



Young Carers Cardiff

Case Studies: Experiences and insights

The young carers service provides targeted support and respite opportunities that help children balance caring responsibilities with school, friendships and personal development. Families describe a service that reduces pressure at home, supports emotional wellbeing, creates opportunities for connection and helps young carers feel understood, valued and less alone. This leads to improved emotional and mental health and a better overall quality of life for children and their families.

During the year, we conducted semi-structured interviews with people associated with the project and thematically analysed the responses to summarise people's experiences and the impact of the service.

Feeling supported, cared for and less alone

- **Support for parents and carers:** Families feel reassured knowing there is someone they can turn to and that support is available quickly when they are struggling.
- **Children feel understood and supported:** Staff respond to individual needs and provide sensitive, informed support that helps young carers regulate emotions and feel safe.
- **Emotional relief for parents:** The service helps reduce feelings of guilt and stress by giving children time away from caring responsibilities and providing practical help during difficult times.

"For me, it has relieved the guilt. I do feel guilty when I can't do the things other parents can."

"She often shuts down and won't communicate with anyone but me. But now they've built those relationships, she's built that trust and it's given her another avenue of people to talk to."

Connection, belonging and shared experience

- **Peer connection and belonging:** Young carers value being around others who understand their situation, reducing feelings of isolation.
- **Family days that build community:** Opportunities for whole families to take part in activities help strengthen bonds and create shared positive experiences.
- **Group activities that build confidence:** Sharing experiences, participating in group work and joining youth clubs create a sense of normality and fun.

"They also have family days which are brilliant."

"It's nice for him to be around other people who are the same."

"We've done group work where those who've been on events shared their experiences with others."

Practical help that makes everyday life easier

- **Support with transport:** Flexible transport helps children take part in activities even when parents are unwell or cannot drive.
- **Enabling independence and skills:** Activities help develop practical skills such as safe cooking, building children's confidence and reducing pressure on families.
- **Small changes that make a big difference:** Simple help like being picked up for a youth club or an outing enables children to maintain routines and social activities.

"Even taking him to the youth club as I don't drive has really helped us out."

"It means he can now safely cook a few different meals at home. Before this it might have just been sandwiches. Now I know he's safe to do it."

Trusting, long lasting relationships

- **Building trust over time:** Consistent support helps children overcome anxiety about leaving parents and builds emotional confidence.
- **Staff knowing children as individuals:** Workers build deep, personal relationships that help them understand each young carer's specific needs.
- **Reliable support for the whole family:** Young carers trust staff to provide support, advice and emotional safety during difficult periods.

"Someone or somewhere I can turn to as well, not just for him."

"It's the one to one support, the emotional support and really getting to know the children. They build these personal relationships."

Positive emotional and practical outcomes

- **Improved emotional wellbeing:** Young carers feel happier, more confident and more able to cope with daily life through supportive relationships and enjoyable activities.
- **Enjoyment and relief from pressure:** Activities offer valuable respite and fun, helping children feel more like their peers.
- **Practical skills and home impact:** Skills learned in sessions translate into independence and relief for families at home.

"It's made them feel good. It's made such a difference to them."

"He absolutely loves it. It's given him something of his own."