



**“BEING A YOUNG CARER,  
YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE  
BETWEEN YOUR FUTURE  
AND THE FUTURE OF THE  
PERSON YOU CARE FOR.”**

**INQUIRY INTO THE LIFE OPPORTUNITIES OF  
YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS**

**NOVEMBER 2023**

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All-Party  
Parliamentary  
Group for  
Young Carers &  
Young Adult  
Carers

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- Alexandra, Windsor
- Chandra, Gloucestershire
- Courtney, Dorset
- Emma, Sheffield
- Emma, Wiltshire – Inquiry co-chair
- Grace, Norfolk
- Holly, Cambridgeshire/Oxford
- Jack, Windsor
- Pooja, Birmingham
- Ruby, Windsor – Inquiry co-chair
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# FOREWORD

**On behalf of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers, we are proud to present this landmark report from the first-ever parliamentary inquiry focused on young and young adult carers.**

We have received powerful evidence from over 70 stakeholders covering a range of perspectives – from young carer services to university researchers, from schools to parents. The submissions highlighted the significant impact that being a young carer can have on their life chances if they are not properly identified and supported.

Most powerfully, we have heard from more than 400 young carers and young adult carers from across the country – through online surveys, consultations at young carers festivals, video submissions, and evidence sessions. They told us of the difficulties they faced when unrecognised as carers by schools and others and that too many young carers cannot access the support they need. Young adult carers were also clear about their need for better support as they approach adulthood, with areas such as employment and housing, as well as the need for greater recognition of their needs within adult social care.

As we approach the ten-year anniversary of the passing of legislation designed to support young carers and young adult carers through the Children and Families Act and the Care Act in 2014, this inquiry has shone a light on the postcode lottery that exists in terms of that support. We have heard about excellent, innovative examples of projects to support young carers and young adult carers. Yet we also heard of areas where there are six-month waiting lists for young carer needs assessments. We have also heard of areas where young carers cannot access support if an adult carer is in the household. We have heard examples of local authorities saying a young carer cannot receive an assessment unless they are aged eight or over, despite there being no minimum age for a young carer in the legislation.

We are particularly concerned that young carers from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those with more intensive caring roles are at risk of even more significant inequalities in their life opportunities.

Recognition of young carers and young adult carers within legislation and policy developments, such as the inclusion of caring status in the School Census and by UCAS, is welcome. However, the lack of awareness of young carers demonstrated by the School Census, where 79% of schools did not record any young carers, shows how much more needs to be done. So does the fact that there are still around 15,000 children caring for more than 50 hours a week and that young carers are less likely to go to higher education or enter employment than their peers.

Our inquiry has highlighted the urgent need for cross-government action to improve the life chances for all young carers and young adult carers. But this issue cannot be just for the national Government to tackle. It requires the continued support of parliamentary colleagues across both houses. It also requires collective action at a national and local level from various actors, including local authorities, health providers, education settings, employers and regulators. Too many young carers are unidentified and unsupported, and as a result, are left feeling that they lack any real choices or opportunities to shape the direction of their futures. As an APPG, we are clear this has to change.



**Duncan Baker**  
**MP, Inquiry**  
**Chair**



**Paul Blomfield**  
**MP, APPG**  
**Chair**



**Emma,**  
**Inquiry**  
**Co-chair**



**Ruby,**  
**Inquiry**  
**Co-chair**

# KEY FINDINGS

Key findings summarised from the evidence that stakeholders submitted to the inquiry included:

**Identification** of young carers and young adult carers needs to improve on a national scale. Evidence to the inquiry highlighted how young carers are left for many years without support. Evidence submitted by Carers Trust<sup>1</sup> cited a snapshot survey which found that it took on average three years for young carers to be linked into any support, with some young carers caring for more than 10 years before being identified.

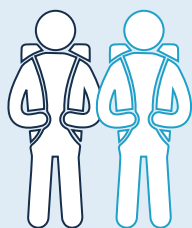


## THE 2021 CENSUS IDENTIFIED

**127,176** YOUNG CARERS AND  
**229,690** YOUNG ADULT CARERS.

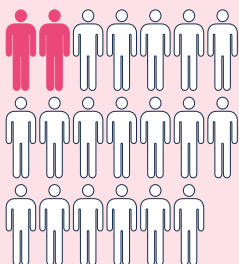
The 2021 Census figure is likely a significant **underestimation** due to the methodology of the Census, where the survey is completed by heads of households who are less likely to identify their young children as carers.

Furthermore, the first year of School Census data relating to young carers was released in June 2023. The data showed significant under-reporting of the number of young carers in schools. When schools were asked to record whether a pupil was a young carer, nationally:



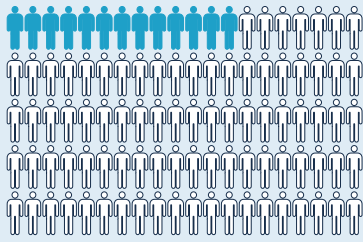
**38,983** PUPILS  
WERE RECORDED AS YOUNG  
CARERS, REPRESENTING  
**0.5%** OF THE PUPIL POPULATION.

In contrast, when young people were asked whether they have caring responsibilities, the BBC and the University of Nottingham suggest that:



**10%** OF ALL PUPILS  
WILL PROVIDE HIGH OR VERY HIGH  
LEVELS OF CARE - EQUATING TO  
AT LEAST **2** YOUNG CARERS  
IN EVERY CLASS.<sup>2</sup>

This is similar to other recent surveys of young people, such as the COVID Social Mobility and Opportunities study, which reported that:



**13% OF ALL PUPILS  
SURVEYED HAD CARING  
RESPONSIBILITIES.<sup>3</sup>**

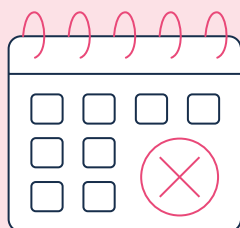
Language is particularly crucial in the identification of young carers and young adult carers. This is because many young carers and their families don't identify themselves or their children as young carers, thinking of them instead as young people helping or supporting someone with aspects of their daily living related to their disability, health condition(s) or addiction. This is an essential consideration when looking to boost identification.

**Access to support:** There is significant regional variation in the provision of support for young carers and young adult carers. **Evidence highlighted that access to support is a postcode lottery for young carers and young adult carers.** This includes access to statutory support, such as young carer assessments and transition assessments, and the availability of dedicated young carer and young adult carer support.

Evidence collected also raised concerns about the lack of measures to ensure legal duties relating to young and young adult carers are being met. It highlighted the significant waiting lists for assessments and support in some local areas. Some young carer services are so stretched they are reluctant to raise further awareness of young carers. They stated that they are currently struggling to meet existing demand.

Lastly, the inquiry found that support within settings, such as education and employment, is geographically variable. The evidence we collected demonstrates the need to monitor and evaluate support for young carers and young adult carers across all regions to better understand and address gaps in access to support.


**Education:** Young carers and young adult carers experience distinct challenges in their attendance, attainment and experiences within education settings.



**RESEARCH BY MYTIME FOUND  
THAT YOUNG CARERS IN THEIR  
LOCAL PILOT PROGRAMME  
MISS AN AVERAGE OF  
27 SCHOOL DAYS PER  
ACADEMIC YEAR.<sup>4</sup>**


Furthermore, research by The Children's Society found that young carers perform worse in their GCSEs than peers without a caring role.<sup>5</sup> A lack of awareness of caring roles by education professionals leads to the inflexibility of schools in responding to the impact of caring on studies. This was a common theme in the evidence we received. Young carers also highlighted the need for greater awareness amongst other young people in schools.

**Further and higher education:** Research submitted by Rebecca Lacey (Reader, St George's, University of London) found that:



**YOUNG ADULT CARERS ARE SUBSTANTIALLY (38%) LESS LIKELY TO ACHIEVE A UNIVERSITY DEGREE THAN THEIR PEERS WITHOUT A CARING ROLE.**

Furthermore, the likelihood of obtaining a university degree decreases with the increasing number of hours spent caring per week:



**THOSE CARING FOR FOUR HOURS PER WEEK ARE 47% LESS LIKELY TO HAVE A UNIVERSITY DEGREE QUALIFICATION, WHILE THOSE CARING FOR 35 HOURS OR MORE A WEEK ARE 86% LESS LIKELY TO HAVE A DEGREE QUALIFICATION.<sup>6</sup>**

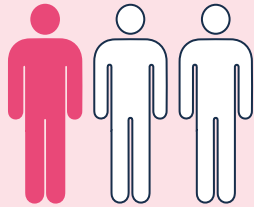
Furthermore, the Learning and Work Institute found those with caring responsibilities are:



**FIVE TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DROP OUT OF COLLEGE THAN THEIR PEERS WITHOUT A CARING ROLE.<sup>7</sup>**

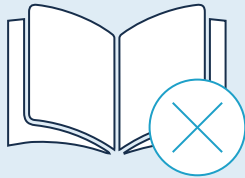


**Employment:** Young carers and young adult carers are less likely to be employed than their peers without a caring role. This is particularly true for those who provide more hours of care per week. Youth Employment UK's Youth Voice Census<sup>8</sup> found that:



**32.9% OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CARING RESPONSIBILITIES SURVEYED WERE CURRENTLY NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEET) COMPARED TO 5.3% WHO WERE NOT CARERS.**

Furthermore, it also found that:



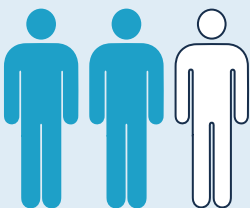
**40% OF REGISTERED CARERS AND 31.3% OF UNREGISTERED CARERS HAD SPENT OVER 18 MONTHS BEING NEET.**

However, research submitted by Rebecca Lacey (St George's), found that where young adult carers completed a university degree, they had no apparent disadvantage in entering work relative to peers without a caring role.<sup>9</sup> This highlights the need to ensure higher education is a genuine option for young carers. It also shows the importance of providing proper support to young adult carers at university to ensure they finish their course and obtain their degree.

**Health and wellbeing:** Research by the Sutton Trust found that:



**YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CARING RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE A HIGHER PREVALENCE OF SELF-HARM (25%) THAN NON-CARERS (17%).**



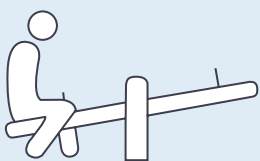
**FURTHERMORE, OF THOSE WHO SELF-HARM, YOUNG CARERS WERE MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY TO DO SO IN AN ATTEMPT TO TAKE THEIR OWN LIFE COMPARED TO THEIR PEERS WITHOUT A CARING ROLE (17% COMPARED TO 7%).<sup>10</sup>**

An NHS Digital study found that:



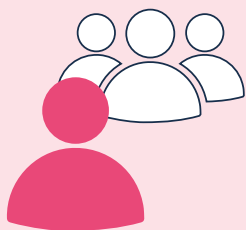
**YOUNG CARERS AND  
YOUNG ADULT CARERS HAVE A  
HIGHER PREVALENCE OF ANXIETY  
AND DEPRESSION (13%)  
THAN NON-CARERS (8%).<sup>11</sup>**

**Participation in social and leisure activities:** The Survey of Adult Carers in England found that:



**19% OF YOUNG ADULT CARERS  
SAID THEY HAVE LITTLE SOCIAL CONTACT  
WITH PEOPLE AND FEEL ISOLATED.<sup>12</sup>**

In a survey by Carers Trust:



**40% OF YOUNG CARERS  
AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS  
SAID THAT CARING 'ALWAYS' OR  
'USUALLY' AFFECTS HOW MUCH TIME  
THEY CAN SPEND WITH THEIR FRIENDS.<sup>13</sup>**

Research by Rebecca Lacey (St George's), finds that caring impacts the number of friends young adult carers have in the short term.<sup>14</sup>

**Finances:** Young carers and young adult carers are more likely to live in financially disadvantaged families.<sup>15</sup> For some, the cost-of-living crisis has exacerbated stress over managing household budgets.

In a Carers Trust survey:



**32% OF YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS SAID THEY EITHER 'ALWAYS' OR 'USUALLY' FACE ADDITIONAL COSTS BECAUSE THEY ARE A CARER**



**57% SAID THAT THEY ARE EITHER 'ALWAYS' OR 'USUALLY' WORRYING ABOUT THE COST OF LIVING AND THINGS BECOMING MORE EXPENSIVE.<sup>16</sup>**



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**Based on the evidence we received, the APPG for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers makes the following recommendations:**

## **1. National Carers Strategy**

- A cross-government National Carers Strategy is urgently required, with a dedicated section and resourced action plan relating to young carers and young adult carers.
- This should focus on the priority areas identified through this inquiry, such as:
  - Training and dedicated staff are needed within education, workplace and health settings, such as mental health. These professionals should have strategic responsibility and oversight for identifying and implementing appropriate support for young carers and student carers.
  - Access to a dedicated range of support for young carers, young adult carers and their families in every local authority.
  - Improving access to financial support for young adult carers.

**2.** The Government should **commission an independent ten-year review of the difference the Children and Families Act 2014 and Care Act 2014 have made for unpaid carers**, including young carers and young adult carers. The Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care should use the findings of this review to inform new practice guidance relating to young carers and the two pieces of legislation.

- 3.** Ahead of any new National Carers Strategy, the Government should work with young carers and young adult carers to set out its immediate plans to **improve early identification, increase access to support for young carers and reduce the numbers providing inappropriate or excessive levels of care.** Based on the evidence submitted to this inquiry, we propose this plan should include, as a minimum:
- Improving reporting and accountability for statutory duties relating to young carers and young adult carers. This should include recording and publishing the number of young carer assessments and transition assessments for young adult carers carried out each year.
  - New guidance and awareness-raising campaigns to support earlier identification and a whole-setting approach to support young carers within schools, colleges and universities, including a requirement for all education institutions to have a staff lead for young carers as with pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
  - Increasing the identification of young carers amongst professionals providing health and social care support to adults with care needs.
  - Improving access to support for young carers and young adult carers. As part of this, the Government should:
    - Ensure funding is appropriate to deliver the level of support required, ringfenced for dedicated support for young carers and young adult carers
    - Hold local authorities to account for measuring and delivering against support needs of young carers and young adult carers, in line with legislation
    - Set out how the Families First for Children Pathfinder will improve whole-family support for young carers.

- 4.** The Government should formally **support the development and implementation of the first UK-wide Covenant for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers.** Learning from the existing covenants for care leavers and the Armed Forces community, this Covenant is intended to build on the principles of the draft Commonwealth Charter for young carers and set out the outcomes from which all young carers and young adult carers should benefit.
- The Government should work with businesses, civil society, local authorities and education providers to encourage their sign-up to the Covenant and support its aims, demonstrating their commitment to a fair future for young and young adult carers.

# BACKGROUND

**This is the first-ever parliamentary inquiry on young carers and young adult carers. It has been chaired by Duncan Baker MP and two young carer co-chairs – Emma and Ruby – and supported by Paul Blomfield MP and a group of 11 Youth Advisors.**

The inquiry focused on the impact of caring on young carers and young adult carers' short- and long-term life opportunities. It covered a wide range of outcome areas such as education, training and employment, finances, health and wellbeing, and having time to do things they want outside of their caring role. It also focused on what support is available to young carers and young adult carers and how well access to assessments and support is working in practice.

The inquiry used the following definition of young carer and young adult carer:

**“A young carer is someone aged under 18 who cares for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an alcohol or substance misuse problem, cannot cope without the young carer's support. Young adult carers are aged 16 to 25, who may have different support needs to young carers as they become adults.”**

There was an online call for evidence, which was then followed by four evidence hearings, one of which was exclusively for young carers. The inquiry received 71 written submissions of evidence from various stakeholders, including academic researchers, local carer organisations, charities, think tanks, and schools, as well as hearing from parents of young carers and young adult carers. We also heard from over 400 young carers through in-person and online consultations and direct evidence from young people.

A full breakdown of stakeholders who provided evidence to the inquiry is included in [Appendix 1](#).

# HOW ARE THE LIFE OPPORTUNITIES OF YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS IMPACTED?

## Identification

Written and oral evidence referenced particular concerns around the lack of identification of young people with a caring role within education settings, adult social care services, and health settings – in particular, GPs, hospitals and adult mental health services.

Evidence submitted by Carers Trust cited a snapshot survey which found that it took on average three years for young carers to be linked into any support, with some young carers caring for more than 10 years before being identified.<sup>17</sup>

The first year of School Census data relating to young carers was released in June 2023. The data showed significant under-reporting of the number of young carers in schools. When schools were asked to record whether a pupil was a young carer, nationally, 38,983 pupils were recorded as young carers, representing 0.5% of the pupil population. 79% of schools recorded having no young carers in their school. In contrast, when young people were asked whether they have caring responsibilities, the BBC suggests that 10% of all pupils will provide high or very high levels of care – equating to two young carers in every primary school class.<sup>18</sup>

Identifying and understanding caring roles is paramount in education, the workplace, health services and community organisations. These are the spaces young carers and young adult carers are likely to interact with and, therefore, where they may be identified as having a caring role as early as possible. Family Action and Young Carers National Voice told the inquiry:

**“There is often still a reactive approach, where support is not provided until major issues become apparent – practitioners ask about further issues and realise the extent of the caring role. We need to be having these conversations sooner. This is why it is so important education and primary care have the correct systems in place to identify and support young carers.”**

**Family Action**

**“We can’t expect the onus to be on young carers to come forward. Schools are the eyes and ears and should be attuned to the fact pupils may have caring responsibilities. Schools should expect there to be young carers in their schools as a baseline.”**

**Young Carers National Voice**

Our Time<sup>19</sup> highlighted how, concerning identifying young carers by health professionals, the UK is behind countries such as The Netherlands and Norway. Both these countries have introduced requirements for health professionals to consider if adults with mental health problems have children. Our Time concludes the Government should ensure that safeguarding guidance, such as Working Together to Safeguard Children and guidance related to mental health and addiction, should emphasise the critical role of professionals working with adults with health and care needs in identifying young carers.

## **Access to support**

Young carers' and young adult carers' access to assessments and support was a priority area for this inquiry. The evidence received by the inquiry has clearly shown that young carers and young adult carers are currently in a 'postcode lottery' of whether they receive support.

There is also a lack of national evidence on what works best to identify and support young carers and young adult carers.<sup>20</sup>





## Young carer assessments and transition assessments

As a result of the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities are legally required to provide Young Carers Needs Assessments for young carers living in their area. This could be offered by a social worker, young carers support worker or someone else who helps the young person. The assessment should determine:

- whether it is appropriate for the young carer to care for someone else
- whether they are providing inappropriate or excessive care
- whether they want to be a carer
- the impact of the person being cared for's needs on the young carer's wellbeing, welfare, education and development.

The Care Act 2014 also states that local authorities must provide transition assessments for young adult carers if the carer is likely to have support needs when they turn 18, and there is a significant benefit in receiving an assessment to help them think about their futures and transition to adulthood.

There is a lack of evidence in monitoring young carer assessments and transition assessments for young adult carers. Previous research by Professor Saul Becker (Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Manchester Metropolitan University) found that only 10-20% of young carers have ever had a statutory assessment. Assessments are one-off events rather than an ongoing process with periodic reviews.<sup>21</sup>

Submissions to the inquiry described how there was inconsistency in whether the young person receives an assessment or any follow-up support from such assessments. Often, these are contingent on local offers, such as whether the local area has a dedicated young carer or young adult carer service. They are dependent on capacity and having the necessary funding to be able to provide support:

**“ We have a waiting list for assessments as we support over 500 young carers, and for the past seven months, have only had one worker.”**

**Sheffield Young Carers**

Professionals within local carer organisations and young carers told the inquiry that young carers are frequently placed on growing waitlists for assessments, some lasting six months or longer. Furthermore, they stated that commonly, if the young person receives an assessment, it is often not matched with follow-up dedicated services or support to help them.

Young carers told the inquiry about their experiences of assessments:

**“ I accessed a young carers needs assessment – the benefits were practically non-existent... not much was offered. The majority of support came from staff [in local carer organisation] who went out of their way to offer support and advice to anyone who needed it – I can imagine drawing a bad hand within your area may lead to a large deficit of support compared to others. I didn’t know of any other support available.”**

Young carer

Young carers and young adult carers said that having dedicated support to talk about the future planning of their caring role or preparing for changes was not something that was routinely offered, or that they even often knew about:

**“ We aren’t hearing about planning for the future happening effectively and regularly. Planning for the future is a topic sibling carers turn to us for advice on – legal responsibilities, mental capacity, power of attorney etc. Many siblings feel they are given no choice about their future caring roles and have to find their way independently through the system.”**

Sibs

Evidence regarding local authorities highlighted two further challenges where young carers experience difficulties accessing support when needed.

Firstly, support for young carers in some areas is restricted to those defined as the ‘primary carer’. One local authority’s website states that the young carer service has the following criteria:

**“ The young carer must be in a situation where there is no other significant adult in the home providing the main caring role or undertake tasks for siblings, either because a parent is unable to do so due to their ill health or as respite for a parent who has a disabled child.”**

Restricting eligibility criteria for support is problematic for certain groups of young carers, such as sibling carers, who are likely to share their caring role and young carers where the ‘primary carer’ is also working.



Secondly, several local authorities define young carers as having a minimum age of 8. However, the 2021 Census identified 7,389 children aged 5-7 who were providing unpaid care; 1746 were providing 50 or more hours of unpaid care a week.<sup>22</sup> This number is likely an underestimation due to the methodology of the Census, where the survey is completed by heads of households who are less likely to identify their young children as carers.

Furthermore, evidence submitted by The Children's Society found that despite legislation and guidance outlining the duties of local authorities to carry out young carers' transition assessments before they turn 18, 35% of local authorities reported adult services completed this after the young person has reached adulthood. In reality, this means that these assessments are carer assessments rather than transition assessments, and this results in young carers missing out on the benefits of an assessment that looks distinctly at their transition into adulthood. A further 35% of local authorities reported that they didn't know when to complete an assessment with the young carer.<sup>23</sup> Findings in focus groups and interviews highlighted that practitioners were unsure how these assessments differed, when they should occur, and whether they were part of a young carers needs assessment. A young carer told the inquiry:

**“Most young carers I know unfortunately have never heard of a transitions assessment, so I don't think they are currently very accessible, or there are insufficient means or resources to offer them to young carers.”**

**Young carer**

There is no statutory guidance on what a young carer needs assessment should look like. Recommendations from the inquiry highlighted the need for standardised assessment frameworks and training for local authority staff providing assessments to ensure consistency across the country and accountability and monitoring of whether these assessments are taking place and, most importantly, what difference they are making.

Furthermore, dedicated funding is needed to ensure service providers across the country have the resources to conduct assessments routinely and offer the required support following an assessment.

Moreover, stakeholders highlighted the need for whole-family approaches in assessments to try and address some of the practical and emotional issues that lead to the reliance on the young carer, better working between adult and children's social care services, and partnership working between health partners and local carer organisations to ensure that the young person is effectively supported.

### **Policy spotlight: Housing issues for young adult carers**



Research by Commonweal Housing, Quaker Social Action and the Learning and Work Institute found that the risk of homelessness amongst young adult carers is often high and hidden. Examples included, in crises, tension or breakdowns in family relationships at home, if the person they are caring for passes away or is moved into supported accommodation or a hospice. They state that the UK's current housing crisis exacerbates this risk and that young adult carers are more likely to come from lower-income households and feel socially isolated.

This research highlights the need for housing considerations in young carers assessments and transition assessments for young adult carers. The report states that there has been a lack of awareness amongst practitioners of the housing needs of young adult carers, which often leaves them unmet and contributes to youth homelessness. It outlines the need for partnerships between local carer services and organisations such as housing providers to ensure that young adult carers receive appropriate support for their housing needs.

## Dedicated young carer and young adult carer support

Dedicated young carer and young adult carer services were highlighted throughout submissions to the inquiry as having a positive impact on young carers and young adult carers. They were spoken about as vital lifelines, often offering a safe space for young people to meet others going through similar experiences, providing peer-to-peer support, or the chance to talk to staff members about what is going on at home.

However, the availability of dedicated services for young carers, especially young adult carers, is geographically variable. The availability of these dedicated support services is often contingent on funding and commissioning practices in local authorities.

As part of Carers Trust's 2023 Network Data Exchange<sup>24</sup> survey of local carer organisations that provide young carers support, 80% reported demand outstripping capacity. A further 70% reported fundraising and sustainability as a challenge. Spurgeons told the inquiry about challenges they were anticipating, which were similarly echoed by Barnardo's:

**“The number of referrals received that need to be assessed outweighs the level of resource in place to complete these assessments. This will only increase as schools respond to their legal requirement to identify young carers – but with the same support levels in the already stretched organisation. We are increasing the support and training provided to schools to encourage them to develop their own young carer support opportunities.”**

**Spurgeons**

**“A dichotomy exists between the need to raise awareness and better identification of young carers, with the reality of delayed interventions and support being deployed due to capacity.”**

**Barnardo's**

With increasing pressure on local authority budgets, many stakeholders from local carer organisations told the inquiry that they were worried about support only focusing on the statutory aspects, meaning that young carers and young adult carers would miss out on the bespoke support they receive.

In evidencing the positive impact of dedicated age-appropriate support, a young carer told the inquiry:

**“I know I would have struggled more without Young Carers and the friends I made there. It would have been a much more lonely experience and, frankly, a dangerous one. I was battling depression and suicidal ideation. Being a young carer put a spanner in my life development. I’ve had to go back and unlearn a lot – my support worker at the time pushed me to go to university, and she told me, ‘There’s a world outside of this, you know’. Young Carers always had my back.”**

Young carer

## Education

For many young carers, school offers respite, providing a dedicated space away from their caring role. However, young carers told the inquiry that too often, they are struggling to balance their education with their caring responsibilities. Evidence shows young carers are at risk of poorer attendance, attainment and more challenging experiences within education settings, such as experiencing bullying or social isolation:

**“A caring role can be incredibly mentally taxing and time-consuming – often causing absences, ostracisation and impacting our mental health. We are often put in the situation of taking on an adult’s duty whilst balancing this with being in full-time education – it puts us at a disadvantage.”**

Young carer

Research by The Children’s Society found that 27% of young carers miss school or experience educational difficulties. This figure is 40% where children care for a relative with drug or alcohol problems.<sup>25</sup> Data from a MYTIME Young Carers study, based on five secondary schools participating in their Level Up Programme,<sup>26</sup> found that young carers have double the absence rate (14.1%) compared to non-young carers (7.7%). Young carers were found to miss an average of 27 school days per academic year. Furthermore, the same research found that young carers have double the persistent absence rate of peers without a caring role (41.6% compared to 19.7%).



Poorer attendance can contribute to several poor outcomes. These can include:

- Being at risk of lower educational achievement
- Being at risk of experiencing issues of low self-esteem and confidence in their academic abilities
- Experiencing limited opportunities to build social skills whilst at school. For example, building friendships with peers or maximising opportunities in school compared to peers without a caring role. This includes engaging in extracurricular activities, school clubs or trips.

The research by MYTIME found that young carers are twice as likely (11.2% versus 22.6%) to leave primary school below Age Related Expectations and are twice as unlikely (23.5% versus 12.5%) to meet Greater Depth Student – working above average. This shows that young carers may struggle in essential subjects like reading, writing and mathematics, putting them at a disadvantage compared to peers when they start secondary school.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, research by The Children’s Society<sup>28</sup> found that young carers have poorer academic performance in their GCSEs than their peers without a caring role. This highlights the need for routine monitoring of young carer attendance and attainment locally and nationally.

There is a particular concern for young carers in education other than school and the impact caring has on them and their access to support. There is very little research or monitoring of this issue<sup>29</sup> and the impact the caring role has on engagement and attainment.

Young carers told us they find it difficult to concentrate in school, with their minds worrying about what is happening at home. They are often tired, stressed and anxious at school due to their caring role, which can impact their educational performance. They frequently experience disruptions within their school, being called upon to support a sibling or contact their family. Research submitted by MYTIME found that in their area, two-thirds of young carers reported experiencing bullying in school.<sup>30</sup> This was similar to research submitted by Professor Saul Becker (Manchester Metropolitan University), which found that 36% of adolescent young carers reported being bullied about their caring role.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, young carers spoke about how they can find it challenging to ask for help with their education at home. Often, they do not want to add extra stress to their family members who may be busy helping with the caring role. It can be challenging to keep to strict deadlines for homework and coursework if their caring role changes, or they might not have a dedicated quiet space at home to complete their studies. Many said they didn't want to feel that they were adding extra burden on their family by having to worry about them falling behind:

**“ Completing my A-levels was incredibly difficult. They were during the period of COVID-19. I couldn't focus on my online classes as I was at home constantly undertaking my caring role, which was distracting. It was a stressful time... I feel ashamed of my grades, and it is disappointing how unsupportive my school seemed to be about my caring role.”**

**Young carer**

Evidence emphasised the vital role education providers play in being part of the solution for young carers and young adult carers. Evidence shows that where schools do identify young carers, it is beneficial for them. They will likely have better educational journeys, such as better wellbeing and health outcomes.

Evidence submitted by Carers Trust found that due to the Young Carers in School (YCiS) Programme, there had been improvements in young carers' relationship with education and better meeting of their needs. In the survey, 63% of schools in the evaluation reported improvement in the achievement of young carers. Schools also reported improved wellbeing (85%), young carers being happier (83%) and more confident (83%).<sup>32</sup>





### **Good practice: Young Carers in School Initiative**

The Young Carers in School (YCiS) initiative, jointly run by Carers Trust and The Children's Society, is an England-wide programme that equips schools to identify and support young carers. It shares good practice, provides relevant tools and training and celebrates good outcomes achieved by schools for young carers.

As a result of YCiS, 94% of YCiS schools said that staff were more likely to know what to do if they identified a young carer, and 94% had a better understanding of the support required for young carers.

However, evidence to the inquiry demonstrated that, at present, school support is incredibly inconsistent in its provision across the country, with schools operating with different policies:

**“I’ve been to two different schools – my current school has a young carers champion, a young carers group, and they talk about young carers a lot. At my last school – nothing.”**

**Young carer**

Carers Trust found that across the UK, 40% of young carers and young adult carers said they either ‘never’ or ‘not often’ get support in their school, college or university.<sup>33</sup>

The 2023 School Census reported that 79% of schools in England recorded having no young carers in their Census return. This highlights the significant improvement needed in identifying young carers in education settings. This would help schools monitor critical educational metrics, such as attendance and attainment, and enable them to check in and offer support when young carers need it. This is likely to improve young carers’ educational experiences and outcomes.

## **Access to further and higher education, training and employment**

Being at risk of adverse educational outcomes has an impact that extends beyond the school years. Evidence to the inquiry has highlighted how issues with attendance, attainment and experiences within educational settings have a distinct effect on the likelihood of young carers pursuing or continuing their studies beyond 18. It also impacts young carers’ and young adult carers’ experiences entering and remaining in employment and their experiences within the workplace.



Young carers and young adult carers told us about their experiences in deciding whether to pursue further or higher education. For many, especially those who experience difficulties securing alternative care for the person they care for, thinking about further or higher education can be an overwhelming and stressful experience. Research submitted by Rebecca Lacey (St George's),<sup>34</sup> found that young adult carers are significantly (38%) less likely to achieve a university degree than their peers. The likelihood of obtaining a degree decreased with the increasing number of hours caring per week. Their research found that those who cared for up to four hours per week were 47% less likely to have a university degree qualification. Those who cared for 35 hours or more a week were 86% less likely to have a degree qualification.

Young carers and young adult carers told us about some of the difficulties they experience in accessing further and higher education opportunities. These included:

1. Feeling at a disadvantage in the application process, such as personal statements for higher education opportunities, due to missing out on extracurricular activities:

**“My caring responsibilities mean that I don’t have time to do any extracurricular activities which would make my application stand out.”**

Young carer

2. Feeling stressed and overwhelmed about the prospect of leaving the person they care for. Or not having the option to move away, thus limiting choices in what educational opportunities they can pursue or removing the ability to pursue further or higher education altogether:

**“I’d feel very guilty about leaving mum on her own. I know I can save money and continue to support my family if I stay home, but this puts more strain on me and limits my social life. I want to have the same university experience as everyone else – but that would be selfish. I’d feel guilty when mum would ring me to tell me it’s hard.”**

**Young carer**

3. Young carers and young adult carers spoke about feeling stressed about the financial difficulties they may experience in pursuing further education opportunities. Research submitted by Carers Trust analysing the COSMO study<sup>35</sup> found that of those who stated they were unlikely to go to university, 32% of young carers said the reason they would be unlikely to go is because they could not afford it, compared to 22% of young people with no declared caring responsibilities. The same research found that 24% of young adult carers in school said they could not afford to go to college or university.<sup>36</sup>

Young adult carers told the inquiry that they were worried about the cost of travelling to and from home to fulfil their caring role. This concern regarding transport costs is particularly acute for carers from low-income families during the current cost-of-living crisis.

Moreover, The Children’s Society highlighted how young carers are not recognised as a vulnerable group in the 16 to 19 bursary scheme and aren’t entitled to dedicated financial support. Furthermore, due to the eligibility criteria of Carers Allowance restricting study to 21 hours per week, young adult carers often have to choose between their education and financial support.<sup>37</sup> This is a particular challenge for the new ‘gold standard’ T-level qualifications, which require more than 21 hours of study each week. Learning and Work Institute stated that for many families, £76.75 per week is a significant chunk of their household income that they simply cannot afford to give up, pushing some young adult carers away from education or into financial hardship by removing this income.<sup>38</sup>

4. Similar to findings on education, some young adult carers struggle to balance their further or higher education with their caring role. Carers Trust research found that 39% of young adult carers said they ‘always’ or ‘usually’ struggle to balance caring with their education work.<sup>39</sup> Research shows that young adult carers are four times more likely to drop out of college than peers without a caring role.<sup>40</sup> Carers Trust highlighted how, despite the increasing evidence about challenges faced by young carers post-16, young carers are not currently included on the Individualised Learner Record – the equivalent of the School Census for Further Education and training providers.

Evidence highlighted how, when pursuing higher education, support for young adult carers is often promoted as part of widening participation schemes at open days and is sometimes part of admission offers. However, once young adult carers start at the institution; there is little signposting or active outreach to specialist support.<sup>41</sup> For some young adult carers, this may be a key reason for not continuing their studies. Similarly, in situations where they are uncertain about whether they will receive support, it can be why they forego the opportunity altogether:

**“I’m not sure what options are available to me as support.”**

**“Even if I were to reach out, I’m not sure who I would speak to at the university.”**

**“There’s not much I can do at university other than take a year out.”**

**“When I searched for the word ‘carer’ on the university website, it said ‘Did you mean career?’”**

**Quotes from young adult carers as part of Carers Trust evidence**





### **Good practice: Driving Change in Further Education project**

Learning and Work Institute, in partnership with The Carers Federation, worked to improve young adult carers' support in further education. They worked with 39 further education colleges and college groups and three universities across the UK, providing tailored support to review provisions for young adult carers and implement actions to enable them to achieve better outcomes.

The project resulted in a range of positive outcomes for colleges and young adult carers, including:

- Improved identification of young adult carers
- Increased staff confidence in recognising and supporting young adult carers
- Improved relationships with local carers services and other local partners, resulting in more joined-up support for young adult carers during their time at college
- External recognition of the support offered to young adult carers at their college through the achievement of the Quality Standard in Carer Support (QSCS).

The impact of caring can also extend beyond education and into young adult carers' experiences in entering and remaining in the workplace, including paid work, training and apprenticeships.

Research by Nicola Brimblecombe (Assistant Professorial Research Fellow, London School of Economics) found that young adults aged 16-25 who provided care were 2.4 times less likely to be employed at follow-up compared to non-carers. Furthermore, research submitted by Rebecca Lacey (St George's)<sup>42</sup> found that providing care after full-time education age negatively influenced the likelihood of young adult carers entering employment. The impact is more pronounced for those who provide intensive care.

Youth Employment UK's Youth Voice Census 2023<sup>43</sup> found that 32.9% of young people with caring responsibilities were currently NEET compared to 5.3% who were not carers. Furthermore, it also found that 40% of registered carers and 31.3% of unregistered carers had spent over 18 months being NEET.

In terms of experiences within the workplace, 45% of young carers and young adult carers told Carers Trust that they either 'always' or 'usually' struggle to balance caring with paid work.<sup>44</sup> Within this inquiry, young adult carers told us about their experiences of feeling restricted in their

choices of entering and remaining within the workplace. Some of the key challenges included:

**1. Getting relevant work experience for their CVs and applications.**

Young adult carers told us young people typically secure work experience during the school holidays. However, research by Action for Children and Carers Trust found that school holidays are periods where caring roles can intensify for young carers and young adult carers, with more than a quarter of young carers saying they spend more than 10 hours on a typical day caring.<sup>45</sup> Young adult carers told us they felt they were at a disadvantage in building up their employment portfolio and competing against their peers without a caring role for employment opportunities:

Linked to this, young adult carers and local carer organisations said caring roles are often not seen as employable skills that young carers and young adult carers have had to learn. Submissions encouraged a broader view of caring as a valuable skill set. In promoting this outlook, young adult carers' confidence and self-esteem may be boosted:

**“Many young carers develop soft skills, such as time management and the ability to problem solve. Many young carers have a level of maturity beyond their years and are committed and determined to achieve.”**

**Family Action**

**“If they could see their caring skills as transferable and valuable to employers across different sectors – this would positively influence their aspirations and subsequent progression pathways. They see themselves as lacking compared to their peers.”**

**Learning and Work Institute**

- 2. Some young adult carers have restricted choices over the types of jobs they can apply for.** Firstly, restricted geographical mobility limits the job opportunities they can apply for. Secondly, they feel they need to choose part-time or zero-hour contracts, which are seen as more flexible to fit employment around their caring role. This is a challenge for opportunities such as apprenticeships, which are typically offered full-time.<sup>46</sup>

**“They sometimes choose an employer close to where the cared-for person lives. This could prevent them from accessing a workplace for which they have the skill, qualification or interest.”**

**Southampton Council Inclusion Service**

**“We find that young adult carers tend to take part-time work and can move around jobs... they can find themselves in low paid, unskilled and insecure work. Opportunities for promotion or advancement are very limited.”**

**Holt Youth Project**

- 3. There may be apprehension about declaring their caring responsibilities in their job applications and when in the workplace.** This can stem from feelings of awkwardness in bringing the topic up or fear of being seen as a risk or unreliable in having to split their time. They also fear being seen as ‘less dedicated’ than others without caring responsibilities:

**“Work doesn’t know about my caring role – there’s never been an opportunity to make it clear, and it’s not been brought up in conversations.”**

**“I worry about disclosing my caring role because I worry about facing discrimination.”**

**Young Carers National Voice**

- 4. Some young adult carers must miss work days, often at short notice, due to their caring responsibilities.** This can be a source of stress, especially when they have inflexible schedules and if they have not declared their caring responsibilities to their employer. Young adult carers are worried that this impacts their job performance or chances of securing opportunities for promotion.
- 5. Young adult carers spoke of the need for reasonable adjustments within their workplace, such as acceptance of sometimes being late, missing work at short notice because of an emergency, or needing to use their mobile phones during their shifts.** Several young adult carers worried they would be seen as ‘unprofessional’ if these situations occurred and feared this would put them at a disadvantage in the workplace.

Sibs spoke about the need for employment support to reflect the wide range of caring responsibilities someone may have. Such support could include extending policies beyond 'dependents' or those receiving Carers Allowance. These eligibility criteria may not apply to some young adult carers, such as sibling carers, even though they may still provide significant care.<sup>47</sup>

Research submitted by Rebecca Lacey (St George's),<sup>48</sup> found that where young adult carers completed a university degree, there is no apparent disadvantage in entering work relative to peers who aren't carers. Therefore, a practical conclusion from this research is that support into and through university or similar qualifications for young adult carers may help mitigate the long-term effects of young adult caring on entering work.

### **Good practice: Supporting young adult carers in the workplace: A guide for employers**



Learning and Work Institute have created a guide to help employers support young adult carers to gain and stay in work. It includes practical information, resources and case studies which demonstrate the types of support employers can offer to young adult carers.

## **Health and wellbeing**

Young carers and young adult carers report poorer physical and psychological health than their peers without a caring role.

The 2023 GP Patient Survey found a higher prevalence of long-term health conditions amongst carers aged 16-24 (43%) than their peers without a caring role (29%).<sup>49</sup> The 2021 Census also showed how young carers and young adult carers were more likely to report their health as either 'bad' or 'very bad' compared to their peers without caring responsibilities.<sup>50</sup>

Young carers and young adult carers told the inquiry about some of the challenges they were experiencing regarding their physical health, such as experiencing backache from conducting physical tasks like lifting and carrying the person they care for. Furthermore, young carers told us about their struggle to get support to manage their own physical condition as often, it doesn't feel as important as the person they care for:

**“As someone with a disability myself, it always feels like my needs are overlooked because I'm not as 'bad' as my sibling.”**

**Young carer**





Regarding mental health and wellbeing, for some, caring can be connected to feelings of stress, anxiety, shame, guilt, isolation and exhaustion. Many care for people who experience significant distress; some will experience grief and traumatic events at a young age. Young carers often carry heavy emotional burdens that may negatively impact their mental health.<sup>51</sup>

Carers Trust told the inquiry how, in their latest survey, 44% of young carers and young adult carers said they 'always' or 'usually' feel stressed because of their caring role. Furthermore, 38% said they 'always' or 'usually' feel worried because of their caring role, and 27% said they 'never' or 'not often' feel they get enough sleep.<sup>52</sup>

Research submitted by Rebecca Lacey (St George's), found that mental health deteriorates shortly after becoming a young adult carer, and this effect is more pronounced for this age group than becoming a carer at an older age.<sup>53</sup>

Furthermore, data in the Mental Health of Children and Young People (2017) reported differences in the prevalence of anxiety or depression among young carers and young adult carers. 13% of 11-19-year-olds with a caring role had a declared emotional disorder, such as anxiety or depression, compared to 8% of non-carers in the same age group.<sup>54</sup>

Sutton Trust research found that half of young people with caring responsibilities reported elevated psychological distress, as measured by the General Health Questionnaire, and that they were more likely to report this than young people with no caring responsibilities (50% versus 43%). Furthermore, **one in four (25%) young carers reported self-harming compared to 17% of non-carers**. Most worryingly, of those who self-harmed, **young carers were more than twice as likely to have made an attempt to end their life (17%)** compared to those without caring responsibilities (7%).<sup>55</sup> Similar data was found in the ME-WE 2020 study, where **28% of young carers thought about self-harm**

compared to 14% of peers without a caring role. Furthermore, a small but notable proportion of young carers also thought about harming the person they are looking after,<sup>56</sup> illustrating the significant distress many are experiencing.

In their submission, Our Time also highlighted the potential long-term impact of caring responsibilities on young carers. Evidence from NHS Digital found that having a parent with mental health difficulties makes it three times more likely a child will go on to develop mental health problems themselves.<sup>57</sup>

Young carers and young adult carers told us they struggle to talk about what they are experiencing at home, leading to them feeling isolated, ashamed and distressed.

There is an urgent need for professionals within mental health services to identify young carers proactively and to help young carers and young adult carers across the country access the required professional mental health support they need. Additionally, young carers must be supported in prioritising their self-care to ensure they can look after their health and wellbeing. This was summarised by a young carer who told us:

**“We don’t recognise our own needs. We tend to prioritise the needs of others, and it’s hard to recognise what we need – it feels shameful for us to focus on ourselves and to do something we want, which might take us away from our caring role. Young carers must recognise they are important and look after themselves – they should not be ashamed”.**

Young carer

Young carers told us about the struggles they were experiencing in trying to access mental health support. Firstly, due to the long waitlists in Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or other NHS services, often being over two years long; secondly, because they didn’t feel mental health professionals understood their roles:

**“I spoke to mental health services about my issues and was spoken to like a child. I felt this minimised my experiences.”**

Young Carer from Young Carers National Voice

**“For those who receive support, it isn’t always appropriate or with an understanding of the specific issues faced.”**

Sibs

In the young person's evidence hearing, young carers and young adult carers highlighted the importance of feeling understood by mental health professionals. They also highlighted the importance of peer-to-peer support in allowing young carers and young adult carers to talk about their caring role and how it affects them.

Our Time also highlighted the importance of information provision from mental health services for young carers supporting parents with a mental illness. This can help remove their misconceptions, such as thinking all mental illness is hereditary and can reduce levels of worry.<sup>58</sup>

### **Good practice: Top tips for mental health professionals and young carers**



Young carers from Young Carers National Voice created a top tips document for mental health professionals, including the need for health professionals to have specific young carer training and for crisis and discharge plans to be in accessible language so young carers know what to do before a crisis happens. This [top tips document](#) also includes [wording](#) for adult and child mental health services to identify young carers.

## **Participation in social and leisure activities**

Young carers and young adult carers experience many challenges in balancing their caring role with having a life outside of caring. This includes participating in social opportunities, making friends, having time for hobbies, or simply having time for themselves. These opportunities are essential for young people's social functioning and health.

Carers Trust research found that 40% of young carers and young adult carers said that caring 'always' or 'usually' affects how much time they can spend with their friends. It also found that 26% of young carers and young adult carers said that they either 'never' or 'not often' feel included in the things their friends do.<sup>59</sup> Data from the Survey of Adult Carers in England (2021-22) found that 19% of young adult carers said they have little social contact with people and feel socially isolated.<sup>60</sup>

Research submitted by Rebecca Lacey (St George's),<sup>61</sup> found that being a young adult carer impacted the number of close friends reported in the short term. This was a particular challenge for those caring for more hours per week. A Carers Trust (2023) survey found that 40% of young carers and young adult carers said that caring 'always' or 'usually' affects how much time they can spend with their friends, and 26% of young carers and young adult carers said that they either 'never' or 'not often' feel included in the things their friends do. Data from the Survey of Adult Carers in England (2021-22) found that 19% of young adult carers said they have little social contact with people and feel socially isolated.

Young carers and young adult carers talked about the challenges they experience in often needing to be close to home, being anxious about who would carry out the caring role if injured during sports, and feelings of anxiety and guilt about enjoying themselves away from their family:

**“ I felt both guilty and determined to make sure I saw friends – this was hard knowing my mother needed me at home. My conflicted feelings affected my relationship with my mum – I felt I was letting her down. I didn’t have much time to relax because when I was relaxing in my bedroom, she would ask for help.”**

**Young carer**

Furthermore, in more rural areas or for lower-income families, young carers and young adult carers said they struggled to access social opportunities.<sup>62</sup> They said they could not rely on their families for transport because their parents often couldn’t drive due to their care needs. Similarly, their parent might be busy looking after their sibling. If reliable public transportation wasn’t available in their local area or they couldn’t afford to pay for this transport, young carers and young adult carers said they often had to miss out on social opportunities compared to their peers without a caring role. A submission to the inquiry read:

**“ They experience a lifetime of coming second (or third, or fourth) to the needs of another. This often means that their interests and hobbies take less priority. Parents tell us that if money is short or if something has to give because of a crisis, it is usually the carer’s activity that will go because the parents see them as being understanding and resilient. Many struggle to talk to their friends or family”.**

**Sibs**

Furthermore, many organisations supporting young carers and young adult carers have to spend increasing levels of their limited resource on providing transport for young carers and young adult carers who otherwise would struggle to access support due to transportation limitations. Spending funds on this is a concern amongst the cost-of-living crisis and increasing costs:

**“We are currently supporting not an insignificant number of primary school-aged children for whom, other than attending school, our clubs are the only time they leave their homes. This transport is organised by our staff – they are collected directly from their homes in taxis.”**

**Action for Children**

Social activities are vital for mental health outcomes such as wellbeing, life satisfaction, happiness and anxiety. Ensuring young carers and young adult carers have access to breaks should be a priority support area. This is particularly important at certain times of the year, such as during school holidays, when, for many, their caring role intensifies, and they experience distinct challenges in having a life outside their caring role.<sup>63</sup> The Government should consider referencing young carers in its Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) guidance to local authorities to highlight the benefits the programme could provide young carers and to ensure the programme is promoted to local carer organisations. Providers of sports and leisure opportunities should also ensure they are ‘carer-aware’ and remove barriers to young carers participating.

Attending social opportunities within dedicated young carers and young adult carers support was highlighted as crucial in offering a space for young people to meet and be with people ‘who get it’. It often serves as an important space for peer-to-peer support. In a Carers Trust survey, 24% of young carers and young adult carers said<sup>64</sup> their friends did not understand their needs as a young carer or young adult carer either ‘very well’ or ‘at all’. Funding social opportunities through



dedicated young carers and young adult carers support can be vital in helping young carers and young adult carers feel less alone:

**“ It helps me feel like I have my own space and a break.”**

**“ It helps to be able to talk about it”.**

**Young carer quotes from the Young Carers Festival in England 2023, submitted by Carers Trust**

## **Finances**

Young carers and young adult carers are more likely to live in socio-economically disadvantaged households.

Research submitted by Rebecca Lacey (St George's),<sup>65</sup> found that young carers were more likely to be from households with lower income, where parents had lower educational qualifications and occupational class. The research found that those financially worse off are more likely to care and to be caring for more hours.

No young carer should be at risk of financial hardship because of their caring role. Young carers and young adult carers may have to pay for the additional costs of living in a household with disabilities and/or illness. This can include paying for required heating, washing or medical equipment. This is particularly worrisome for young carers and young adult carers during the cost of living crisis, where anxiety over managing the household budget is exacerbated for these young people. Carers Trust found that 32% of young carers and young adult carers said they 'always' or 'usually' face additional costs because they are a carer, and 57% said they either 'always' or 'usually' worry about the cost of living and things becoming more expensive.<sup>66</sup>

Carers Trust highlighted that young carers and young adult carers need to be recognised as a priority group within financial support schemes, such as bursaries, grants or scholarships. This would help ease some of the financial stress that young carers and young adult carers are experiencing. It would allow them more access to opportunities across outcome areas such as education, gaining employment skills, having time for themselves and accessing social opportunities.

One area particularly highlighted in the inquiry was the difference financial assistance for transportation makes to young and young adult carers. This is particularly important for those from financially disadvantaged backgrounds or who live in more rural areas where support, for instance, from their local carer organisation, might not be as accessible. Transportation assistance can include public transportation passes, taxis or driving lessons. Stakeholders also highlighted that young carers and young adult carers should be considered in applications for Motability vehicles, which could help them in their caring role. This could include dropping family members at appointments, picking up medicine or shopping.

# CONCLUSION

**This report shows how caring can significantly impact young people’s education, employment, health and wellbeing. Being a young carer can also greatly affect their future life chances compared to their peers. It shows that without proper identification and support, many young carers and young adult carers feel alone and are at risk of falling behind their peers without caring responsibilities.**

Urgent cross-government action is needed to ensure that the proper support is in place to ensure that caring responsibilities do not have a lasting impact on young carers’ life chances. Young carers and young adult carers must have real choices for their lives and futures.



# APPENDIX 1: LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

## Oral evidence

The APPG on Young Carers and Young Adult Carers conducted four oral evidence sessions with the following witnesses:

### **Monday 21 August 2023 (online)**

- 11 young carers and young adult carers

### **Thursday 7 September 2023 (online)**

- David Holmes CBE: CEO, Family Action
- Joanne Martin: Children's Services Manager – Birmingham Young Carers (Spurgeons)
- Professor Morag Farquhar: Professor of Palliative Care Research, University of East Anglia
- Professor Saul Becker, Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Founding Director of the Institute for Children's Futures Faculty of Health and Education, Manchester Metropolitan University

### **Tuesday 12 September 2023: First session**

- Anne McMunn: Professor of Social Epidemiology, University College London
- Aymen, a young adult carer
- Clare Kassa: CEO, Sibbs
- Dympna Cunnane: CEO, Our Time
- Rebecca Lacey, Reader, St George's, University of London

### **Tuesday 12 September 2023: Second session**

- Amy Woodworth – Social Researcher, Policy and Public Affairs, Barnardo's
- Kirsty McHugh – CEO, Carers Trust
- Krista Sharp – CEO, MYTIME Young Carers
- Thomas Cave – Policy and Impact Manager (Child Poverty and Inequality), The Children's Society



## Written evidence

The inquiry received written submissions from the following:

- We received ten direct evidence submissions from young carers and young adult carers including:
  - Amber
  - Freya
  - Holly
  - Mirrie
  - Sharandeep
  - Tessa
  - Young adult carers from Action for Family Carers
- 347 young carers took part in consultations at the England, Scotland and Wales Young Carers festivals
- We received 18 submissions from parents of young carers or young adult carers
- Action for Children
- Barnardo's
- Carers Resource
- Carers Trust
- Commonweal Housing
- Debbie Hustings
- Dr Amy Warhurst, University of Winchester
- Dr Ed Janes, Cardiff University
- Dr Geraldine Boyle, The Open University
- Dr Rosa Mas Giralt, University of Leeds
- Enfield Carers Centre
- Family Action
- Florence Nightingale Foundation
- Harrow Carers
- Holt Youth Project
- Howard of Effingham School
- John Bangs, Independent Policy Advisor
- Learning and Work Institute
- MYTIME
- NCS Trust
- Nicola Brimblecombe, LSE
- Our Time
- Professor Morag Farquhar, University of East Anglia
- Professor Ruth Evans, University of Reading
- Quaker Social Action
- Rebecca Lacey, St George's, University of London
- Saul Becker, Manchester Metropolitan University
- Sheffield Young Carers
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The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers brings together Parliamentarians from across the political spectrum who are committed to improving the lives of young carers and young adult carers.

The group's mission is to provide a forum for key issues affecting young carers and young adult carers which will be addressed collaboratively by Parliamentarians and other key stakeholders, including young carers and young adult carers.

The APPG holds regular meetings in Parliament with an ambitious agenda of work and seeks to make the very strongest collective case to Central Government as it seeks to achieve the best support, services and outcomes for young carers and young adult carers.

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Carers Trust provides the Secretariat for the APPG on Young Carers and Young Adult Carers.

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