

SUPPORTING YOUNG ADULT CARERS

A RESEARCH PROJECT 2019

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

- We wanted to research the unmet needs of young adult carers and the support they would benefit from.
- Using a survey, interviews, and focus groups we sought the opinions of young adult carers between the ages of 16-25 years.
- We reached approximately 80 young adult carers – over 50 surveys, 12 interviews and 18 young adult carers attending focus groups/group interviews.

National Research

- We analysed data from several large scale research papers on the impact of being a young adult carer and recommendations for practice.
- We investigated the main impacts on mental health, education and employment.
- We collated recommendations around providing information for mental health support and managing everyday stress.
- We also looked at recommendations including providing tailored careers advice considering the young adult carers' caring role, providing opportunities to develop peer networks, and building links with colleges and universities.

Presenting Issues from National Research

- Isolation
- Financial pressures
- Stress, anxiety, anger
- Lack of knowledge about employment
- Lack of knowledge surrounding further education
- Lack of/incorrect qualifications for aspirations

Key Findings and priorities

- Support is needed to manage everyday mental health – especially stress and anxiety
- Building social networks with other young adult carers is a priority
- Information, advice and guidance for practical or “adult” problems is needed
- Barriers are commonly stopping progress in these areas.

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Young adult carers expressed that the main barriers to accessing support were:

1. Not knowing what support was available
2. Not having enough time to access support
3. Not having transport to get to locations where support could be accessed
4. Not having the money to get to locations where support could be accessed.

Ways to Break Down Barriers

Young adult carers gave many suggestions of how to break barriers, the most common ones heard in interviews and groups were:

1. Advertise services online and in public places
2. Hold drop-ins in colleges
3. Create an online network of young adult carers using social media

Next Steps

This work is shaping our strategic thinking and planning.

We are making the 'Someone to Talk to' service more accessible for young adult carers.

We are researching how online support could be used to support young adult carers.

We are working closely with adult services to ensure joined-up working is taking place.

Watch this space!