

**This draft strategy has been informed by initial engagement with young carers and their families/carers and practitioners. It will undergo further consultation to ensure that the vision, strategic priorities, and initial actions to embed change reflect what young carers and our partners would wish to see.**



# SURREY JOINT STRATEGY FOR YOUNG CARERS 2022 - 2024



**SURREY**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

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## Foreword

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# Introduction

We want to ensure that young carers in Surrey are recognised, celebrated, and given the support they need across the system. Children and young people who are carers have told us that they are proud of the care that they provide and the support they offer to their family and the wider community. However, caring can also put some strain on young people, particularly affecting their mental health. Young carers have the right to the same opportunities as all young people, to learn and enjoy, and have happy, healthy childhoods.

This strategy sets out how partners in Surrey will work together to develop and improve the way services work together to identify, assess and improve outcomes for young people with caring responsibilities. This will happen in partnership with young people. This strategy will show young carers and their families the direction of travel that Surrey's statutory and voluntary agencies are moving towards.

Carers are people who look after someone who otherwise couldn't manage without their help. This may be because of illness, frailty, disability, a mental health need or an addiction. Each caring situation is different and is influenced by factors relating to both the carer and the person they care for. Some young carers take on a level of responsibility that no child should be expected to undertake. This, in turn, can have adverse effects on their education, their own health and well-being and restrict their opportunities to engage in social activities enjoyed by children who are not carers.

In May and June 2021 consultation with young carers, parents, schools and practitioners took place through a range of surveys and interviews, building on previous and ongoing consultation with young carers and their families. This feedback showed how young carers and their parents are proud of the care that they provide, how they see their caring responsibilities as helping a family member. This lived experience needs to be respected whilst ensuring the young person's life options are impacted as little as possible. However, we need to change how organisations respond and support young carers to enable them to thrive and live well to their full potential. This includes schools, health professionals and other agencies that interact with young carers.

The continued development of schools understanding of young carers and support from the wider system to enable them to support young carers is a key element of the delivery of this strategy. School is a key constant in our young carers' lives and if this is a supportive environment that understands their personal challenges it will reduce the stress and anxiety young carers experience.

This strategy therefore sets the vision, priorities and actions to support this being achieved across Surrey. Through the strategy, we as local leaders, will ensure that the system is best placed to meet those needs, work together to minimise the impacts of caring on a young carer's life, and ensure that the caring they undertake is valued by the system.

This strategy has been developed with the intention to evolve, and for the action plan to be constantly updated. The long-term ambition is to integrate with the [adult carers strategy](#) to create an all-age carers strategy for Surrey.

## National Context

In England, there were estimated to be 166,000 young carers aged 5 to 17 in the 2011 census but this is understood to be a considerable underestimate. A survey by the [BBC in conjunction with Nottingham University in 2010](#) estimates there may be as many as 700,000 young carers in

the UK, which is one young carer for every 12 secondary aged pupils. The [BBC repeated the survey in 2018](#) and indicated an even higher prevalence of potentially 800,000 Young carers in England.

The 2017 national survey '[The Lives of Young Carers in England](#)' by the Department of Education reveals that most of the young carers were caring for someone inside the home. Of these, over half (55%) were caring for their mother and a quarter were caring for a sibling. Younger carers (aged 5 to 11) were most likely caring for siblings, while older children (aged 16 to 17) were most likely caring for their mother. A small number of young carers were caring for a grandparent, or sibling that they did not live with.

National research by the [Children's Society](#) suggests that young carers are 1.5 times more likely to be from black and minority ethnic communities and are twice as likely to not speak English. However, children and young people from black and ethnic minority communities are less likely to self-identify. Children and young people in the Gypsy Roma Traveller community are at risk of becoming young carers and young adult carers as the adults from the GRT community are more likely to suffer chronic ill health or suffer more than one health condition.

In 2016 the [Children's Commissioner released a report on young carers \(2016\)](#), highlighting the difficulties in defining and identifying young carers. It recognised that any estimates were based on self-identification by young carers and their families. The report cited that some authorities used a broader definition of what constitutes a young carer than the 2011 census data, estimating that nationally just 20% of young carers receive support from their local authority.

Being a young carer can have a negative effect on the child or young person's emotional health and wellbeing. The findings in the 2017 Report – The lives of young carers in England have been reflected in the consultation responses we received from young carers (54% cited negative impact), parents/guardian (41% cited negative impact on the young carer), and social workers (20% cited a negative impact). That is why partners in Surrey have developed this strategy, to ensure that young carers get the support that they need.

## **The Legislative Framework**

The [Care Act \(2014\)](#) and the [Children and Families Act \(2014\)](#) require the development of an integrated response to the specific needs of young carers. Legislation places the responsibility for identifying and supporting young carers on both Adults' and Children's Services in the council. The expectation is that when a child is identified as a young carer, the needs of everyone in the family are to be considered.

The Care Act (2014) introduced obligations to support young carers in transition to adulthood, including the requirement of adult services to provide transition planning for young carers who are likely to need support after becoming 18 years old. The Children and Families Act (2014) requires local authorities to take reasonable steps to identify young carers in their area, provide assessments for young carers under the age of 18, and identify whether caring responsibilities are appropriate. The Care Act (2014) requires local authorities to put in place a transition plan for young carers aged 16 –18. This legislation refocuses the law around the person rather than the provision of a service, strengthening the need for a more integrated approach.

**A young carer is defined in the Children and Families Act as:** *“a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person”*. The person supported can be of any age and relates to care, emotional support or additional duties related to having a family member who has a physical disability, mental health need, learning disability, or who is affected

by drugs, alcohol or other substance use. An exclusion is made where that care is provided for payment, as part of a contract or as voluntary work.

A young carer may become a “Child in Need” when caring responsibilities impact their ability to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) strengthens the emphasis on early identification, assessment, and intervention. This reinforces the need for agencies to work together effectively to support families with young carers, developing a whole-family approach.

The NHS 10 Year Long Term Plan sets out the ambition and direction for the health service in England over the next ten years. It recognises that carers are twice as likely to suffer from poor health compared to the general population and identifies specific areas where the NHS will look to better identify and support carers. including emergency plans as part of summary care records, developing carer GP friendly practices and providing more mental health prevention support for young carers.



# Young carers in Surrey

In 2019, ECORYS ([Surrey Young carers in Schools Research](#)) undertook a detailed study to understand prevalence of young carers in Surrey, across 11 secondary schools and involved 10,460 pupils. This found that an average 4% of all pupils identified as a young carer (more detail can be found in Appendix 1). This equates to at least one carer in every class of 30. However, we also know that young carers sometimes do not see themselves as carers and are not always comfortable in identifying as a carer. This can be because they are worried about any potential impact on their family or that they do not want to stand out from their peers, therefore, it is possible that this number is underestimated.

The 2017 young carers' JSNA noted that between April 2014 and Feb 2017 there were 1,518 Child and Family Assessments where "young carer" was selected as a factor in the assessments.

- The numbers of male and female young carers were roughly equal.
- The majority of young carers were aged 5 to 9 (30%) and 10 to 15 (43%).
- 75% of the young carers were white British.
- There were 210 (14%) young carers recorded as having some form of disabilities.

The 2019 Healthy Related Behaviours Questionnaire found that being a young carer has an impact on primary age pupil's experiences with more young carers trying smoking, reporting that they are worried about body changes, or being afraid of bullying.

In 2021 we undertook surveys with young carers, their families, schools and social workers. From the conversations with young carers, it was clear that Covid-19 and being unable to meet together physically had a negative impact on young carers. It has also impacted on the ability of schools, who are actively engaged, to support young carers. For schools that were developing young carer support it had created a delay in developing that provision.

Further feedback from young carers tells us:

- There is a need for more localised young carers' services. Many young carers struggle to access services due to a combination of financial restraints, no access to a car or the limitations of public transport.
- Service provision needs to consider when services are available, young carers sometimes need the service to be available when they finish caring and to help relieve the stress of caring, not during the school day.
- School is an important constant – when schools work well, they provide a break from caring, time with friends, a safe place to be open about being a young carer and seek support. Some schools are flexible with young carers such as allowing a different start time and this has a positive impact on young carers. When schools don't recognise young carers it creates stress and anxiety. Furthermore, when phones are confiscated, this removes the ability to stay in touch with the person they care for, causing further anxiety.
- Young carers provide significant emotional support, they and their family recognise that their own emotional mental health and wellbeing can be impacted by this.



# Plan on a Page

## Our shared vision is that:

Our vision is that young carers feel supported and confident to say that they are a young carer. They are identified, recognised, valued, and supported, both in their caring role and as an individual helping to reduce the health and wellbeing inequalities that young carers face. They have a strong voice that results in services that work for them. Across the system, staff have the tools, skills and knowledge to increase identification of young carers, enable young carers to self-identify and provide the right support to young carers and their families.

## Values

- We are young carer focused, ensuring they are considered in every service and by every individual.
- We have a whole family approach, meaning we support the young carer in the context of what the wider family needs.
- We provide the right support at the right time for young carers, in their community, recognising their needs before they escalate.
- We focus on continuous improvement in our services for young carers, ensuring that we provide the best support possible.
- Our services will promote inclusivity and diversity

## Strategic Priorities

- Increased awareness and visibility of young carers in education, health and social care
  - Training for improved identification of young carers and a whole family approach
  - Improved transfer of information
- Staff have a good understanding of young carer's rights and young carers and their families have the tools they need to advocate for themselves.
  - Ensuring that young carers and their families feel able to request a young carer's assessment and staff have the skills to put them in place
  - Championing young carer's rights
- Young carers are enabled to and feel safe to self-identify
- Young carers have access to appropriate services that meet their needs
  - Information and peer support for young carers
- Young carers have improved Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH)
- Young carers safeguarding needs are identified and supported

## Vision Statement

Our vision is that young carers feel supported and confident to say that they are a young carer. They are identified, recognised, valued, and supported, both in their caring role and as an individual helping to reduce the health and wellbeing inequalities that young carers face. They have a strong voice that results in services that work for them. Across the system, staff have the tools, skills and knowledge to increase identification of young carers, enable young carers to self-identify and provide the right support to young carers and their families.

## Values

Young carers have told us what is important to them; what they would like to see in all work we do with them and for them. We have developed our values using feedback from partners and providers across the education, health and care system in Surrey. Adopting these values will help us to keep young carers at the heart of what we do and enable them to thrive as young people.

### **We are young carer focused, ensuring they are considered in every service and by every individual.**

Young carers will be considered in everything we do, throughout the education, health and care system in Surrey. We need to ensure adult and children's services have the skills to recognise when there is a young carer involved in supporting an adult or child and the knowledge to make appropriate assessment and referral. Greater awareness of young carer rights and universal recognition of the contribution that carers make is integral to ensuring we value and empower young carers.

### **We have a whole family approach, meaning we support the young carer in the context of what the wider family needs**

It is important that the young carer's family context is respected, and that a whole family approach to caring is embedded across Surrey. Young carers will be assessed in this context. The whole family will be supported in the caring experience, with ready access to information and appropriate support services when they need.

### **We provide the right support at the right time for young carers, recognising their needs before they escalate**

Caring can have a significant impact on a young person's experiences. It can impact on education, physical health, mental health and wellbeing, and often future life opportunities. Young carers therefore need to be identified and recognised at the earliest opportunity to enable appropriate support to both protect the young carer and enable them to have the same opportunities as their peers. Young carer services respond to the differing needs of young carers and there is a personalised, holistic approach to information, advice and support.

### **We focus on continuous improvement in our services for young carers, ensuring that we provide the best support possible**

We will strive to continually do the best we can for and with young carers. We will work with all our partners to increase recognition and awareness of young carers. Services across Surrey will

respect every young carer's aspiration, personal circumstances and choice, and be accessible to young carers in the way that works best for them.

We will continue to engage and listen to the voices of young carers about their needs. Young carers will be empowered to influence the design and provision of services. Health and social care will work together to commission services, develop the market and enhance the local offer. This will help ensure that high quality, flexible and reliable services for carers are available across Surrey.

## **Our services will promote inclusivity and diversity**

We will ensure that our services for young carers are inclusive, culturally appropriate, and address the needs and preferences of diverse groups and communities by monitoring where the commissioned services work and who they are working with. This includes recognising and understanding people's cultural needs, their choices and preferences and looking at how best to support these needs. These needs will vary and are based on ethnicity, religious beliefs, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, area of Surrey, family, income and employment history etc.

We will ensure our services and their uptake is representative of our communities and their needs. To achieve this, we will build equality monitoring into all service specifications and contracts and will monitor equity of access to services as well as activity and outcomes.

All partners and services will value and evidence inclusivity: with support from the newly commissioned Giving Carers a Voice service which will work with both adult carers and young carers. They will proactively engage with the diverse range of communities in Surrey to help ensure that appropriate support is accessible and contributes to improved outcomes.

# Strategic Priorities

## **Priority 1 – Increased awareness and visibility of young carers in education, health and social care**

We need to ensure there is greater visibility and awareness of young carers across Surrey. Recognising the huge contribution of young carers to supporting families is essential, however, nationally there is under reporting of and lack of recognition for young carers. Services that have the most opportunities to identify young carers include:

- 1) Education
- 2) GPs and other medical professionals
- 3) Adult Social Care
- 4) Children's Social Care
- 5) Youth workers

### **Training for improved identification of young carers and whole family approach**

We will develop mandatory training and resources for staff across the system that encourages and enables the identification, recognition and support of young carers and that embeds the whole family approach. Staff will have the skills to embed a whole family approach to services so that when any assessment is undertaken whether by a statutory or voluntary organisation, the staff undertaking the assessment are aware of and inquisitive to situations where children may be undertaking care activities and considered as part of the assessment process

### **Improved transfer of information**

Our consultation with schools highlighted that information about being a young carer is not always passed from primary education to secondary. We will undertake a rapid review to identify the challenges in ensuring an appropriate transfer of information from primary to secondary education that shows when a child is a young carer and input appropriate measures to tackle this.

## **Priority 2 – Staff have a good understanding of young carer's rights and young carers, and their families have the tools they need to advocate for themselves.**

The Care Act (2014), and the Children and Families Act (2014) requires the development of an integrated response to the needs of a young carers with responsibility for identifying young carers placed on both Adult and Children's services within social care. It is our vision for health, care, education and wider workforces to understand the impact of being a young carer, to promote and support young carers.

### **Ensuring that young carers and their families feel able to request a young carer's assessment and staff have the skills to put them in place**

The Children and Families Act (2014) requires local authorities to take reasonable steps to identify young carers in their area, provide assessments for young carers under the age of 18, and identify whether caring responsibilities are appropriate.

To ensure high quality assessments that make a difference to young people and their families take place:

- All social care staff will have access to mandatory carer and young carer awareness training. This will improve recognition of young carers and show how the whole family approach should be used.
- All assessments will be undertaken using language that is accessible and appropriate to the age of the young carer.
- Young carers and their family will know about their right to a young carer's assessment, what this is, the benefits of having one and how to obtain one.
- Information, advice and support is available using appropriate language that both respects their caring role and the fact that the young carer is still going through their childhood and adolescence.
- Young carers will be recognised as important partners in providing care needs and their voice will be heard in the care planning for their family members.
- As set out in Children and Families Act, young carer assessments should be reviewed regularly using a whole family approach, including young carer health and wellbeing, and are updated to reflect changing needs.

It is important that the system, as well as recognising someone as a young carer, also remembers that they are still a child. So, any discussions, information shared, assessments undertaken, support offered needs to be age appropriate whilst respecting their lived experiences and any changes are discussed so they are understood before they happen.

### **Championing young carers' rights**

We will identify and build on opportunities to raise awareness of young carers' rights, including participating in national campaigns and events (for example: Carers' Week, Carers' Rights Day). These activities will be inclusive of all partners and providers.

### **Priority 3 – Young carers are enabled to and feel safe to self-identify**

Our consultation highlighted that many young carers do not come forward as they do not want to stand out from their peers. We are aware that young carers who support their parents or guardians can be more cautious about identifying as a young carer because they are concerned there will be a negative impact on their family. We want to maximise the number of young carers that are recognised as such by services that support them, such as their schools and GPs.

Using the whole family approach, we want parents and guardians to feel safe informing us of the caring activities their children are undertaking so appropriate support can be put in place. Commissioned services will be an enabler in this.

Training for health, adult and children's social care teams will increase recognition. Providers of young carers services will provide support and training to key young carer touch points (e.g., schools), to enable them to work proactively with children. This will include the [Angel Award](#) which recognises schools who develop strong practice supporting young carers.

## **Priority 4 – Young carers have access to appropriate services that meet their needs**

Services providing direct support to young carers will ensure that young carers are supported to have a life that recognises their caring and doesn't interrupt usual childhood experiences. The design of any service will have input from young carers and their families.

Services need to be responsive to the changing needs of young carers and provide flexible opportunities for young carers to access the services including young carers Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH).

Commissioned services will need to respond to young carers needs in a flexible way that enables support when young carers need it and respond to the challenges in young carers accessing services in such a large county by being offered in locations across the county. Services will be developed that offer a wider a choice of locations and availability to improve access. Use of technology will enable continued support for those unable to travel or who may be minimising contact with others.

### **Information and peer support for young carers**

Young carers support those they are caring for with a range of conditions and undertake tasks which may involve physically supporting others. It is important that the care provided is reasonable and suitable for the young carers age. Young carers should be supported to understand what inappropriate care is and that the correct support is in place for them and the person they care for if this happens.

Information and training will be co-designed with young carers and be developed to be accessible. It may be delivered as a structured programme or one to one guidance with an appropriate practitioner.

We also recognise the value of peer-to-peer support, with professional involvement and guidance as needed. This involves young carers having the opportunity to share experiences, practical advice and emotional support with other young carers.

It is vital that young carers know they are not alone, and that support is available. Group meetings in school or run by third sector partners can lead to friendships based on their shared experiences. Commissioned services will be required to continue to use and develop online groups as a means of making groups accessible to as many young carers as possible.

## **Priority 5 - Young carers have improved Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH)**

As detailed earlier, being a young carer can have a negative impact on emotional mental health and wellbeing.

Surrey has signed up to implement the THRIVE framework for System Change(Wolpert et al 2019) to support the mental health and wellbeing needs of all children, young people and their families. THRIVE ensures there is a graduated response based on the child's individual circumstances and that the child is able to flow between the quadrants as their needs evolve. This relies on close working of all parties; schools, social care, health, emotional wellbeing and mental health services and any third sector providers.

A key aim is to reduce the number of times a child is assessed. Referral and assessment routes will need to be made simple, consistent and clear. Each part of the system supporting the young carer needs to understand the boundaries and limitations of the services that they interact with and have the tools to share appropriate information to best support the young person.

We will co design and develop services to meet young carers EWMH needs as part of the broader young carers service development.

## **Priority 6 - Young carers safeguarding needs are identified and supported**

Safeguarding is part of a continuum where prevention and early intervention can help young carers and their families work through the challenges they face. Safeguarding is about keeping children safe from harm and abuse and is an important part of integrated working. By working together in an integrated way professionals place the child at the centre of all activities and are better able to identify holistic needs earlier and improve outcomes.

We will ensure that all practitioners are aware of local safeguarding policy and practice, and accept a joint responsibility to work in partnership to identify and respond to any young carers who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm

## **Actions**

These actions will form the basis of the young carers strategy action plan that will continue to be built on and developed.

1. We will work with young carers, staff and organisational development to develop training and resources for staff that cover:
  - a. Improved identification of young carers across the system in Surrey.
  - b. How to involve young carers in care planning and shared decision making, whilst recognising that they are still a child or young person.
  - c. Embedding a whole family approach when supporting young carers and their families.
  - d. Undertaking a high-quality young carers assessment
2. We will monitor the number of young carers that are identified in different parts of the system, for example, the number of schools that identify young carers, identification in GP surgeries, identification by adult and children's social care. This will require the development of a new information system. This will also provide local information regarding the demographic make-up of young carers.
3. We will undertake a rapid review to identify the challenges in ensuring an appropriate transfer of information from primary to secondary education that shows when a child is a young carer and input appropriate measures to tackle this.
4. We will ensure that, where appropriate, children and young people who identify as a young carer have their needs appropriately assessed and receive a joined-up package of support in order to maintain and/or improve their physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.
5. We will embed young carers' voices in every aspect of our work, respecting and listening to young carers as 'experts by experience'. To do this, we will work with the young carers' forum and report quarterly on the implementation of these actions.



6. All young carers will have access to appropriate and accessible information to enable them to make informed choices about their caring role. This will include access to training, where needed, to support them in their caring role.
7. Young carers will be supported through key transition and stress points by commissioned services with personalised support planning and early intervention.
8. Young carers will have access to peer support that is both in person and online, this will be facilitated by the commissioned young carers support service.
9. Young carers will have access to services that are inclusive, culturally appropriate and address diverse needs. This will be through our commissioned services for young carers which will be monitored on the equity of access to service.
10. We will, in partnership with young carers, develop an appropriate service to support their Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health needs.
11. We will raise awareness of young carer's rights with a co-developed communications plan for national events. This will be led by the commissioned service, in partnership with the young carers' forum.

## Delivering our Strategy

Delivery of the strategy will be undertaken in partnership, with collaborative commissioning that aligns effort and resources wherever possible to ensure outcome improvement for young carers.

The series of actions outlined in this strategy will be further developed and incorporated into the young carers strategy action plan which will be a live document to identify areas for continual improvement, using feedback from young carers and their families and track progress towards the vision set out in this strategy.

The Surrey Carers Commissioning Group will be responsible for overseeing the operational implementation and delivery aspects of this strategy and the action plan.

The Surrey Carers Commissioning Group reports to both the Surrey Strategic Health and Care Commissioning Collaborative and the Surrey Carers Partnership Board (SCPB). The SCPB has representatives from Children's Services, Adult Services, Health Services, Education Services and the Voluntary Sector and will have strategic oversight of the strategy to embed change for young carers, holding the Commissioning Group to account. The Surrey Carers Partnership Board reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

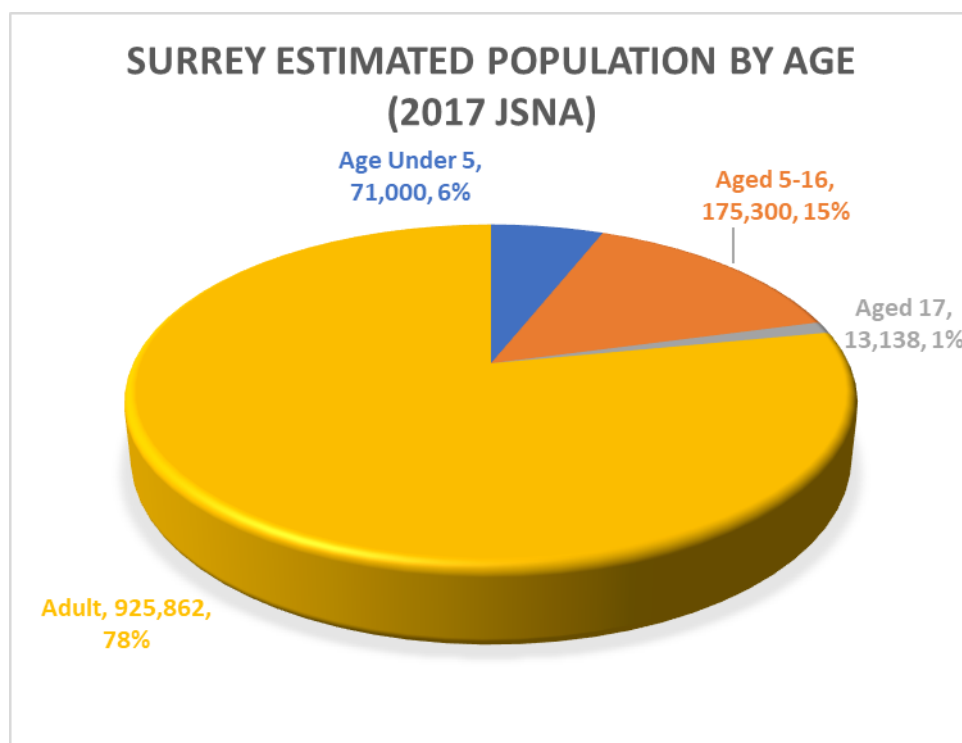
*Diagram to be included outlining hierarchy of decision making*

The Surrey Carers Partnership Board will:

- Provide strategic leadership to ensure that the Surrey system supports young carers, embedding this strategy across the partnership
- Provide strategic support to embed the whole family approach across all relevant partners.

- Develop, agree and monitor the young carers strategy action plan, through the Commissioning Group. based on the priorities and associated actions within this strategy, in partnership with young carers and their families.
- Provide a regular report on performance to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Ensure that the Partnership continues to enhance engagement and participation with all the relevant partners including young carers and those they care for.
- Raise the profile of young carers as a key vulnerable group and the activity undertaken to support them.
- Support the system in providing communication and publication of the range of support that is available for young carers and families across the county

## Appendix 1: Local Context



Age band	Number of residents	Percentage of residents
Under 5	71,000	6%
5-16	175,300	15%
17	13,138	1%
18+	925,862	78%

The 2017 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment ([JSNA](#)) estimates the Surrey population as having 259,438 children and young people aged from 0-17. The JSNA may be updated early in the lifecycle of the young carers' strategy. This revised data will inform the review of both the adults and young carers strategy in 2022 and further developing the Whole Family Approach within an all-age strategy

The 2017 [JSNA](#) in Surrey noted that between April 2014 and Feb 2017 there were 1,518 Child and Family Assessments where "young carer" was selected as a factor in the assessments.

- The numbers of male and female young carers were roughly equal.
- The majority of the young carers were aged 5 to 9 (30%) and 10 to 15 (43%).
- 75% of the young carers were white British.
- There were 210 (14%) Young carers recorded as having some form of disabilities.

The estimated number of young carers aged 0 -18 years old in Surrey, is somewhere between 4% and 8% of all pupils (the higher figure is based on findings from the BBC and University of Nottingham survey in 2010, and the lower figure from a 2019/20 Surrey based study by ECORYS researching the prevalence of young carers in Surrey Schools looking at 10,460 students in 11 schools).

The 2019 Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire undertaken by Surrey Public Health in partnership with Children, Schools and Families looked at 4,322 primary age pupils 2,429 secondary aged pupils.

It reported that 7% of primary age pupils responded that they are a young carer and only 24% of these pupils said their school knew they were a young carer (2% of all pupils).

Being a young carer has an impact on primary age pupil's experiences:

- 2 % have tried smoking (compared with 1% overall)
- 22% are worried about body changes (compared to 13% overall)
- 50% report being afraid of bullying (compared to 37% overall)
- 5% of young carers have had an alcoholic drink (compared with 2% overall).

In contrast 4% of secondary aged pupils stated that they were a young carer (with 5% not sure and 1% didn't want to say). The difference in experiences continues for young carers enter secondary education:

- 6% smoke occasionally or regularly (compared with 4% overall)
- 13% are worried about becoming pregnant before being ready (compared to 6% overall)
- 38% report being afraid of bullying (compared to 24% overall)
- 13% of young carers have had an alcoholic drink in last 7 days (compared with 12% overall).

The figures demonstrate the inequalities in life experience faced by young carers. Young carers are more likely to have tried smoking or drinking than their peers, they have increased body concerns, are more likely to be concerned at becoming pregnant and are more likely to be afraid of being bullied. The impact of bullying is reflected in our Survey of young carers (Appendix 3) and in the 2017 National Survey (also in Appendix 3).

The importance of schools and colleges in recognising that a young person is a carer cannot be underestimated. Recognition and following this up with support and signposting for the young person as appropriate is a key element in reducing the impacts of being a young carer.

The Period between Spring 2020 and Autumn 2020 was greatly impacted by COVID 19 restrictions. Over the period of Autumn 2019, Spring 2020 and Autumn 2020 school & college terms, a total of 346 different schools & colleges reported at least one pupil who had been identified as a young carer.

Statistically somewhere between 4% and 8% of pupils are likely to be young carers. This is equivalent to 1-2 pupils who are young carers in every class of 30 pupils. In September 2020

there were almost 197,000 pupils across all schools and colleges in Surrey. If 4% are young carers that would indicate potentially 7,880 young carers and at 8% that figure rises to 15,760 young carers.

A total of 151 schools & colleges in the Autumn 2020 term reported that they had identified no pupils who were young carers (36 of which had previously identified young carers).

The school's data between Autumn 2019 and Autumn 2020 had a peak figure of 2521 identified young carers.

The data indicates significant level of underreporting of pupils with caring responsibilities. This demonstrates a need for continued work with schools to skill them to recognise pupils are young carers and make the environment safe for the pupils to come forward and self-identify knowing they will be supported appropriately.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>Number YP Identified as a carer</b>	<b>Number YP Accessing Young carer Services</b>
Autumn 19	277	2421	1040
Spring 20	270	2490	1186
Autumn 20	269	2521	919

Action for Carers supports schools to better understand young carers needs and support them. They provide resources, PSHE materials. Work with Home School Link Workers and SENCOs. To support this, Action for Carers developed the Angel Award Scheme with young carers to accredit schools that demonstrate they are young carer friendly.

## Appendix 2: Interviews with Young carers and their Parents

In May-June 2021, with support from Surrey Young Carers we conducted seven interviews with young carers and their parents/guardians, a group interview was also undertaken with a young carers group in Woking to understand their lived experience in their own words.

### On the caring role

All the young carers we interviewed support a sibling, five of whom has Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

When young carers are at secondary school, they can be more conscious about their home life and less likely to feel comfortable about being identified as young carer.

They support the person they care for both emotionally and at times more actively by supporting siblings – for example distraction tactics, walking them to school, calming them down as well as assisting with dressing and meal making.

When their sibling attends a different school to them, school becomes a place for the young carer to switch off from caring. At home they often never fully switch off whenever the cared for sibling is at home. When young carers support older siblings, it leads to a feeling of being the “older one, responsible one” which makes them feel different to peers who can behave like the younger sibling.

Being a young carer means they have less time for themselves and to socialise with peers. This can make young carers more isolated, more likely to stay at home and less confident in navigating social situations.

Being a young carer enhances life skills including making the young person better at listening and being attentive to the needs of others.

The young carers raised the importance of the weekly young carer group in Woking. It gave them a structured time of the week where they did not have to worry about caring and enabled them to be with peers who understood the challenges and pressures they felt.

### On Carer Identification

It was clear that many families do not have prior awareness that their child is a young carer and are unlikely to reach out for assistance – therefore identification by a professional is key to recognition.

Parents and carers appreciate their young carer children being acknowledged for their role helping their sibling with additional needs.

Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings for a child with additional needs can identify young carer(s) in the family.

Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) play a part in identifying young carers at school and helping parents refer them as young carers. Likewise Social Workers and Family Support Workers can be key in recognising that a child is a young carer and enabling appropriate referrals.

## **On School and College**

Schools are a constant in young people's lives – a key touchpoint for young carers and for some, an important time away from caring.

The response from schools can be varied. Some teachers although aware of the young carer's additional responsibilities, don't seem aware of what a young carer is or that there is support for them out there.

For secondary school pupils' recognition and support in schools can be better where young carers have a trusted person at school they can talk to (e.g., their form tutor) and they have a long relationship with them with knowledge of their history.

Teachers can be helpful in giving young carer time out, extended homework deadlines etc. Young carers appreciate a young carers support team or Head of Young carers where they can go to for support, although they report that these people can carry several positions and be very busy

Some schools are not supportive of young carers or understanding of how home life may impact on the young carers ability to learn and / or emotional wellbeing / behaviour at school.

Young carers felt more awareness of young carers needs to be had across the school, even in schools that have a young carers group. However as young carers get older, they often don't want peers to know have been to a young carer support group. This was also highlighted by the group of young carers in Woking – they wanted their school to understand their challenges but not single them out – for example in an assembly.

## **What Works What Doesn't**

We asked the young carers about some of the challenges they face. The location of any young carers event can prove challenging – the group in Woking citing the cost of a bus and how in winter it is harder to attend evening events due to safety concerns.

The group felt the weekly young carers session was very important as it gave both a regular break and a chance to build relationships with others.

The need for increased mental health support was highlighted and, in some cases, they were waiting for a CAMHS referral. A number of training sessions were also suggested by the group,

1. Manual Handling – although we need to ensure young carers do not undertake inappropriate care
2. Safeguarding – to understand when what you do is what is common to most your age and when it tips over into being a carer, when as a child you may want to refer
3. Further training for schools to support young carers

The young carers group suggested subsidised access to leisure activities including leisure centres to help with stress.



## Appendix 3: Survey of young carers

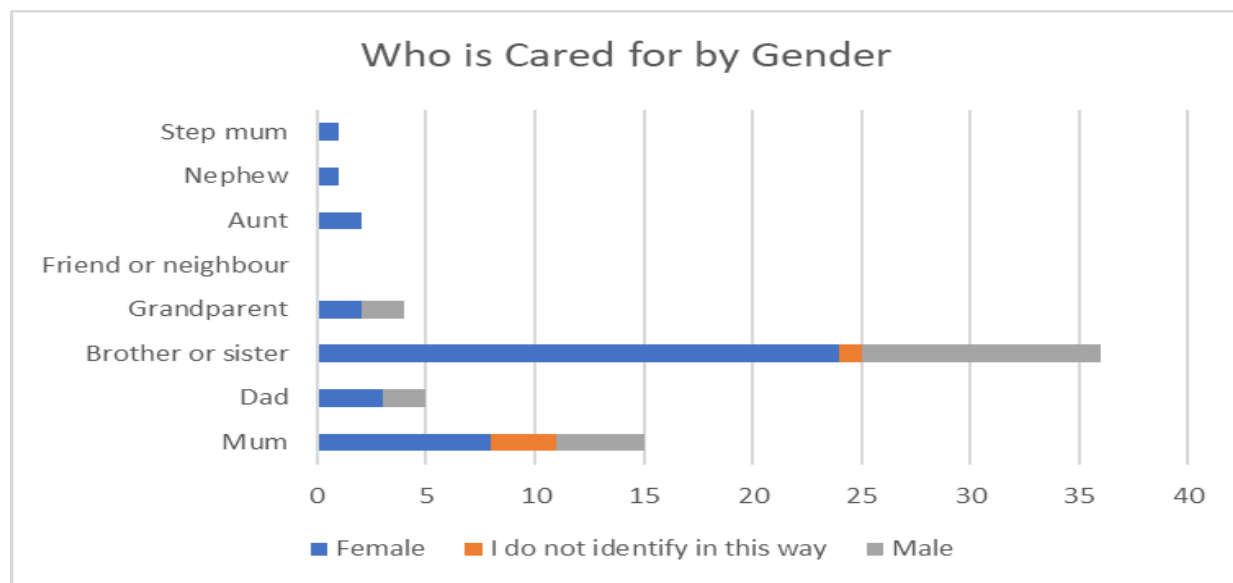
In June 2021 we undertook an online survey of young carers and their parents in total we had fifty-four responses from young carers and seventy from parents of young carers.

### Young carers survey findings

The young carers survey highlighted that almost two thirds of the young carers were female and over half were aged 12-15 years old. Given the online nature of the survey the age range is perhaps to be expected. However, of note is the fact that 30% were aged 9-11 and 2% were aged 5-8.

We had responses from 10 of the 11 boroughs with the highest responses from young carers living in Elmbridge (19%), Waverley (17%) and Woking (15%).

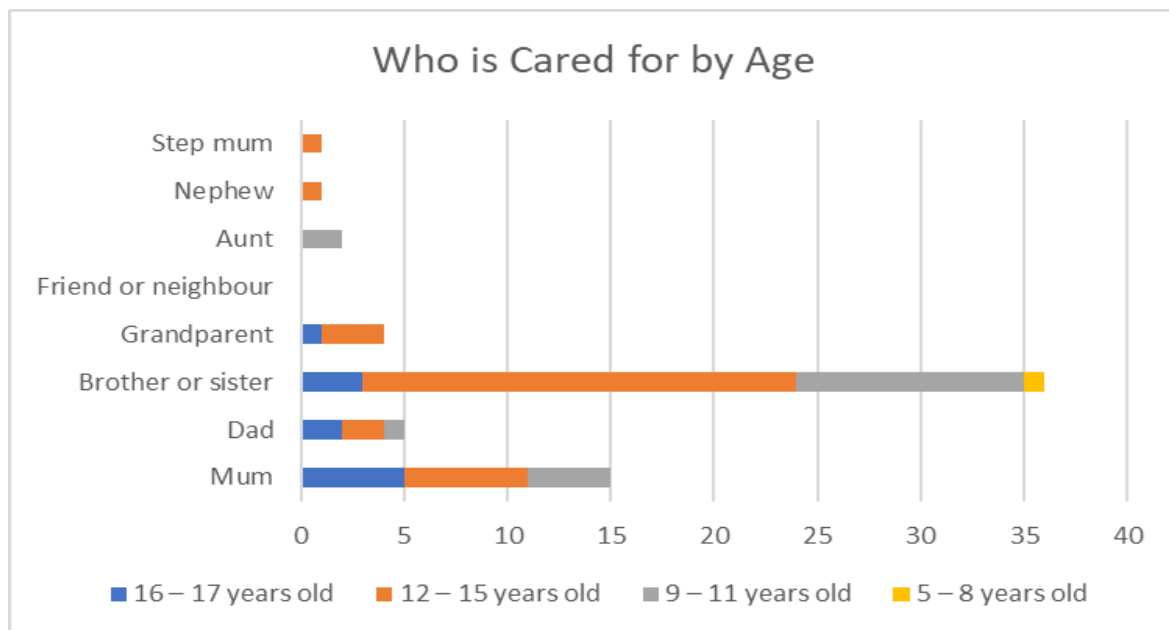
### Who is cared for by Gender



The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

Gender	Mum	Dad	Brother or sister	Grandparent	Friend or neighbour	Aunt	Nephew	Step mum
Female	8	3	24	2	0	2	1	1
I do not identify in this way	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Male	4	2	11	2	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	15	5	36	4	0	2	1	1

### Who is cared for by Age

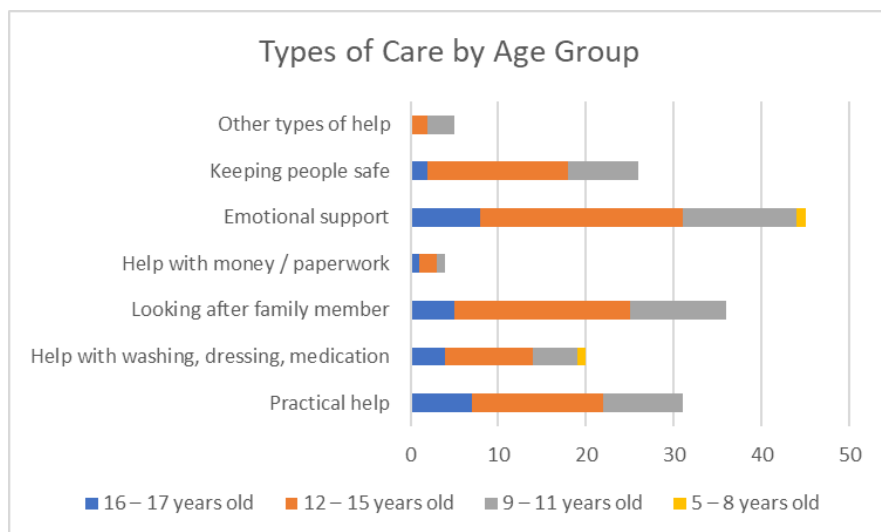


The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

Age Range	Cares For Mum	Cares For Dad	Cares For Brother or sister	Cares For Grandparent	Cares For Friend or neighbour	Cares For Aunt	Cares For Nephew	Cares For step mum
5 – 8	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
9 – 11	4	1	11	0	0	2	0	0
12 – 15	6	2	21	3	0	0	1	1
16 – 17	5	2	3	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

We asked who the young carers cared for, and two thirds cared for a brother or sister. This caring responsibility was proportional across gender. When looked at from an age perspective it is the person that the greatest number of 9–11-year-olds care for. 27% of the young carers care for their mum and just under 10% for their dad.

## Types of care undertaken

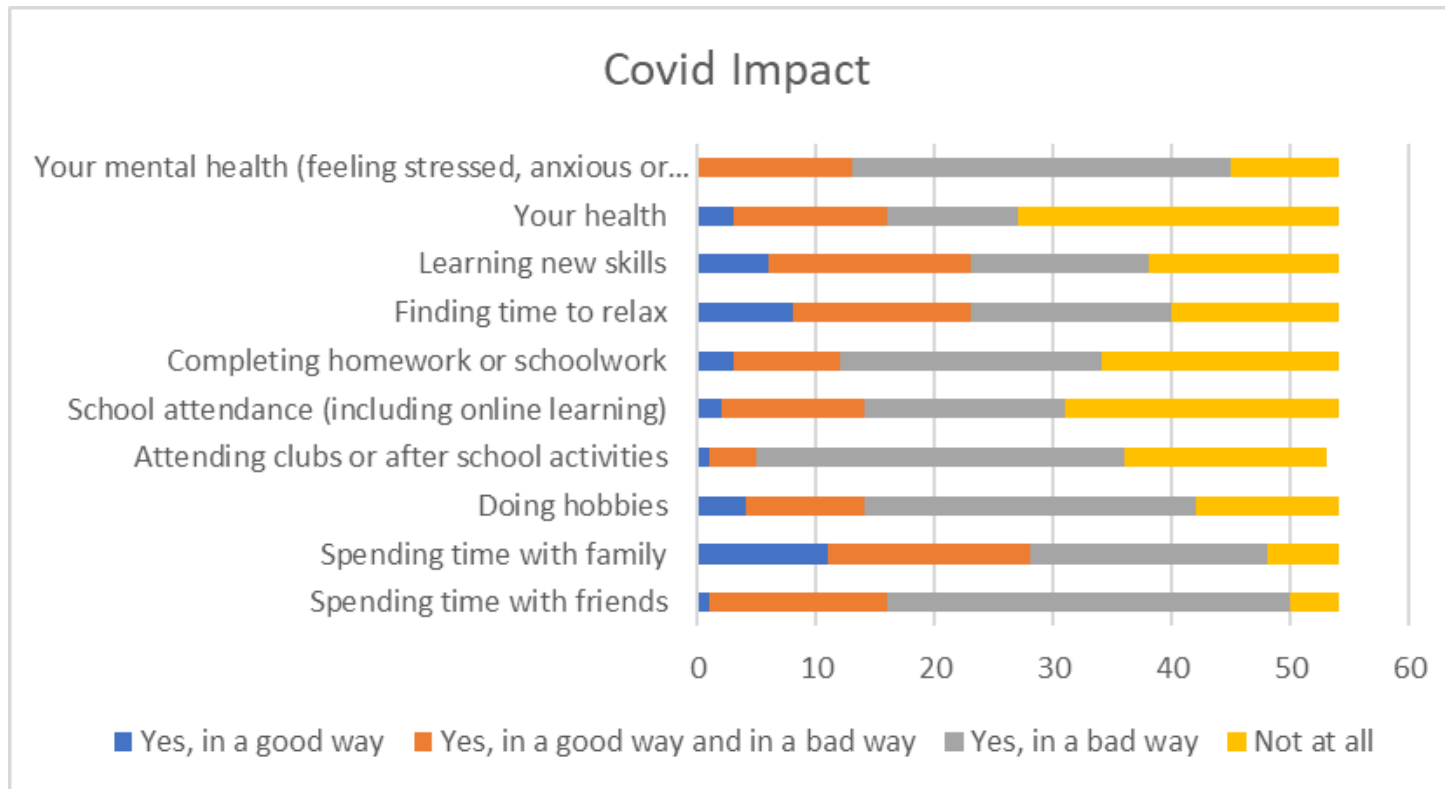


The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

Age Range	Practical help, cooking, cleaning, shopping	Help with washing, dressing, medication	Looking after family member	Help with money / paperwork	Emotional support	Keeping people safe	Other types of help
5 – 8	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
9 – 11	9	5	11	1	13	8	3
12 – 15	15	10	20	2	23	16	2
16 – 17	7	4	5	1	8	2	0

Young carers are involved in practical help from a young age with 17% of 9–11-year-olds (9) providing practical help, 24% (13) providing emotional support, 15% (8) helping keep someone safe and 9% (5) providing help with washing, dressing, moving around or medication. This care is provided to a combination of their mum/ dad, brother, or sister and in 2 cases their aunt.

## Impacts of Covid



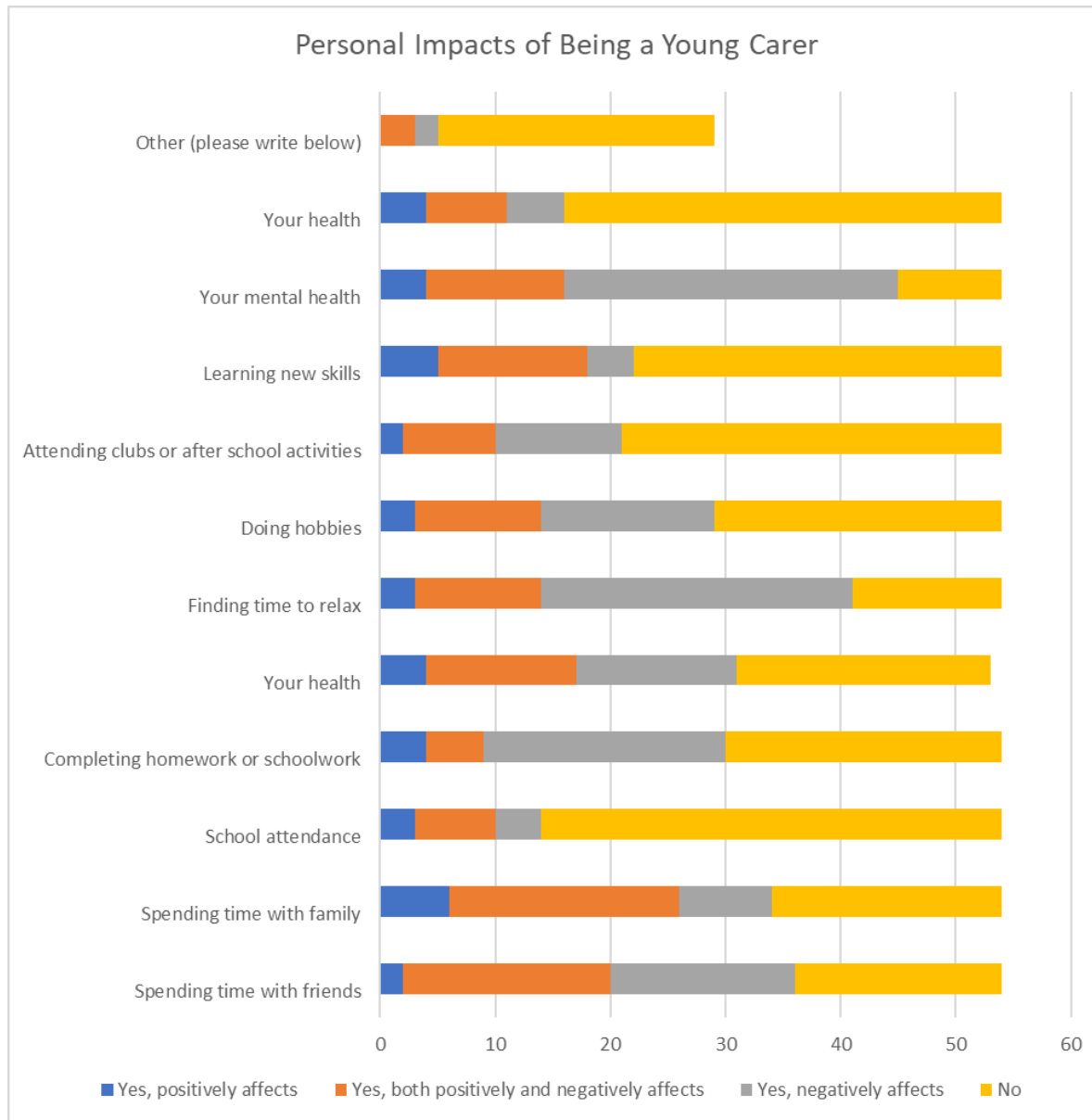
The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Spending time with friends</b>	<b>Spending time with family</b>	<b>Doing hobbies</b>	<b>Attending clubs or after school activities</b>	<b>School attendance (including online learning)</b>	<b>Completing homework or school work</b>	<b>Finding time to relax</b>	<b>Learning new skills</b>	<b>Your health</b>	<b>Your mental health (feeling stressed, anxious or low)</b>	<b>Other (please write below)</b>	<b>Covid impact other</b>
Yes, in a good way	1	11	4	1	2	3	8	6	3	0	0	0
Yes, in a good way and in a bad way	15	17	10	4	12	9	15	17	13	13	2	0
Yes, in a bad way	34	20	28	31	17	22	17	15	11	32	2	0
Not at all	4	6	12	17	23	20	14	16	27	9	16	0

The survey covered the impacts on covid for the young carers and their families. By far the biggest impact was on spending time with friends and attending school clubs and activities – it is likely that this is a contributing factor to the feeling of isolation.

As a follow up we asked what young people were most looking forward to in the next six months. Going out with friends, holidays, attending events such as weddings, going to venues like Chessington and Harry Potter World, attending the cinema, new schools, and a return to normal schooling and for a number of young carers they were looking forward to Christmas (In June!).

## Impact of being a young carer





The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

Impact	Spending time with friends	Spending time with family	School attendance	Completing homework or schoolwork	Your health	Finding time to relax	Doing hobbies	Attending clubs or after school activities	Learning new skills	Your mental health	Your health	Other
Yes, positive impact	2	6	3	4	4	3	3	2	5	4	4	0
Yes, both positive and negative impact	18	20	7	5	13	11	11	8	13	12	7	3
Yes, negative impact	16	8	4	21	14	27	15	11	4	29	5	2
No	18	20	40	24	22	13	25	33	32	9	38	24

Our findings showed that caring does have a negative impact on young carers., The greatest impact is on the young carer's mental health 54% (29), possibly linked is finding time to relax 50% (27) and completing homework 39% (21). Caring also has a negative impact on doing hobbies, meeting friends, and attending clubs/afterschool activities.

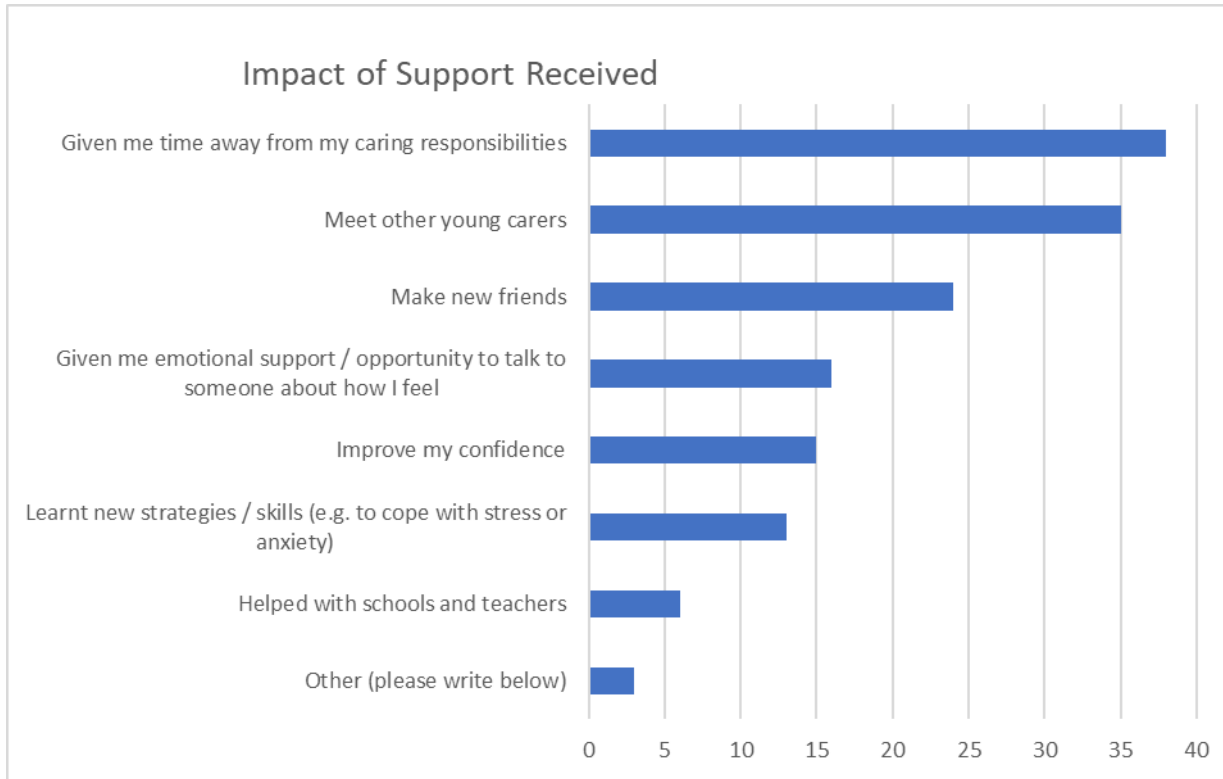
Caring impacts on friendships with 67% saying they felt isolated or lonely at least some of the time and 75% stated they found it hard to make friends.

Being a Young carer impacts their education. Nationally 10 % of young carers indicated that their caring responsibilities led them to being late for school; in this study a much higher proportion of young carers 31% stated that they had been late due to their caring responsibilities. The prevalence of bullying or being afraid of bullying at 52% is very similar to the 2019 Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire undertaken by Surrey Public Health in partnership with Children, Schools and Families.

Nearly 80% of all the young carers said that their school knew they were a young carer with 19% stating they did not know if their school was aware. Primary education settings were more likely to be aware that a pupil was a young carer.

78% of the young carers surveyed said their school had support for young carers. 81% of all young carers worry about the person they care for at least some of the time.

### Impact of support received



The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

<b>Impact of Support Received</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Given me time away from my caring responsibilities	38	70.37%
Meet other young carers	35	64.81%
Make new friends	24	44.44%
Given me emotional support / opportunity to talk to someone about how I feel	16	29.63%
Improve my confidence	15	27.78%
Learnt new strategies / skills (e.g. to cope with stress or anxiety)	13	24.07%
Helped with schools and teachers	6	11.11%
Other (please write below)	3	5.56%

We asked Young carers if they had heard of the support services available to them. 98% of the young carers had heard the services and 89% had either read or been given information and 81% had attended an event run for young carers.

We asked about the benefits of young carers support they had received. Over 70% said that it gave them time away from caring responsibilities, 65% appreciated the opportunity to meet other young carers and 44% said it enabled them to make new friends. The impact was also on a more emotional level with nearly 30% stating it gave them emotional support/ opportunity to talk to someone how they feel or improved their confidence. Nearly 25% said that it helped by learning new strategies and skills to cope with stress and anxiety.

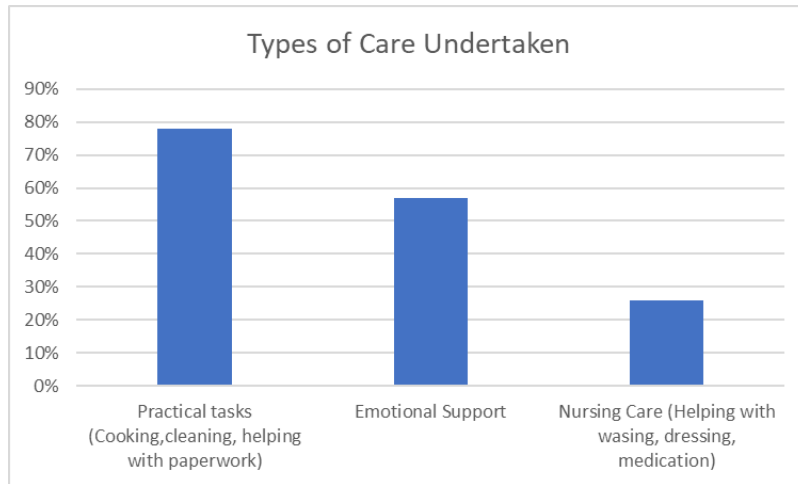
We asked those who attended an event what they most liked the two most common themes were being away from home being able to relax away from the stress of caring and meeting new people who had similar experiences (making friends). A large number mentioned how much fun the events were, and they were often something different and a chance to learn new skills.

We also asked about what they least enjoyed and variations on being shy, not knowing anybody were the biggest issue, some mentioned when they went from attending 8–11-year-old events to the next group 12-16 they were the youngest and found it intimidating. A large number said there was nothing they didn't like.

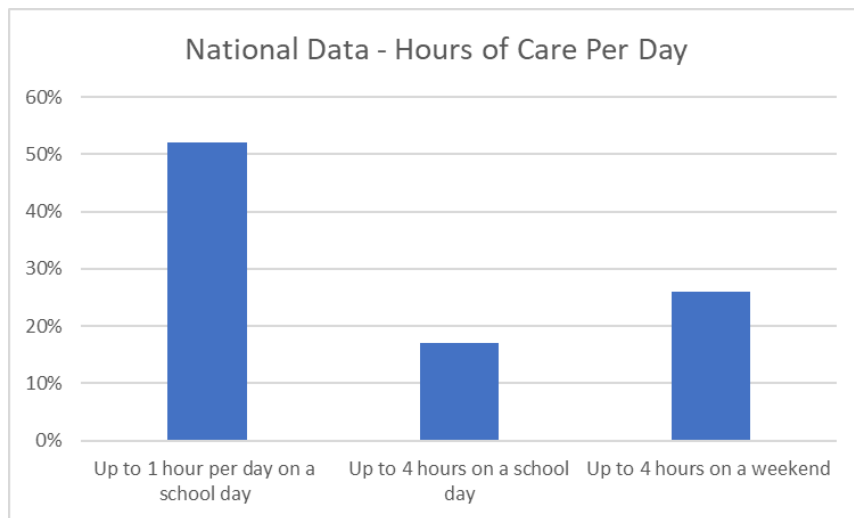
The positives are common to the findings from the parental survey.

## 2017 National Survey - The Lives of Young carers in England

The 2017 survey looked at the kind of tasks young carers were undertaking. Practical caring responsibilities increased with age but involvement in nursing care and emotional support was similar across age groups.



Young carers provide a substantial number of caring hours across the country including on school days.



Caring can have a negative impact on young people. Young carers reported a greater prevalence of experiencing anger “a lot” (14% compared to 8% of non-carer peers). 19% of young carers aged 11-17 reported difficulty in making friends (compared to 12% in non-carer peers) and were much more likely to be bullied (16% v 3%).

Caring has an impact on education to, 10% of young carers reported being late for school at least once a week, compared to 1% of peers and much more likely to have fallen asleep at school 31% (compared to 20% of peers). Young carers had a higher prevalence of absenteeism with 74% absent at least a few times in the year compared to 49% of their peers. Only 28% of young carers were never absent in comparison to 51% of their peers.

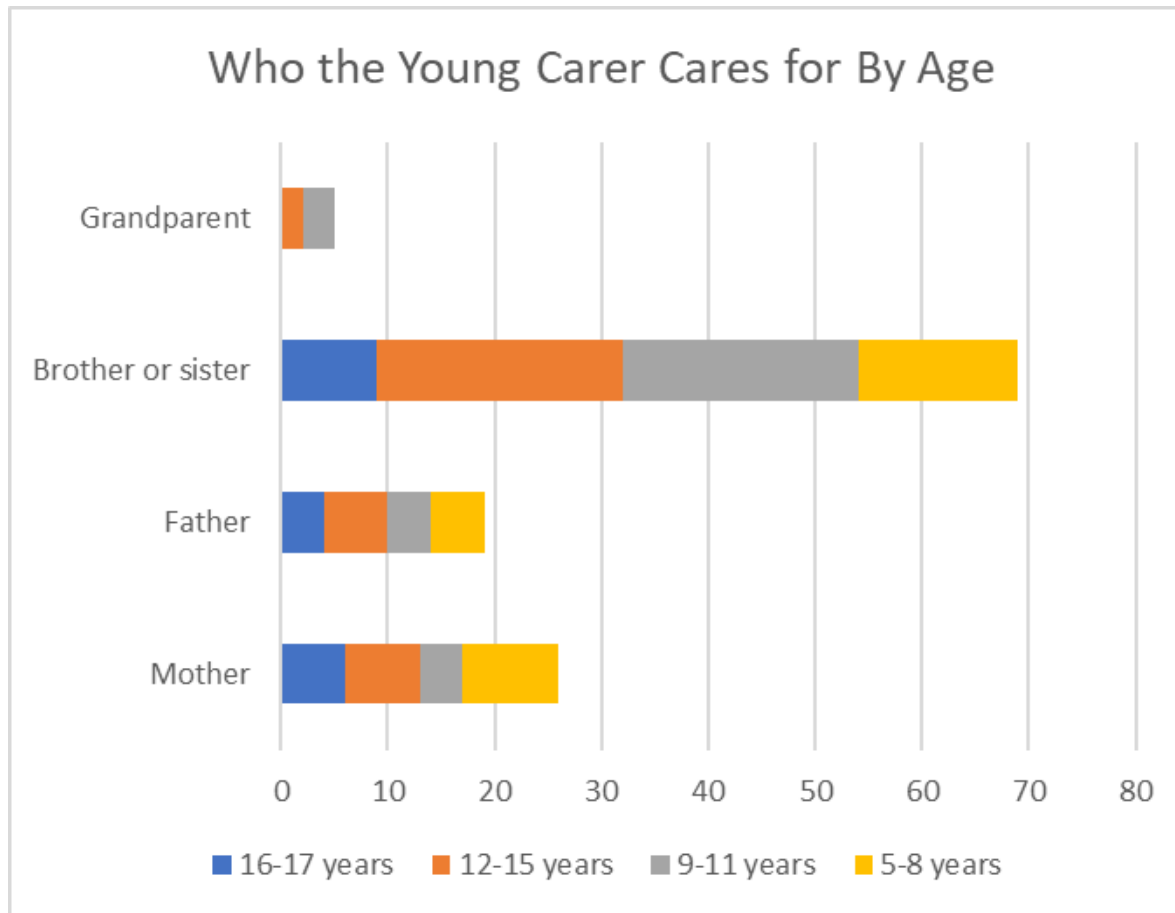
One positive was that 64% said they felt happy “a lot” compared to 55% of their peers.

Overall, the findings from the 2017 National Survey are like the findings of the Surrey Survey in 2021.

## Appendix 4: Survey of Parents of Young carers and Parent Carers

In total we received Seventy responses from parents who were responding giving their perception of the care provided by the young carers in their family. The parent's survey was structured so they completed a single response no matter how many young carers were in their family.

### Who is Cared for by Age



The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

Age Range	Mother	Father	Brother or sister	Grandparent
16-17	6	4	9	0
12-15	7	6	23	2
9-11	4	4	22	3
5-8	9	5	15	0

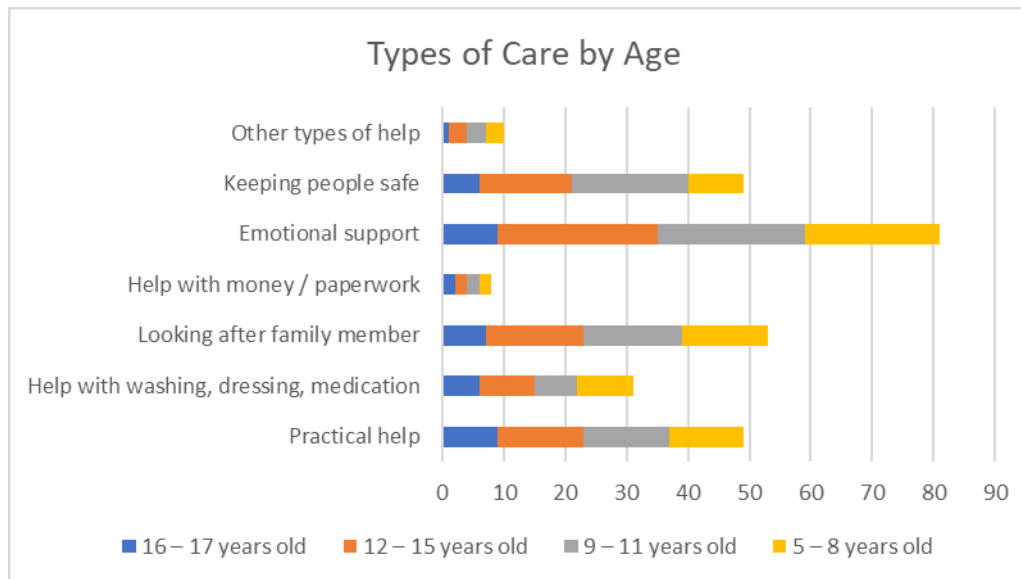
There was a more even split of young carers across the age ranges. Parents highlighted 22, 5–8-year-old young carers making up 25% of young carers identified (compared to 2% of young carer responses) The percentage of 16–17-year-olds is almost identical at 15% (13 children), as is the percentage of 9–11-year-olds at 29% (26 children). The number of 12–15-year-olds is much lower at 31% (28).

The proportion of who the parents perceive the young carer cares for is very similar to the responses of the young carers themselves. 98% of parents say that the young carer looks after a brother or sister, 37% their mother and 27% their father.

Parents from all 11 Boroughs are represented. Once again Guildford (21%) Elmbridge (14%) and Waverley (13%) are heavily represented.



## Types of Care by Age

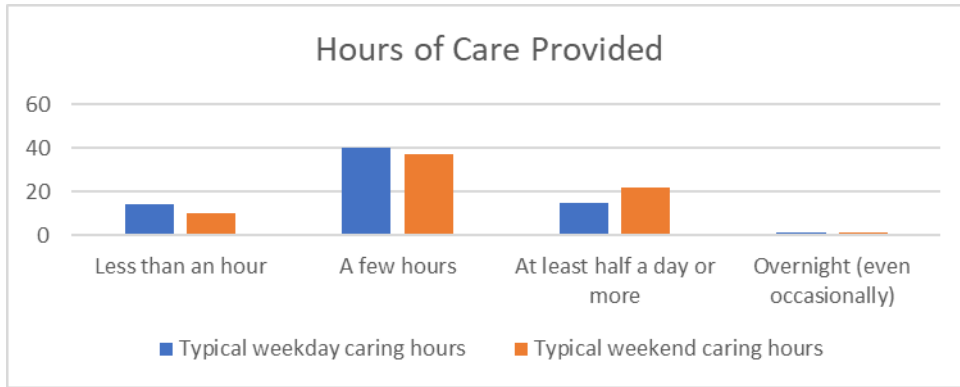


The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

Age Range	Practical help	Help with washing, dressing, medication	Looking after family member	Help with money / paperwork	Emotional support	Keeping people safe	Other types of help
16 – 17	9	6	7	2	9	6	1
12 – 15	14	9	16	2	26	15	3
9 – 11	14	7	16	2	24	19	3
5 – 8	12	9	14	2	22	9	3

The types of care provided percentages are broadly like that stated by the young carers. When looking at the ages we had to assume that all young carers undertook all tasks as this was not further extrapolated in the questions.

## Hours of Care Provided

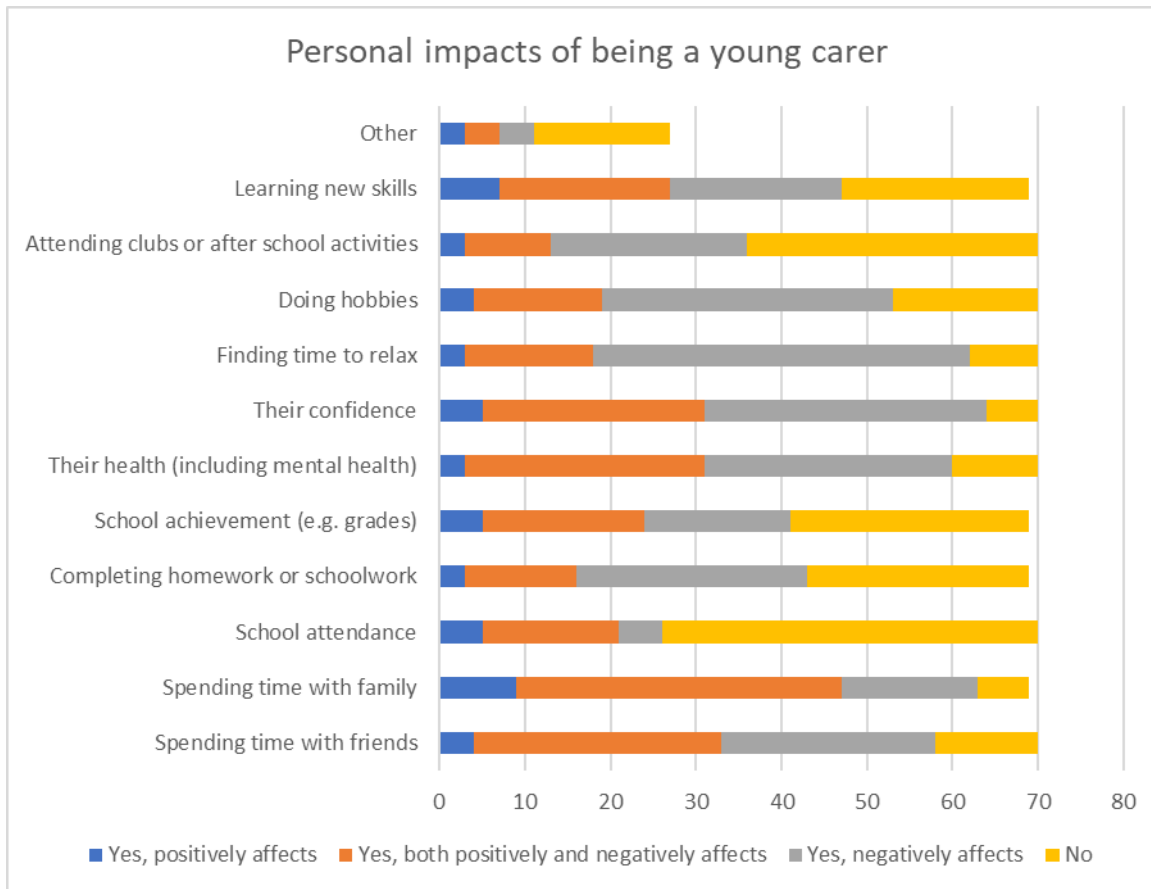


We asked parents for information on the hours of care their children undertake. Young carers provide both care midweek and care at the weekend. 16% (14) provide less than an hour care midweek and 11% (10) provide the same at the weekend. Nearly half all young people 45% (40) provide a few hours care each weekday and 42% (37) do the same at the weekend

17% (15) of all young carers provide care at least half a day or more midweek rising to 25% (22) at the weekend.

Finally, one young carer aged 16-17 occasionally provides overnight care to their sibling in the week and at weekends.

## Personal Impacts of Being a Young Carer



The data in the above image is shown in the table below.

	Spending time with friends	Spending time with family	School attendance	Completing homework or schoolwork	School achievement (e.g. grades)	Their health (including mental health)	Their confidence	Finding time to relax	Doing hobbies	Attending clubs or after school activities	Learning new skills	Other
Yes, positive affects	4	9	5	3	5	3	5	3	4	3	7	3
Yes, both positive and negative affects	29	38	16	13	19	28	26	15	15	10	20	4
Yes, negative affects	25	16	5	27	17	29	33	44	34	23	20	4
No	12	6	44	26	28	10	6	8	17	34	22	16

Parents were also asked about their perception of the personal impacts of being a young carer. As with the Young carers themselves their parents felt that in very few areas caring had a solely positive impact, as before spending time with family 13% (9 parents) and learning new skills 10% (7 parents) are the two most common positive areas.

Parents are very aware of the negative impacts citing finding time to relax 63% (44), time to do hobbies 49% (34), their confidence 47% (33), their health including mental health 41% (29), completing homework 39% (27), spending time with friends 36% (25) and attending clubs 33% (23).

Just 1 parent said caring had a wholly positive effect on the young carer.

Overwhelmingly 86% (60) of the parents said the school was aware that their child was a young carer 7% (5) were not sure, and 7% (5) said the school did not know.

We asked parents a free text question on the support schools provided 16 parents answered. Three highlighted supports from home school link workers. Five parents talked about clubs either ongoing or starting and the importance of key staff, one mentioned a dedicated member of staff and another that the school kept an eye on their child and the school offered a safe space. One parent mentioned the child being given an exit card to leave lessons. Three parents said no support or very little was offered, and another parent praised the fact that their child was able to attend lessons during lockdown.

90% of all parents had heard of Surrey Young carers (SYC) however only 70% said they had a child that attended an event and just 34% said that they had received information.

That said 27% said the service totally met their needs and a further 41% that it partially met their needs. We asked for further detail and the following is common to several responses from parents on the benefits of the service

Parents really appreciated the opportunity for their children to make friends, especially with children in a similar position to themselves. The fact that the events and time away allowed the child to be a child, have time focussed on them and not be interrupted by or worry about the person they care for. Several parents were very positive about the events online over lockdown.

We also asked about what stopped their child attending. Only eleven parents (15%) responded, but three of these mentioned travel difficulties getting to the events or location of the event being an issue.

## Appendix 5: Survey of Social Workers

A total of 29 social workers answered the survey and there were a number of key themes addressing the biggest needs of young carers and areas where they need support.

A common theme is the need for greater recognition that they are young carers but that we need to ensure that at the same time they are not singled out and stigmatised by this.

There is a need for more localised activities – making access easier with little or no travel. Additionally, a broader range of services, (possibly through school), as Surrey Young carers and My Time does not appeal to some young carers.

Counselling and Emotional Support, there is an emotional impact from the caring role, with an impact on their physical and mental well being

Where they are caring for siblings an opportunity for 1:1 time with parents with undivided attention or with the family away from caring. This tied in with generally care packages for the cared for enabling the young carer more free time.

There is still a fear from families to ask for help or to recognise their child as a young carer for fear of being removed from the family home. Families do not always agree to referrals to Surrey Young carers.

Overarching was a recognition on the negative impact caring had on the young carers impacting their ability to socialise with friends, social isolation, know how to access things like public transport.

There is a recognition that some young carers may be missed by Adult Social Care as assessments often take place during the school/college day so the young carers may not be present.

Children with Disability social workers know most siblings of the child with disabilities are young carers – it was not explicit that they will be referred to Surrey Young carers

Many requested clearer information on the service offer from Action for Carers/Surrey Young carers to better inform potential service referrals and discussions. In fact, 2 social workers stated they were not aware of the services/resources offered by Action for Carers/Surrey Young carers

Access to Young carer support needs to be timely.

## Appendix 6: Survey of Schools

In total we had 81 responses from schools, access to education and the Hope Service.

### Identification

Our first question asked all the ways young carers were identified within their school.

By far the most common way schools know about a young carer (41 responses 51%) was following parents informing them and linked to these 14 schools (17%) stated that the information came from information on the school application. Prior family knowledge (siblings with SEND for example) was cited by 17 schools.

Schools indicate positive identification by staff with 32 responses (40%) stating that identification was following monitoring concerns and/or staff identifying the person as a young carer.

In 28 Schools (35%) the child/young person identified themselves and linked to this, 16 schools (20%) mentioned identification came following promotion in an assembly.

6 Schools (7%) specifically mentioned being informed by Surrey Young carers and an additional 4 schools mentioned external agencies. 2 schools stated that their GDPR had caused data sharing issues and that the school could not be provided with names of young carers from Surrey Young carers

In total 8 out of 25 schools and colleges indicated that they were informed a pupil was a young carer by the previous school (year 7 or Year 11).

4 schools mentioned the work of the ELSA in identifying young carers and 8 mentioned the safeguarding team

### Barriers

We asked schools about the barriers to identifying young carers, and 28 schools (35%) stated it was because young carers do not want to be identified, they do not want to be seen as different, feel embarrassed by being a young carer or that there is a stigma or taboo. 24 schools (30%) stated that parental barriers (a combination of accepting that their child is a young carer, not giving permission to share information with Surrey Young carers and are not motivated to allow their child to access support). 9 schools highlighted the fact that the children and young people did not realise they were a young carer.

18 Schools stated a lack of knowledge of services available and 6 said a combination of identification of young carers could be improved or they lacked clarity on the threshold were helping at home becomes being a young carer

A challenge for the young people in accessing services can be a lack of local events as families often have no car/transport can be an issue. (11 schools) and the challenging family lives (6 Schools).

## Awareness

There was an almost 50/50 split in terms of schools and colleges that rated their awareness of young carers as excellent or very good in contrast to good or fair. The same number stated their knowledge was excellent as stated their knowledge was fair.

Awareness	Number	Percentage
Excellent	15	18.5%
Very Good	26	32.1
Good	25	30.1
Fair	15	18.5%

This question indicates more work is required in schools to develop further understanding of young carer issues, young carer recognition and information on services available to young carers.

## What is in place to support young carers

From a young carer viewpoint 40 (50%) respondents said they either had a club/group to support young carers or one was in development/ being planned – often working closely with Surrey Young carers. Assemblies focusing on young carers was a tool used by 9 (11%) schools. 4 schools have this on their PHSE curriculum. 11 have mentoring programs.

7 schools stated they have emotional support in place, four use Thrive, 2 mentioned using Mindup and two stated they had developed tailored programs.

Recognising the impact of caring 5 schools had homework clubs or offered homework passes, one allowed young carers to continue to attend school in lockdown, and one offered flexible timetabling

14 (17%) Schools specifically mentioned either Action for Carers or Surrey Young carers as being part of the support offered. In total 7(9%) schools stated they had worked with Action for Carers and had achieved their [Angel Award](#), which recognises schools that are “Young carer friendly”. A further 6 (7%) schools are striving to achieve this award.

Staff within schools can be key in providing support, ELSA’s were named by 20 (25%) schools as being important in the support of young carers. 11 (14%) schools stated the importance of having a lead member of staff or a young carers champion, 9 (11%) schools mentioned pastoral support. Within these 7 (9%) schools highlighted staff training to recognise and support young carers. 7 schools highlighted the role of the home school link worker can be key in building relationships with the family.

5 (6%) Schools stated that they had no young carers.



## Knowledge of current services

Schools and Colleges were asked if they had heard of Action for Carers/Surrey Young carers and about their knowledge of the Angel Award.

Knowledge of..	Yes	No
Action for Carers and Angel Award	55	22
Action for Carers but not Angel Award	3	
Angel Award but not Action for Carers	1	

Overall, 58 (72%) schools had heard of Action for carers and 56 (69%) Schools had heard of the Angel Award with 55 (68%) schools stating they had heard of both. Just 22 (27%) schools were unaware of both Action for Carers and the Angel award.

## What can be improved

The most common named improvement was the need for better information/marketing in schools regarding the support that is present for young carers (14 schools).

Covid-19 has had an impact 10 schools in answering this question felt the restarting of groups and face to face contact would be a major improvement. 8 Schools though stated that funding to run bespoke support/clubs/sibling groups was an area for improvement.

## Appendix 7: Young carers rights

As a Young carer or young adult carer it is important that they are supported to understand their rights and what support they and their family are entitled to. To determine how best to support a young carer the local authority will need to conduct an assessment which is a discussion with the young carer to find out information about:

- The Young carer and the care they provide.
- How the Young carer feels about the support they provide.
- If there is any support that could help the young carer and their family.

The aim of a 'Young carers assessment' is to find out if the young carer is getting enough support. The support could be given to the person they care for care for, so that the young carer can live their life, get involved in activities, go to school or other things that would give them the same chances as other people their age.

### **A young carer's assessment is for young carers under the age of 18.**

A young carers assessment is offered when the young carer is aged under 18. If they have a children's social worker this could be from this social worker, a young carers support worker or someone else involved with the family.

The assessment will look at caring tasks the young carer undertakes and seeks to find out how the young carer feels about caring and whether it is impacting on their daily life at school, with friends, if it is affecting their health and any worries the young carer may have.

Once the assessment is completed the young carer should be given a written report that is for the young carer and their parent/guardian to know what the Local Authority feel may support the young carer, what was agreed at the assessment, what support we feel the whole family could receive and what will happen next. that you need, what has been agreed will happen next.

The assessment should enable the young carer and their family to receive the support they need and should then involve other support services who could provide this.

### **A transition assessment is undertaken before the young carer reaches 18**

A child or young person under the age of 18 may receive support from services aimed at children. After a young person turns 18, the support would come from services aimed at adults.

We call this move from services aimed at children to those aimed at adults - Transition.

Young carers should be offered help to think about this change in a transition assessment meeting. This discussion could happen with a social worker, young carers support worker or another person who can help the young person think about their future and aspirations. The discussion should particularly cover how the caring role may have an impact upon any future for after they leave school and after they turn 18.

The transition Assessment should take place well before the young person is 18 so that there is time to discuss and plan what support may be needed.

A transition assessment should look

- The young person's aspirations in terms of education and employment
- How the caring role impacts access to future education or employment
- What support could be put in place for the family of enable the young carer to achieve those ambitions.
- Housing options
- The young person's Mental health and well-being
- Any financial support they be entitled to

The young person and parent/guardian should receive a copy of the completed assessment report detailing what support we feel is appropriate, what was agreed at the assessment, the next steps and ongoing support plan for the young person and the person they care for. The assessment should enable the young person and their family to receive the support they need and should then involve other support services who could provide this.

## Appendix 8: Thrive

Surrey has signed up to implement the THRIVE framework for System Change (Wolpert et al 2019) to support the mental health and wellbeing needs of children young people and their families



The essential approach of THRIVE is that there is a graduated response based on the child's individual circumstances and that the child is able to flow between the quadrants as their needs evolve. This relies on close working of all parties including Schools, Social Care, Health, CAMHS and any 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector providers.

### Thriving

This is at the centre of the model and is where a Young carer is coping well, no impact on their education and their caring responsibilities are balanced so that they are able to have a similar life experience to peers they are considered to be Thriving and no additional input or support is needed.

### Getting Advice

Where it is recognised that the caring is having a minor impact on their education or ability to meet friends and the caring responsibilities are more significant it is recognised that they need advice and signposting they are in the getting advice group. Examples may include child friendly information on the conditions of the cared for person, engaging with online forums for Young carers, access to a help line etc.

## **Getting Help**

As a young carers' caring responsibilities impact on their education; perhaps more isolated or need some training to safely undertake caring roles. Examples could include referral to get a travel card to access the community, an Early intervention payment, referral to a young carer group for peer support or some practical training.

## **Getting More Help**

Some young carers will need more intense intervention with 121 supports, perhaps mentoring, and specialist intervention. There may be the need for additional personal support intervention in the form of carers for the cared for person. Work with the school to allow reasonable adjustments so the caring has less of a negative impact – for example allowing a pupil to arrive at a later time so they can take a sibling to school.

## **Getting Risk Support**

If the help has not resolved the issues for the young carer or they have been unable to access the help greater intervention may be needed, this may be going through safeguarding to assess risk, further increased support packages to the cared for, closer work with the school or college including tutoring to enable completion of assignments and homework.

## Appendix 9: The voice of young carers and their parents

Below are some selected comments from young carers and their Parents from the completed surveys.

### On The Caring Role

It's more just making sure that he stays calm. ..., it's just talking to him. And just doing stuff with him. (Young carer aged 17 at College)

I take care of my sister who has a few disabilities. I do a bunch of different tasks for her. Mental and physical things. And sometimes also I have to mentally support my mum because caring is also hard for her because she works a lot, so I have to support her as well. (Young carer aged 17)

She knows when he's getting fizzy and when we can't deal with him, she has a way of settling him. She'll give him a hug and he'll calm down. And she doesn't have to be told to do that. (Parent of Young carer aged 8)

### On Carer Recognition

We actually asked the SENCo last year to do a referral to Surrey Young carers and they said wouldn't do it, so it's not always that easy to know how to get that support (Parent of Young carer aged 10)

I had community nurses at the time. And she gave us Surrey Young carers details and that's when we joined. (Parent of young carer aged 10)

I knew about Surrey Young carers because a friend of mine's got a similar child and her other child has done it. And she said it was really good. So I asked my family support worker to get my daughter into it. (Parent of Young carer aged 10 )

We were referred through surrey family services (Parent of Young carer aged 17)

### On School and College

...they could probably do assemblies on it and just mention that there are Young carers out there, but it's a difficult thing, because helping out with one odd job or just doing a little bit around the house, it's hard to find the differentiation between being a carer and just helping out. .... person I spoke to most was my old form tutor from when I was in the main school, not in the Sixth Form, and I still go and see her now, even though she's not my form tutor. (Young carer aged 17 at a school with a Young carers Support Group)

I felt most relaxed on all my school trips..... The fact I didn't have to take care of anything and it being a break where it was just me (Young carer aged 17)

Like, if I'm upset, school can be a great place for me to focus on some things because I like playing with my friends at school and stuff like that (Young carer aged 10)

we wrote to the school... we basically said to the school look we are not in a position to do this home learning like we can put alternative to online learning in place for [Young carer]. But she's not going to do any of the schoolwork that you've given her because we don't have capacity to manage it. And they basically just wrote back and said that's fine. (Parent of Carer aged 10 with 2 children with additional needs)