

# Young Carers Support Project

## Who are Young Carers..?

A young carer is a young person who looks after a parent or brother or sister who has a long-term illness, physical disability, mental health issue, learning disability or a drug or alcohol problem.

The Project is part of "Off The Record", a counselling service for young people, and currently works with around 350 young people aged from 7 to 25, who are either the main carer or the secondary carer.



## What We Provide...



### Emotional Support

There are four project workers who are able to meet with young people on a one-to-one basis if they would like that, to offer support and to chat about how things are going for them. We can meet them after school or during school time, whichever the young person prefers.

### Holiday Trips and Activities

During each school holiday, there are a number of trips and activities organised, such as go-karting, laser questing, trips into London and arts and crafts. There is a wide variety of choice in order to appeal to different age groups and the aim is to give the young people an opportunity to take a break from their responsibilities and take part in activities that they may not otherwise get to do. We also offer workshops around a range of issues.

These trips are a great chance for them to have fun and socialise with others who are in a similar situation to themselves.

### Advocacy

The young people are able to contact the project workers or assessment worker for advice or advocacy support on issues ranging from benefits, to schooling, jobs, support groups, health... and if we can't help you, we'll try to find somebody who can!

### Educational Support

Sometimes young people can miss out on reaching their full potential at school because of caring responsibilities or problems arising at school. As a result, they may fall behind, be reluctant to go or stop attending altogether.

Our Education Support Teacher is able to provide them with educational support at home in order to help them catch up or just to feel more confident about getting back into the education system. They can also talk to schools to arrange support with a range of difficulties and offer help in managing issues, such as bullying or homework.

They can also come into some schools to do one to one support, PSHE lessons, drop-in sessions and staff training.





## **Learning Support Club**



Young people can come to the weekly learning support club during term-time for help with schoolwork and any difficulties relating to school, such as bullying, attendance or friendships.

There are computers available with access to the Internet and again, this is an ideal place to meet with the other young people and build friendships.

## **Holidays**

The project receives some funding which can enable young carers to take a short break if the family is unable to afford it themselves. This can help young people to go away on a school trip or away with family or friends if they've not had a holiday for a while.

We also take a group of young people away each year to an activity centre.

## **Fundraising**

Many of the families who we work with are on benefits, where a parent may be unable to work due to requiring or providing care, and so where necessary we can help to fundraise for basic necessities such as cookers or washing machines or school uniforms for example.

## **Befriending**



The project trains volunteers to be befrienders for some of the young people who may feel isolated and feel they would like some support and individual time at the weekends. They generally meet fortnightly for about 6 months.



The befrienders can take young carers on trips to the cinema, museums, or to grab a bite to eat, to help them gain confidence & encourage their interests outside the home.

## **Counselling**

We have a counsellor who provides time-bounded counselling for young carers or their parents within a confidential setting. This is for families that include a parent with mental health issues and / or long-term or life-limiting illness or disability.

This gives young carers and their parents a chance to talk about difficult issues in the past or present. There are also therapeutic group workshops in school holidays using art and play.

## **Life Coaching**

We have a life coach who works with young carers or their parents. This is for families that include a parent with mental health issues and /or long-term or life-limiting illness or disability.

Life coaching is a confidential space to speak about any areas of your life that you want to progress. It's about looking forward, working out what you want and how to get it.

## **Young Carers Assessment**

All carers are entitled to an assessment of their needs. This gives young carers a chance to sit down with a professional and talk through all the different areas of their life that might be affected by caring for someone else. This can help us see how we can support you.

**For more information please ring 020 8649 9339 (option 2)**