



OUR LIFE

WINTER 2020-21

Welcome from Michelle



Hello to you all!

Well what a year it has been... we have all had to adapt, try new ways of living and learn new skills in these unusual times.

As we approach the New Year, it is always a good time to look back on all the things that have happened, both the good and bad. You will have achieved so many things and taking some time to think about these, whether big or small, will help you realise how amazing you are!

Like with everyone we have been limited with the events we could run this year, but we really hope you have enjoyed our Zoom meeting, support packs and the digital newsletter. We were lucky to cram in some events when lockdown was eased and have put some highlights in the newsletter to show you.

We are all keeping positive that next year is a good year for everyone and we can get back to enjoying the things we used to. We hope to be able to continue with a mix of online support and to run our events to support you in your caring role. So, here's to a Happy New Year and new beginnings – 2021 we are coming for you!

Michelle

Two best friends running for their superhero brothers

We are Alfie and Harrison and we are 8-years-old and proud to be Surrey Young Carers.

Alfie: My brother has ADHD. I am running for the ADHD Foundation so I can raise awareness. I would like to give the foundation some money so it can help more families just like mine and help people just like my brother.



Harrison: My brother is bravely fighting a brain tumour. I'll be running to raise money for Momentum who are a fantastic charity that help children and their families affected by cancer. We call our brothers' ADHD and brain tumour superpowers, and they are our superheroes!



We are running 2K on 28th December and hope to raise £100 for our charities. Please sponsor us

<https://www.justgiving.com/team/AlfieandHarrison> and together we'll run and raise money and awareness for our amazing brothers!

High rise fun with SYC!



The North East Team spent some time at Walton Firs Activity Centre in October half-term with small groups of young carers, who took part in various activities. The activities were designed to gently challenge the YCs, build their skills and confidence, and bring out their spirit of adventure! The YCs are encouraged to only attempt what they feel comfortable in doing and are always cheered on by the other YCs and SYC staff.

The photo, left, is of a Senior young carer climbing the Leap of Faith tower (whilst tethered to a safety harness). He overcame his initial nerves to complete the activity, through to Leaping for the bar, very impressive to see.

This photo, right, is of a Junior young carer taking part in the Traversing activity, and she made her way all the way to the top!



If anyone in the family is doing shopping on-line, please let them know about 'Easy Fundraising'. You can raise money for SYC at no extra cost! Search 'Easy Fundraising' on our website www.actionforcarers.org.uk to find out more!



What you told us: Survey update

I just want to say a big 'THANK YOU' to all of you who have returned the surveys that have been sent with the Autumn newsletters. Here is a brief summary of what you said:

- For many of you lockdown was an opportunity to spend more quality time with your families and not have to get up early for school!
- Online lessons were great for some of you, while others really struggled. You said you found it hard to concentrate and focus – especially if you had siblings around.
- Not having a break from caring was a big thing with many of you. School/college was a break and not being able to attend meant you were caring 24/7
- Most of you missed seeing friends but some said that it gave them a break from socializing.
- You missed the clubs/activities that you used to attend.

- Many of you learnt and tried new things – cooking, building rockets, reading new things.
- You all embraced Zoom calls and would like SYC to continue doing them – perhaps more often so you 'meet' the same people.
- But you all missed meeting up in person and suggested we could continue socially-distanced outdoor meetings in parks, etc.
- You also enjoyed receiving the packs and online newsletters. You would have liked more of them and have some activities/art/crafts in the packs.
- Some of you felt that you had enough contact with us but some of you would have liked more.

All your comments and suggestions have been read and taken back to our teams. We'll be looking at how we can improve things that are important to you.

Thanks so much again, *Lisa*

Introducing Tracy Sgambellone

Hi, I'm Tracy, the latest addition to the North-East team! Before joining SYC as an Education Advisor I worked at Reigate Secondary School for 10 years, most recently as an Intervention Tutor and Young Carer champion. I really enjoyed raising the profile of young carers there, with the support of SYC—so I'm excited to now be doing it the other way round and meeting even more young carers than before. When I am not working, I might be found trying out new recipes and baking, and then attempting to burn it all off in tap classes, Body Combat and walking in the Surrey countryside. I also love all things Italian – pizza coming a close second to my Italian husband!

Looking to 2021, we are all really looking forward to meeting even more of our young carers in person, especially the many of those who have recently joined us.



Introducing Nicola Frisby

Hi! My name is Nicola and I've just started working as the Children and Young Person's Support Co-ordinator for the South East.

My job involves working to provide opportunities to support young carers. This includes hosting Zoom and face to face events, giving young carers opportunities to have fun — and meet other young people in similar caring roles.

Before arriving at SYC, I worked as a primary school teacher, ELSA, home tutor and also ran my own pre-school music group. In my spare time, I enjoy walking, reading and being creative. Song-writing, in particular, is a big passion of mine and I love to write, record and perform music with my band.



Zoom In — events online

Some of us have been getting involved with Zoom In! a series of online events which started in October half-term and go right up to Christmas.

We had a magician who wowed us with some really close up tricks and mind-reading, plus completing a Rubik's Cube in 3 seconds. Amazing! We've done boxing along with mindfulness and kept up with a really fast, energetic dance routine. Our older young carers had a pizza and a comic drawing workshop, creating Manga style cartoon characters. Still to come, we'll learn to juggle and make some Christmas crafts with the lovely ladies from Watts Gallery. The Under 8s have a craft night, connected to a story about 'Hope', based on a painting by GF Watts of the same name- look it up!

We've had so much fun that we plan to do it all again in the Spring. If you live in Guildford or Waverley, watch out for an invitation in January, all about Zoom In 2021!

