

Action for Children – Hackney Young Carers Project

18 Ashwin Street

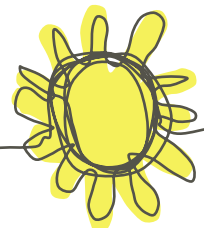
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Presented by

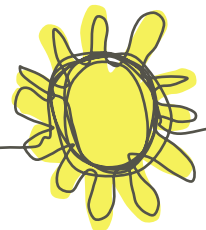
Vera Beining, Manager, HYC



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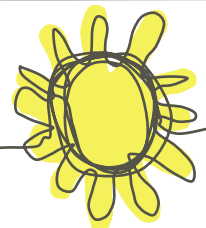


Definition of 'young carers'...

“.... children and young people under 18 who provide **regular and ongoing care and emotional support** to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances...a young carer becomes **vulnerable** when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes **excessive and inappropriate** for that child, risking impacting on his or her emotional or physical wellbeing or educational achievement or life chances. “



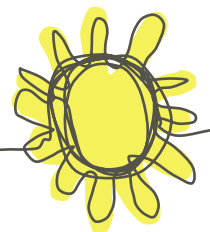
ADASS and ADCS, 2009 *Working Together to Support Young Carers*



Who do young carers support...

- - Parent(s) 66%
- - Sibling(s) 31%
- - Grandparent(s) 4%

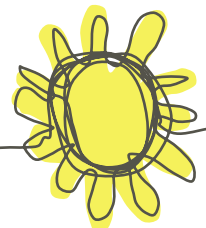
(2001 Census &ONS 2003)



Who do young carers look after ...

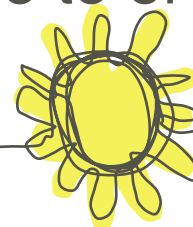
A family member who may have:

- A physical or sensory impairment
- A learning disability
- A long term / terminal illness
- Mental ill health
- Alcohol or drug dependency



Young Carers may be...

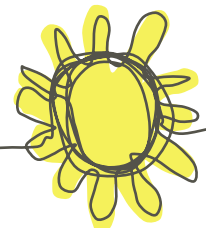
- Children or young people who are the sole carer in the home (primary carer) for one or more person in the household
- Children or young people who are supporting another adult family member in care tasks (secondary carer, e.g. sibling carer)
- Children or young people of the above families who are also taking on parenting responsibilities for younger brothers and sisters because their parents are unable to or need assistance at particular times



A young carer may undertake some or all of the following:

- Domestic tasks (cooking, housework, shopping)
- Emotional support
- Physical care (lifting, helping a parent on stairs or with physiotherapy)
- Personal care (dressing, washing, helping with toileting/bathing)
- Managing the family budget, collecting benefits/ prescriptions, interpreting
- Administering medication
- Looking after or “parenting” younger siblings

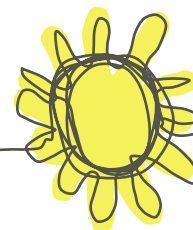
(over and above the general age appropriate role)



Some statistics...

- Average age of a young carer: 12 years old
- 2001 Census: 175,000 young carers in the UK
- 2010 BBC/Loughborough University research:
1 in 12 secondary pupils is a young carer
→ 700,000 nationally or 2 – 3000 in Hackney
- 65% of these caring 7 days a week
- 56% of young carers live in a one parent family

(Loughborough University, 2004)



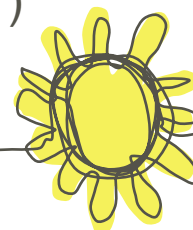
Some school statistics...

- For over 39% of young carers, school staff not aware that they were young carers;
- 68% said they had been bullied in school

(Princess Royal Trust for Carers, 2010)

- 27% of young carers aged 11-15 experience educational difficulties or miss school, rising to 40% where children are caring for a relative with drug or alcohol problems
- More than twice as likely as their peers to be NEET

(Audit Commission 2010, *'Against the Odds'*)



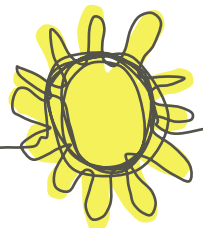
Possible indicators of being a young carer

Is the pupil...

- ...often late or missing days/ weeks off school for no reason?
- ...often tired, anxious or withdrawn?
- ...finding it difficult to concentrate on their work?
- ...having difficulty in joining in extra curricular activities or is unable to attend school trips?

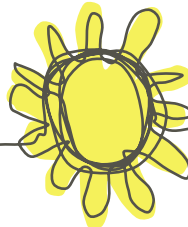
Are parents (or another relative)...

- ...difficult to engage with?
- ...not attending parents' evenings?
- ...not communicating with school?





action for
children



Young Carers and School

What HYC young carers told us...



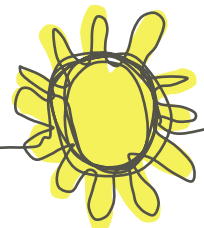
“Sometimes teachers and others talk to us but we feel uncomfortable. We don’t want pity, we want understanding.”

“It would be so good to have someone who supported us and made us feel ‘You can still make something for yourself...you can go far.’”

“I can get upset in lessons, I would like teachers to understand the difficulties I face and not to think that I am being naughty.”

“My mum had gone into hospital. I was worried all day about it, and I was distracted in class. I was told off by the teacher which I didn’t think was fair.”

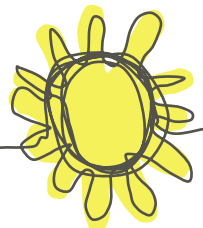
“Sometimes I can’t finish my homework because I don’t have time. If school knew about the circumstances, I could go to someone and get an extension to do the work.”



Good Practice in schools

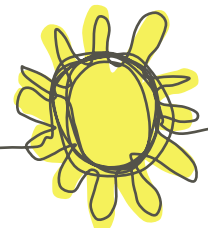


- Assembly/awareness sessions for all pupils
(e.g. year 7 assemblies at *Drop Down Day* at Bridge Academy)
- Drop-in/support group within school (e.g. SNS)
 - Developing school policies
(e.g. identification through admission forms at Our Ladies Convent HS)
- Awareness sessions for all staff within the school community (e.g. City Academy)
- Joint working around issues such as behaviour, attendance and achievement (e.g. De Beauvoir, Berger)
 - YCs school notice boards



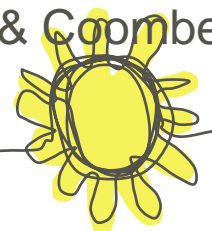
Negative effects of young caring on health outcomes

- Stress, anxiety, depression and low self-esteem (Dearden & Becker, 1998, 2000; Banks et al, 2002)
- *Children's Society & OU 1999:*
 - 70% of former YCs: long-term psychological effects; 40% reported mental health problems
- Eating problems, difficult in sleeping and self-harm (Frank et al, 1999; Doran et al, 2003)
- Tiredness (Banks et al, 2002; Dearden & Becker, 2004; Frank, 1995)
- Musculoskeletal problems associated with lifting (Frank, 1995; Frank et al, 1999)



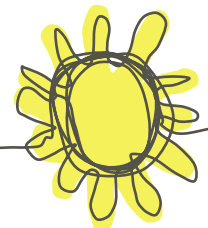
Negative effects of young caring on health determinants

- Poverty and social exclusion (Dearden & Becker, 2000, 2005);
- Educational difficulties (Marsden, 1995; Dearden & Becker, 1998, 2004)
- Restricted opportunities for social networking (Bilsborrow, 1992; Dearden & Becker, 1995, 1998, 2004; Thomas et al, 1993);
- Limited opportunities for taking part in leisure and other opportunities (Aldridge & Becker, 1993);
- Limited horizons and aspirations for the future (Dearden & Becker, 2000);
- A sense of stigma by association (especially where parents have mental health problems or misuse alcohol or drugs, or have HIV/AIDS) (Landells & Pritlove, 1994; Alexander, 1995; Imrie & Coombes, 1995; Evans, 2005);



Negative effects of young caring on health determinants

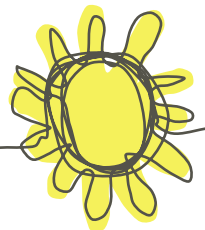
- Alienation from peers from lack of understanding (Aldridge & Becker, 1993, 1994; Dearden & Becker, 1998);
- Alienation from professionals from fear of intervention/separation from family if circumstances become known (Aldridge & Becker, 1993, 1994);
- Keeping silent from fear of public hostility or punitive professional responses (Aldridge & Becker, 1993; Crabtree & Warner, 1999; Frank et al, 1999; Aldridge & Becker, 2003);
- Significant difficulties in making a successful transition from childhood to adulthood (Aldridge & Becker, 1999; Dearden & Becker, 2000; Frank et al, 1999).



Positive impact associated with young caring



- Develop a range of caring and transferable life skills from their young caring
- Mature and responsible behaviour by young carers
- Develop empathy and understanding for those they care for
- Closer, loving relationships within families



How professionals can support young carers



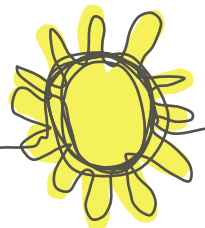
- Find out about the parental status of your clients & identify potential young carers
- Record caring responsibilities on file
- Give information of support services and refer to HYC
- Use professional interpreters
- Include young carers in discussions around care for their family member (including diagnosis, treatment; check their understanding, information needs & how they are coping)



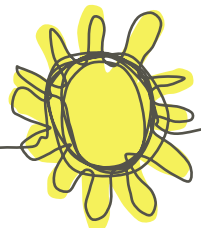
The Scrutiny Commission on YC support in Hackney



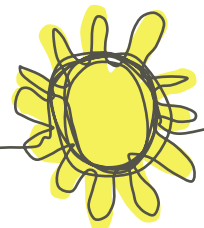
- The process
- Findings
- Recommendations (summary)
 1. YC leads in every organisation they have contact with
 2. multi-agency steering group/delivery
 3. Compile accurate data on no's of YC
 4. Keep funding YC services
 5. Lead teacher in every Hackney school



6. Lead school governor for Ycs
7. Schools to raise awareness (e.g. assemblies, posters)
8. School admission service to consider YCs' needs at secondary transfer stage
9. All schools to implement flexible support measures
10. Award scheme to highlight good practice in schools
11. Awareness raising in adult & children's social care teams and healthcare staff
12. Plan & commission support services for young adult carers (16 – 25)
13. Hackney Carers Helpline/information card to be extended to YCs
14. Annual 'MOT'/health check for young carers & recorded on GP records



Hackney Young Carers Project



What we do... Groups

Weekly term-time activities:

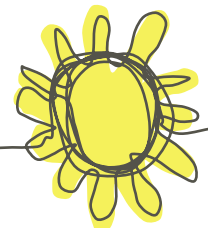
Monday: Well-Being group

Tuesday: Cooking group

Thursday: Homework Club

Friday: Football team

Saturday: Trips, outings, having fun (short breaks)



What we do at HYCP...

Group work (e.g. Beat Bullying
Dealing with Emergencies)

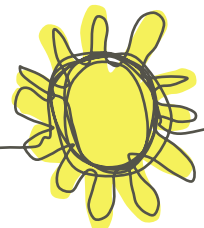
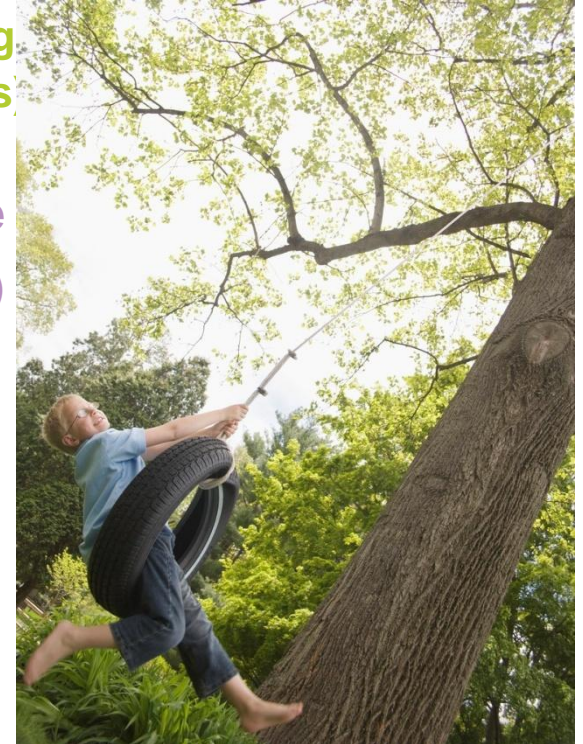
Outreach & Individual Support (e.g. service
plan to develop a hobby, going to university)

Holiday Activities (e.g. cinema,
picnic, ice skating)

Advocacy (e.g. school places, training)

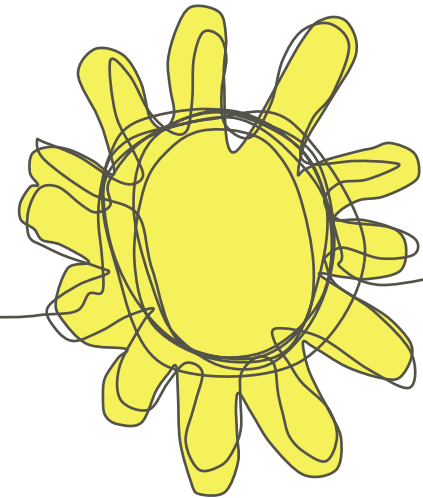
Whole Family Approach (e.g. benefits
review, housing support)

Emotional Support (e.g. counselling, peer support,
medical information)



Thank You!

Q & As



as long as it takes