

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR RELEASE: 10.10.23 World Mental Health Day**

### **New research from Surrey carers charity, Action for Carers, shows just how strongly caring is affecting the lives of young carers.**

**Being a young carer, who looks after someone in their family who's ill or disabled, is incredibly tough.**

They often have big responsibilities, extra chores, plus emotional worries, and have little time for schoolwork, let alone a personal life. And carer families are often poorer families as adults are not always able to work, so finances are tight, meaning there's fewer opportunities.

Young carers' wellbeing can suffer, and they can feel really isolated and misunderstood, missing out on a lot that other children take for granted.

#### **Young carers survey**

**Charity Action for Carers Surrey has recently asked the young people supported by its Surrey Young Carers service about their own health.**

A staggering 65% of respondents said that caring was affecting their own health.

*"It limits my social health i think as it means i can't spend as much time with friends etc, emotional health as it's quite draining and sometimes feels like I'm stuck in a cycle."* Young carer, Surrey

They said that caring affected their:

- Emotional health – 74%
- Mental health – 53%
- Social opportunities – 41%
- Physical health – 12%.

#### **Comments included:**

*"It's hard having friends round or going to fun places."*

*"Constantly walking on eggshells, expecting a negative reaction even when doing something super nice for sister."*

*"I feel a bit sad when Mum has a bad seizure."*

*"I'm embarrassed to go out in public with my sister."*

#### **The main physical effect was tiredness**

*"I'm very emotional and get upset easy. Sometimes it's because I'm feeling tired."*

But young carers can thrive with the right support – they are extremely hard-working and resilient young people. One said: *"Being a carer is definitely hard work but I want to help my family."*

## Life changing support

Our Surrey Young Carers (SYC) service makes a big difference. It offers free information and support, plus groups, a Forum, workshops, and fun events, to give carers aged 5-17 time out from caring, helping them achieve all they can in life, and minimise – as much as possible – their caring role.



As well as getting advice and support, the young people get a little time just to be themselves, and meet others in similar situations. We run regular 'drop in' sessions across Surrey, a bit like youth clubs, allowing young carers

to have some fun and make friends. We also offer fun activity sessions, helping them to learn new skills and boost their confidence – sports, creative arts, music and more.

*"I just wanted to say a huge thank you for hosting such a fabulous afternoon. X had the best time and keeps saying how lovely you were to her. She also found a great deal of belonging knowing that most of the other children, some of which her age, also had older siblings with special needs. She felt they knew what she goes through at home despite it not being outwardly spoken about. She keeps asking if there will be another one soon. Please accept our thanks for all your hard work and for making big difference in their little lives. It means a lot."*

*"Z has had some wonderful opportunities through your kind work and been supported so well with the challenges she faces/continues to face. From a Mum's perspective it's been lovely for Z to have something of her own, (fun) away from daily struggles. I really can't put into words how amazing your charity is. All the lovely ladies that help/enable these fantastic events support us both."*

Our support is open to young carers for as long as they need us – or until they turn 18 and move to our adult service.

We also help in schools, supporting staff to identify and support their many young carers, running our '[Angel Award](#)' scheme, awarded to those schools who demonstrate excellent support.

## Please let families know about us

If you know a young carer, in any capacity – your family, friends, neighbours, through work – please let them know about us. We can make a big difference.

**Young carers/their families can get in touch by calling us on 0303 040 1234; texting on 07723 486730; or emailing [SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk).**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

**About Surrey Young Carers, a service from charity Action for Carers**

We offer free, impartial information and support to young carers and their families on minimising the impact of their caring role. We also provide workshops, forums, fun activities and groups. We give young carers time out from caring and help them to achieve their full potential. We also offer training to health, social care and educational professionals in best support for young carers.

**Action for Carers Surrey** provides events, information, advice and support for carers aged 5-95. Support includes benefits help, advocacy, guidance on moving and handling, hospital carer advisors, workshops, 14 drop-in Hubs across Surrey, information and relaxation events (by Zoom and face to face), support groups, free resources and more.

**Carers can get in touch by calling us on 0303 040 1234; texting on 07723 486730; or emailing [CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk), young carers email [SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk).**