

**Young Carers
Annual Update
2022**

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A message from Councillor Patricia Bradwell OBE, Executive Councillor for Children's Services

I continue to be honoured to play a small part in ensuring young carers in Lincolnshire are identified, supported, and celebrated. We should never underestimate the amount of time, energy, and love that they give to their loved ones to make sure that they are cared for however challenging the situation may be.

I am moved every time I hear about some of the circumstances these amazing young people face and am proud of the people who are so committed to helping them.

In this report you will see the range of people who are identifying young carers and supporting them through activities, listening and whole family help.

Our Early Help Workers and Schools do some amazing work and continue to lead the way in the support on offer. Health Services, Adult Support Services and Voluntary Organisations continue to be key partners in helping us to continue to improve.

And of course, we want our improvements to be informed by the young carers themselves, so I am grateful to Sally Stanfield and the Young Carers Participation Group for giving a voice to young carers. I hope you enjoy reading this report, and whatever your role, find a small way to help young carers in the coming year.

2022 has been a busy year for our Young Carers across the county, they have had to cope with many changes as the country around them began to find our new 'normal' post pandemic way of living. Many Young Carers were rightly so, worried about re-engaging in public/community activities and for some, returning to school was also a big worry. Our Young Carers Service began by combining virtual and face to face activity sessions, we have been working with lots of new schools to support them in exploring how they can best support their Young Carer students and we have done this by including our Young Carers on the journey with us, so that we made sure what we delivered best met their needs. This Annual Update will share a reflection of what life has been like for our Young Carers during the past year and share some of the highlights and plans for the future as we work 'better together'.

Priority Updates

Last Year we shared our plans and priorities for the forthcoming year and below is an update on what we have achieved so far:

1. Support our new Young Carers Participation Group to evolve and find opportunities to co-produce improved information and support for Lincolnshire Young Carers
2. Continue to support our partners in identifying Young Carers at the earliest opportunity so that they get the right support at the right time.
3. Continue to support all professionals in Lincolnshire to develop their practice in working with young carers and their families through advice and learning opportunities.
4. Support our Young Carers Participation group to lead on and plan a County Wide Young Carers Celebration Event.
5. Continue to work with colleagues in Adult Social Care to develop 'our 'whole family working' approach.

The priority work plan has led to some fantastic achievements and collaborative work taking place, which all deserve their own write up – see below for more information!

1. Things have definitely moved on over the past year for our Young Carers Participation Group! They have met several times face to face, they decided they wanted to be called 'Young Carers Matter', they have been involved in several pieces of work so far including contributing to 2 TAC Newsletters that go out to all of our partners they enlisted the feedback and support from their local Young Carers Groups to include in this, they have guided us and ratified the new Young Carer 'best questions' that help professionals to have a conversation with Young Carers about their lives and the things that matter to them and they have contributed to the development of the new cards and resources to support Young Carers who care for parents/carers that struggle with substance use or have mental health issues – things

that quite often are hidden and not easily shared. This next year they are working with us to help us improve the way we reach out to Young Carers through our website and leaflets/cards – we are all really excited about future developments!

2. Identifying Young Carers as early as possible has always been something we have aimed to do, this last year we really wanted to make sure this was given priority and time to make sure changes could be achieved. A group of keen and enthusiastic members of our TAC team got together to work on this as a priority. This led to an update of the Early Help Pathway to include Young Carers, updated our messages that go out to colleagues, made sure our Young Carers mailing list included all professionals we work with, research into UK wide best practice and toolkits to add to our resources, co-produced and updated our best questions and developed improved publicity.

3. We have developed a Community of Practice which aims to bring together like minded professionals to share what they have found has worked well, improve networks and links and increase confidence in professionals to ‘think young carer’. Attendance continues to grow. We are also linking with increasing numbers of GP surgeries across the county, supporting them to explore Young Carers needs, make links with local agencies and some have also attended and contributed to our Young Carers/Young Adult Carers multi agency team.

4. Young Carers Matter did not host a Young Carers event but there were several local events that took place across the county – logistics played a huge part in this! They are however involved in the upcoming Young Carers Action Day, so watch this space.

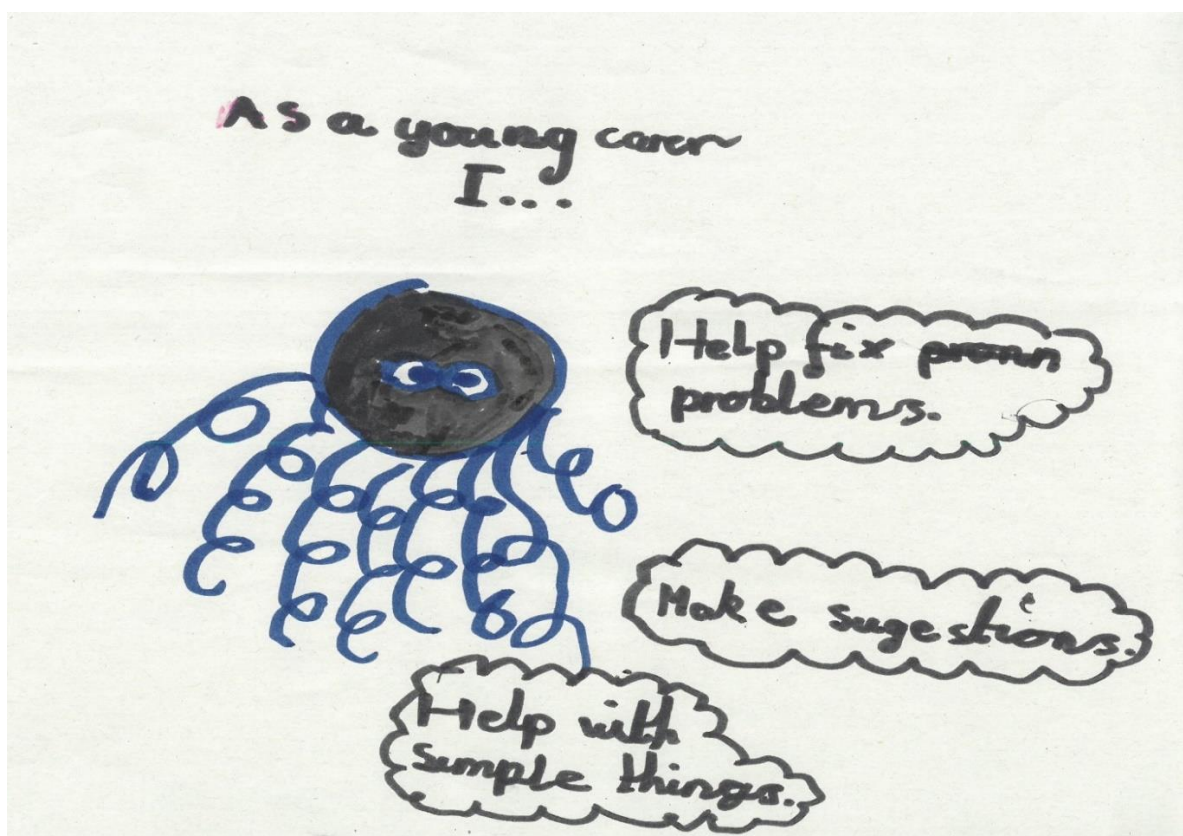
5. We continue to work with colleagues in adult care and are developing improved ways that Young Carers transition into adult support services and support colleagues in adult social care to explore the whole family’s needs



Young Carers Survey

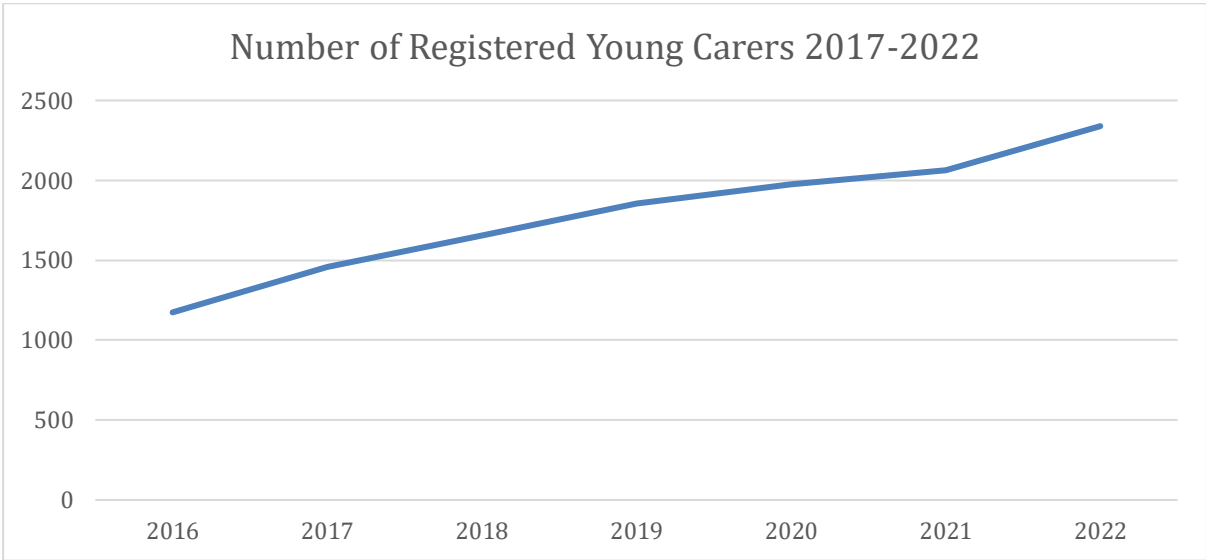
Our first Young Carers Survey took place last year, this was designed to reach out to our Young Carers and their families to find out their experience about the support they received, what services they accessed and what difference this made. There were limited numbers of Young Carers that completed it (62) but of those that did, the biggest sources of support for them were face to face Young Carers groups, Young Carers card and zoom groups. Those that responded also said the best ways in which we could continue to support them was via face-to-face groups, one to one support and that the best place to receive this was either a neutral place or in school. 45% of Young Carers said that they felt confident and over 25% said they felt very confident about their caring role and over 71% said that their school knew that they were a Young Carer and 51 of the Young Carers who completed the survey shared that they had lots of different people they could go to if they were worried.

We hope to make this an annual survey and the responses will help us to grow and shape future support and services for our Young Carers. If you are interested to read the full survey report, please visit - [Young Carers Survey | Let's Talk Lincolnshire](#) the survey is now closed but the report can be accessed via a pdf document.

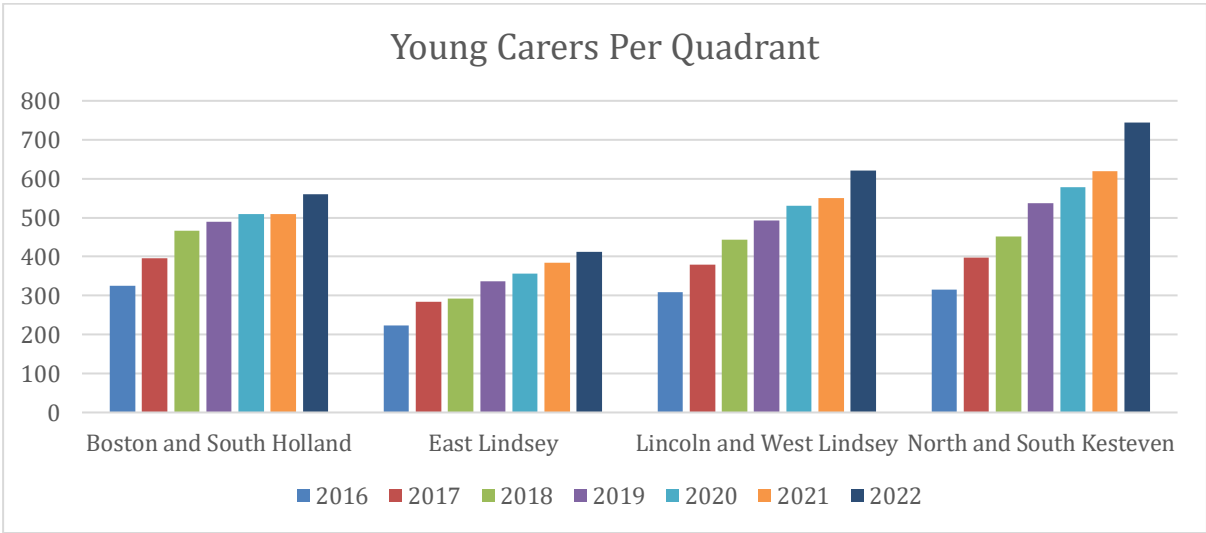


Identification of Young Carers

The best estimate regarding the number of Young Carers in Lincolnshire, using Census 2011 data and research available, is 6,000. There are currently **2339** young people registered as Young Carers in Lincolnshire, this is a large increase of 276 from the previous year, it is difficult to know whether this has any links to the covid pandemic and how this may be affecting families or indeed, if it is also as a result of an increase in numbers being identified due to the priority work we have been doing.



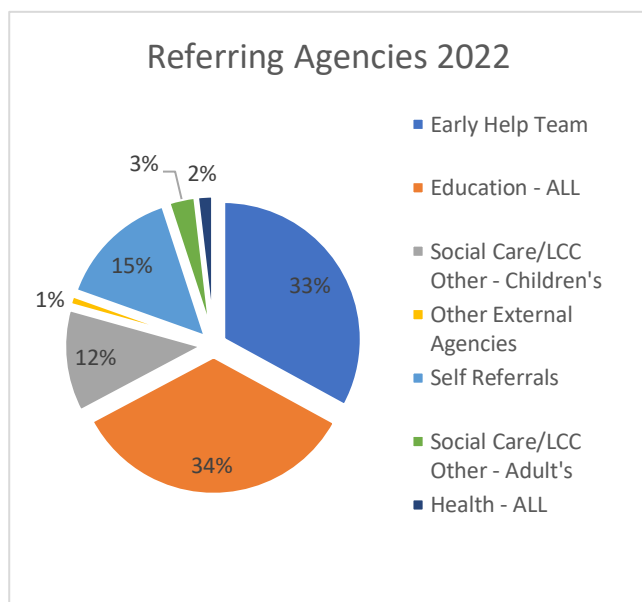
The growth of Young Carers and the spread across the county remains fairly in line with previous years with North and South Kesteven identifying the highest numbers.



Where are our Young Carers Identified?

There were 537 new young carer identifications made in 2022, Early Help Teams and the Education sector continue to identify most young carers in Lincolnshire. There has been an increase in self-referrals, which evidences growing visibility of the service to families.

246 young carers requested support from the Early Help Team in 2022.



Referring Agencies	2021	2022
Early Help Team	116	177
Education - ALL	107	184
Social Care/LCC Other - Children's	43	65
Other External Agencies	19	6
Self-Referrals	62	78
Social Care/LCC Other - Adult's	24	17
Health - ALL	31	10
TOTAL	402	537

Age

The average age of young carers at the point of identification is now just below 10 years of age, this is consistent with previous years data.

We believe that the earlier in their caring journey that young carers are identified, the more likely with the right support, outcomes are positive. Older young carers, including those who are now adults, have told us that they had been caring for quite a while before someone spoke to them about this – if indeed it had happened at all. They wished they had known that support was available.

Year	Average Age	Age Range
2017	11.01	2-18
2018	10.8	3-18
2019	10.9	4-18
2020	9.9	2-18
2021	9.9	4-18
2022	9.9	3-19

Current Young Carer Age Breakdown

Age Breakdown	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
0-5	5	24	15	10	3	6
6-11	374	478	518	545	557	440
12-17	780	829	947	1017	1081	1440
17+	299	322	376	402	422	452
TOTAL	1458	1653	1856	1974	2063	2338*

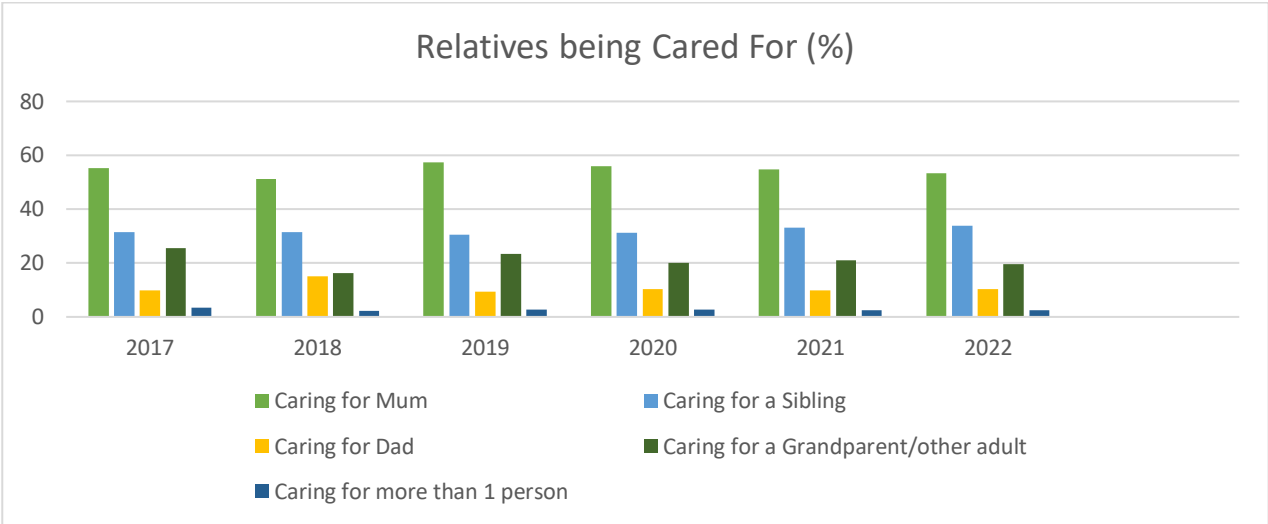
Gender

There are currently **1288 (55%)** female Young Carers and **1031 (44%)** male Young Carers. This is similar to the national average and remains consistent.

Year	Female	Male	Self-Identifying	TOTAL
2017	820 = 56%	638 = 44%		1458
2018	929 = 56%	724 = 44%		1653
2019	1037 = 56%	819 = 44%		1856
2020	1132 = 57%	842 = 43%		1974
2021	1150 = 55.5%	900 = 44%	13 = 0.5%	2063
2022	1288 = 55%	1031 = 44%	20 = 0.8%	2339

Who Young Carers are Caring For

The breakdown of who the Young Carers across Lincolnshire are caring for, appears to be fairly static with the majority known to us who care for their Mums.



Reasons people need care

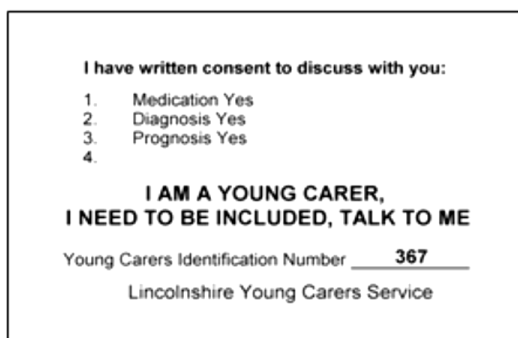
The data below shows the numbers of young carers who are caring for people with the identified conditions.

Primary Support Reason	2019	2020	2021	2022
Physical Disability	822	863	821	788
Mental Health	492	508	545	620
ADHD/Autism	283	310	360	418
Life Limiting/Long Term	79	104	156	293
Learning Disability	67	67	67	70
Other/Unknown	49	48	49	82
Substance Misuse	40	51	46	51
Sensory	23	23	19	17
Emotional/Behavioural	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	1856	1974	2063	2339

Young Carer Card

145 Young Carer Cards were requested and sent out in 2022 an increase compared to the previous year

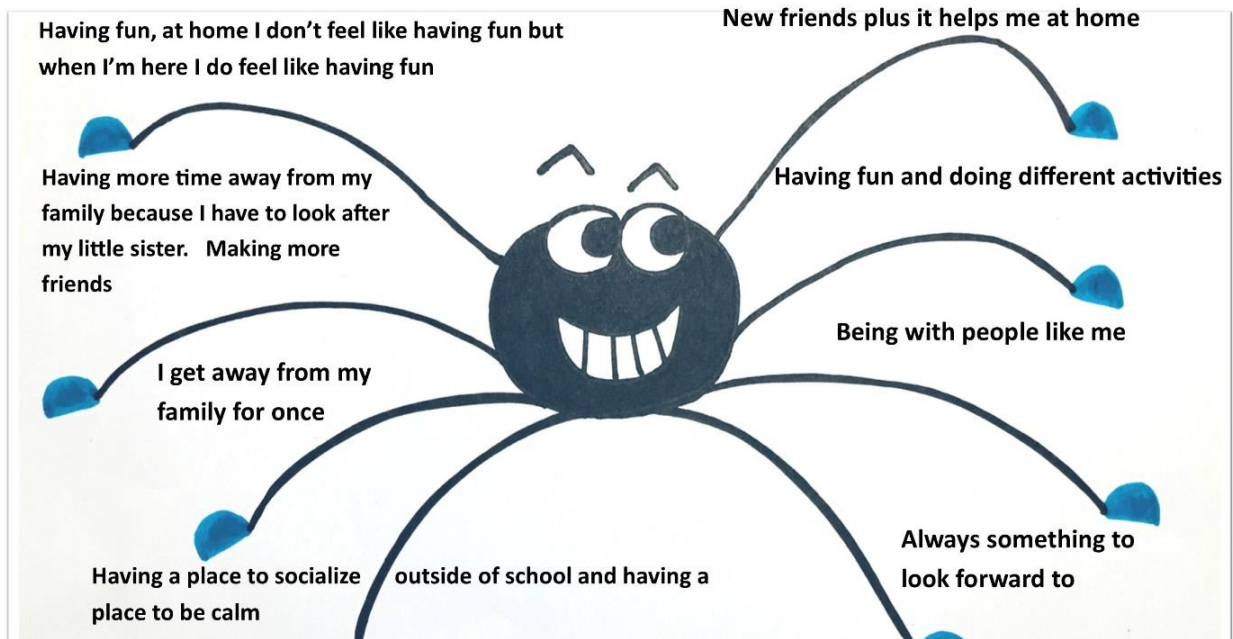
2022	145
2021	115
2020	139
2019	80
2018	30
2017	18



Young Carer's Voices



CARING SPIDER: You told us some of the things that are important to you at group





"I really like being with other young carers like me".

"For one of our Young Carers who is home schooled this group can sometimes be the only opportunity he has to see others outside of his family. His mum has told us that she would really like there to be more groups as he is growing in confidence"

"I have a fun and nice time away from caring at home as it is chaotic at home sometimes."

"Everything is great, I'm really pleased my daughter is part of the Young Carers Group. It's really helped her to have something for her only where she cannot be distracted or be put out by situations at home with her brother."

"K has come out happy and said he really enjoyed himself. It's nice to see as he's been worrying about it for a few days. So, it's nice to see his worries were eased. So, thank you."

"He seems more confident going to places without a familiar adult. He is more confident as a Young Carer now and maybe more important now his role has been recognized by his group membership."

"The Young Carers wanted to express themselves and pay tribute after the death of Queen Elizabeth, so we let them draw, write, or make a tribute however they wanted."

"All of the members are fun they have lots of fun which takes your mind off things they are kind, caring and respectful that you can enjoy yourself and not have to worry that you can basically do whatever you want time out, talking, support, people. Its sooo fun, fun food and Darrens cooking."

Working with our schools

Boston and South Holland Young Carers

Christmas baking with the Smile Club

The last Smile club session of the term was a fun session baking and decorating Christmas biscuits.

All the equipment and ingredients were provided and the students got to take their biscuits home (some may not have made it!)



If you are or you know a young carer, please get in touch
for information about our groups

BostonSHYCarersGP@lincolnshire.gov.uk

We continue to work closely with schools as key partners in providing the right support to Young Carers at the right time. Lincolnshire is a vast and often quite rural county, which sometimes means that Young Carers and their families can be fairly isolated and not always able to access a Young Carers group, or they don't necessarily want to go somewhere where they don't know people. Following the recent Covid pandemic, the way in which support was provided had to adapt, our local Young Carer Early Help Teams worked creatively using technology to continue to offer support which worked for some young people and is continued to be used where needed. However, many of our schools are really keen to explore the opportunities that they have within their own settings to develop different opportunities of providing support to Young Carers. This has led to a fantastic piece of work between our Boston and South Holland Early Help Team and Boston High School. Together they have co-produced a Young Carers group, The Smile Club so that pupils who attend the school can access support where they want it.

"The things that have been important for me is the time away I got from caring"

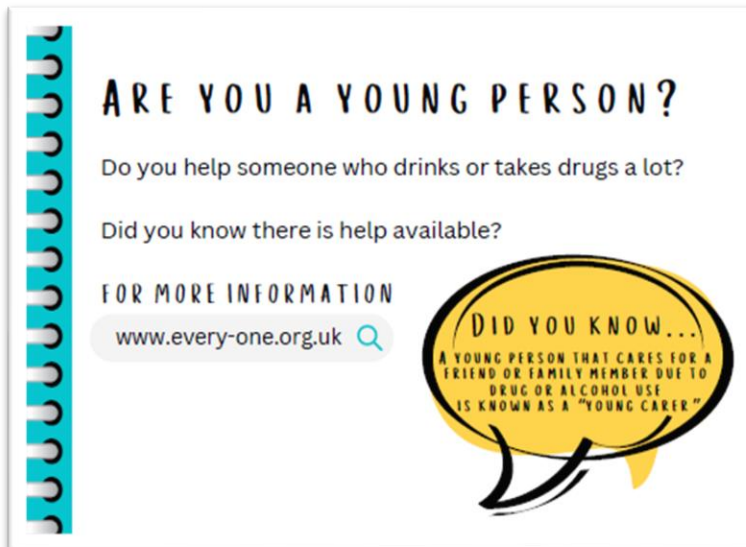
"Thank you for teaching me stuff I'll need whilst caring for my Dad"

Partnership Working and Co-Production

Our Young Carers across the County were asked to be involved in producing some post card resources to help reach out to those Young Carers who might not necessarily see themselves as a Young Carer. Those who's parents/carers struggled with substance use either alcohol or drugs, or those who had mental health difficulties. Quite often we know that young people and their families don't necessarily see this as something that requires a caring role and don't always want to share this information with schools or other professionals.

Every-One were asked to co-produce these resources based on an identified unmet need, until now there weren't any specific ways to help young people experiencing these issues understand that there is help out there.

Paula from Every-One went out to meet young carers at their groups across the locality and also did some work online, the result is an eye catching post card that hopefully will help any young person who's parent or carer uses substances or has a mental health issue know where they can get help.



Priorities for 2023

- Co-produce our public information and resources available to our Young Carers with Young Carers Matter.
- Support our schools to continue to explore opportunities to support their Young Carers in the best ways that meet their needs.
- Continue to explore opportunities to make sure Young Carers lived experiences help shape future services.
- Continue to work closely with colleagues in Adult services to make sure we are embedding whole family working practices across our workforces.
- Continue to grow and support our Communities of Practice to help them support one another and be a place to increase confidence and share good practice across our county.

Where to Get Help or Find Out More

Contact Lincolnshire Young Carers youngcarers@lincolnshire.gov.uk

or call us on 01522 553275

Or join our Facebook Page:



Useful websites:

Family Services Directory <https://lincolnshire.fsd.org.uk/kb5/lincs/fsd/home.page>

Lincolnshire Carers Service <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/support-carers>

Online support for sibling carers <https://www.sibs.org.uk/youngsibs/>

Kooth <https://www.kooth.com/>

