

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013 – 2014

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

22nd January 2014

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S
SERVICES**

Agenda Item No:4

**RAC Young Carers Service and
Annual Report 2012-2013**

**Author: Jayne Preston, Service Manager.
Children's Services, Ty Pennant, 01443 495108**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to update members on RCT Young Carer's Service and Annual Report 2012-2013.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Corporate Parenting Board note the contents of the attached report and the work undertaken by the Young Carers Service.

3. BACKGROUND

The work of the Young Carers Service is led by the 5 main aims of the RCT Young Carers Strategy:

To ensure young carers are not expected to carry out inappropriate levels of care by providing each young carer with an assessment of their needs.

To ensure that young carers are identified and their needs acknowledged.

That young carers receive the support, information and advice they need, when it is needed.

To ensure all young carers have a voice regarding the services they receive and the issues that affect them.

To ensure that support and services are accessible for young carers so that they can achieve their full potential.

4. CURRENT SITUATION

There is positive work being undertaken within the Young Carers service which is evidenced within the report.

Due to raising awareness and ensuring that young carers are identified, there has been a 43% increase in contacts during 2012-2013, compared to 2011-2012.

91 contacts have progressed to “requests for an assessment”. Unfortunately there has been a decrease in the number of assessments completed this year, (this is due to a combination of an increase in workload of the assessment worker and no cover provided for the young carers support worker whilst she has taken maternity leave). The number of assessments completed were 64 compared to 74 in 2011-2012. The numbers awaiting an assessment will be carried over into 2013 -2014, however, capacity will be reduced in the first part of 2014 as whilst the support worker has returned to work, the development worker will be taking six months maternity leave.

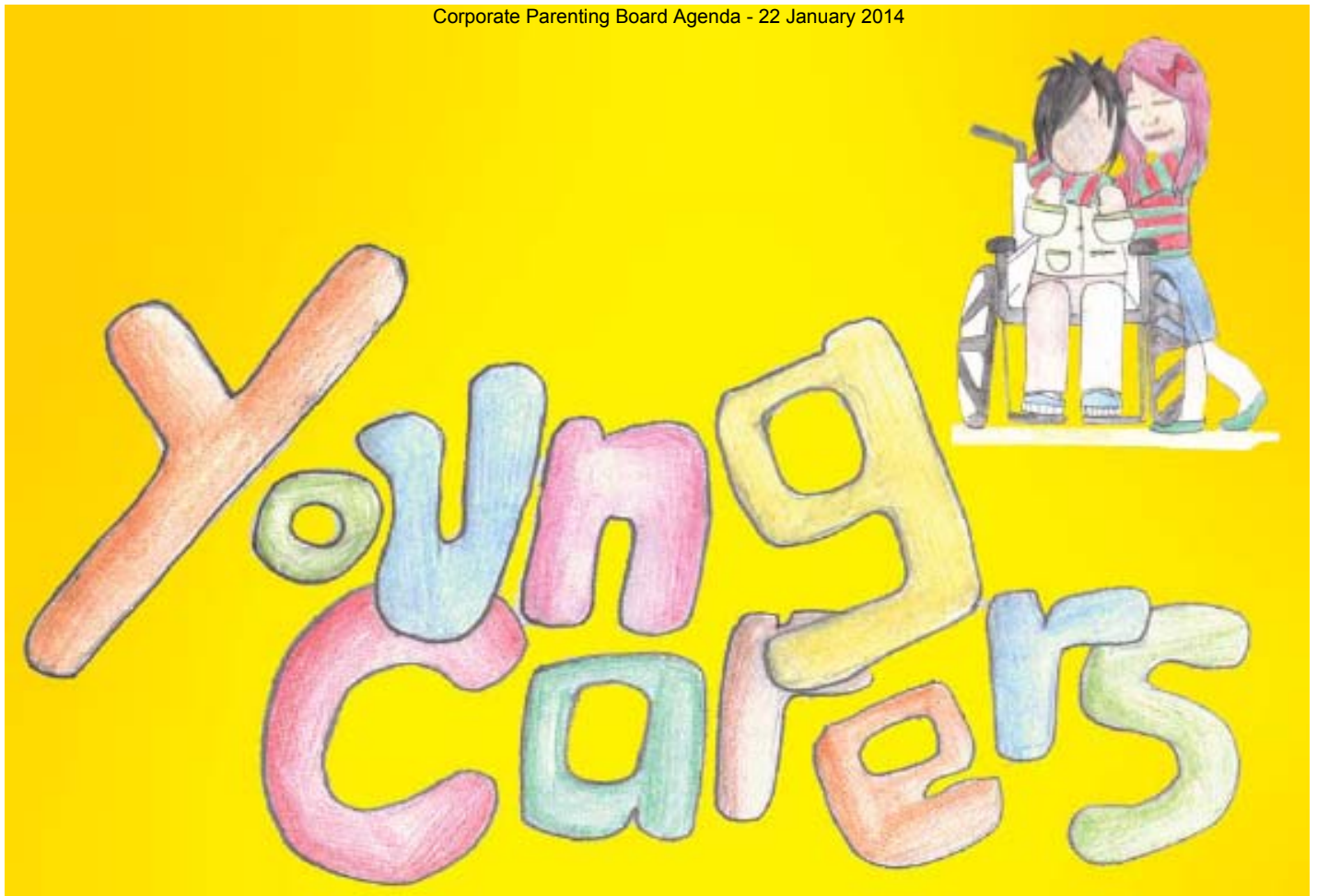
34 of the young carers assessed in 2012-2103 were referred onto the Young Carers project and 30 remained with the service.

42 young adult carers received a service in 2012-2013.

In terms of young carers “having a voice” a review and monitoring system has been developed to review the Young Carers project.

In terms of decision making young carers have been involved in several new initiatives such as Funky Dragon Residential, CASE, and Carers Measure residential, which have proved to be a resounding success.

The young carers service has also been instrumental in building working partnerships with services and departments across RCT to ensure that young carers are able to access their services.



RCT Young Carer's Service Annual Report 2012-13

“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**



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.

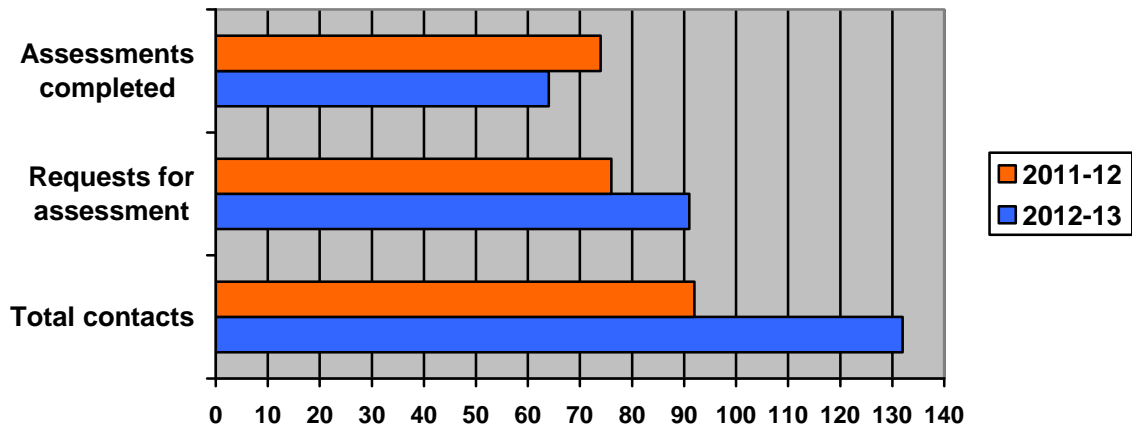
The Rhondda Cynon Taf Young Carer's Service consists of:

- **The Young Carers Assessment & Development Worker**
(based within Children's services)
Responsible for the Young Carers Strategy, all related development work and carrying out all Young Carers assessments
- **The Young Carers Support Worker**
(based within Children's Services)
Responsible for carrying out individual, intensive support to the most isolated and vulnerable Young Carers
- **The Young Adult Carer Development Worker**
(Big Lottery funded and based within Children's Services)
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



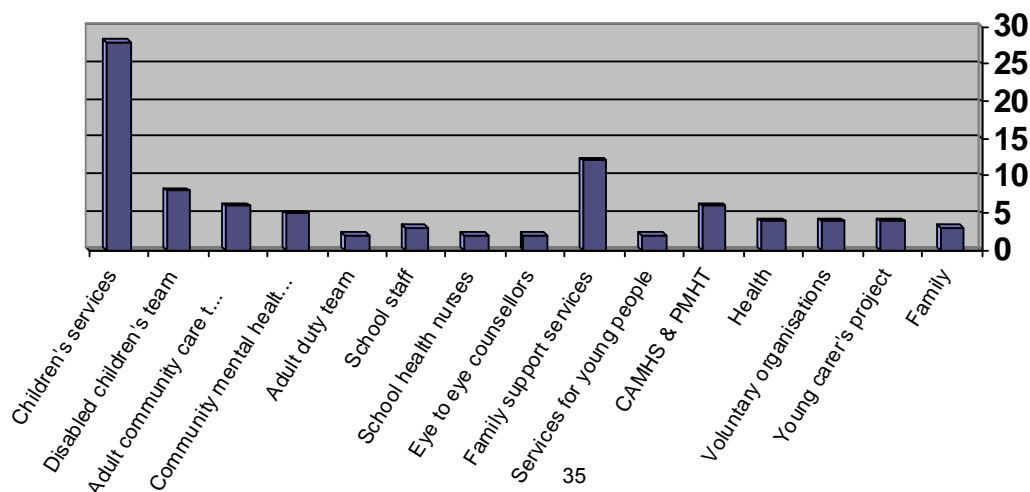
All contacts and enquiries for the service are received by the Assessment & Development worker, apart from referrals for 18-25 year olds, which go direct to the Young adult carer worker.

Data to illustrate contacts and referrals received for 2012-13 compared to 2011-12:



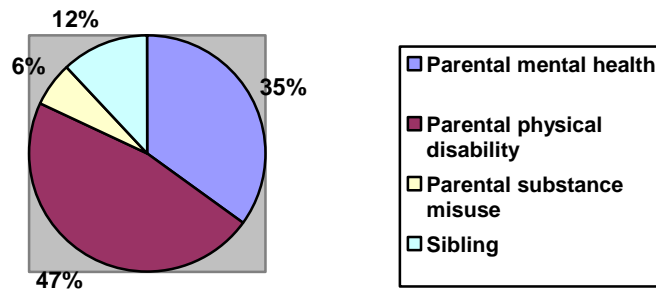
- There has been a 43% increase in contacts during 2012-13 but not all these have progressed to a referral to the service; some of the young people moved before contact was made and some were inappropriate contacts.
- 91 contacts have progressed to 'requests for assessment' but the Assessment worker has not yet made contact with 27 of these due to lack of resources, so these will be carried over to 2013-14.
- There has been a decrease in the number of assessments completed this year. This has been due to a combination of an increase in the workload of the Assessment worker and no cover provided for the Young carer's support worker while she has been taking maternity leave. The Young carer's support worker is responsible for undertaking a lot of the intensive 1-1 work that is identified from an assessment so while she has been on maternity leave, this work has remained with the Assessment worker.
- **543 Referrals have been received by the service from February 2008 – March 2013. Of those, 454 have received a young carer's assessment & follow-on support.**

Source of referrals 2012-13

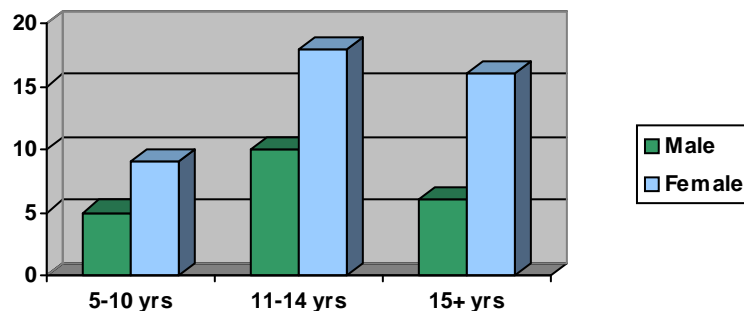


The following data represents the 64 assessments carried out 2012-13:

Category of person cared for



Age and gender of young carer



Of the 64 young carers, 34 were later referred onto the Young Carers Project – Action for children. The remaining 30 received support from our service and either then decided they didn’t need ongoing support or were referred to other non-specialist services such as ‘Services for young people’.

The work of the Young Carer’s service is led by the 5 main aims of the RCT Young Carer’s Strategy:

- To ensure Young Carers aren’t expected to carry out inappropriate levels of care by providing each Young Carer with an assessment of their needs
- To ensure that Young Carers are identified and their needs are acknowledged
- That Young Carers receive the support, information and advice they need, when it is needed
- To ensure all Young Carers have a voice regarding the services they receive and the issues that affect them
- To ensure that support and services are accessible for Young Carers so they can achieve their full potential

The following pages illustrate the work of the service during 2012-13

To ensure Young Carers aren't expected to carry out inappropriate levels of care by providing each Young Carer with an assessment of their needs

As previously illustrated, 64 young carers have received an assessment of their needs this year. The assessment is a chance for young carers and their families to talk about their situation, what they enjoy about it and what they find difficult. The assessment looks at the needs of the whole family and covers issues such as dealing with medication, manual handling, and coping with parent's fluctuating mental health. It is also a time for young carers to consider their wishes in relation to employment, training, education and leisure opportunities and to discuss the barriers they feel they are facing. Some assessments can take a number of visits and 1-1 time to complete as it takes time to build a relationship with the young person.

Following the assessment a plan is put together with the young carer and other family members, if appropriate, to address the identified needs. The follow-up work often involves a lot of joint working with teams in adult services as well as other support organisations to ensure the young carer isn't carrying out inappropriate levels of care and has a choice about the care they want to continue to provide.

Tools to help measure 'soft outcomes' such as how the young carer feels about the amount of care they provide and whether they feel they get enough of a break from caring, have been developed and used this year. These are now starting to be used during reviews to help demonstrate the difference the service is making to young carers.

Example of joint working following assessment

Two young carers were referred who were caring for their Mum. She was waiting for a heart and double lung transplant and was very weak. She couldn't walk to the front door, couldn't get upstairs and often needed to use her oxygen tank. Mum was relying on her daughters to do everything for her. They were carrying her upstairs, taking it in turns to stay awake at night to ensure she was breathing, helping her to wash and dress and doing the household chores, all while trying to attend school. The family weren't aware that they could have any support and were wary of people coming into the home. School staff had become aware that things were difficult at home but weren't aware of the extent of caring being carried out. The assessment worker gradually built a relationship with the family and supported Mum through an assessment of her needs. Since then, a stair lift has been installed, telecare has provided sensors and monitors, direct payments have been set up so that Mum has a PA to help her and the girls are receiving the emotional support they need.

Plans for 2013-14

To develop the review system so that all young carers needs are reviewed, not just the ones who are referred onto the young carer's project.

To ensure that Young Carers are identified and their needs are acknowledged

The key aspect of this aim is raising awareness of young carers among professionals and the public.

- Leaflets and information sheets have been regularly distributed to key agencies
- Talks given at team meetings to other RCT departments
- A briefing was sent to all GP's via Public Health Wales
- Presentations were given at a Fframwaith, Local safeguarding board and Children's services management team meeting
- Contributing to the work on the new Cwm Taf Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure to ensure young carers are included and represented

We also work together as part of the wider Carers Support Project to raise awareness of carers of all ages. Our work has included:

- Information stands at many events including RCT Homes day, Big Bite, Cwm Taf LHB fun day and Council open days
- A page dedicated to young carers in the Carers News
- 'A day in the life' spread in the local papers illustrating the lives of young carers, young adult carers and adult carers
- Young adult carer interviewed for Radio Wales



- 'Joint' carers support project poster produced and used to advertise on billboards, buses, one4all centres
- Young adult carer poster produced and displayed in various locations such as the cinema



- Carers Week events including the Family Fun Day and the Carers Rights day

It is evident that our raising awareness efforts are having a positive impact on the number of young carers who are being identified. 2012-13 saw a 25% increase in contacts to the service about potential young carers and the number of young carers receiving support continues to grow year on year. Referrals continue to be received from a wide range of sources.

Plans for 2013-14

- Facilitating the involvement of young carers, young adult carers and adult carers in the 'Flash Mob' organized by Crossroads to raise awareness of young carers in Merthyr and Pontypridd town centres
- Continued involvement in the Carers Strategies Measure work including the new e-learning package
- Training on recognizing and supporting young carers to agencies including Careers Wales, Attendance and Wellbeing Service and Eye to Eye youth counselors
- Utilizing social media as a way of raising awareness and communicating with young carers and the public
- Involvement in Carers Week events such as the family fun day

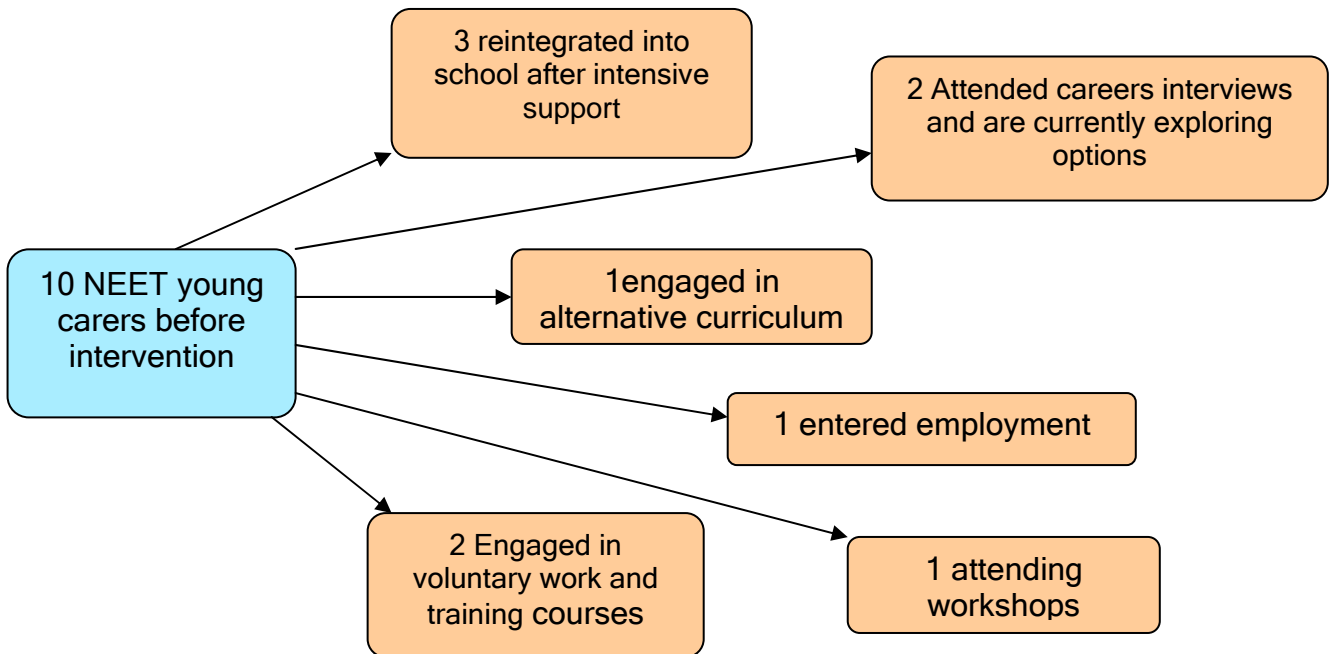


Young Carers receive the support, information and advice they need, when it is needed

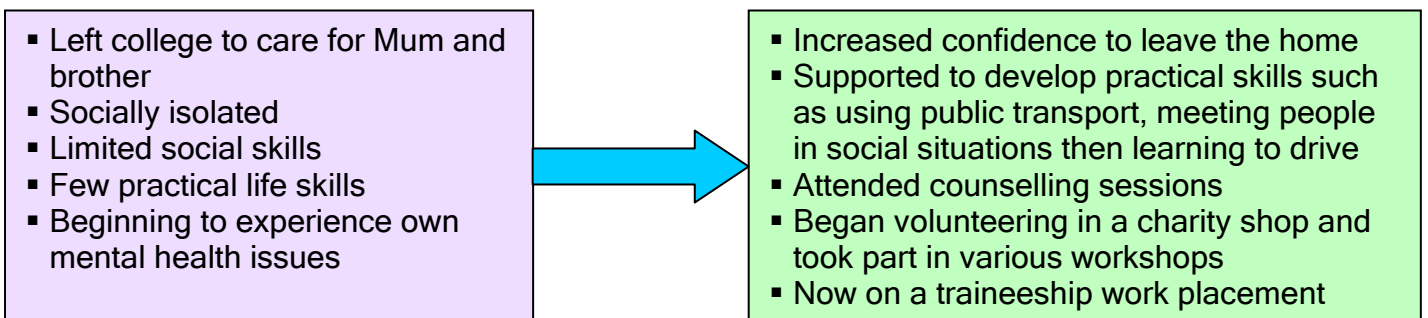
Young Carers Support Worker

One way we achieve this aim is through the work of the young carer's support worker. During the year, the worker has been supporting the young carers who are identified during their assessment as being the most isolated and vulnerable, often missing a lot of school or are NEET and don't have a support network to turn to for advice and information. The support worker has an in-depth knowledge of the issues that may be preventing the young carer pursuing their own ambitions and aims to provide intensive, time-limited 1:1 support to begin to address some of these barriers.

The young carers support worker has been working with over 30 young carers. Over 30% of the young carers were NEET and 25% had no contact with friends or people outside their family before intervention.



The support worker also works in partnership with other organisations such as the young carer's project, counselling services and youth workers to begin to address some of the identified issues. Below is an example of a young carer's life situation before and after intervention:



Plans for 2013-14

It is important to note that the support worker has been taking maternity leave and as no cover has been provided, the capacity of the service has been reduced and will continue to be reduced for the first part of 2013-14.

- Working with partners to deliver focused small group support to the young carers who are NEET/disengaged. Working with the YAC worker to provide workshops on interview skills, job applications, writing CV's etc. Addressing the barriers to the young carers accessing these workshops.
- Providing specific support for young carers caring for someone with mental health issues, using toolkits and drama/art.
- Developing more focused support for the most isolated young carers to raise confidence and self-esteem until they feel ready to access support from the young carer's project (run by Action for children) or other local community activities. To include team building and challenging activities to build confidence and activities to develop their specific interests.
- Working with education to raise awareness of young carer's issues in school, provide drop-in sessions in schools, and encourage schools to sign up to the young carer's school award.

Young Adult Carer Development Worker

The development worker has focussed on providing residential and outdoor pursuits opportunities for young adult carers during 2012-13. The focus of these has been to build confidence, self-esteem and team work while enabling the young adult carers to achieve qualifications and have a break from their caring environment.

Working in partnership with other agencies and departments such as Services for young people, Miskin project and Children in Wales, the development worker has been able to provide

- 2 week long courses with overnight stay including team building, first aid course and various outdoor pursuits
- A 2-night residential in Brecon including walks, beach activities and outdoor pursuits
- Overnight stay and a walk up Snowdon



All the activities have been challenging and rewarding and the residentials have been a chance for the worker to build relationships with the young adult carers. They have had opportunities to talk together, discussing issues and problems and the development worker has then been able to provide information and advice in a relaxed setting. Follow-up work and support has then been provided after the residentials.

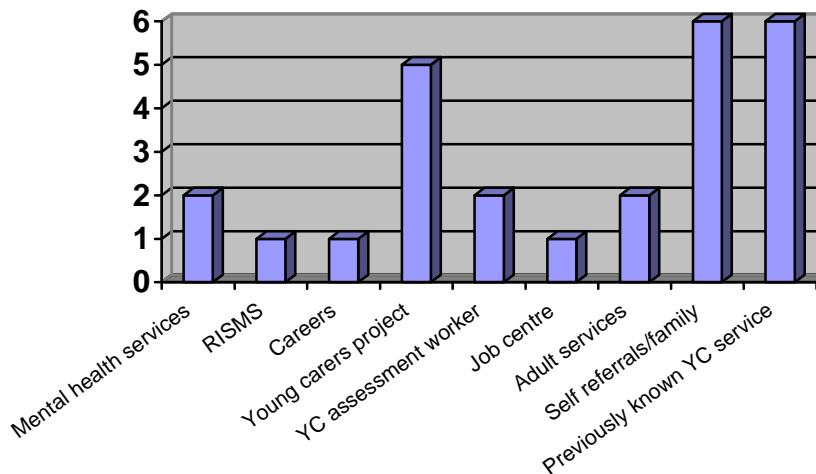
I loved socialising with other carers and achieving something for myself

An example of support for a young adult carer following a residential:

20 year old young adult carer was very socially isolated and had concerns that were discussed during the residential. Follow up work included

- Addressing concerns in college to enable her to achieve level 3 health and social care
- Information provided re carers allowance and linked into benefits advice
- Continued support to enable her to maintain her new friendships with other young adult carers
- Courses arranged to increase confidence and self esteem
- Support to access careers advice

During 2012-13 the young adult carer development worker has received 26 new referrals:



42 young adult carers have been supported during 2012-13.

Plans for 2013-14

- Working with local colleges and university to raise awareness of young adult carers and advise about supporting effectively
- Production of information pack for young adult carers
- Workshops and courses aimed at building confidence and employability skills
- Further residential courses

Ensure all Young Carers have a voice regarding the services they receive and the issues that affect them

It is important to ensure that young carers continue to be involved in decision making and are engaged in the development of new initiatives that may affect them. During 2012-13 the following events have taken place:

Funky Dragon Residential

The young carers assessment & development worker arranged and facilitated a weekend residential, funded by SCDWP. 15 young carers spent the weekend at the Glynconel centre with Anna from 'Funky Dragon' (the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales). The young carers learnt about participation, took part in team building activities and decided what messages they want to share with others about what it's like to be a young carer and things that they want changed. They then used these messages in designs for hoodies and trainers so they can share their messages with others. The weekend was a great mix of learning and fun! Follow up work has included forming a 'Young carers forum' so they can continue to get their voices heard



CASE

We are supporting a group of young adult carers to constitute their own group called CASE (which stands for Care And Support Each other) so they can organise social events and can apply for funding to support this. Meetings have begun and training is being organised for the members.

Carers Measure residential

The young carer's service organised a residential to consult with young carers from RCT & Merthyr about the new e-learning package that is being developed to support the Carers measure. The assessment & development worker organised the weekend and facilitated a consultation morning funded by the LHB from Carers Measure money. The rest of the residential was spent team building and taking part in outdoor activities organised by HCE adventures.



Plans for 2013-14

We will be arranging consultation workshops to look at developing a new strategy for carers of all ages in RCT as well as strengthening the young carers forum

To ensure that support and services are accessible for Young Carers so they can achieve their full potential

The young carers service has been working in partnership with a number of organisations and other RCT departments during the year to ensure that young carers are able to access their services. Below are some examples

The assessment and development worker has been working with **Services For Young People** to find ways for young carers to benefit from their provision. Funding was secured through their E3+ provision to provide a series of creative workshops including pottery, jewellery making and craft. The workshops have provided opportunities for the most isolated and vulnerable young carers to come together in a small group and have a go at learning some new skills.



Funding was also secured from their 'Creations' project for a range of singing workshops followed by the 'Big Sing Day', facilitated by Tanya Walker. The event was a way of enabling more young carers to have a go at singing in a friendly, supportive and fun environment. By the end of the day the young carers had transformed from a group of nervous, self conscious young people to a group of singers keen to share their new songs with their family and friends. One young carer commented at the end of the day "It was nerve-racking and exciting. I gained confidence and learnt how to perform in front of people. I'd like to do more sessions!"



RCT leisure services have been working with the assessment & development worker to support young carers to try new sport and outdoor activities through their **Support To Access Recreation Scheme**. During the year, 11 days of outdoor activities such as canoeing, climbing and gorge walking were organised as well as an overnight stay in the Gower for young carers aged 8-17 yrs. The activities provided opportunities for young carers to experience new and exciting challenges and to encourage and support each other.



Young adult carers have been able to benefit from a 2-month pilot, funded by the Big Lottery, to use the leisure centres for free.

Young carers have also been using the new 'morecard' level 3 discount scheme, which is available for all carers to use the leisure centres at a reduced cost.

RCT Homes

Following a presentation by the assessment & development worker, joint working has begun with RCT Homes to find ways of raising awareness of carers among staff and looking at ways of supporting young carers and families. To begin this process, workers have spent days 'shadowing' RCT Homes staff to gain an insight into their area of work

Plans for 2013-14

- Expanding the STARS leisure sessions to include young adult carers & utilising leisure centres more
- Evaluating the pilot 2-month free leisure centre scheme for young adult carers
- Taking forward the E3+ provision for young carers in partnership with the young carer's project
- Meeting with the transitions workers from Viva/Crossroads to look at provision for sibling carers and young carers ready to move on from the young carer's project
- Working with Framwaith and Families First on the new SEET initiative

For further information please contact:

**Rachel Spry
Young Carers Assessment & Development Worker**

01443 668839

07824 496485

Youngcarerssupportteam@rctcbc.gov.uk