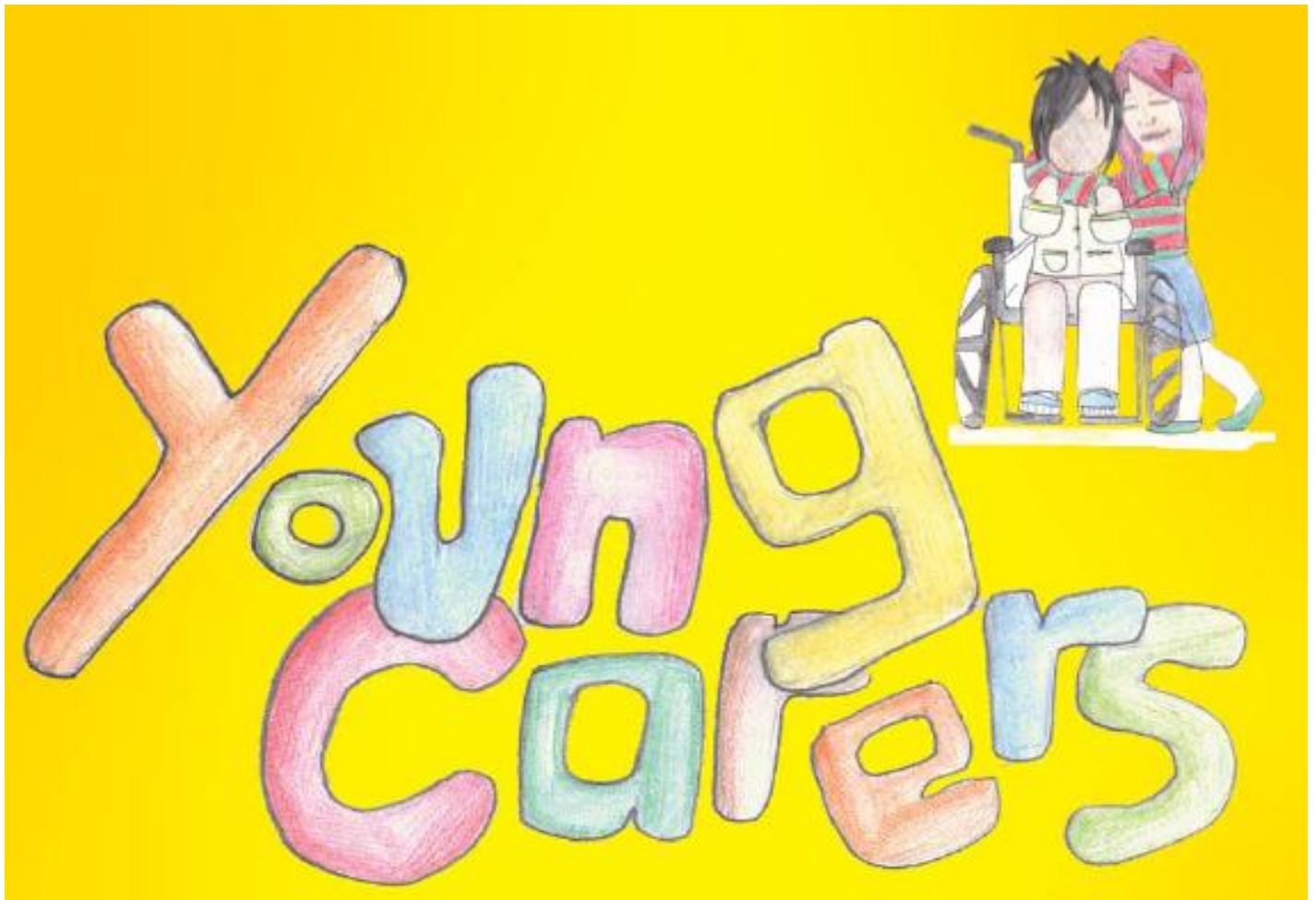
As detailed in the report, our key actions are very much focused on sustainability and growth with exciting new opportunities to develop the service and engage with other areas of the Council and other organisations such as Carers Trust.

The changes and the focus being given to Carer's Services will go a long way to improving the sustainability of support to carers of all ages.

7. CONCLUSION

2017-18 has seen a number of developments within the Young Carers Service and an ongoing increase in need for awareness raising, advice, assistance and support.

The team have worked together to achieve positive outcomes for young carers and their integrated approach will serve them well in taking forward the reshaping of carers services over the next few years.



RCT Young Carer's Service
(Supporting carers aged 0-25 years)

Annual Report
2017-18



“A young carer takes responsibility for someone who is ill, disabled, elderly, experiencing mental distress or affected by substance use, or has *substantial* responsibility for caring for a sibling.

A young carer could be from any family and is under 25. They may be providing all of the care or helping someone else provide care.

The care they provide is not only the things you see-like changing bandages, cooking, cleaning or helping someone to use the toilet or have a wash-but also things you can't see, such as how the young carer feels or thinks because of their caring role.”

Our aim is to promote and improve the health and well-being of young carers and their families by

- **Preventing and protecting young people from carrying out excessive and inappropriate caring roles *and***
- **Preventing the continuation of inappropriate caring**
- **Supporting young people in their caring roles**



The Young Carer's Service recognises that young carers have varied needs and aims to offer a range of support.

We do not wish to create dependency on our service; therefore we aim to support a young carer *through* our service, ensuring that individual aims and objectives have been met, so they can move on from the service and feel able to integrate into mainstream provision.

Census figures and local stats:

According to the Census (2011) there has been a 15% increase in the number of young carers (aged 0-24) across RCT since the 2001 Census.

The Census (2011) identified **2509** carers aged 0 - 24 years in RCT. 13% of these are carrying out a staggering 50 hours or more unpaid care a week.

However, a recent BBC survey found that 1 in 12 school children have some caring responsibilities. If the survey reflects the UK as a whole, potentially there are 700,000 young carers in the UK and **over 4000 in RCT**.

Between February 2008 - March 2018, **1072 referrals** have been received by the service.

Of those, **789** have received a Young Carers Assessment & support and **33** (age 18+) have received a Carers Assessment.

This data illustrates that there are still a huge number of Young & Young Adult Carers in RCT not receiving the support they are entitled to.

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Young Carer's Service consists of:

- The **Young Carers Assessment & Development Worker**
(based within Children's services)

Responsible for strategic developments and reports relating to Young Carers/Young Adult Carers and carrying out Young Carers assessments

- The **Young Carers Support Worker**
(based within Children's Services)

Responsible for developing the RCT Schools Award, carrying out young carers assessments and individual intensive support



- The **Young Adult Carer Development Worker**
(based within Children's Services - funded via Families First)

Responsible for developing a service to support Young Adult Carers (18-25 yr olds) as they transition to Adult Carers

- The **RCT Young Carers Project** – Action For Children
The Local Authority commissions the project to support Young Carers needing ongoing support and intervention. The project provides social opportunities for Young Carers as well as individual support and workshops on a range of issues and topics.

This report will only make brief reference to the work of this project as they produce their own report



The Cwm Taf Carers Strategy

The Young Carers Service has developed over the last few years and now provides a service to young carers up to 25 years of age. The service also sits within the wider Carers Support Project (for adult carers) and we work together to support carers of all ages within RCT. During this year a review of carer's services across Cwm Taf took place and the Cwm Taf Regional Integrated Model for Carers Report was produced which will have an impact on future support for Carers.

The service continues to work towards the 5 key aims of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy:

- Aim 1. Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions
- Aim 2. Providing up to date, relevant and timely information, advice & assistance to Carers of all ages
- Aim 3. Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of Carers of all ages
- Aim 4. Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice & control over their lives
- Aim 5. Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages

The following pages use these aims to illustrate the work of the service 2017/18

Aim 1. Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions

By this we mean raising awareness amongst the public and with our staff about who Carers are, what they do and how important it is to identify them and understand their caring role. For our service this is split into two areas -

- Identifying and assessing Young Carers *and*
- Raising Awareness about Young Carers to enable their identification

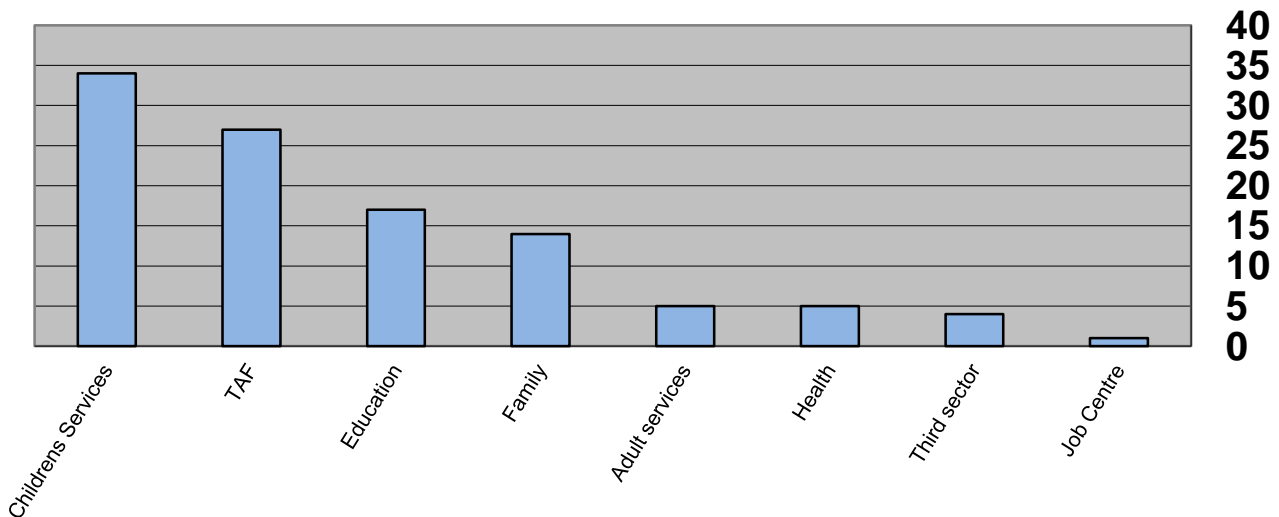
Identifying and assessing Young Carers

All contacts and enquiries for the service are received by the Assessment & Development worker.

Young Carers

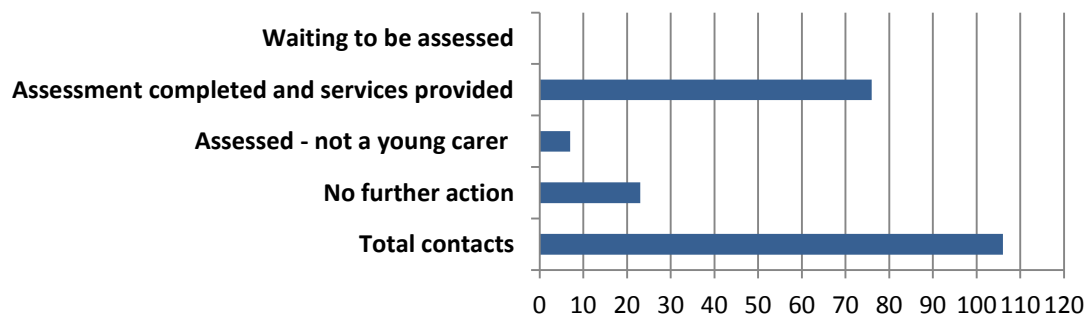
Data to illustrate contacts and assessments for Young Carers (0-18 years) received for 2017-18

Source of contacts 2017-18 TOTAL = 106



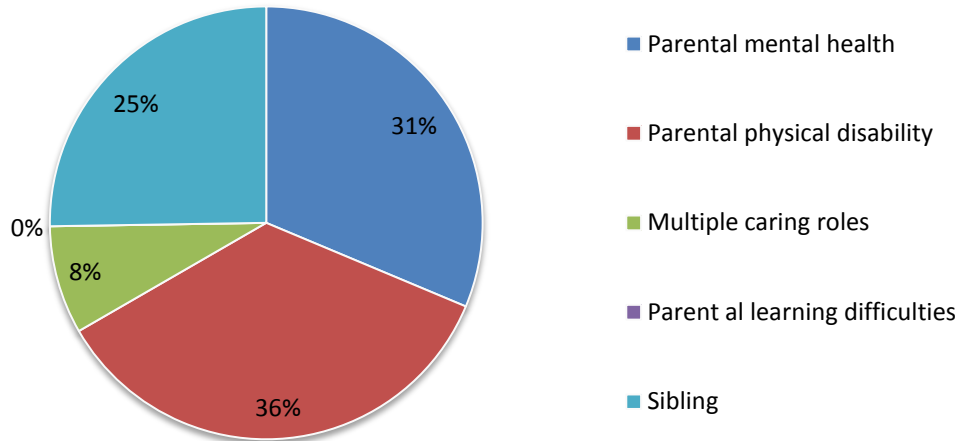
- ✓ Continued increase in referrals from Schools & College campuses year on year
- ✓ We have already seen a 30% increase in referrals from Schools & College campuses during the first 3 quarters of 2018-19
- ✓ 50% increase in referrals from Adult services so far this year
- This number does not include the 30+ referrals received for siblings that are on the waiting list

Result of Contacts



- 298 young carers are currently known to the young carers service and receive information/support

Category of person cared for from 76 assessments completed 2017-18:



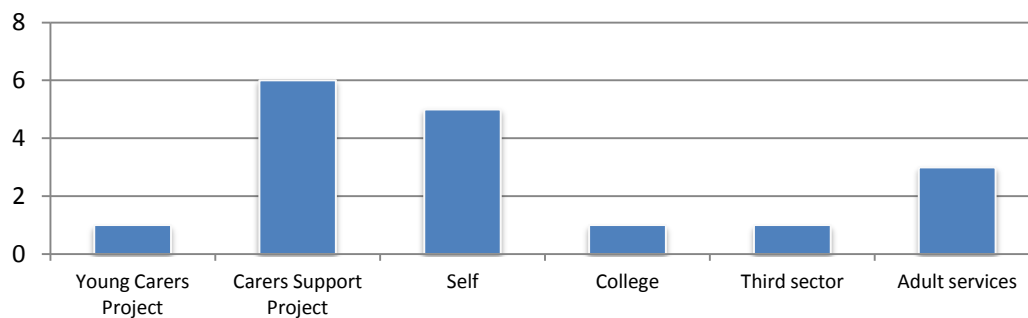
Of the 76 young carers assessed during 2017-18,

- 35 were then referred onto the Young Carers Project (Action For Children).
- 17 are now accessing the new sibling support groups within our service
- 6 were assessed but no further action needed or weren't young carers
- 2 were referred to the YAC service as they were nearly 18
- The remaining 16 received individual or family support from our service and either then decided they didn't need ongoing support or were referred on to other appropriate services

Young Adult Carers

Data to illustrate referrals and assessments for Young Adult Carers (18-25 years) received for 2017-18

Source of referrals



- 17 Referrals received for YACs (**Notably, 17 new referrals have already been received for the first 9 months of 2018-19**)
- The YAC development worker is actively supporting 51 Young Adult Carers

- 147 referrals for Young Adult Carers have been received by the service to date

- ✓ **The Support Worker's job description now includes the assessment role**
- ✓ **Funding was continued for the YAC post for 2017/18 & 2018/19**

So What Next and any issues? Plans for 2018-19:

- Establish a review system for all young carers assessed
- The sibling service has proved very popular but due to only 1 staff member providing this service, we have had to create a waiting list. We currently have 50 sibling referrals waiting to be assessed. A new Sibling Support service needs to be established that can cope with demand. Specific criteria needs to be developed to ensure service is appropriately accessed.
- The restructure of the service means that there will now only be 1 assessment worker. 71 referrals have already been received this year plus there are 50 siblings waiting to be assessed. The capacity to complete assessments & reviews is a concern

Raising Awareness about Young Carers to enable their identification

The key aspects of this part of the aim are raising awareness of young carers/young adult carers among professionals and the public and promoting their needs and rights as carers.



This year we have continued to roll out the RCT Young Carers Schools Award and we now have a Carers Champion in each Comprehensive School. All schools are actively working towards either the Bronze or Silver level of the Award and feedback from the schools has been really positive. A number of **Primary Schools** had heard about the Award and expressed an interest in getting involved so this year saw the development of a unit of work for Year 6 pupils. 6 schools took part in the Pilot programme and helped to develop the unit of work which culminates in an assembly attended by pupils and parents and the presentation of the award. To date, 11 Primary schools have completed the work and have agreed to include it each year. Following the success of the Schools Award we decided to adapt it for use in the 3 college campuses and created the **RCT College Award**. To date both Aberdare and Rhondda Campuses have been awarded the Bronze Award and Nantgarw Campus is working towards it.

An additional £1900 was provided from the Cwm Taf Carers Partnership to print more teacher's guides, folders and to pay additional hours for project staff to take assemblies and lessons



YOUNG CARERS COUNT!

This year saw our third Young Carers Recognition Evening which was held to celebrate Young Carers Awareness Day and was attended by over 170 young carers, young adult carers & their special guests. All the young carers and young adult carers were presented with medals to recognise their caring roles and special awards were given out during the night to young people who had been nominated by their family or a professional who had been working with them. A number of young people were also brave enough to perform during the night and the young carers choir 'Young Carers Aloud' entertained everyone with their lovely songs.



Working with the wider Carers Support Project we have:

- Attended events and open days including the Big Welsh Bite, RCT Homes fun day and Freshers Days at the 3 college campuses
- Updated the RCT Carers webpages and written pieces for 'Carers News'
- Taken part in the Young Carers Awareness Day in January, organised by Carers Trust

- ✓ We have continued to see an increase in the identification of Young Carers and the number of referrals for an assessment.
- ✓ We have seen a 30% increase in referrals from schools and colleges and our first referrals from Primary Schools and are working more closely with key staff within the schools to ensure young carers are receiving the support they need.
- ✓ During inspections Estyn have held discussions with schools and the college to discuss their support for young carers and have given positive feedback about the Awards

So What Next and any issues? Plans for 2017-18:

- **Our Schools & College Awards are highlighted as good practice among Local authorities and a number of representatives have visited to find out more about them. They have also received positive feedback from Estyn inspectors. All the Comprehensive schools, 11 primary schools and the 3 College campuses are all involved in the Award with more Primary Schools looking to take it on. It is currently co-ordinated by the Young Carer Support Worker but in the restructure this post no longer exists. There are concerns about who will take on responsibility for this and the capacity needed to ensure this piece of good practice continues.**

Aim 3. Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of Carers of all ages (including aim 2, providing information to Carers)

We were allocated a portion of the **Welsh Government's Carers Respite Grant** to use during this year and so we were able to provide a number of additional respite opportunities for Young Carers, YACS and Parent Carers. Some of these were:

A 1-night residential break for Parent Carers and their families (including sibling carers). This was the first time we had arranged a residential for families and the feedback was fantastic. 14 families joined us for accessible activities, all food was provided and each family had their own bedroom at Dare Valley Park. Families felt that they were able to spend time away from home in a safe environment and started to build support networks with other families



A 2-night residential break for 35 Young Carers and YACs at Morfa Bay adventure centre. This was a great opportunity for the young people to spend time away from home, to relax, make new friends and try new activities.



3 Family events supporting approximately 200 Carers of all ages. We arranged these events to suit a range of accessibility so that as many families as possible could benefit. Many families said that they would never attempt a day out to somewhere like a theme park because there would be too many barriers to overcome. We were able to address these and provide fun and relaxing days for the families.

Other support and information:

Last year we started to develop a **Sibling Support Service** as we had recognised that sibling carers have their own support needs and often want to meet other children who have siblings with additional needs. During this year we began accepting referrals and assessing sibling carers and were supporting over 50 siblings by the end of the year. The Parent Carer Officer co-ordinated the support and the rest of the team helped out during workshops and events. Some of the support provided this year included activities that increased exercise levels such as ice skating, increasing cultural awareness by attending a show and workshops on cooking and craft. The intention is to run a rolling programme of workshops and social activities that siblings can access for a set time and then regular opportunities for the siblings to get together on an ongoing basis. (see issues below)

Information is sent to each new young carer and young adult carer when registered and they then receive a copy of the Carers Newsletter a few times a year that includes pages of information dedicated to young carers and young adult carers. Information is posted onto the Carers facebook page and important information is sent out when needed. Young carers and young adult carers regularly ask for information about other services that might be available for them in RCT and can be signposted to other relevant advice agencies.

As part of the wider Carers Project, we have listened to feedback from parent carers especially, but also feedback from carers of all ages and have organised events and workshops that the **Carers can come along to with the person that they care for and sometimes as a family**. They feel that this provides opportunities for them to do things together that they wouldn't otherwise feel able to do. Some of the events have included family fun days that are fully inclusive, events held on weekends so working carers and children can attend and respite opportunities organised to places that are accessible for all ages and abilities.

- ✓ Feedback following the activities arranged with the Respite Fund money was extremely positive and really provided additional respite that the Carers wouldn't otherwise have received
- ✓ The Sibling Support Service has received many referrals with referrers saying how much this service is needed
- ✓ YACs are consistently feeding back how much they value the peer support from the service and how they feel less isolated since getting involved.
- ✓ 349 YCs & YACs receive information throughout the year via the Carers Newsletter and additional information about family friendly events organised by the project

So What Next and any issues? Plans for 2018-19::

- **Capacity to provide the Sibling Support Service is a big issue. With only 1 member of the team dedicated to providing the service as part of their role and over 50 siblings already accessing the service, a waiting list has been created and to date has over 50 siblings waiting for an assessment and support.**
- **Involvement with Carers Trust as they evaluate support for Young carers across Wales. A number of examples of good practice have already been highlighted including our work in schools, working with under 8's and our transition work with YACs**
- **Young carers have requested an ID card for some time. Carers Trust are starting to research this but say it could be some time before a scheme is launched. Look into potential of starting our own scheme in RCT**

Aim 4. Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice & control over their lives

A Young Carer was asked to speak at this year's **Social Care Awards Ceremony** to raise awareness amongst our local workforce. She spoke of her experiences with social care staff and the support she receives. The speech was very well received and we have again been asked to attend this year's Ceremony.

Young carers who attend the schools and college campuses taking part in the **RCT Young Carers Schools & College awards** are often asked to get involved in assemblies to share their story & experiences. They are also involved in evaluating whether their school/college has done enough to achieve a certain level of award and what improvements need to be made to support young carers.

CASE

The Young Adult Carer Worker has been supporting a dedicated group of Young Adult Carers, known as **CASE**, to come together to make decisions about the service they receive. They worked together to apply for ICF funding and have been awarded £12K for a residential, 'time for me' activities and individual grants to support wellbeing

- ✓ Young and Young Adult Carers are actively involved in the development and evaluation of new service initiatives and wider policy consultations.
- ✓ YACs are taking responsibility for fundraising to support their own social activities.
- ✓ Young carers and YACs are involved in innovative ways of getting their voice heard and raising awareness about their lives.

So What Next and any issues? Plans for 2017-18:

- **Support CASE to utilise the ICF funding**
- **Develop outcome measurement tools to evaluate the service as a whole and the impact the ICF funding has on YACs**

Aim 5. Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages

- We have been working with our local **Carers Trust** organisation to support carers to apply for grants from their Carers Fund for items such as furniture, short breaks and driving lessons.
- We have been continuing our excellent joint working initiative with Leisure Services and have arranged for Young Carers to be able to access **swimming lessons** for just £2 a session

- We have continued to work with leisure services to offer young carers and YACs very discounted rates to use the leisure centre facilities by signing them up to **STARS cards**. This has proved really successful.
- Working with **Youth Arts** we have been able to put on workshops for parents of children with additional needs, the children and their siblings.
- We have continued to work with **Youth Support Services** to address some of the barriers that young carers face when accessing extra-curricular activities in their school and community. Additional funding has been provided to pay for transport and staff time to ensure young carers can take part in social events and activities. We have also adopted their Resilience Framework as part of our assessment process

- ✓ Through effective partnership working, Young and Young Adult Carers in RCT have been able to access a range of events, activities and services, with other carers, their families and within their wider communities.

So What Next and any issues? Plans for 2017-18:

- **Develop our work with Youth Arts and build on success of the musical by launching a new project**
- **Discuss options for a young carer's taster day with the University of Glamorgan**
- **Meet with the 'First Campus' officer from Cardiff University to discuss project ideas for widening access to University for Young Carers**
- **Explore possibility of working with Coleg Y Cymoedd to utilise their catering department for various projects**
- **Under the restructure there will no longer be a dedicated Young Carer Service. Instead the current workers will become generic Carers project workers. Concerns around who will have capacity to take forward this work**

Report produced December 2018

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