

Young Carers in Dorset

Simon Fraiz-Brown - Service Manager, Young and Thriving

Young Carers in Dorset

- A young carer is a child or young person aged 18 or under who cares for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, mental health problems or an addiction, cannot cope without their support.
- Research indicates that being a young carer affects:
 - Economic situation
 - Emotional wellbeing
 - Physical health
 - Educational Outcomes
- Dorset Council is required to assess the impact of caring on the child and whole family and to provide support where this is needed. However young carers are often isolated and reluctant to ask for help

Support to young carers

Dorset Council Young Carers Team support those undertaking a 'significant caring role'. Currently 112 young people.

- 121 support and liaison with the family
- Advocate for young carer with school and other professionals
- Signpost to additional support where required
- Provide access to positive activities and a break from caring
- Attending regional and national events such as the Young Carers Festival

Support to young carers

- Carer Support Dorset are commissioned to provide all age carer support and maintain a register of carers. This includes:
 - Support young carers to co-produce services
 - Raise awareness of young carers needs
 - Provide training to professionals
 - Support young carers as they move into adulthood
- MYTIME is a pan-Dorset charity which supports young carers. Their support includes:
 - Delivery of school holiday activities
 - Online 'Zoom' youth groups
 - Employability Programme
- Rethink – Commissioned to provide emotional wellbeing support to young carers aged 16+

Strengthening our offer

- More work to do identifying young carers – BCP has much higher numbers and 2021 Census indicates that we have many more than we currently know about
- Improving how well young carers are involved in decision making, especially in health settings
- Young carers have recently been added to the school census return – this will provide an opportunity to understand the impact on school attendance and attainment and work with schools to better support them
- Continue to strengthen links with Adult Services to ensure young carers makes successful transition into adulthood
- Progress on these may require additional investment although research by Sheffield Young Carers indicates a return on this investment