

OUR LIFE

SUMMER 2021

Hello from Michelle



It's been lovely to see so many of you come to our activities that are now back up and running. We still have measures in place to keep us all safe but it has been great for our team to meet up face to face, especially when the sun's been shining!

As we roll into the summer months, please do keep in touch and let us know if there is anything you need support with around your caring role.

Some of you will be making the move from Primary school to Secondary school and others might be moving onto college. These can be exciting but nervous times, always know we are here to help and support you on that journey.

Wishing you all a fab summer and hope the sun continues to shine! Best wishes,

Michelle Harper,
Manager Surrey Young Carers

Camp in the Cloud!

Brothers and sisters charity Sibs has teamed up with Over the Wall to provide 'Camp in the Cloud' for young siblings who have a brother or sister with a health condition, and their families.



Taking place on Sunday 12 September, this virtual event gives sibling 'campers' a day of action-packed fun. Campers can get involved with a mixture of online and real-life activities. You can interact with others, through message boards and video calls. It's free, but families will need to meet the criteria.

Visit sibs website: <https://www.sibs.org.uk/sibs-workshops-and-training/camp-in-the-cloud-for-siblings-and-their-families/>

You get sent a 'Seriously Fun Box' (of games, craft materials, etc) in advance. And if you don't have access to Wi-Fi or a device, you can be sent a device with pre-loaded data. Ages 8-17.

Win tickets to Thorpe Park!

And tell Surrey County Council what matters to you!



Surrey is refreshing its Young Carers Strategy and URGENTLY wants to find out what YOU think. They've done a lot of work already, but want to hear from young carers like you in this survey – but be quick, it closes **midnight 1st July**.

It's short, and anonymous (if you wish), looking especially at how you've been affected by the pandemic – and also asks generally about how caring affects your school life, health and wellbeing.

The more that SCC knows about the lives of young carers, the better they will be able to design the young carers' services of the future.

PLUS when you enter, you can go into a prize draw to win tickets to Thorpe Park! Do it today!

It's on Surrey Says website <https://www.surreysays.co.uk/csf/young-carers-strategy-survey/> (or find it by searching 'consultations' on our website).

Meet the Education Team: are you struggling at school?

We may be able to help. We are the 'Education Advisors' at SYC, and it is our job to help teachers to help you and other young carers to enjoy being at school and college and to do well.

We speak to a lot of teachers. And headteachers. And a whole lot of other adults besides. We also talk to a lot of kids, including hundreds of young carers, just like you.

How can we help

We have a couple of simple aims when we visit schools, and both involve teaching the teachers themselves. Firstly, we aim to help the teachers understand what it is that you do to look after someone when you are away from their classrooms, and how that can sometimes get in the way of all the other important things that you need to do (such as getting to school on time, looking smart and ready to learn... not to mention doing homework and studying for exams...)

Secondly – we aim to teach the teachers about how to help you at school. That may be by giving you a bit of extra time and support to get work done, or by listening to you when you're feeling down or stressed, or simply by letting you know that they are there to help when you need them.

Most teachers really do care about you, and want you to be healthy, happy – and, of course, hard-working – because that is how you'll do well at school and eventually go on to college, or uni, or get a good job that you really like. That's all they want for you – and we want to help them and you together in achieving that.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that if you want your teachers to help you, they need to know that you **need** help. Teachers are clever, but they aren't mind-readers, and you probably wouldn't want them to be (frankly it would be a bit creepy).



Your lovely team: Emma, Petrina, Naima & Tracy

So, it's good to talk. Once your teachers know what you do and what you need, things usually get a lot easier to handle at school.

We are also here to keep reminding them that you need help – but because teachers are really busy people, we sometimes also need your help in reminding them that you need help (if you get what we mean).

Tell them about you – and us!

If you would like your teachers to understand a bit more about you and about young carers in general, why not tell them that you are looking after somebody, and tell them about us – and that we would really like to meet them and talk to them too.

You could also ask your mum or your dad to talk to your teachers or your Headteacher about inviting us into the school (why not show them this article?)

And just a final reminder to you for now – if you are having problems at school (or college) because you are worried about the person you look after, or because you are too busy to get everything done – as well as talking to your teacher, please give us a call, and we'll do our best to help.

**Please give us a call on
01483 568269 or email
syc@actionforcarers.org.uk
We're here to help YOU!**

TOP TIPS from young carers on moving to Secondary or College/Uni

- Go shopping for some of the things that you'll need – school bag (big enough to hold everything you'll need – small enough to carry comfortably), uniform & PE kit, stationery (e.g. pens, ruler, calculator).
- Do a practice journey to school from home, using whatever transport you'll be using. Time it but beware it might take longer when the school traffic returns.
- Work out your morning routine with your family. There is usually more to prepare for secondary school and you may also have caring tasks to do before you leave home on time.
- Talk it over – speak to brothers/sisters/friends already at that school – ask them what it's like and advice for settling in. You can talk to your mum or dad about anything that's worrying you – they've been through it and probably remember what it was like!
- **PLAN!** Work out what time you have – what you can and can't do with regards to school work.
- If you know you are not going to be able to complete a piece of work before a deadline – tell someone. The sooner the better.
- Ask school/college/uni if you can have your timetable in advance – this can help you plan your caring and organise help if needed.
- Talk to people – try to meet other carers.
- Help is out there – find it through social services, counsellors, youth workers etc. You are not alone.
- **Keep smiling and keep going, and take some deep breaths. Everything is OK!**

Update from Young Carers National Voice (YCNV)

YCNV is the national organisation that SYC is part of and some of our young carers attend



LOUDER TOGETHER

We are 1 year old! We held a session to celebrate this and to reflect on our first year and what we would like focus on next year.

12 young carers (YCs) from Surrey, Bedfordshire, Brighton, Doncaster, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Kent, East Sussex, London, Newcastle, Sandwell, Sheffield and Worcestershire all came together, with their workers, on one Zoom call.

There was a presentation showing the background to YCNV and a summary of all our Young Carers Action Day (YCAD) campaign activities and we shared our reflections on what we were most pleased with and what we would like to see improved next year.

SOME THINGS WE'RE PLEASED WITH

I loved seeing how engaged our school was by YCAD and how interested all the pupils were in learning more about YCs.

Proud of the cohesion that lockdown has brought. The fact we've all overcome so much adversity and we're all still standing proud.

Lovely to have everyone working together this year! Felt so much more connected to other areas.

Extent of the coverage and how many people acknowledged and took part in various activities.

How far we've come and how people have changed towards YCs and actually want to help them.

SOME CHANGES FOR NEXT TIME

I would like to see more buildings lit up in purple next year, including the London Eye!

Could improve on learning more about each young carers service.

I think the awareness from YCAD needs continuing so that the teachers are more aware so that it's not just the students taking part in learning about young carers

I'd like to find a way of collecting and measuring the way that schools have taken action – and share this more widely.

I'd like to see more famous people such as MPs, etc talk about young carers so more people will listen.

We also looked at our petition on Change.org to campaign for a YC lead in all schools and shared what we're doing/done to spread the word.

We also had a poll to choose next year's campaign. From Education, Mental Health and Health Services, we chose Mental Health. We split into groups to talk ideas through, and came up with some ideas to take forward, including:

- Counsellors don't touch the surface of trauma
- Schools don't notice young carers and doctors/therapists need to know if their adult patient has a young carer
- We need someone to talk to outside of school or through a website
- We should put workshops together to train mental health services

We agreed that a training film on these issues would be a good idea, as well as all service referral forms having a young carers question.

This is all very exciting and I'll keep you posted on how this progresses.

If anyone would like to attend these (Zoom) meetings, please let me, Lisa know (07834 006841 Lisa.roberts@actionforcarers.org.uk).

We are allowed to bring 3 YCs from each organisation.

Huge thanks to Robyn who has been fabulous at representing SYC :-)

Mental health support

There's a new 24/7 mental health crisis line for children/young people and their families and carers in Surrey.

The **free number 0800 915 4644** – is for all young people aged up to 18, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). It's open 24/7.

If someone is in a mental health crisis, they can call up and get emotional support, advice, and signposting to a range of services. (No referral needed.) The crisis line is staffed by a team of experienced, trained call handlers and mental health nurses.



Some other sources of mental health help...

Chat Health 07507 329 951, 9-5, Mon-Fri is where you can text a School Nurse to chat confidentially about anything troubling you like anxiety, sleep issues, exam stress or eating.

www.kooth.com offers online mental wellbeing support for children aged 10 upwards, including a virtual chat with a trained member of the team.

www.riseabove.org.uk has lots of films on things you might worry about—like body image, relationships or coping with unhelpful thoughts.

www.safespacehealth.uk offers physical, emotional and wellbeing health information in an fun and interactive way for 11-14 year olds.

www.jigsawsoutheast.org.uk supports bereaved children and young people, and those facing the loss of a loved one.

News and updates

Did you know you can now get free period products in Surrey?

Working with charity Binti, Surrey County Council is providing them free at many public libraries across Surrey in the #PeriodDignitySurrey scheme.

Just look for the Binti sticker. There's no need to ask, simply go to the collection box and help yourself. The Binti app can help you find your nearest library participating.



Do you support someone with a drinking problem?

Carers Trust have a new survey for young carers (12+) who help support someone with a drinking problem. The information shared will help them improve services, influence government and highlight young carers' needs. It's here (closes 5th July):

<https://carerstrust.surveymonkey.com/r/pdyoungcarers>

Wordsearch

Left, right, up and down. Can you find them all?

E	D	S	E	C	O	N	D	A	R	Y	S	C	H	O	O	L	S
K	W	E	J	S	T	A	T	I	O	N	E	R	Y	X	H	C	C
Q	N	E	W	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	H	L	D	L	B	O	H
Q	P	E	D	P	K	T	I	M	E	T	A	B	L	E	O	L	O
A	F	T	E	R	S	C	H	O	O	L	C	L	U	B	S	L	O
Q	L	I	S	C	H	O	O	L	U	N	I	F	O	R	M	E	L
J	O	O	W	O	R	R	I	E	S	C	T	M	Q	I	K	G	D
X	J	T	G	G	E	T	R	A	N	S	I	T	I	O	N	E	I
N	E	W	O	P	P	O	R	T	U	N	I	T	I	E	S	V	A
A	P	P	R	E	N	T	I	C	E	S	H	I	P	S	N	S	R
H	C	C	O	I	V	E	X	C	I	T	E	M	E	N	T	J	Y
T	U	K	J	U	C	A	P	G	C	C	F	K	B	Q	Q	R	D

Find these words!
AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS
APPRENTICESHIPS
COLLEGE

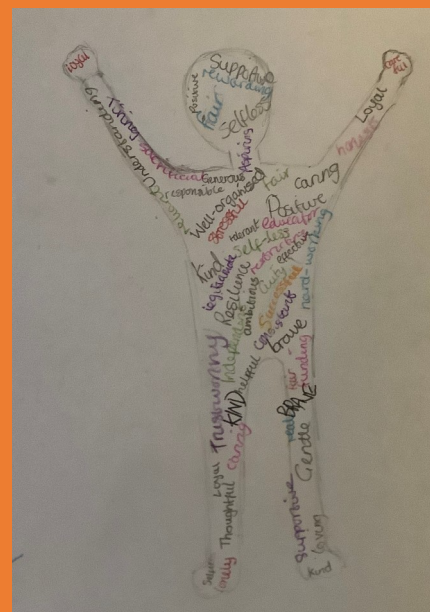
EXCITEMENT
NEW FRIENDS
NEW OPPORTUNITIES
SCHOOL DIARY
SCHOOL UNIFORM

SECONDARY SCHOOL
STATIONERY
TIMETABLE
TRANSITION
WORRIES

Join our Forum!

Our Young Carers Forum is where young people get together to discuss issues of importance to them as carers – getting involved in projects which lead to improvements benefiting *all* young carers.

One of the Forum members Molly, drew this great picture to show how she felt about being a young carer. As you can see, being a young carer is not just one word!



EIKON youth clubs

Surrey charity EIKON have new Online Groups for young carers aged 11-15. They take place Tuesdays, 6.30-8pm, if you can only come for part of it, that's fine. It's a mixture of fun, games, chat and topics. Email eikonline@eikon.org.uk or call 07971 951553 to register.



CONTACT US Call 01483 568269 or email SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk

Surrey Young Carers is part of charity Action for Carers Surrey.

Action for Carers (Surrey) is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. Registered charity number 1116714.

Company number 5939327 Registered in England & Wales

Registered Office: Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham, Surrey GU4 7HL.
ACS0002_06.21