

Young Carers (0-18)

What support is available to Young Carers?

Overview

The Young Carer team have been focused on direct work over the last few years due to changing management oversight since the upheaval of moving from the Youth Trust back into Torbay Council in 2023. As part of the recent Children's Services restructure to support the government's Families First Partnership programme reforms, the service now sits within the Youth Hub as part of Family Help. This brings together services specifically for young people, including the Youth Service and Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service. This will enable a wider offer, more flexible use of resources and improved collaboration with-partners to improve access and engagement from young people in Torbay.

As part of the ongoing work to define and establish the Youth Hub within the community, we are currently reviewing the service offer in line with the needs of young people.

This will include:

- Making referral pathways clearer and easier for professionals and individuals to access and submit. We have had a downward trend in referral numbers over the last 12 months. Further analysis is required to understand the reasons for this reduction.
- Implementation of clear timeframes and expectations for assessments and reviews to include improved recording on Liquid Logic. This will include the introduction of a home visit for the initial meeting following a new referral to ensure the assessment factors in the parents' views and understanding of life at home for the young person.
- Mapping the support and respite opportunities available in each locality to improve signposting and engagement.
- Focusing on the impact of targeted interventions, activities and support provided to ensure needs are being met and inform future developments. Explore barriers to engagement, particularly around transport needs and out-of-school activities. Consider Youth Service cross-over.
- Working with the Young Adult Carers (YAC) service to support smooth transitions into adult services and improve the transitional support between primary and secondary school.

The current support for Young Carers if assessed as appropriate includes:

- Weekly 1 to 1 intervention with a named Young Carer project worker for a minimum of 6 weeks. These all currently take place in school. Workers have strong relationships with most local schools.

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- Optional check-in opportunities with Young Carer Project Worker at school. 1 per term in primary age range and weekly lunch club at secondary age.
- Group sessions with other Young Carers facilitated by Young Carer Project Worker take place once per month at primary age and once per fortnight for secondary groups. Average attendance: 7 young people per session.
- Invitations to attend 'one-off' events and activities to enable protected family time including half-term Forest School, Train of Lights and Circus tickets.

In addition, there is support from the Young Adult Carers Services (16-25), (Torbay Carers Services, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT)), for Young Adult Carers aged 16 or 17 (as well as those up to and including age 24).

Carers of this age can be supported by either or both services, depending on which service the young carer feels is most appropriate to them. The YAC Service offers 1 to 1 support tailored to the individual's identified needs, access to group drop-ins, and access to a wide range of activities (funded by its charitable strand). Whilst some Young Carers choose to continue to receive ongoing support from the Young Carers service alongside accessing the activities run by the YAC service, others may choose to receive all support through the YAC service.

How are opportunities for Young Carers promoted?

This is currently communicated through email notices to those Young Carers on the register and shared with schools. Young Carers Service is looking at introducing a menu of events as part of the assessment process and exploring the use of social media to engage more directly with Young Carers.

For Young Carers aged 16 or 17 who are accessing the Young Adult Carers Service (16 – 25), opportunities are communicated individually through 1-1 sessions, emails and text messages, and Instagram (an NHS-approved social media). The wider promotional material for the service is distributed through a wide range of organisations – e.g. South Devon College and other educational establishments, GP Surgeries, NHS premises, Carer's Centres etc. Also promoted on TSDFT website ([Carers under 25 - Torbay Carers Service - Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust](#)), Torbay Council Website ([Carer support - Torbay Council](#)), and the YAC website ([Torbay Young Adult Carers](#)).

The refresh of the Young Carers Under 25 Strategy is now commencing – this has been delayed whilst waiting for the new staffing structure in Young Carers Services, which is now in place.