

Our plan for young carers

2023 to 2024



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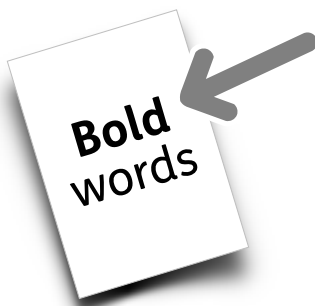
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In this Easy Read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



Some words are blue and underlined. These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction



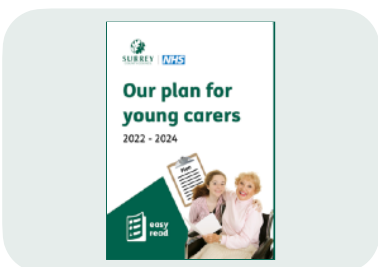
The local NHS and Surrey County Council have been working together on a plan for **young carers** in Surrey.

Young carers are children and young people who care for someone.



We want to make sure that young carers:

- Get the support they need.
- Can live happy lives.
- Get the same chances as everyone else.



This document explains our plan.

Young carers in Surrey



1 in 28

At least 1 in every 28 children in Surrey secondary schools are young carers.



Young carers are more likely to:

- Try smoking.
- Worry about changes to their bodies.
- Be afraid of bullying.



In 2021 and 2022, we spoke to:



- Young carers.



- Families of young carers.



- Schools.



- Social workers.



- Youth workers - these are people who work to support young people.



- Local organisations where people help others for free, like community groups and churches.

They told us that:



- Not being able to meet up with people during Covid-19 had been hard for young carers.



- Schools found it hard to support young carers during Covid-19.



- There should be more local services for young carers.



- Young carers should be able to use services at the times that suit them.



- Schools are very important for supporting young carers.



- Some schools agree a different start time for young carers so they can take brothers or sisters to school.

They also told us that:



- Some schools take children's phones away from them. This can make young carers worry about getting in touch with the person they care for.



- Young carers give a lot of support, and this can harm their own mental health and **wellbeing**.



Wellbeing means feeling happy and healthy in your body and mind.

Our plan



We want young carers to:

- Feel supported.



- Be happy to say that they are a young carer.



- Be able to speak up.



We want services to find and support young carers.

What we believe

We believe it is important to:



- Think about young carers in every service.



- Support will look at the whole family's needs and how to support the young carer. This is called a Whole Family Approach.



- Support young carers at the right time, before any issues they might have get worse.



- Make sure our services are always getting better.



- Include everyone in our services.

Our priorities



Priorities are the most important things that should be done first.

We have 6 priorities:

1. Know more about young carers

We need to make sure that young carers are found and supported by:



- Schools and colleges.



- Health staff.



- Adult **social care**.

Social care is the extra support some people need with everyday things such as personal care.



We also need to make sure that young carers are found and supported by:

- Children's social care.



- Youth workers.



We will:

- Train people in these services to find and support young carers.



- Make sure services share information about young carers.



- Think about young carers when we plan changes to services.

2. Know about young carers' rights



Rights are things that every person should have by law. Like the right to be safe, the right to education, and the right to be respected.



The law says that young carers have the right to:

- Support from local councils.



- A **young carer assessment**.

A **young carer assessment** is a meeting with care staff to find out if a child is a young carer and what support they need.



We will make sure that young carers and their families can ask for an assessment.

To have the best assessments, we will:



- Train all care staff about young carers.



- Use words that young carers can understand.



- Make sure that young carers know:
 - That they have a right to an assessment
 - How to get an assessment.



- Give information and support to young carers.

To have the best assessments, we will also:



- Listen to what young carers have to say about caring for their family members.



- Check assessments and change them if needed.



We will let more people know about young carers' rights.



Children's services and adult services will work together more to support young carers as they become adults.

3. Young carers can speak up



A lot of young carers do not tell people that they are young carers.

This might be because they don't want people to think they are different.



We want family members to feel safe letting us know that someone is a young carer.

4. Young carers can use services



Services should:

- Support young carers in a way that lets them have a normal life.
- Be able to change as the lives of young carers change to best support them.





We will provide services in more places so that they are more local for young carers.



We will use phones and computers to help those who find it difficult to travel.



Young carers should be given information about what care they should or shouldn't be giving.



We will work with young carers to write this information.



We will help young carers to talk to and support each other.

Services will run online groups for young carers to talk to each other.

5. Young carers have better wellbeing



We will support the mental health and wellbeing of all young carers and their families.



To make assessments easier we will share information that we are allowed to.



All services should be clear about the support that they can give.



We will work with services to support young carers' mental health and wellbeing.

6. Young carers are safe



It is important to keep young carers safe from **abuse** and harm.

Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly.



We will make sure services work together to make sure young carers are safe.

What we will do

We will:

- Work with young carers and care staff to write information and training about:



- Finding young carers in Surrey.



- Listening to young carers when making decisions.



- Thinking about the whole families of young carers.



- Giving young carers the best assessments.



We will also:



- Check how many young carers are found by different services, like schools and doctors.



- Look at what stops primary schools from sharing information with secondary schools.



- Work with schools to give better support to young carers.



- Give young carers information to help them make choices about the care they give.



- Support young carers during difficult times in their lives.



- Give young carers chances to meet and get support from other young carers.

We will also:



- Provide young carers with services that are right for them.



- Work with young carers to make a service that supports their mental health and wellbeing.



- Let people know about young carers' rights.

For more information



You can look at our website here:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk>



You can contact us on:

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This Easy Read information has been produced by easy-read-online.co.uk