



CARDIFF JOINT YOUNG CARERS STRATEGY

SECOND DRAFT

Cardiff Joint Young Carers Strategy.

Background to this Report

1. The document sets out to fulfil the Cardiff's Children and Young People's Framework Partnership objective of preparing a strategy to meet the needs of young carers in Cardiff.
2. The document has been produced by a multi agency task and finish group established under the auspices of Cardiff's Children and Young People's Framework Partnership
3. A consultative paper has been circulated seeking the views of heads of service and senior managers of departments and sectors who have a responsibility for, or engagement with young carers.
4. The following organisations responded to the initial consultation; Children's Services, Adult Services, Schools and Lifelong Learning Service, Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust, Cardiff Local Health Board, National Public Health Service, Crossroads Young Carers Project, and NCH, Voluntary Action Cardiff.
5. Young carers made direct representation of their views to the consultative paper.

Following this process a second draft will be presented to the Framework Board for further consideration.

Background

Young carers are a highly vulnerable but relatively unseen group. Their position as carers can expose them to pressures that often lead to poor physical and mental health and limit their personal development. As children and young people it can be difficult for them to understand and argue for their own needs and rights.

Young carers make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of others. There is however a clear need to provide them with appropriate support. The legal framework in relation to young carers is extensive and complex. The local authority must act within a clearly identifiable statutory framework.

The Legislative Context

The duties and powers of local authorities to assist young people with caring responsibilities are established in a number of key pieces of legislation, and further development in the Department of Health's Policy guidance and Practice Guidance to the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995. Guidance has been issued by the Social Services Inspectorate.

Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

The Act amends the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 and the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995. The Act gives carers more choice and opportunities to lead a more fulfilling life.

The new law:

- Places a duty on local authorities to tell carers of all ages, including young carers, about their rights. Informing children of their right to an assessment must be undertaken in the context of family assessments and undertaken in an appropriate manner.
- Places a duty on local authorities to consider whether the carer works or wishes to work, wishes to study or have some leisure activities, when they are carrying out a carer's assessment. This applies to any assessments carried out under the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995, which has no age limit, and assessments of young people aged 16 and 17 years caring for adults carried out under the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000.
- Gives local authorities strong powers to enlist the help of health, housing and education authorities in providing support for carers of all ages.

The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000

The only group of young people who have caring responsibilities who can benefit from this Act are those over the age of 16 years who care for someone over the age of 18 years. The Act enables these young people to ask for an assessment of their own needs from their local authorities and for the local authority to

provide services to meet those needs. Young people over 16 years caring for people over 18 years can also receive vouchers and direct payments to help them to have more choices and control over the services they use.

The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 1989 intention is to enshrine good practice in making decisions with, and on behalf of, children by setting out a wide range of checklists, duties and rights for those involved in such decisions. The Children Act places specific responsibilities upon social services in respect of children in need. Section 17 (10) of the Act states that a child should be taken to be 'in need' if:

- he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority...; or
- his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; or
- he is disabled.

Given this definition, in many cases children and young people who have the responsibility of caring for someone will be considered 'children in need'. The annex to the letter to Directors of Social Services from the Chief Inspectorate (1995) states that 'many young carers with significant caring responsibilities should therefore be seen as children in need'.

Once a child or young person has been assessed as being 'in need', the Children Act specifies that a range of support services must be made available. Section 17 (1) refers to a general duty to provide a 'range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs'.

Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families

This guidance produced by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment (now the Department for Education and Skills) and the Home Office (2000) specifies how assessments should be carried out. In the guidance document, 'Practice Guidance', it is recommended that the practitioner is required to look at any child in the context of the whole family.

The Framework states: 'An assessment of family circumstances is essential. Young carers should not be expected to carry inappropriate levels of caring which have an adverse impact on their development and life chances. It should not be assumed that children should take on similar levels of caring responsibilities as adults. Services should be provided to parents to enhance their ability to fulfil their parenting responsibilities.'

Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995

This Act came into force in April 1996. The Act gives rights to a large group of people, including children, who provide a substantial amount of care and support to relatives or friends on a regular basis. It builds on existing community care legislation, formally bringing carers into the local authority assessment process.

The Act places a duty on local authority social services to assess the ability of a carer to provide and continue to provide care to the person being cared for. This definition includes young people under the age of 18 years and enables them to request an assessment when the person they are caring for is being assessed. However, if a young person does not request an assessment, social services should still consider whether there is a need to assist or relieve the child either through the provision of community care services for the user or through the provision of services to promote the welfare of the child.

In relation to the role of young carers it recommended that the following principles are adhered to:

- Services and Assessments for Young Carers are provided within the framework of the 1989 UN Convention on the rights of the child and the 2001 WAG Extending Entitlement. This recognises children's universal right to education, play and leisure, participation, respect for family life, and a basic standard of living. It further recognises young people's entitlement to support; youth activities and health, careers, housing and financial advice.
- Young carers are supported in a way that respects the general principle of reinforcing family relationships.
- Young carers be supported in ways that do not perpetuate inappropriate types or levels of caring.

Definition

"A Young Carer is someone who takes responsibility for someone who is ill, disabled, elderly, experiencing mental distress, affected by substance use or has substantial responsibility for caring for a sibling.

A Young Carer could be from any family, they may be the person providing all the care but they may also help someone else to provide the care. The care is not only the things people can see like changing bandages, helping someone use the toilet or have a wash but it is also how you feel or think because of your caring role ."

The definition of a Young Carer includes both the legal definition of a child, “a person under the age of 18” and the definition of entitlement “to provide services to young people up to the age of 25.”

Organisations working within the Children and Young People’s Partnership Framework recognise their responsibilities to support Young Carers through the transition to adulthood beyond the age of 18 as appropriate.

Most young carers care for parents or siblings, but they may also care for grandparents, other family members or friends. Young carers include children who are very young. For example, a six or seven year old who regularly checks that a sibling is safe and well in another room in the house because the parent is physically disabled is carrying out caring tasks beyond what might be considered normal.

Numbers of Young Carers

The precise number of young carers in Cardiff is not known with a degree of accuracy. The number of young carers aged 0-17 in Cardiff taken from the Census 2001 is 1,000, of which 457 (46%) are boys and 543 (54%) are girls. The figures produced by the 2001 Census should be approached with a degree of caution as it is likely, due to both census process and identification issues, to be an under estimation of the real number of young people with caring responsibilities living in Cardiff.

Additional information indicates that the majority of young carers live in households where the family is dependent on welfare benefits as the sole source of income and, therefore, it can be estimated that there is a direct link between low income and inappropriate caring responsibilities. The spread of young carers will therefore vary greatly across the city with a disproportionate number of children in poorer areas being involved in caring responsibilities.

The Impact of Caring

Research provided from a number of authoritative sources confirm that the nature and extent of the caring tasks are, in the main, determined by the condition of the cared for person and family circumstances. The ranges of tasks highlighted are varied and included:

- domestic chores
- shopping
- help with moving around
- giving medication
- offering emotional support
- providing intimate personal care such as bathing and dressing

- looking after brothers and sisters

Young people need time and opportunities to develop. While caring for a family member can be a positive and rewarding experience, it is vital that supports are in place to ensure that a young carer's quality of life and personal development are not compromised.

Engagement in education has been highlighted as an area of concern, attendance at school is known to be disrupted due to conflicting care responsibilities. It has also been recognised that concentration in the classroom can be affected by their caring roles. Young carers report that they often feel isolated from their peers because of their family situations and are known to be vulnerable to incidences of bullying. These factors often combine to limit performance at school leading to poor results, difficulties in accessing further education and poor job prospects.

Needs of Young Carers

One of the key observations, coming from the perspective of both young people and agencies is to recognise that the nature of young carers is diverse as are their needs. Dealing with the complexity of the issues requires a multi faceted and multi agency approach. No one service can hope to meet the range of need. There needs to be a radical change in the way we currently think about, plan, provide for and account for meeting the needs of young carers. This strategy addresses the following needs.

- Identification of young carers and consideration of their needs
- Educational attainment and achievement at school leading to further education, training or employment
- Good physical and mental health
- Practical, social and emotional supports
- Choice and control of their circumstances and personal development
- Remove inappropriate caring tasks by providing suitable care for the cared for person

Messages from Consultation in Cardiff

Consultation Summary

The following consultations have been undertaken with young carers in Cardiff during the autumn 2005;

1. A four week workshop with 8 young carers exploring their views on the ten entitlements and which entitlement young carers miss out on
2. The production of a DVD giving 10 young carers opportunity to express their views on a range of issues.
3. A peer led workshop organised by Save the Children with 26 young carers aged from 7 upwards
4. Four young carers have been involved with the CYP P/Save the children young consultants program
5. Four young consultants presented to the local authority scrutiny committee for children and families. In addition to the information above the young people presented on health
6. Young carers are about to establish their own youth forum
7. Young carers have been involved with Funky Dragon young carers network in Wales

Consultation findings

1. The overwhelming issue that needs to be addressed is education. Many young carers do not attend; experience bullying; are given no support to catch up with missed work; are treated as truants by the police and welfare service
2. Young carers only receive support from Crossroads. Young people feel that there is little understanding or support within other contexts such as education or the youth service. Crossroads funding streams are very insecure and this has a major impact on young people's sense of security in their support
3. Young carers feel excluded from other youth activities because of time, transport and respite care issues. Many activities e.g. team sports need regular commitment.

4. Young carers in Cardiff have indicated the need to develop an ID card as such they have filled a petition requesting an I.D. card for use when professionals such as the police, youth leaders, teachers etc do not believe their situation
5. Young carers are frequently stigmatised in society and wish to contribute to awareness raising through both the media and through professional training
6. Young carers want more opportunities for shared events and activities as young carers. Resources including a minibus are required to support this
7. Young carers wish to set up a peer support group (based on smile clubs in schools)
8. Young carers value their role as a carer in the family and want that to be recognised and supported not simply replaced by professional care
9. Less than 50% of young carers appear to be receiving social work support
10. Many young carers suffer from depression and low self esteem. Some self harm. These health needs are not always picked up by health professionals
11. Young carers value support that is given to the whole family e.g. social events for the whole family

Identifying Young Carers and Assessing Their Needs

Developing the mechanisms which will identify and assess the needs of those young people who undertake a caring role and who may require additional support has been identified as an essential element of a strategy.

Young carers have until recently had a low profile. There is need to develop awareness of young carers and to ensure systems are robust enough to offer appropriate support to allow them to be young people first.

Objectives and Actions

Objective 1

Ensure that service providers are identifying Young Carers, acknowledging their needs and working to support them.

Actions

- To identify a young carer's lead professionals in each key local authority department and other relevant agencies. The role of this professional is to ensure that departments are aware of and responding to the needs of young carers.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- To deliver generic carers awareness training to staff, preferably on a joint basis (Children's Services, Adult Services, Health, Schools and Lifelong Learning Service, Leisure Libraries and Parks, Housing, Advice and Benefits, Youth Service), which promotes better understanding, good practice and joint working.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- To identify and implement in Adult and Children's Services an effective joint service, all-family approach to assessment which takes account of the needs of young carers and their families.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Develop local initiatives to create awareness of Young Carers amongst a boarder range of professional organisations, the voluntary sector and the general public.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Objective 3

Ensure that all services are accessible to minority ethnic Young Carers.

Actions

- Ensure that services working with BME communities take account of young carers.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Objective 4

Ensure that young carers are able to access appropriate support

Actions

- Generate a greater awareness of young carers amongst staff conducting assessments and reviews. This will be implemented as part of the carer awareness training programme.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Ensure that the needs of young carers are addressed as part of the assessment and review process.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Ensure that young carers are aware of and are offered an assessment in their own right (ie a carer assessment) and that they are able to negotiate an appropriate level of caring responsibility.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Establish a Young Carer Information Group to ensure the production and delivery of information of value to young carers in understanding their situation and accessing support.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Promoting Educational Achievement and Attainment

Background

Education is a key factor in determining the extent to which a young person will progress and fulfil their potential. Attendance at school and participation in classes are important to acquiring skills and qualifications that allow progress to further education and employment. Young carers often experience disruption to their education due to a range of factors.

The demands of a caring role can conflict with attendance at school and a young carer may absent themselves in order to attend to the needs of a relative. Young carers can suffer from bullying because they are perceived to be different or have a parent who has a condition that has a degree of social stigma. Even when at school young carers may have difficulty focusing because of tiredness caused by broken sleep or heavy care responsibilities. After falling behind it becomes increasingly difficult to catch up and young carers may become estranged from school work altogether leading to poor educational outcomes

Promoting Educational Achievement and Attainment

Objectives and Actions

Objective 1

Ensure that school staffs are aware of the needs of Young Carers and siblings and are able to access appropriate support as required.

Actions

- Encourage practices in Cardiff schools that allow young carers to feel comfortable in identifying themselves.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Identify current models of good practice of supporting Young Carers within schools and work to develop these further where practical, including involving young carers both in the planning and provision of such services.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Schools, Children's Services and Adult Service staff to develop information sharing systems and joint working practices to enable the timely identification of young carers requiring support. Ensuring lead professionals are in place in all services.

Lead agency	Time	Resource
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver multi-agency sessions to raise awareness of the issues affecting young carers amongst all relevant professionals and to strengthen existing links. 		

Lead agency	Time	Resource
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School, Colleges of FE, Careers Wales and Youth Service staff development sessions to be offered and delivered in order to raise Young Carer awareness and build active local links. 		

Lead agency	Time	Resource
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop models of practice and maximise the potential of other education initiatives to address Young Carer Issues, for example the Cardiff Network of Healthy Schools and the Community Focussed Schools Initiative. 		

Lead agency	Time	Resource
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage schools to highlight the issues of Young Carers during Personal Social Education, Circle Time etc. 		

Lead agency	Time	Resource
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Schools Service helpline for looked after children, Young Carers and vulnerable children. 		

Lead agency	Time	Resource
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the needs of Young Carers with Youth Mentoring services. 		

Lead agency	Time	Resource

Objective 2

Promote support strategies that will facilitate educational inclusion, achievement and attainment.

Actions

- Support the development of positive peer relationships within the school community and where appropriate raise awareness of anti bullying practice and support.

Lead agency	Time	Resource

- Monitor the school attendance of those identified young carers once appropriate support services have been secured. (Maximum school attendance is the aim for all pupils). This data should be used to inform future practice.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Encourage young carers to support and progress their education in schools during lunchtime homework provision or after school clubs where available and appropriate, as well as via non-formal and broader educational activities and opportunities.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Youth Service and Leisure, Libraries and Parks Service throughout Cardiff to include young carers both in the planning and provision of out of school services including access to recreational and social opportunities.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Raise awareness with Careers Service and further education providers to ensure the issues faced by Young Carers are addressed when receiving careers advice and support when considering employment choices.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Encouraging Good Physical and Mental/Emotional Health

Background

The quality of life that young carers experience will have a significant impact on their health, in childhood and in their adult lives. The health of young carers is potentially affected by the special responsibilities they carry, both in terms of their capacity to experience a 'normal' childhood and the detrimental effects that stress and worries have on their mental health. The actions that will have the most health impact in the short term are those contained within the other sections of this strategy, namely providing various forms of support (one to one, group, peer), short breaks, recreational opportunities and support for education.

Objectives and Actions

Objective 1

Raise awareness of the needs of young carers throughout Primary Care, the Local Public Health team, and school and community health services

Actions

- Raise awareness through presentations to Cardiff Local Health Board Primary Care Team and Local Public Health Team and Cardiff and the Vale NHS Trust school health nurses. At locality level to raise awareness via GP, health visitors and practice nurse team meetings.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Objective 2

Provide clear and accessible information and guidance for primary care and school health practitioners regarding local and city wide support for young carers

Actions

- Develop and distribute a summary information sheet for GP's, practice nurses, health visitors, school health nurses, and community-based health workers.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Objective 3

Ensure that the needs of young carers are addressed within health initiatives aimed at supporting young people, and where possible the development of future young people's initiatives.

Actions

- Key officers/managers to ensure that young carers are part of the agenda including :-
Young Peoples Health Task Group, associated sub-groups and action plans
Emotional and Mental health initiatives- Mental Health Promotion pilot projects (particularly the project addressing young carers needs in the black and minority ethnic community)
School health service
Community-based Healthy Living programmes

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Objective 4

To enable young carers to understand the medical condition of those who need care within their family.

Actions

- Develop a supportive environment to discuss medical conditions of those who need care and its social implications, with opportunities for early counselling.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Provide electronic (web-site) information and support.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Ensure that any specific support project addresses the emotional health of Young Carers.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Developing Support Services for Young Carers

Background

Young carers have a range of needs which must be addressed in order to help them cope with their care responsibilities and promote their personal development. The most fundamental needs are for recognition, encouragement and emotional support. Having someone who understands the situation and has the time and interest to listen is of great significance in allowing a young carer to cope and articulate their own needs. The company and understanding of peers is also of assistance in providing emotional support.

There is a range of information needs including advice on the implications of being a young carer, what supports are available and information on the condition of the cared for person. More in depth exploration of personal circumstances is required to identify problems and options for their resolution. One to one support, training, family work and group work all have a role to play.

As with any young person, young carers require social and recreational opportunities. Unlike most young people however, many young carers find their time and energy restricted by care responsibilities. Short breaks and befriending are supports that allow young carers time to enjoy themselves and build friendships.

Allowing Choice and Control for Young Carers

Background

Young carers often find themselves in circumstances far from their own choosing. They can be responsible for significant levels of care due to pressure of family expectation. Young carers need to be supported:

- To develop as young people
- To express their needs and wishes
- To make choices
- To be involved where appropriate in decisions affecting the person they care for
- By adequate levels of agency support to the cared for person
- By a range of direct support for themselves
- By involvement in the development and evaluation of services

Current Position

The services required to meet the needs described above are limited, Crossroads Young Carers Project, 'Give us a Break' which operates a support group for young people is oversubscribed and lacks long term funding. Outside

of this project there is little identifiable bespoke provision offering support to young carers in Cardiff.

Objectives and Actions

Objective 1

Support the involvement of young carers in assessments and reviews for the cared person.

- Ensure that the views of young carers are taken into account during assessments and reviews. Participation in the assessment process encouraged through the provision of appropriate information.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Ensure that young carers have a choice in the extent of their caring role by providing appropriate support to the cared for person.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Objective 2

Develop additional Young Carers Support Services in Cardiff.

Actions

- Commission a service for Young Carers through the appointment of a development worker

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Assist young carers to develop their own networks of support

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Develop an independent advocacy service for young carers in Cardiff

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Implementing the Strategy: Monitoring and Evaluation

Background

It is essential that the planning partners monitor and evaluate the implementation of this strategy and the outcomes for Young Carers. Review of progress could be monitored through the overall Carers Plan and individual agency plans although at least initially there should be a regular coordination of reports to the Framework Board. Monitoring should be developed through the NSF process.

A number of mechanisms will be put in place to measure the implementation of the actions proposed in the plan. The success of these actions in achieving the planned objectives and the overall aim of improving the quality of life for young carers will also need to be measured.

Objectives and Actions

Objective 1

Measure the implementation of strategy actions

Actions

- Develop a implementation plan against which established actions can be measured.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Review of services for young carers to form part of the annual review process for the Children's Services Plan, Education Strategic Plan, Cardiff Cares Plan and National Service Framework.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Establish mechanisms to ascertain the views of young carers and their families, as to the impact of the Young Carers Strategy.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Identify baseline measures against which success can be measured, eg numbers of joint assessments, school attendance.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Financial Framework

Background

It is crucial to the viability of a plan that it demonstrates an understanding of the level of resources currently being invested in services. There should also be a clear indication of how this resource base will change over the planning period and how it will be allocated to obtain maximum advantage. This transparency is an important element of accountability to carers and other interested parties.

Objectives and Actions

Objective 1

Establish a clear and accurate picture of current expenditure on young carers

Actions

- Conduct a review of all appropriate services budget lines in order to identify current elements of expenditure to support young carers

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Establish a financial framework to support the implementation of a strategy in Cardiff

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Objective 2

Establish core budgets and expand expenditure on young carers

Actions

- Seek additional funding to support the work of Young Carers Projects.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

- Stabilise long term core budget for Young Carer Projects.

Lead agency

Time

Resource

Appendix 1

Messages from consultation

The following section draws directly from consultation undertaken in Glasgow. The range of issues and concerns set out in the Glasgow report reflects the range of concerns and issues raised in Cardiff at in both the 2003 Young Carers Conference and recent consultative work with young carers.

Impact of Caring

The experience of being a young carer can be stressful and diminishing. If the commitments are excessive the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of the young person will be gradually undermined. Difficulties at school can affect attainment and reduce future job prospects. There is a large pool of unidentified young carers who require support in order to allow them to make positive choices about their role.

Positive Features

There is a very positive side to caring consistently reported by young carers themselves. Through these roles they gain a status and sense of responsibility as well as finding satisfaction in supporting a close relative. They also acquire practical skills and learn to understand the needs of another person. These factors can be strengthening and build self-esteem. Young carers commented that they wished to continue with their caring role.

Concerns of Young Carers

Young carers expressed a range of concerns particularly in relation to the involvement of statutory agencies. There can be a fear that such involvement may result in the break up of the family either through the young carer being taken into care or the cared for person being removed from the family home. There is also a fear of losing control, that professionals will move in and displace young carers from their role and influence. Young carers want to be acknowledged and their views taken seriously whether in relation to themselves or the person to whom they provide support.

Information

Comments from young carers and workers indicated that current information is very limited, poorly distributed and under used. There was a number of suggestions about how this situation could be improved but a common view was that young carers themselves should be asked in more detail about what information was required and the most effective ways of communicating. An

information strategy could be developed in co-operation with a focus group of young carers who would provide general advice and provide feedback on any potential material.

Existing Service

Young carers placed a high value on the support they received from existing young carer services implying a need to strengthen and expand these supports from their very limited base. Having regular contact with an independent source of one to one advice and peer support from meeting as a group was of great benefit.

Responsibilities

The support provided by young carers should never be a substitute for formal service input. Many young carers carry out tasks more properly the responsibility of adults or statutory services. Young carers need to be aware of the practical supports that service agencies can provide. This will include adequate inputs from home help and community health staff.

Practical Supports

A range of other useful supports was identified. Advocacy services in order to support the young carer understand their circumstances and ensure that their needs are met. Respite was identified as crucial to free up time for the young person to fulfil their own needs whether that be to complete homework or spend time with friends.

Identifying Young Carers

There is a large pool of unidentified young carers who would benefit greatly from being offered information, advice and practical support. Opportunities and encouragement should be given to young people to identify themselves as young carers. This is closely linked with raising the profile of young carers particularly in the school environment and clearly identifying routes to support. The most likely mechanism for the better identification of young carers however is through those staff who come into contact with young people as part of their work. This encompasses a very broad range of staff who should be provided with appropriate information and undergo training sessions.

Young Carers from Minority Ethnic Communities

Young carers from ethnic minority backgrounds have particular difficulties in being identified and supported. There is a need to ensure a good quality dialogue with minority ethnic communities in order to understand their cultural

requirements and to communicate that services and supports are available. All areas of activity, from information, assessment to service provision, should be culturally sensitive and equally accessible to all groups.

Striking a Balance

Young carers want to be able to strike a balance in their lives; A balance between supporting the needs of a family member and fulfilling their own needs; A balance between accepting help from outside agencies and their need for independence. Currently the burden of expectation on young carers is too great due to their largely unrecognised role and the lack of available support. There is a pressing need to create a dialogue with young carers leading to services which support them in making positive choices about their lives

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