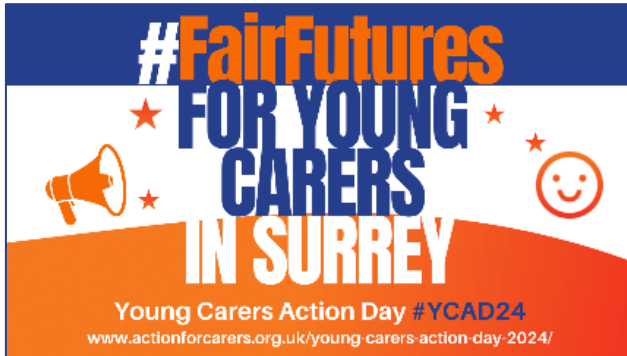


PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 16.02.24



Young Carers Action Day 2024 takes place on Wednesday 13th March.

The focus is 'Fair Futures for Young Carers' highlighting why caring should not be a barrier to learning, earning or being able to get on in life – but for many it is.

Young Carers Action Day is on Wednesday 13th March.

Its theme is Fair Futures for Young Carers focussing on why caring should not be a barrier to learning, earning or being able to get on in life – but for many, it is.

Carers Trusts' [2023 Young Carers' Survey](#) showed ONE in THREE young carers struggle to balance caring with education, this can have a big impact on whether they can get on at school, go to university, or get a job or an apprenticeship.

Caring can massively affect their life opportunities and plans – and changes in policy, practice and investments are needed to give young carers the support and flexibility they need to thrive.

What goes wrong for young carers?

In school they can fall behind, miss classes, not have time for homework or extra activities (let alone friendships), feel tired, and physically and emotionally under pressure from their caring role.

When considering college or career choices, having to care for someone at home can really impact on a young person's plans, limiting their options, including whether they can leave home, how far they can go, and if in fact they can go at all.

And even when in work, a lack of support or understanding can pile even more pressure on a young carer, meaning they are likely to have to quit.

What can we do in Surrey?

We want to help Surrey professionals and the public understand these issues and work with us to minimise them, helping young people get the support they need, achieving Fair Futures for all young carers in Surrey.

We can help by providing information, support, free resources and training to help you do more – whether you are a school, college or employer. And any young carers should please just come to us directly for support.

Facts

- There are at least **14,000 young carers in Surrey** – that's at least two in every classroom.
- Action for Carers currently **supports over 2,300** of these young people.
- **Over a quarter of young carers aged 11-15 regularly miss school.** This can have a lasting effect on their life chances. ([Children's Society 2023](#))
- **44% of young carers always or usually feel stressed** because of caring ([Carers Trust 2023](#))
- **23% of young carers in the UK said that their caring role had stopped them making friends.** ([Children's Society 2023](#))

What's happening in Surrey for Young Carers Action Day

We're running special events for our registered young carers this YCAD, including a novel session being recorded with Surrey Hills Radio with five older young carers (16-17) sharing their experiences of making their future choices with five young carers (12-13); a group of young carers meeting the Mayor at Reigate Town Hall; and a fun event at Farnham Maltings.

We're also working with Surrey County Council, local councils and the NHS to reach more professionals to help their awareness and understanding, including a learning session with cartoonist James Parsons reflecting on what Fair Futures means, working with one of our staff who was a young carer himself. And you'll also see us in many Surrey hospitals during the week – reaching out to staff and families to highlight our support.

More on our website <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/young-carers-action-day-2024/>

What Surrey young carers say

Lauren, juggling education and caring ([Lauren's story](#))

"What tutors don't understand is how caring affects your studies; sometimes I couldn't make it to college for 9am as I had to help James out in the morning, or I couldn't hand an assignment in on time, or complete homework because caring for my brother was more important.

Fortunately, I found my way to one of the college mentors. If I had to speak to tutors, I would ask him to email them for me. He arranged extra time and got me working in long lunch breaks because there was no way I could work at home."

Sriya is in her late teens and cares for her grandparents ([Sriya's story](#))

"I faced some trouble when it came to balancing schoolwork with my home life. In Indian culture, it's expected that younger members of the family should care for the elderly; this meant that my caring role was almost an obligatory part of my life and my family struggled to see how it would make completing homework any harder. I had trouble managing this balance for a while until I found out about Surrey Young Carers (part of Action for Carers Surrey) who were able to give me support, I needed to care for my grandparents and complete my work."

Rhianna, caring for her mum since the age of 6 ([Rhianna's story](#))

"Being an only child and caring for a parent is a heavy load and I wish there was greater understanding of what life is like. There can be all different levels of carer and it can affect people differently too. I remember when I was at school thinking, "Really, how am I going to do anything? I can't even revise!". But it all worked out, I ended up graduating university with a 1st class

honours degree. I would say I've developed some good skills from being a carer and that it really can be a positive thing."

NOTES TO EDITORS

What support does Action for Carers offer?

Charity Action for Carers' young carers service has been working to minimise disadvantages and support young people since 1996.

We support young carers aged from 5-17 who are providing ongoing care and support for a brother or sister, parent or other family member. They may help by doing physical tasks, like getting someone out of bed, or helping give medication; provide emotional support; or do practical tasks to help the household run, like cleaning, cooking and shopping.

We offer free, impartial information and support to young carers and their families on minimising the impact of their caring role. As well as tailored support, we provide free information workshops, and we also run lots of fun activities, giving young carers a little 'time out' as well as the chance to meet other young people in similar situations. We also offer targeted information and events for those aged 18-25.

Our overall aim is to reduce caring's impact on their lives, and help them achieve their full potential.

We also offer training to health, social care and educational professionals in best support for young carers, including significant support to children and staff in Surrey's schools.

Our work has resulted in the identification of young carers in Surrey's schools (via the annual school census) being significantly higher than in other counties, but there is still a great deal to do.

About Action for Carers Surrey

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.

Contact information

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

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<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/young-carers-action-day-2024/>
#YoungCarersActionDay