



Windsor and Maidenhead Young Carers

Impact Report 2024-25

Introduction

Our mission

Family Action supports people through change, challenge or crisis. It's what we've done for over 150 years. We protect children, support young people and adults and offer direct, practical help to families and communities.

We see first-hand the power of family to shape lives, for better or worse, so we speak up for the importance of family in national and local policymaking, amplify family voices and represent the changing needs of families in the UK today.

Our vision and ethos

At Family Action, our vision is of a society that understands the importance and power of family as a foundation for individual futures and connected, resilient communities.

RBWM Young Carers service provides a whole-family approach, working collaboratively with parents, children and young people aged between 5 to 18 years old who are dealing with the emotional, practical and physical pressures of life as a young carer. We work with families and other professionals to mobilise support around the young carer and their family.

Our service aims

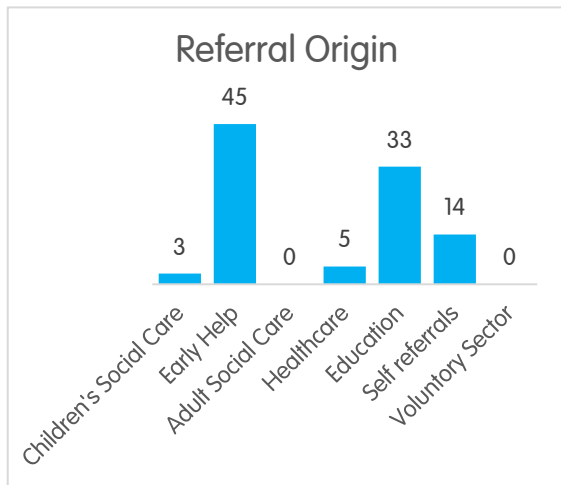
We offer a range of direct support to young carers and their families including young carer assessments, one-to-one and family sessions, wellbeing programmes and an outreach programme of respite support.

We work closely with local support agency partners through providing professionals training to all sectors to improve the understanding of the term 'young carer' and assist workplaces to create an environment which identifies and supports young carers. Our Young Carers Champions programme supports workplaces to embed positive systems of support.

Family Action is committed to making sure that caring is a positive experience for all their young carers. While they continue to provide care, young carers should be able to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Please note, the data within this impact report is related to the Local Authority funded Young Carers Service. It does not include data from the National Lottery Community Fund 'Young Carers in Healthcare' project. The impact report for the Healthcare project will be written when the project comes to its close at the end of June 2025.

Young Carers in Windsor and Maidenhead



Our service registered 101 young carers to assess their caring roles and provide direct support towards achieving positive outcomes:

- a reduction in caring tasks through the widening of formal and informal support
- an improvement in the health and well-being of young carers whilst they continue to provide care

Young Carers Assessments

Young Carer Assessments explore the level of care being provided by a young person and considers the impact of providing care on the young carer's own health and development. This discussion empowers each family to identify the most suitable support for their child and the whole family, including the cared-for. Our average intervention period was 10 weeks.

20%

of young carers supported by our service have known additional physical, emotional or SEND needs of their own, which are taken into consideration when assessing their caring role.

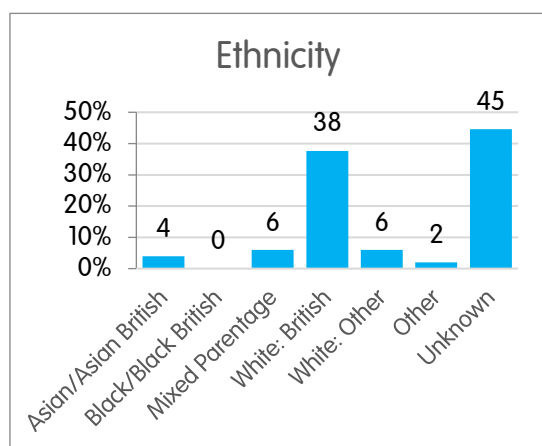
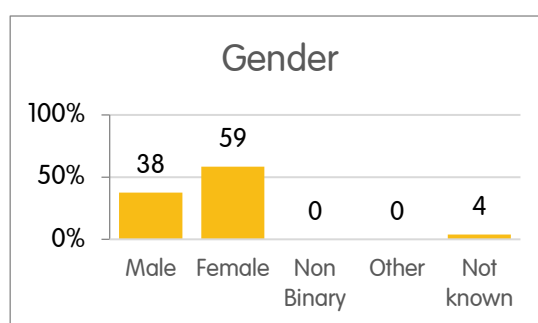
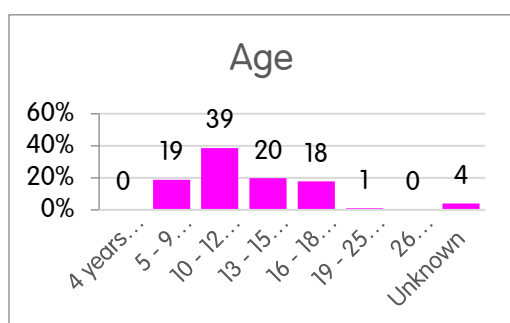
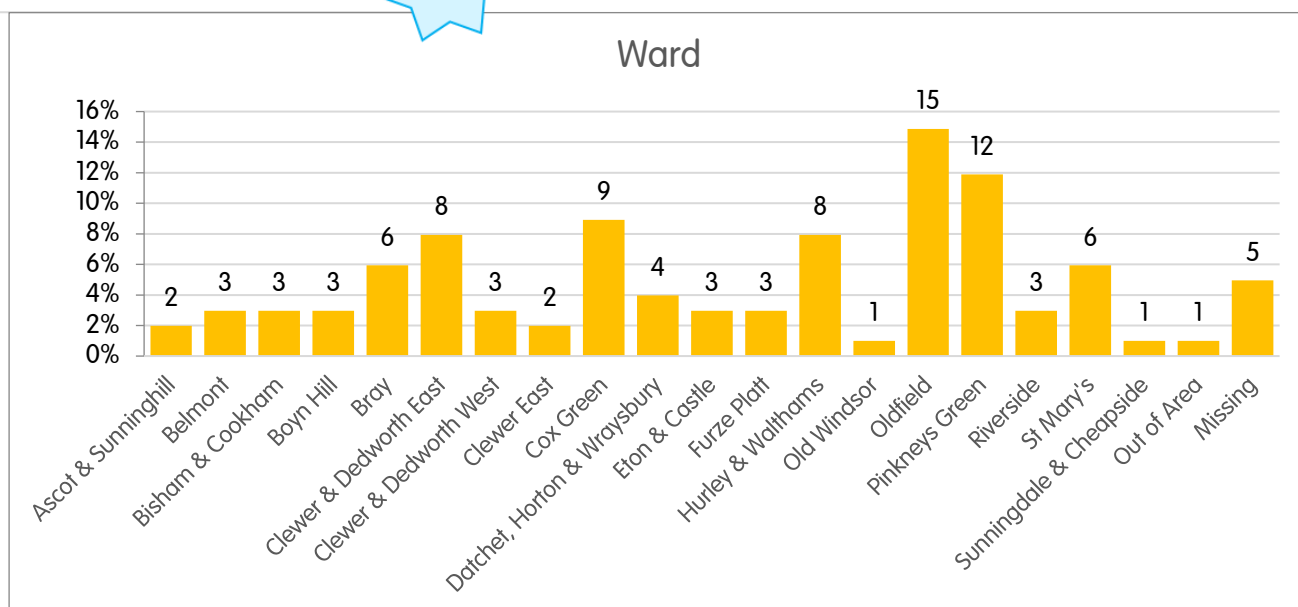
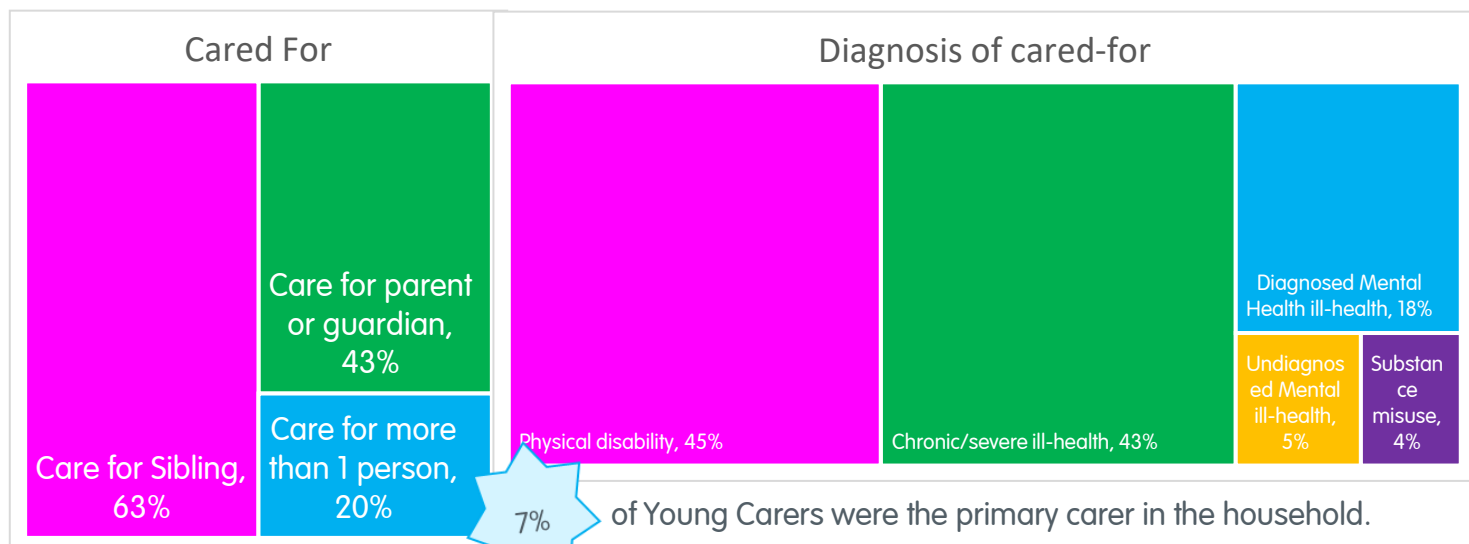
For 40% of referrals to our service, a Young Carer Assessment and immediate support plan was sufficient to enable a family to overcome their challenges. This conversation empowered families to reflect upon and make necessary changes to lessen care tasks and/or ensure suitable support is put in place to reduce the negative impacts of caring.

"YC1 and I just wanted to say a massive thank you for all your help - you're doing a great job! Maidenhead Fire-station popped over last night. They changed our smoke-alarms and gave us some really useful tips. They were so kind and patient and answered all of cared-for's questions - he had lots. We're also going to have a think about the Carers' Contingency Plan. Thanks so much." – Parent

The remainder of Young Carers referred to our service went on to receive a more in-depth support offer, which included family sessions and one to one support.

"Since being with the service, we have received so much help and support and have been given links that I didn't know was around. YC2 has loved all the family sessions, and I have found that he has become more open and confident about his feelings. YC2 still helps me with household jobs but we have made charts to help. Occupational Therapy and Adult Social Care have been in and supplied stuff to help me so YC2 no longer has to help with personal care. It has been very eye opening there was a lot I thought I was shielding from him, but he noticed" – parent

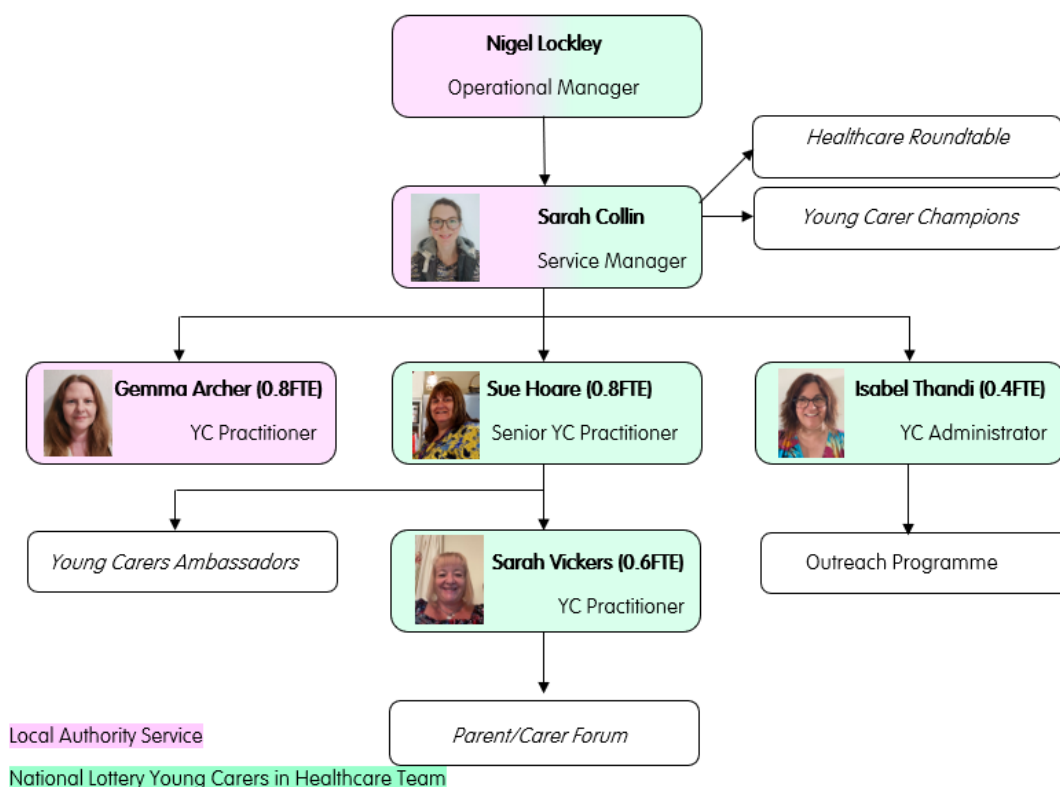
"My young carers support has been useful. The one-to-one sessions have given me things to think about and we have made a lot of small changes in life. When you put everything together, it feels like a bigger change." – YC3



Ethnicity data is captured at Assessment.

'Unknown' accounts for service declined prior to assessment or yet to be assessed

Meet the Team



Young Carer Ambassadors Programme

Seven young carers have participated in our Young Carers' Ambassadors Programme this year. All Ambassadors have benefited from the opportunity to "Find Their Voice" to explore their caring roles and what they are comfortable sharing in order to raise awareness of young carers.

Nationally, they attended the All-Party Parliamentary Review on services for young people at Portcullis House. They have worked with Family Action's Story and Engagement officer to [discuss the impact of providing care](#) at a young age on their own mental health. Their voice, ideas and action has contributed towards the [National Youth Strategy](#) to tackle the challenges for their generation of young people and ensure that every young person can thrive. They have worked with the Young Carers National Voice network to develop an [assembly resource pack](#) to support schools to confidently explore what it means to be a young carer.



Locally, they have welcomed local commissioners, councillors and MPs to their monthly meetings, where they have embraced the opportunity to discuss their lived experiences and support needed for young carers. Ambassadors reviewed audits and evidence submitted by our professional Young Carer Champions and allocated gold and silver awards for the identification and support of young carers in their workplace, presenting these awards at our annual Appreciation Event.

Young Carers Outreach Programme

The Young Carers Outreach Programme enables young carers to continue to access support once direction interventions have come to an end. We have delivered 11 activities, with 164 engagements.

These included two residential trips to Honeypot House in the New Forest, designed for children who could benefit from some time away in a safe and nurturing environment, where they are given the opportunity to have some fun, worry-free time, play with peers and enjoy new activities and experiences in a safe and child-friendly environment.



During the school holidays, Young Carers enjoyed trips such as Longridge Activity Centre, Inside Out 2, Milly Day and a Christmas Party. With special thanks, our outreach programme is made possible through the generosity of local organisations and individuals; Norden Farm Centre for the Arts, Cookham Bridge Rotary, Windsor Lions, Maidenhead Arts Society, Cookham Fete, Gilead and the Baby Bank.



"Please can you pass on our thanks for the lovely party that YC4 attended last night. She went feeling nervous and came out buzzing! Thank you also for the generosity and thoughtfulness of the gifts too. You really put a smile on her face and we are so grateful for your support to ensure YC4 gets to enjoy these fun experiences." – parent

Young Carers Champions in the Workplace Programme

Family Action trains professionals across all sectors to be Young Carer Champions within their workplace. We have trained 116 Young Carer Champions across 50 workplaces across education, healthcare, community and statutory services. Champions are supported in their role through regular reflective sessions, where they receive local and national updates alongside peer support to share what works, the challenges and provides access to additional tools and resources.

Young Carer Champions are invited to extend their role to earn a Gold or Silver award for their workplace through auditing and evidencing their commitment to support Young Carers, including; disseminating their training, ratifying policies, implementing ways in which to identify young carers within their duty of care and setting up groups. 9 workplaces have gone on to achieve these awards.

Young Carers in Schools

The third annual data collection on Young Carers in the school census was completed in January. Family Action worked closely with RBWM Education team to support schools to create suitable systems to know and identify their young carers.

The learning from the Department for Education on the educational experience of young carers has been stark so far:

- Young carers are twice as likely to be persistently absent (39%) than pupils with-out a caring role. They have the highest rate of absences above all named vulnerable groups.
- Young carers had more than double the rate of suspensions (0.25 vs 0.11)
- The proportion of young carers enrolled with one of more temporary suspensions was also more than double the proportion for pupils not recorded as young carers (8.00 vs 3.59).

This year, we trained 12 in schools on our research-informed Young Carers wellbeing framework '*How to Support Your Pupils as Young Carers*' and equipped with the necessary tools and resources to roll out young carer's support sessions in their respective schools.



"I thought it was absolutely brilliant and incredibly useful and of course a huge bonus to be provided with resources. I think this will be great especially for those pupils who encounter barriers with external support and we can therefore help internally with a bit more structure and ensure they are being supported properly/appropriately." Newlands School

In looking at secondary schools this year, all schools talk about it, have policies on it and the best even run activities. This is an enormous step forward. It's part of the language now and something schools know they need to offer support on. This is incredible." - Parent



We support our Young Carers in Schools groups through hosting creative workshops, where they can explore the themes of national Young Carers days. Young Carers from across the borough came together and expressed their ideas on what taking a break means to them. One young carer shared, "It's been fun because I never get to make things out of clay. It's been nice to think about how me and my monster can have a break." Other young carers used Comic Art to explore 'Carers Rights'.



These events provided a valuable opportunity for young carers to connect with others who share similar experiences.

"It's been really good to be here, because I got to talk to other people and relate to them, because we all look after other people."

Young Carers in Healthcare

7 of 10 carers start their caring journey in an NHS setting ([Carers and Hospital Discharge](#)). [The NHS Long Term Plan](#) makes a clear commitment to improve the identification, recognition and support of young carers as part of proactive prevention approaches being pursued at a population health level.

- National research has evidenced that 29% of young carers reported their own physical health was 'just OK'.
- 38% reported having a mental health problem. Young people with caring responsibilities have a higher prevalence of self-harm. Of children who do self-harm, young carers are twice as likely to attempt to take their own life than non-carers.
- Research by Tseliou et al found that young carers are less likely to report chronic mobility problems overall and that young carers who provide a relatively intense level of care are at a higher risk of such conditions.

Healthwatch WAM consulted with a cohort of our young carers and their families and published their [Manual handling and health and safety briefing](#). The briefing makes the following recommendations:

1. Having access to good quality, individualised health and safety training that is age appropriate.
2. Health and social care services working in partnership to prioritise the needs of young carers, even where this may be outside of their statutory remit, ensuring there is 'no wrong door' for young carers.
3. Services working with families to provide practical support for young carers who are responsible for household tasks.

Family Action trained all PCN Care Coordinators as Young Carer Champions. Care Coordinators have commenced contacting their known young carers within their GP practices to offer wellbeing check ins in order to provide preventative support and avoid young carers reaching crisis with their own health and wellbeing.

"Thank you, it was really informative and useful. It makes you think how many young people are still out here needing support and how to identify them."



Our effective partnership with the Windsor, Maidenhead and Ascot PCNs has been recognised nationally, and has been invited to be a best practice case study for NHS England's work on the [GP Framework of Quality Markers](#).



Family Action and Healthwatch WAM partnered with Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System (ICS) to support their engagement project- Reconnect, Reset, Rebuild, the biggest national conversation about the future of the NHS since its birth. Through an in person consultation session and virtual survey we asked families, 'what are your top priorities when receiving health and care services in your community?' These findings have been shared with Frimley Health Integrated Care System to ensure the voice of young carers is considered alongside other feedback received as part of this project.

The 'Young Carers in Healthcare Team', funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, celebrated being finalists at the Children & Young People Now Awards. During this funding period, we have trained 372 healthcare colleagues across 34 departments and received an increased referral rate of 533%.



Future service development

Informing the work we provide locally, our team were invited to represent young carers from early childhood through to young adulthood at the All Party Parliamentary Group review at the Houses of Parliament. At this review, we heard powerful testimonies from young people who were providing care to family members in plain sight and yet remained unseen by professionals. Insightful research on parental mental ill health and the importance of positively supporting patients as parents was presented and fantastic new resources were shared for our very young carers!



It was a great opportunity to listen, learn and share with each other and keep the voices and experiences of our young people and their families central in the decisions being made on their behalf.

Family Action have been privileged to support Young Carers and their families through our varied intervention programmes, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside more families over the coming year.

Service contact details

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Visit our [website](#) for more information and downloadable resources