



Flintshire Young Carers

Annual Report 2016 – 2017

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Introduction

Flintshire Young Carers is a service provided by Barnardo's Cymru. It works across the county with children and young people under the age of 18 years who are young carers.

Young carers are children and young people who help to provide practical, emotional, physical, personal, financial support/care for another member of the family who has a physical disability or illness, has mental health problems, or is misusing drugs or alcohol.

However undertaking caring responsibilities can affect young people such as:

- Poor educational attainment
- Heightened levels of bullying
- Poor physical and emotional health
- Not having time to socialise with peers
- Lack of aspirations for the future
- Exhaustion
- Lack of confidence, self-esteem etc.

Flintshire Young Carers provide a 12 session programme of interventions to support young carers and their families in the county. In addition to this there are other interventions within the service which include:

- Fun activities and time out
- Residential weekends
- Peer support groups to meet with other young people in a similar situation
- Training courses and workshops to help young people with their caring role
- 1:1 support from a project worker
- Access to respite services
- Extra support in school through the A2A card and schools work
- Young carers forum
- Young Adult Carers group
- Signposting
- Tailored individual development
- Peer mentoring
- Exit strategy tailored to meet the needs of the family

Referrals to the Service

Referrals into the service are taken from a variety of sources; including Flintshire County Council Social Services, partner agencies (such as health and education professionals), voluntary organisations and self-referrals. The Service Level Agreement with Social Services ensures we work with a minimum of 60 referrals from Social Services per year. The table below shows the actual number of referrals received into the service.

Year	Number of referrals received
2013/2014	89 referrals
2014/2015	98 referrals
2015/2016	117 referrals
2016/2017	110 referrals

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

In 2016/2017 the service underwent significant changes to incorporate developments as required by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The service delivery was designed around the 5 Pathways to Well-being which are as follows:

Connect
 Be active
 Take notice
 Learn
 Give

A 12 session programme of support was developed which incorporated the 5 pathways (above) and the service outcomes such as confidence building, self-esteem, building resilience etc. The programme objective is to support young carers in their caring role, build confidence and resilience followed by a tailored support programme to help them access other universal children's services in Flintshire. In the first year there were 62 young people left the service to access other mainstream services such as youth services, sport classes etc. Many wouldn't have done that without the support from the service. Please see case studies below.

Young Adult Carers (YAC) have received tailored packages of 1-1 support development to help them engage in economic outcomes such as education, employment etc. Whilst this has been very successful, YACs' require the support to sustain the employment/learning.

Other recommendations from the Act means young carers are ageless so there have been changes to the referral processes for the service. Also the Carers Needs Assessments now focus and build upon the positive aspects within the family unit. The monitoring processes within Barnardo's have been adapted to measure both quantitative and qualitative data and soft outcomes such as confidence, self-esteem etc. To do this staff had to be trained in using an outcome star which was developed specifically for the service outcomes. The outcome star measures all soft outcomes and the journey travelled for all young carers. They use the scoring system at the start, middle and end of their support programme to measure their positive progress. This helps us to identify if further support may be required. Please see copy of the Outcome Star in the evaluation section.

Purpose of the Report

Flintshire Young Carers is funded from a variety of sources, including Flintshire County Council, Local Health Board, SMAT and Families First. The purpose of this report is to provide our funding agencies with feedback regarding the outcomes the service has achieved over the past year and complimentary information to support quarterly monitoring reports.

In addition there is an annual questionnaire which provides a means for our service users to give feedback about the services they receive and suggest improvements for future service delivery.

Key Achievements in 2016-2017

- The implementation of a transparent referral and redesigned Carers Needs Assessment process offering a tiered level service to meet Children/young peoples' and families' needs. The Carers Needs Assessment has been redesigned to capture the strengths of the family and fall in line with the requirements of the SS Wellbeing Act 2014.
- Continued to be commissioned to complete young carers assessments on behalf of Flintshire County Council Social Services delivering over and above 100% performance
- The development of a flexibility policy that incorporates carers needs their environment and their current and projected future circumstances.
- The service delivery is dedicated to achieving positive outcomes and works towards five pathways of The SS Wellbeing 2014 Act with all young carers.
- Barnardo's Young Carers service celebrates 21 years in Flintshire this year. The celebrations include hosting a planned event for families, service users past and present, commissioners and other partner agencies.
- The Young Carers Charter for Education was launched in September 2016 in Holywell High School. The first school in Flintshire to achieve the standard for which the objectives include promoting good practice in supporting young carers in education. Since the initial launch other schools have gained the award and our work continues to support all schools in the area to achieve the standards. The pledges to achieve the Charter are as follows:
 - Barnardo's staff training 20% of staff have been trained to help identify young carers
 - Young carers policy in school
 - Awareness of the A2A card
 - Identified Young Carers Champions
 - Website friendly

- Notice board for support information
- Quiet space for respite
- Barnardo's staff raising awareness at parents evenings etc.
- Development of the Young Adult Carers group in partnership with NEWCIS, supporting carers aged 16-25 with the transition into adulthood and adult services with a significant focus on tailored individual development towards economic outcomes.
- Staff and Young Carers at Barnardo's have delivered awareness-raising sessions on the project to various Social Services teams alongside other statutory and voluntary services. This work is ongoing to help practitioners identify Young Carers in their working practice.

The Voice of Young Carers

- Young Carers and their families have been consulted Barnardo's service provision annual questionnaire. The findings and responses can be found in this report.
- Young Carers have been consulted on from in house in Barnardo's and participated in research for our policy unit.
- Young Carers have participated in work for the elections for Welsh Government. They engaged in several educational group sessions learning about the processes and procedures of government and the required specialisms.
- One Young Carer is being supported to petition all services and schools to request that all children/young people are trained early in life in First Aid and CPR. This particular Young Carer was integral in saving her mother's life and therefore feels it necessary for all children to have the training.
- Many providers including WG have attended the service to meet with young carers to consult on varies topics or to provide workshops.
- Forum members have committed to become Community Ambassadors. The young people undertake work each quarter to qualify for the position. Once they are accredited they will promote the work of the Children's Commissioner for Wales.
- Young Carers participated in workshops about the ACES. The findings were presented to the SS Public Health Minister (Rebecca Evans). A report is available on request.
- A few Young Carers alongside other young people from Wrexham and Flintshire undertook training on weekend days to enable them to recruit on an interview panel for a new Barnardo's Partnership Service for CSE work in Flintshire.

- The Young Adult Carers and Forum members recently participated in a consultation from WG regarding issues surrounding Loneliness and Isolation and how to address such issues.

What have we delivered:

In 2016/2017 Flintshire Young Carers have:

- Worked with 264 young carers across the county
- Delivered 124 fun activity sessions (including school holiday activities) – Tier 1
- Delivered 187 group training events to assist young people with their caring role – Tier 2
- Provided 64 young people with 1:1 support – Tier 3 and supporting them to move down the tiers
- Provided 2 residential trips for Young Carers
- Delivered several awareness-raising sessions and PGCE sessions to schools throughout the county.
- Delivered monthly Young Adult Carers sessions to approximately 37 young people aged 16-18 and supporting them to maintain economic outcomes.
- 103 young carers have signed up for the A2A card.
- 111 carers needs assessments were completed within the year.
- Presentations to help raise awareness to young carers needs continue in team meetings, community hospitals, Social Services. Workforce Development in FCC, local colleges, Holywell High School, Connahs' Quay High School etc.

How We Evaluate what we do

Flintshire Young Carers evaluates the service it delivers in a number of ways

a) Annual Service User Questionnaire 2016/17

The 2016/17 questionnaire was sent out to all families who currently access Flintshire Young Carers. The questionnaire was not sent to children, young people or families who were closed to the service during the period.

A parents' version of the questionnaire was sent out focusing on evaluating operational and organisational issues, as well as their perceptions on the service's outcomes for their children.

A young persons' questionnaire was completed by young carers attending group sessions and/or receiving 1-1 support. This questionnaire focussed on

their evaluation of quality of service delivery, and outcomes achieved through involvement in the service.

b) Outcome Assessments

Upon initial young carers assessment a number of outcomes are assessed by the project worker which relate to positive outcomes for the young person and their family.

A comparison of scores and measurements over time provides information about whether the intervention provide by Flintshire Young Carers has had a positive impact, the situation has stayed the same or there has been a negative downturn for the young person or their family. If there has been a negative downturn more support will be provided by the service.

c) Session Evaluation and Young People's Feedback

Sessions delivered by Flintshire Young Carers are evaluated at the end of every session by both young people and staff to ascertain if any improvements need to be made and what outcomes have been achieved. This can be completed through the session evaluation sheets, but is often done in more creative ways. In addition to this we are using measurement tools to ascertain the journey of development for the child or young person.

d) Young Carers Forum

Flintshire Young Carers Forum is going from strength to strength. There are a number of young people involved in the Forum who meet on a monthly basis. All members are integral to any service developments and/or changes. They continue their involvement in a number of projects within the service and are keen to provide feedback and ideas from a young carers perspective.



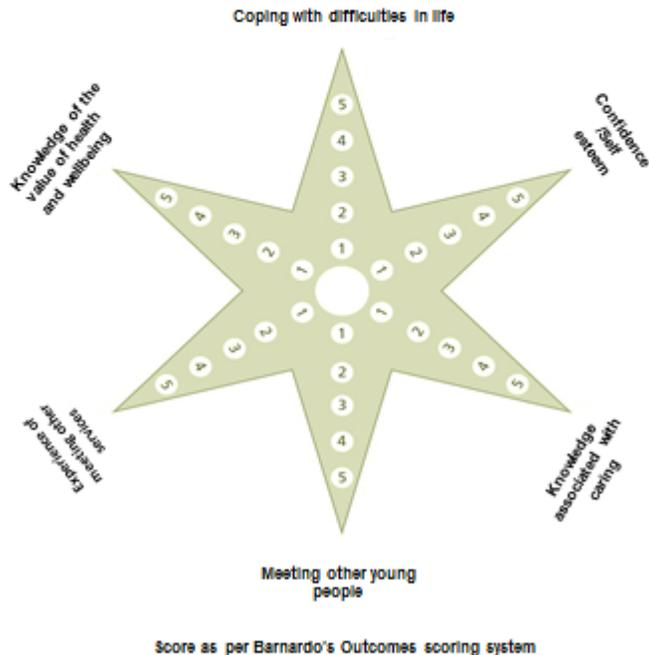
e) The Outcome Star

Barnardo's Flintshire Young Carers

NAME : _____

INITIAL DATE: _____ REVIEW DATE: _____

Signed: _____ & _____



The journey of the outcome star shows us that approx. 95% of young carers feel more confident and empowered.

Service User Satisfaction

Service users were happy with the service provided by Flintshire Young Carers

90% of young carers were happy with the service that they received

70% of young carers stated that they felt supported by the service

"The service is brilliant. It helps me calm down from being angry and agitated." Barnardo's Young Carer

Reducing the impact of Caring

Flintshire Young Carers has helped reduce the impact of young people's caring role

- 60% of children and young people who responded reported that Flintshire Young Carers had helped to reduce the impact of their caring role.

Young People were more able to cope with their caring role, and more confident, following involvement with Flintshire Young Carers

- 80% of young people reported that support from Flintshire Young Carers had meant that they were more able to cope with their caring role.

"I love the young carers service, they're very good to everyone."

Developing New Skills & Knowledge

Young People felt they had learnt new skills through participating in Flintshire Young Carers activities, and that their knowledge of alcohol/drug misuse risks had improved

- 70% of young people stated that they are learning more since attending Flintshire Young Carers. Examples cited by young people included
 - **first aid**
 - **how to speak in groups**
 - **how to make new friends**
 - **new ways of coping**
 - **dealing with everyday life situations/conflict**
 - **caring skills**
 - **confidence building**
 - **personal safety**
 - **healthy cooking**
 - **financial budgeting**
 - **road safety**
 - **communication skills**
 - **drug awareness**
 - **Community safety**
 - **Transport and internet safety**
- 65% of young people reported that Flintshire Young Carers had improved their knowledge of alcohol and drug misuse risks.

Supporting Families

Flintshire Young Carers has helped improve family and personal relationships of service users, and have supported families to feel less isolated

- 80% of young people reported that Flintshire Young Carers had helped to improve their family/personal relationships.

"I really appreciate everything that has been done for me and my family. Many, many thanks!"
"Barnardo's has made a big difference to our lives. They do so much more than it says on their leaflet."

Supporting Young Carers in School

There has been some improvement for young carers in school and educational achievement due to the work undertaken by Flintshire Young Carers, but further improvements need to be made

- Only 30% young people reported that Flintshire Young Carers hadn't really helped them with school/employment.

"The Service is fun with nice people."

Promoting Social Engagement

Flintshire Young Carers helps otherwise sometimes isolated young people make friends, however promoting young carers involvement in, and access to, community activities could be improved

- 60% of young people said that Flintshire Young Carers had helped them to make new friends.

"Barnardo's helped me to gain experience interviewing people for Flintshire County Council. I really enjoyed it and I would like to do it again. I think the experience will help me when I have to go for an interview."

Encouraging Participation

Young Carers feel that their views are being listened to and are becoming increasingly involved in planning and decision making on the issues that affect their lives

- 90% of young people feel that their views are listened to by Flintshire Young Carers

Making it Real – Case Studies

Case study 1

Upon completion of the Young Carers rolling programme and the 1-1 support to aid her confidence and help her cope with bullying at school. R was supported as part of the exit strategy from the service to find another universal service that met her needs. R worked with staff to devise an action plan of her wishes. With support from staff for the first few visits, R attended a local council forum where she felt able to have a voice regarding disadvantages for some young people. R went on to join the Flintshire Forum where she felt able to contribute to forum planning, consult with government representatives and become a voice and represent young carers. R has continued to grow in confidence and now communicates to professionals and young people, highlighting the role of young carers and how they can best be supported.

R stated....

'Anything I can do to help promote the rights of young carers - then count me in!'

Case study 2

J was referred to youth provision staff within the service prior to completing the Young Carers rolling programme. With the support of the youth provision team J's family were able to gather information about suitable after school sports activities within the local area. Mum stated that with the support he has received,

'J has grown so much in confidence and despite several attempts to get him into a physical activity he has never felt confident enough before, he has now agreed to attend a basketball class with a child he met at Barnardo's'.

Mum also stated both she and J were working on healthy eating together and that J was fully involved in helping with meal planning and cooking. Mum thanked the service for supporting J; he's now engaging in a healthier lifestyle and developing his confidence.

Case Study 3

Andrea is 13 years old and was referred to the young carers service by an educational social worker, due to her being the main carer for her mum who suffers from mental health difficulties.

During the assessment process Andrea's mother explained to the young carers project worker that she suffers a number of mental health difficulties including, anxiety, depression and insomnia. Andrea provides significant practical support such as taking responsibility for food shopping, daily chores around the home such as cooking and cleaning. Andrea also provides personal care for her mum when required such as helping her to wash or shower and helping her to get dressed. Andrea is the sole carer for her mum and provides a wide range of practical, personal and emotional support. Andrea was assessed as requiring a Tier 3 level of support.

Andrea shared with young carers staff how she was being bullied at school, because the other children "just don't understand why I can't do all the things they can do"

Andrea has also shared that due to her caring role she often felt like running away, she felt very lonely and that she didn't matter. Andrea was offered support through the young carers intervention programme to help deal with some of the difficulties she was experiencing, she was also provided with one to one emotional support.

The support provided for Andrea helped her to understand and come to terms with her caring role. She knows she is not alone. Her confidence and self-esteem have increased due to the 1-1 support and she has made some lasting friendships with other young carers within the groups. Andrea has been supported through the tiers starting at tier 3 through to tier 1 and has made significant personal progress.

Andrea has now completed the intervention with the young carers service and she has been supported to access a local martial arts club, Andrea is also considering becoming a member of the Flintshire Youth Forum.

Andrea said

"I am so grateful to Young Carers; I have made some great friends and have enjoyed lots of fun activities. Also my confidence has grown, and those people that just to bully me, now understand because I don't feel afraid of telling them about my caring role"

Challenges for the Service

- 1. Whilst the service is inclusive to all young carers at times we are challenged when we accept young carers onto the service that have ADHD/Autism etc. It can be overwhelming for the children in groups and they may require a 1-1 key worker which unfortunately due to restricted resources we are unable to provide.**
- 2. Limited resources means the service has recently had to stop the transportation for the children and young people taking them to and from the service. The groups for the children and young people have had to be taken into hired rooms/halls in communities in Flintshire. To help families adapt to this change the times of the service has changed to reflect the times when children are collected from school so that the access is easier. Whilst it's good to provide outreach lots of the parents have health conditions and therefore struggle to transport the children themselves. This is a significant change for the service.**
- 3. Lack of resources due to cuts in year on year funding is challenging. The service is consistently changing to reflect the cuts.**

Moving Forward into 2017-2018

- 1. Continue to deliver programme of learning and fun activities and wherever possible residential weekends.** Young carers enjoy the sessions and find them beneficial in

making new friends. Whilst the sessions provide respite and time out from their caring role, the programme of activities is educational and fun.

2. Improve links and relationships with existing activity providers. The service aims to promote increased access to/use of community resources by young carers. Improve partnerships to offer more opportunities for young carers such as respite care for the cared for – to enable young carers to independently access these resources to promote individual development especially with young adult carers.

3. Continue with the delivery of the tailored programme and access opportunities for additional training/workshops. The sessions aim to encourage young carers to feel more confident, more able to cope, and to reduce the impact of their caring role. Young carers enjoy the group sessions; they learn new skills which help them with both their caring role and everyday life situations.

4. Continue to develop the service.

We aim to seek more professional aligned support for young carers with medical conditions such as ADHD and Autism. To enable the service to make savings transportation will no longer be provided for by the service. The venues for the groups will be placed throughout the county.

5. Promote the young carers charter and the A2A card in schools to help raise awareness to issues young carers face. Gain support from educational establishments.

This work ensures young carers are supported in schools, improve their educational attainment, and their individual needs are recognised.

6. Where possible deliver training to professionals.

This includes education staff and the business sector to raise awareness of young carer's issues, identify hidden young carers and increase referrals into the project.

7. Continue to use a whole family approach in completing carers needs assessments.

Directing the focus to family strengths remains a priority so that families can be signposted and referred to appropriate services to promote positive family relationships and help reduce family isolation.

8. Look at informed, innovative and fun ways to promote young carers participation and consultation. It's important that young carers are heard and included in decisions that affect them. Young Carers will continue to be encouraged by the

service to have a voice and participate in consultations local and national.

9. Provide tailored 1-1 support/development for young adult carers focussed on personal development plans to suit individual needs and development such as higher education/learning, employment and skill building.

10. Enable, encourage and empower young carers in every way possible. The service continues with these objectives as aligned to the service's action plan.

'Art and healthy eating sessions are the best although everything is good.'