

# RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

### MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015 – 2016

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**27th JULY 2015**

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

<b>Agenda Item No: 5</b>
<b>YOUNG CARERS ANNUAL REPORT</b>

**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 2014-2015.

#### **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 key aims of the RCT Carers Strategy Action Plan:

Identify and recognise carers of all ages

Provide information and training to carers of all ages

Ensure carers of all ages have a voice

Ensure access to carers' assessments

Deliver quality services for carers of all ages

#### **4. CURRENT SITUATION**

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

96% of Young Carer's Assessments were completed and services provided

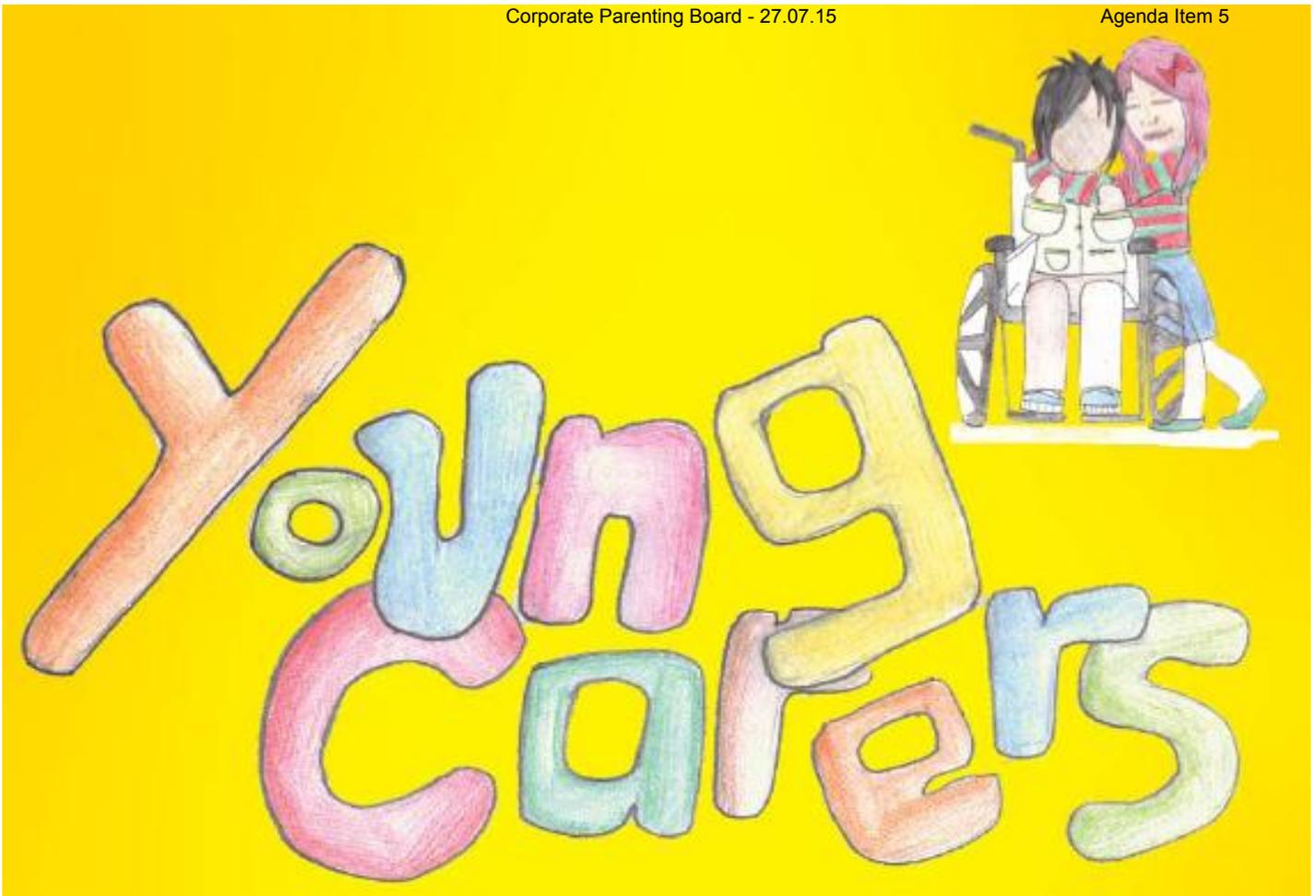
42 of the young carers assessed in 2014-2015 were referred onto the Young Carers project and 27 received individual or family support from our service and were then signposted to other appropriate services. 257 young carers are currently known to the service and receive information/support

Due to the focus on raising awareness in schools through the establishment of a Carers Measure Education Co-ordinator and the Schools Award pilot programme, referrals from education increased from 5% in 2013-14 to 11.5% in 2014-15 .

41 young adult carers received a service in 2014-2015. 20 new referrals were received.

In terms of young carers "having a voice" and making decisions, 9 young carers were trained to become Young Commissioners and were instrumental in re-commissioning the young carers project; young adult carers regularly meet as part of CASE to lead the work of the Young Adult Carer aspect of the service; the Schools Award was developed as a direct result of young carers highlighting the need for schools to improve the support they provide young carers.

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

(Supporting carers aged 0-25 years)

## Annual Report 2014-15



**“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.

### **Census figures:**

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 2015, **736 referrals** have been received by the service.

Of those, **550** have received a Young Carers Assessment & support and **20** (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)

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

- 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***



### Combining the Action Plans of the RCT Carers and Young Carer's Strategies

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. Therefore it was decided that the Carers Strategy and Young Carer's Strategy Action Plans would be amalgamated and redesigned to provide a plan that would deliver quality services for carers of all ages living in RCT. This plan has been produced and covers the period 2014 - 2016 when the new 'Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act' will come into force and a new strategy and plan will need to be developed. A new strategy group has been formed with representatives from a range of organisations and LA departments that meet quarterly to review the plan.

The combined action plan contains 5 key aims that align with the aims of the (Carers Measure) Cwm Taf Information and Consultation for Carers Action Plan :

- Identify and recognise carers of all ages
- Provide information and training to carers of all ages
- Ensure carers of all ages have a voice
- Ensure access to carers' assessments
- Deliver quality services for carers of all ages

The following pages use these aims to illustrate the work of the service 2014/15

## Aim 1. Identify and Recognise Carers of all ages

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

As part of our work under the **Carers Measure**, we:

- Worked with a group of young carers to create new posters & 'pop-ups' that will be displayed in schools and other appropriate places
- Promoted the need for schools to be targeted when identifying Carers Champions. Money was secured from the Carers Measure budget to fund a worker who was tasked with supporting schools to appoint a Carers Champion. 16 of the 17 comprehensive schools now have a champion. The 'Young Carer Aware' e-learning module was completed by 189 professionals within Education during the year.
- Ensured that Young Carers and Young Adult Carers were included in all training sessions for Carers Champions and other professionals. This included using young carers situations as case studies, showing their digital stories and inviting them to speak/perform to share their stories



To take forward the work initiated in schools, the Young Carers Support Worker took on the task of developing and piloting the **RCT Schools Award**.

The Schools Award will create a uniformed approach across RCT and will ensure that good practice is taking place in all schools in relation to young carers and their needs.

The award is made up of 3 levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold and within each level are a set of standards that need to be fulfilled in order for the school to achieve the award. Young Carers have been involved throughout the award's development and school staff have been consulted to ensure these standards are achievable and they recognise the support Young Carers want in their educational establishment. 6 schools are currently piloting the award.

Working with the wider Carers Support Project we have:

- Supported young carers and young adult carers to create 'Digital Stories' that highlight the positive and negative aspects of caring. These are available on the RCT website and are used in training and presentations
- Attended events and open days including the 'carers themed day' at Mountain Ash job centre, to encourage carers to identify themselves and receive support
- Updated the Young Carer's Service factsheet and RCT Carers webpages and written pieces for 'Carer News'
- Created a presentation for display monitors in college
- Included monthly updates in the Carers Matter E-Bulletin
- Created a Teachers Guide, as part of the Carers Measure work, to support teachers in identifying carers.



- **We are already starting to see a positive effect from the Carers Champion and Schools Award work as referrals from Education have risen from 5% (2013-14) to 11.5% (2014-15) of referrals received. As a result of raising awareness among the public, we have also seen an increase in referrals received directly from families, from 9% (2013-14) to 17% (2014-15) of referrals received.**

### Plans for 2015-16

- Complete and evaluate the pilot of the Schools Award with the 6 schools with plans to roll out across RCT
- Work with the Engagement and Participation Service to include Young Carer data within the Vulnerability Profiling process, which is a means of early identification of children and young people at risk of disengaging from learning
- Continue to support the work of the Carers Measure around young and young adult carers. Additional funding has been secured to maintain the Carers Measure Education Champion post for 2015-16 to continue the excellent work achieved in the Comprehensive Schools and to begin work with the Primary Schools.
- Young Carers Recognition event as part of Carers Week

## Aim 2. Provide information and training to Carers of all ages

Thanks to funding from RCT Social Care Workforce Development Partnership via the Welsh Government training grant, we were able to organise a 2-night **'Taking Care of Me' training residential** for 30 young carers and young adult carers. The content of the residential focussed on training needs that young carers had previously highlighted such as cooking healthy meals on a budget, fire safety at home, mental health awareness and personal development workshops around sexual health and drug and alcohol awareness. The young people also had the chance to try new ways of keeping themselves fit such as Zumba & caving.



**Carers Champions** are key to disseminating information to professionals and then onto young carers themselves. Information regarding young carers and young adult carers is included in all information packs and training sessions for Carers Champions as well as the monthly e-bulletins and annual conference.

9 Young carers were trained to become **Young Commissioners** and were very involved in the process of re-tendering the young carers project (this will be discussed in more detail in Aim 3)

A **'Healthy Minds Day'** was arranged for a group of young and young adult carers as a follow-up to the Mental Wellbeing drama sessions held the previous year. The day introduced the young people to a range of techniques for coping with stress such as mindfulness, drumming and Indian head massage.

A range of training has been organised or facilitated specifically for **Young Adult Carers** during the year:

- 5 YACs were supported to engage with the 'Your Future First' programme
- 4 YACs were able to take part in CV writing workshops through the local Careers centres
- 10 YACs were responsible for the local Rotary Club charity shop for a week and were trained in all aspects of running the shop
- All YACs had the opportunity to take part in cookery, jewellery making, first aid and singing and song writing workshops.

- **96% of those who attended the 'Taking care of me' residential said they found the workshops useful and 80% said that they gained new skills/knowledge from attending.**
- **One Young Adult Carer found the cookery sessions really useful because he "will be able to make his Dad a chicken curry and apple crumble rather than burnt toast!"**
- **A Young Adult Carer who was supported to access the 'Your Future First' programme felt it prepared her for work and gave her the confidence to apply for jobs**



### Plans for 2015-16

- Consult Young Carers and YACs on training opportunities that they would like to be offered and source these.
- Continue to look for opportunities to refer Young Adult Carers onto courses which will help make them 'work ready'.
- Run workshops on improving mental health which will encourage YACs to think about their own mental wellbeing
- Identify and encourage YACs to attend courses around building self esteem and improving confidence.
- Ensure Young and Young Adult Carers are aware of and are engaged with the new SSSWB Act.

## Aim 3. Ensure Carers of all ages have a voice

### Young Commissioners

This year we embarked on an exciting new initiative that would ensure Young Carers were meaningfully involved in re-commissioning the Young Carers Project. The contract for the current Young Carers Project (run by Action For Children) was due to end in March 2015 and we wanted to ensure Young Carers were involved from the very beginning of the process. All young carers were given the opportunity to get involved and 9 Young Carers subsequently decided they were able to commit to the process and attended training to become **Young Commissioners** during the summer holidays 2014.

For the next 7 months they were involved in consulting with young carers and families, planning and agreeing the new service specification, evaluating the tenders and interviewing the prospective organisations. The Young Carers

have had a real influence over the decisions made; we ensured that their scores fed directly into the overall scoring matrix and they set their own questions for interviewing the potential providers. By the end of March 2015, the whole process was nearing a conclusion but final evaluations still needed to be made. The process should be complete by the end of May 2015 and will be evaluated with the young people involved.

- **One Young Carer commented about why she was giving up her time to be involved in the process:**

*Its made me feel like I am making a difference to something that I really care about.*

### **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 decided that they wanted to be able to raise money that they could use for social activities and were supported to create a constitution and set up their own bank account. The group met regularly during the year to take forward fundraising ideas and to decide what training and social activities to organise for the following months.



The Young Adult Carer Development Worker has been very involved in supporting this process and developing the group's skills and now plans to delegate more responsibility to the key members.

- **The elected chairperson of CASE commented that:**

*I find that being the chairperson of CASE is both rewarding and makes me feel responsible. I am pleased to think that I can help other young adult carers*

The **RCT Young Carers Schools Award** has been developed as a direct result of Young Carers highlighting the need for schools to improve the support they provide young carers. Young Carers have been involved throughout the award's development and school staff have been consulted to ensure the standards are achievable and that they recognise the support Young Carers want in their educational establishment. It will be necessary for schools to involve young carers when evidencing all standards within the Award.

- **As a result of piloting the RCT Young Carers Schools Award, the Carers Champion in Ysgol Llanhari has set up a young carers development group. Members of the group are supported to liaise with the school's Senior Management Team in order to take forward new ways of identifying and supporting young carers in the school.**



- Young Adult Carers took part in a Welsh Government consultation regarding **ID Cards** and were able to put forward their views as to whether they thought ID cards could benefit young carers and if young carers would actually use them. We are now waiting for the recommendations from the consultation.
- Young and Young Adult Carers have been involved in presenting at **conferences and training sessions** for professionals and their digital stories have been used when they have been unable to personally attend, ensuring their voices are heard as widely as possible.

#### **Plans for 2015-16:**

- Complete the re-commissioning of the Young Carers Project, evaluate the process and work with the Young Commissioners to plan how to monitor and evaluate the new service
- Support the key members of CASE to take on responsibility for organising meetings and agendas and planning activities for Young Adult Carers
- Gather Young Carer feedback on the progress and outcomes achieved from piloting the Schools Award in 6 schools
- Ensure Young and Young Adult Carers are engaged and involved in consultation regarding the new Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act
- Incorporate 'Young Carer' questions into the 'Viewpoint' questionnaire completed in schools
- Support a group of Young Adult Carers to attend the 'Have your voice heard' residential in Carmarthen organised by Carers Trust
- Produce a short film illustrating the difficulties that Young and Young Adult Carers face in juggling their caring role with 'normal' life.
- Work with local Colleges to schedule time for Carers to tell their stories to students studying health and social care courses.

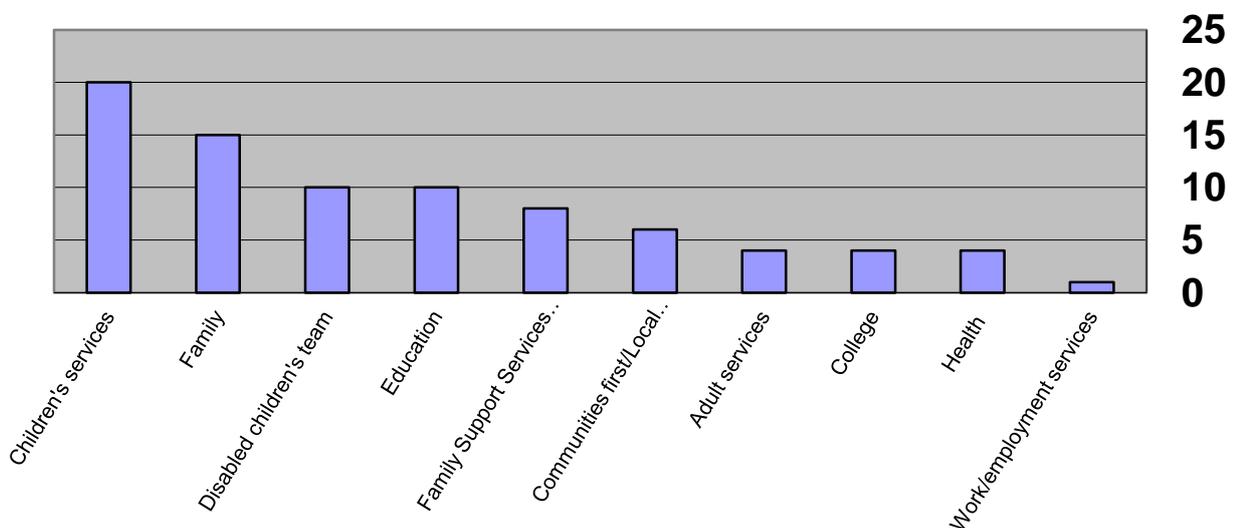
## Aim 4. Ensure access to Carers Assessments

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

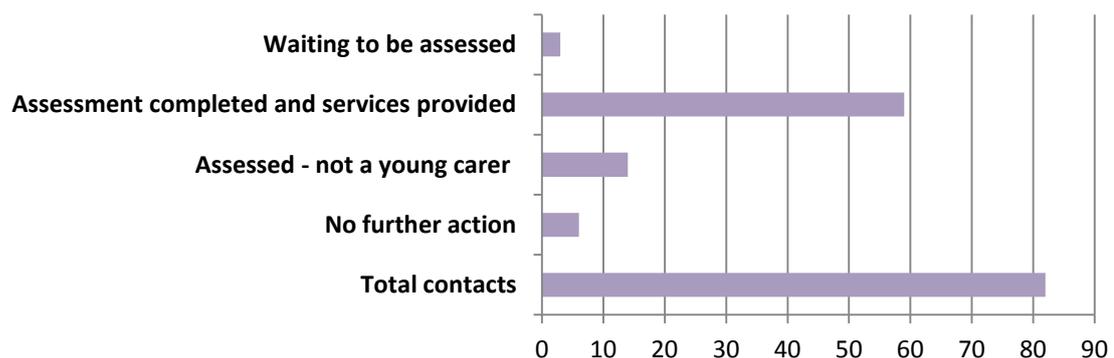
### Young Carers

Data to illustrate contacts and assessments for Young Carers (0-18 years) received for 2014-15

#### Source of contacts 2014-15



#### Result of Contacts

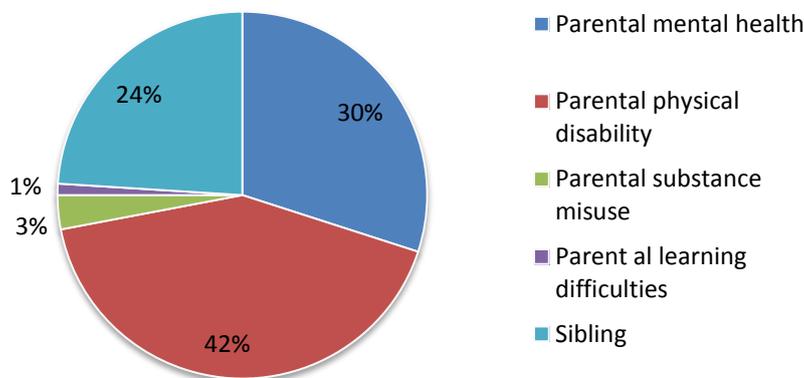


- 96% of Young Carer's Assessments completed and services provided (PI submitted)
- 10 additional young carers also received an assessment but as they were referred before 1.4.14 their assessments aren't included in this year's PI's.
- **257 young carers are currently known to the young carers service and receive information/support**

**Of the 69 young carers assessed during 2014-15,**

- 42 were then referred onto the Young Carers Project (Action For Children).  
33 are actively engaged  
9 didn't engage or are waiting to start the project
- The remaining 27 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 such as Crossroads

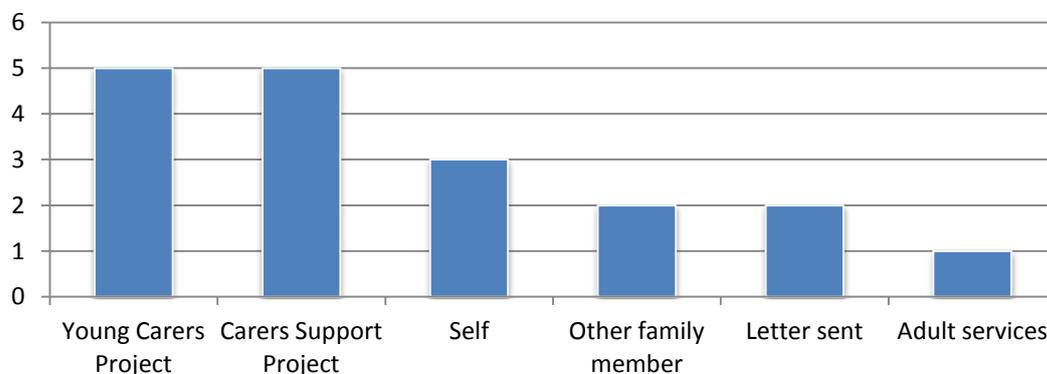
**Category of person cared for from 69 assessments completed 2014-15:**



**Young Adult Carers**

**Data to illustrate referrals and assessments for Young Adult Carers (18-25 years) received for 2014-15**

**Source of referrals**



- 20 Carers Assessments have been carried out during 2014-15
- Of the 20 referrals received this year, 13 were NEET and 7 were attending college

- The YAC development worker is actively supporting 41 Young Adult Carers
- 69 referrals for Young Adult Carers have been received by the service to date

As previously illustrated, **89 Young & Young Adult Carers** have received an **assessment of their needs** this year. The assessment is a chance for the young people 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 the young people 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 person 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 are used 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. These are now starting to be used during reviews to help demonstrate the difference the service is making to young carers. However, due to capacity issues, reviews are only carried out with the carers who become actively involved with the projects.

#### **Plans for 2015-16:**

- **Ensure YAC Carers Assessments are recorded on Swift**
- **Maintain timeliness of assessing young carers while support worker takes maternity leave**
- **Confirm YAC post for 2016-17 and beyond**
- **Aim to reduce the number of NEET Young adult carers by identifying training and employment opportunities and working with the SEET service**

## Aim 5. Deliver quality services for Carers of all ages

Any additional development work not covered elsewhere in the report

- We worked with **Crossroads Care Cwm Taf** to apply for and use funding received via Carers Trust to provide 7 families with a 'Family Time' activity. The funding enabled the families, who rarely have an opportunity to go on a day trip together, to choose something they'd really like to do and we were able to organise it for them. Activities such as seeing a show in Porthcawl, going to a safari park and going to Folly Farm were some of the trips the families chose. The families had an amazing time and it was a great example of organisations working together for the benefit of carers. We are now planning 2 trips to London together for young carers from RCT & Merthyr.
- We have been continuing our excellent joint working initiative with the **STARS** programme within Leisure Services and last year provided 13 days of activities for Young Carers (through the Young Carers Project) and Young Adult Carers with activities ranging from indoor surfing to gorge walking. The activities enabled the carers to try new physical activities whilst helping to build confidence and self-esteem.
- Following a series of workshops when Young Carers (through the young carers project) and Young Adult Carers were able to create their own songs, we worked with **Cultural Services** to put on a Celebration Evening at the Park & Dare. The young people involved were able to showcase their songs to their families and professionals within the authority. They then went on to record the songs in a professional recording studio and produced a CD and then a music video to accompany the songs.



- To celebrate **Carers Week 2014**, an 'It's a KnockOut' event was held for carers of all ages to come together and have lots of fun, doing activities they would never normally get involved with! Staff from the service also took part and everyone involved enjoyed a fun day away from their caring responsibilities.
- The **Young Adult Carer** Development Worker has supported the YACs to arrange 17 social events during the year. These are opportunities for young adults with caring responsibilities to get together and take part in

activities that other young people take for granted. The YACs have also been utilising a private social media group to keep in touch with each other, offer support and celebrate achievements such as finding work or passing exams. The YAC worker also uses this social media group to post weekly updates of local job vacancies and training opportunities

### **Plans for 2015-16**

- **Continue the YAC service after March 2016**
- **Ensure the new Young Carers Project delivers a quality service to Young Carers in RCT by supporting the Young Commissioners to monitor and evaluate the project**
- **Develop and implement a 'Volunteers Policy' to ensure sustainability of the service**
- **Hold a 'Recognition Event' to celebrate and recognise younger carers in RCT, and a 'Vintage Carnival' for carers of all ages, to celebrate Carers Week 2015**
- **Explore potential of an ID card for Young/Young Adult Carers**
- **Increase the capacity of Young/Young Adult Carers to access mainstream youth provision by utilising additional funding from youth engagement service**
- **Explore the currently unmet need of supporting siblings of children with additional needs**

**For further information please contact:**

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

**01443 668839**

**07824 496485**

**[Youngcarerssupportteam@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Youngcarerssupportteam@rctcbc.gov.uk)**

