



# Young Carers Survey 2023

**YOUNG**  
**healthwatch**  
Central Bedfordshire

# Content...



**Introduction** P3

**Methodology** P4

**Executive Summary** P5

**Survey Results** P10

**Conclusion** P20

**Recommendations** P22

**Advice and Support for young Carers** P24

**Appendix A - Survey Questions** P25

**Appendix B - Full List of Comments** P30

**It Starts With You** P42

**About Young Healthwatch** P43

# Introduction

In February 2023 Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire (HWCB) worked with 13 other local Healthwatch across England, to undertake engagement in our area, as part of Healthwatch England's research project called 'Social Care and Unmet Needs'. As part of this project HWCB were commissioned to engage with a particular cohort of people – 'A young unpaid Carer (a child or young person under the age of 18) trying to access care for a loved one'.

Central Bedfordshire Council define young Carers as:

*'Young Carers are children under the age of 18 who spend time helping to care for close friends or family, who due to illness or disability, may find it difficult without their support.'*

*Children and young people aged 5 to 17 who look after or are affected by someone in their family who has a physical illness, disability, mental health illness or substance misuse problem; taking on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities which would normally be expected of an adult'<sup>1</sup>*

According to the Carers Trust, one in twelve children and young people under the age of 18 looks after someone with a care and support need<sup>2</sup>. These estimates suggest there are around 5,210 young Carers in Central Bedfordshire, but only a small proportion of these young people receive specialist services.

HWCB conducted three in depth interviews with young Carers as part of the Healthwatch England project. The young Carers all spoke about the lack of assessment and support they had received, as well as the heavy burden of responsibility they have to carry as a result of their role.

HWCB therefore determined that a wider survey would need to be undertaken to better understand the support and services available to them. In addition, further investigation would be required to understand the current offer available to young Carers living in Central Bedfordshire.

The aim of the survey was to hear directly from young Carers, or from an individual who knows a young Carer, about the support they receive, whether they have accessed support, and if they are aware of the support provided by the local authority and community support groups.

The feedback will help to better understand if services for young Carers are meeting need, and what more needs to be done.



<sup>1</sup> Central Bedfordshire Council, last updated February 2023, [Who is a young Carer? | Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

<sup>2</sup> Homepage - [Carers Trust](#)

# Methodology

A survey was designed, asking a short series of questions, aimed at young Carers, to determine what services a young Carer currently accesses, if they attend a regular support group, what school support is offered, whether they had accessed support online, what they felt could be improved or provided for young Carers in Central Bedfordshire, and whether they had received a Needs Assessment. The remaining questions were demographic; age, gender and location.

The survey was launched via smart survey on 1st February 2023 and closed on 6th March 2023. Hard copies of the survey were also offered and were available on request. A full copy of the survey questions can be found at **Appendix A**.

The survey was promoted extensively through:

- ◆ HWCB and Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire (YHWCB) websites.
- ◆ Social media platforms.
- ◆ HWCB weekly Ebulletin.
- ◆ Targeted emails to our distribution lists including:
  - ◇ Carer community and voluntary organisations
  - ◇ Central Bedfordshire Council
  - ◇ Local schools
  - ◇ Beds, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System (BLMK ICS)

All organisations were asked to share the survey as widely as possible. In total **83** fully completed surveys were returned.



# Executive Summary

The survey was designed for young Carers, and those who knew of young Carers, and the questions asked sought to understand what worked well for them and what needed to improve. The aim was to highlight any gaps in support for young Carers in Central Bedfordshire, and to make recommendations for improvement, to further support their wellbeing.

The survey was widely distributed across Central Bedfordshire using many social media platforms and shared with community and voluntary groups that support young Carers. In total, 83 completed questionnaires were returned. A full copy of the survey questions can be found at **Appendix A**.

Interestingly the results show that over half of the respondents to the survey were those who knew of a young Carer (**64%**), rather than the Carer themselves (**36%**). We can only assume this to be a parent, or the person the young Carer cares for, as a large majority of respondents (**85%**) confirmed they did have a young Carer in their household.

Just over half of respondents (**53%**) said they knew how to access support services but the other half (**47%**) did not. Some of those who knew how to do so said support was provided by Central Bedfordshire Council which included group sessions, activities and events.

Positive comments included, *'Young Carers provides amazing support to both the young Carers in our family and the adults too. They offer groups for the children to attend as well as days out and residential trips. They keep in touch to see how things are going during difficult times. They provide emotional support for the children when we have been unable to get it anywhere else. They have been incredible'*.



In the majority of cases, support was also provided by the school, equally however, many people who completed the survey also said they would get in touch with Carers in Bedfordshire if they needed help.

One individual who completed the survey said, *'I run a monthly Young Carers group in school. These young Carers know how to register as a young Carer and where to get help and support in school'*. However, it is of concern that just under half of those who answered the survey did not know where to go to get help and support. One person mentioned *'monthly evening support group run by Central Bedfordshire Council but I can't get there'*, and another said, *'Yes but there is nothing suitable for my child. Only activities which they feel unable to attend as they hate leaving their sibling'*. One parent told us, *'I have only just signed my youngest son up as a young Carer (his big brother is autistic) so am still finding out what's available for him'*.

A fairly low percentage of respondents (23%) said they accessed support services provided by Central Bedfordshire Council, mainly via the Young Carers Voice Group, positive comments included, *'I am part of the Voice Group, I go to the Voice Group activities'* and *'I have done Go-Karting, as part of the Voice Group, I have done a music project, gone to theme parks and monthly groups'*. Another individual said that *'she attends the activities put on by Central Beds Council for young carers. i.e., fun with friends but this is only usually once per school holiday'*. However, just over two thirds of respondents (77%) were unaware that the Council provided support services, as a few people had said, *'I didn't know the Council provided support services'*. Another person told us, *'The school support worker has contacted young carers and Central Beds Council and been told this service no longer happens'*. Worryingly, another person told us that *'They used to access a young Carers group, but age was changed to '8' and they were deemed not important enough to warrant support anymore as they were too young'*.

The survey also asked respondents if they had accessed Central Bedfordshire Council's website to find out what support services were available, and this elicited the same low amount as those who had accessed support services **(23%)**.



Comments included, *'we are very new to this so hoping to get information through the website'*. Many Carers said that a parent or family member had accessed the website, rather than the Carer themselves, but of those who had accessed the site many found the information 'limited', one parent added, *'A lot of signposting, and no intro support for my child who has specific needs, where he needs personalised support working with them to try new social activities in a new environment amongst new people'*. Once again, others indicated their preference was to contact Carers in Bedfordshire, one Carer told us, *'The website information is very dated so I wouldn't use it to access relevant information, I go to Carers in Bedfordshire's website'*.

HWCB are aware that Central Bedfordshire Council have recently updated their Carers website and the comments received in the survey clearly relate to the previous content. HWCB are widely promoting details of the new website which will give an opportunity for a greater variety of young Carers, and family members, to access the updated information and support services.

When asked if they had attended any adhoc events facilitated by Central Bedfordshire Council over the last three years, many respondents **(70%)** indicated they had not. Of the respondents who said they had, many mentioned attending a Christmas Party, (although this may have been prompted by the question) and some had said, although they received an invitation to a Christmas party, *'places had run out'* by the time they applied. Others mentioned a Halloween event and a summer fete, one Carer said, *'I have gone to the Halloween event and carved pumpkins and have gone to the Christmas party. My favourite thing about the Christmas party was the food and the balloon man'*.



Many Carers and family members mentioned support provided for young Carers in school, so it was surprising when **66%** of respondents indicated 'no' when asked about school support. Comments included, *'no support at all', 'not offered' and 'not in college'*. One parent commented, *'School is useless, doesn't recognise my son's Carer role. Has even said, I doubt he even realises his life is any different from his peers'*. Another young Carer told us, *'I would like my school to do more for young Carers and understand their stress'*. Those that did receive support in school were very complimentary, one parent told us *'Because of the team getting involved with my child's school, they started their own support group once a week for other children who are young Carers'*. Others said they received pastoral support at the school, comments included, *'Pastoral care for young carers, they have lunch together doing fun things once a term'*. Parents also mentioned talking to the school about support for their child in their caring role and, in many cases, were pleased the school took action, one parent said, *'I asked his teacher at our first parent teacher consultation back in Dec 2022 to note that he is a young Carer and thereafter the school added a piece about young carers into their weekly newsletter to parents/carers'*.

When asked in the survey what they felt worked best for them in terms of support and what did not, an overwhelming number of comments were received. Many felt very strongly that what currently works very well are *'support groups', 'days out' and 'activities'* where children *'can be themselves and come back happier than when they went'*.

Many also mentioned a Carers grant plus opportunities to talk to adults and increasing awareness of young Carers and *'the support they need plus help for schools and professionals to support young Carers better'*. Others simply said, *'getting out of the house and having 'me' time' and 'attending regular groups and making new friends'*.

Many Carers also added that they found the support offered by carers voluntary organisations to be invaluable. Others said they did not feel they were offered any

support so did not answer the question, one person said, *'Nothing works, Central Bedfordshire don't seem to recognise there is a need for young Carers. Look at the support in Bedford for what works'*.



When asked what did not work for them, many once again reiterated they do not receive support, so any support would be good, particularly one to one support, and many also mentioned they did not know where to go to for support. One parent was particularly concerned about the way events are posted and being able to get to events, they said, *'some people get them before others although I have been told they all go out at the same time. My two children haven't been on any events for young carers because they have all gone before the email even reaches us. Also, the events they went to in the past are not age appropriate. Far too young for senior school children. It would be nice for regular meet ups during term time, not just school holidays. I did actually see there was a group, but it was too far away for us to attend. Something more local would be good due to travel restrictions'*. Many others spoke of a lack of capacity at monthly groups, parents said, *'they only provide support for 20 out of 240 known Carers at a monthly group. It's not enough, under 8's are struggling to know why they are not important anymore'*. And another who was also worried about the age restriction said, *'This half term there is only one event for young Carers below 10 years old. I don't know about any other support and that is more than needed – my young carer struggles with mental health a lot and there is no help (CAMHS failed us, nothing targeted)'*.



Many Carers and their family members also commented on what they would like to see provided for young Carers which included Peer mentor support and support closer to home. Others would like to see *'regular emails and local term time activities'* plus the chance for young Carers to meet other young Carers in school. They are also looking for recognition as a young Carer and awareness of their disabilities. When given options to select for the *'support they would like'* within the survey, respondents indicated the most popular was 'wellbeing support' and a 'named support worker', closely followed by 'half term activities' and 'Counselling'.

A very large majority of Carers, or the young Carer they were aware of, indicated they had **not had** a Needs Assessment (**77%**) with only **23%** who indicated they had. Of concern is that a few people said they did not know what a Needs Assessment was, or they did not know they could get a Needs Assessment, with some who said they did not feel they needed one. Additional comments included, *'I asked for a Needs Assessment and it was declined'* others said, *'No, we have been told this does not happen anymore'* and *'I can't find how to do this on the Council's website'*. One parent told us, *'My child has a social worker and assessment has been done. He has not accessed the support stated in his assessment yet for his caring role'*. Other comments included, *'Young Carers I am aware of have had assessments when required, by identified need in Early Help Assessment's (EHA's), and have also been given assessments if they have asked for them. Some do not require or request this and just wish to access the core offer of a Carers break'*.

The relatively low percentage who said they had not had an assessment may indicate that young Carers or their family members may not know they can request one. In addition, this may be associated with why many respondents said they had not accessed support services or knew how to.

It would suggest that more needs to be done to promote the service and to encourage young Carers and their family members to request a Needs Assessment.

Many young Carers and their family members have gratitude and appreciation, and clearly benefit from, events, activities, school support and grants from the council, which have a huge impact on young Carers; their wellbeing, and the quality of life they are able to lead. After speaking to young Carers, they very much enjoyed spending their grant on school trips, for example, to give them respite and a chance to relax and unwind.



However, there does appear to be an inequity and gap in service provision, mainly in the support provided and awareness of an assessment, particularly when compared to other areas, and many feel that more support could be utilised from organisations such as Carers In Bedfordshire.

Key themes that emerged from both the survey, and interviewing young Carers, included improved services for 'older', young Carers. Many told us that the activities, including group sessions, tend to be aimed at younger Carers and are not suitable for older Carers. They would also like to see a more accessible and available booking system for events, as well as an increase in the events offered.

Of concern is the number of young Carers who have not accessed a Needs Assessment, or know this is an option for them, and the lack of emotional wellbeing support provided for young Carers.



If this is part of the offer in Central Bedfordshire, many Carers and their family members do not appear to be aware of it, which shows in the wealth of comments received. A full list of all comments can be found at **Appendix B**.

Schools play a vital role in supporting young Carers and in recent years have clearly accelerated the support they provide, however there appears to be a disparity between each of the schools in Central Bedfordshire, relating to the type of support and frequency of support groups, which may only benefit some Carers but not all. This would suggest that a more consistent approach to the offer from schools is needed.

As previously mentioned, Central Bedfordshire Council have recently made improvements to their young Carers website, and offer for young Carers in Central Bedfordshire, which will help many more Carers access the support they need.

However, from the results shown in the survey, and interviews undertaken with young Carers, there is still more that can be done, for them and their family members, to ensure they are fully supported and safe. Some relatively small improvements can make a big impact whilst ensuring bigger changes are planned for the future.



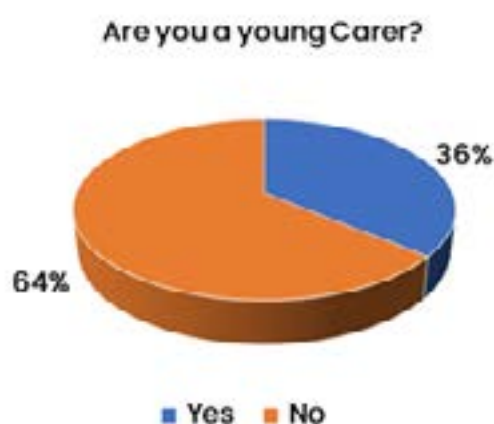
# Survey Results

The Young Carers survey was widely distributed across Central Bedfordshire using many social media platforms and shared with community and voluntary groups that support young Carers.

In total, **83** completed questionnaires were returned. The results from each question are detailed below.

**Question 1** asked if the respondent was a young Carer.

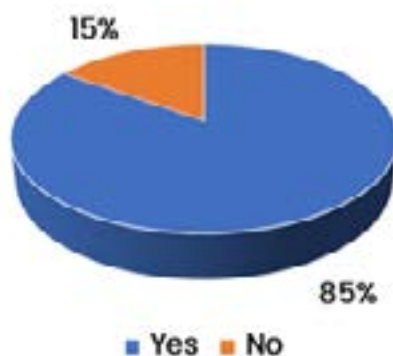
36% of respondents confirmed they were the young Carer, although 64% said they were not.



Following on from Question One, respondents were also asked, if they answered 'no' to the first question, does a young Carer live in their house or support them, or do they know of a young Carer? The majority (**85%**) confirmed they did have a young Carer in their household or one that supported them, and an overwhelming majority (**98%**) knew a young Carer, or of a young Carer.

This would reflect the higher majority in Question One who indicated they were not the young Carer, but it is clear the majority of respondents have young Carers in their house and/or who support them.

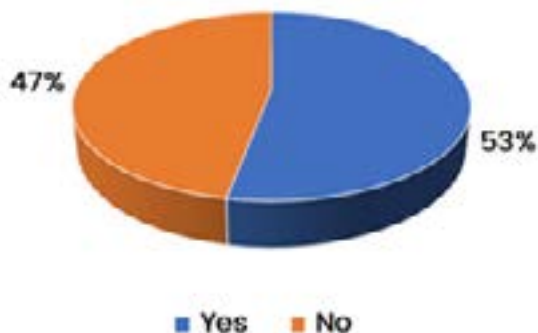
**If you answered 'No' to the question above, can you tell us: Does a young Carer live in your house or support you?**



In **Question 2** respondents were asked, (or the young Carer they knew of), if they know how to access, and where to go, for any support services for young Carers.

Just over half (**53%**) said they did know how to access support and the other half (**47%**) said they did not. Comments from those who had accessed support included, *'I come to all of the fun events, and I go to the monthly groups too'* and *'I go to the young Carers groups and I'm part of the Voice Group'* with many who said they only knew of one place where they could go to get support and that was 'Carers In Bedfordshire'. Others indicated they did not know where to get support, or very little was provided; *'A support Group session once a month and adhoc sessions in school holidays'*. As just under half of respondents indicated they are not aware how to access support, this is of concern given the role they are required to undertake.

Do you, or the young Carer you know of, know how to access and where to go for any support for young Carers?



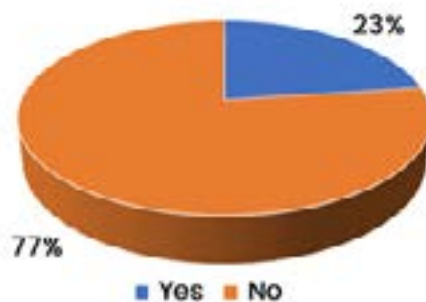
**Question 3** asked if the young Carer, or young Carer they know off, currently attend any support services ran by Central Bedfordshire Council, such as a regular support group or one to one session.

A relatively low **23%** indicated they attended services run by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), compared to **77%** who said they did not attend any services.

A follow up question asked if they could provide an example of the support accessed and many mentioned 'Young Carers Voice Groups'<sup>3</sup> activities and events; *'I have done go karting, I am part of the Voice Group, I have done a music project, gone to theme parks and monthly groups'*. Voice Groups give young people the opportunity to 'have their say' about issues affecting young Carers, and also help CBC develop their Carers offer.

The 77% who indicated they did not attend any support services said, *'I didn't know they provided support services'* and of greater concern, *'The school support worker has contacted young Carers and Central Beds and have been told this service no longer happens'*. Others mentioned, *'I have tried but there are never any spaces'* or *'the selection is too limited'*.

Do you, or the young Carer you know of, currently attend any support services run by Central Bedfordshire Council, such as a regular support group or one to one session?



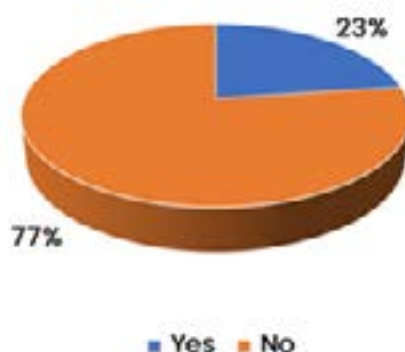
<sup>3</sup> Central Bedfordshire Council - Our Young Carers Offer



**Question 4** asked if the respondent, or the young Carer they knew of, were aware of Central Bedfordshire Council's website, and if so have you/they ever accessed support on the website.

Once again, a relatively low **23%** had accessed Central Bedfordshire Council's website and **77%** said they had not. Some indicated they were aware of the website but had not accessed it. Others said, *'the website does not offer any support or useful information'* and *'I have had a look and it doesn't help at all. Carers in Bedfordshire's is much better'*. Many others mentioned that their parents or a family member may have accessed the website but they had not.

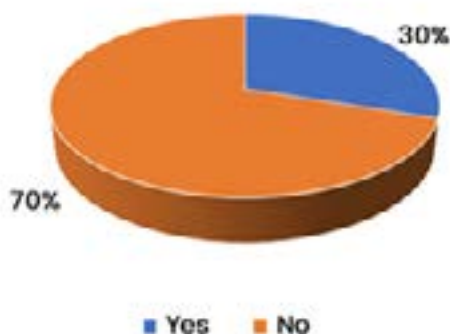
Are you, or the young Carer you know of, aware of Central Bedfordshire Council's website, and have you/they ever accessed support, on the website?



**Question 5** asked if the young Carer, or the young Carer they knew of, had attended any ad hoc events facilitated by Central Bedfordshire Council over the last three years? E.g., Christmas event.

A rather high **70%** said they had not attended events, or knew of events, organised by Central Bedfordshire Council and **30%** said they had attended some events. Many mentioned the 'Christmas party' although this may have been prompted by the question, and some had said, although they received an invitation to a Christmas party, *'places had run out'* by the time they applied. Others mentioned a Halloween event and a summer fete, one Carer said, *'I have gone to the Halloween event and carved pumpkins and have gone to the Christmas party. My favourite thing about the Christmas party was the food and the balloon man'*. One parent said, *'The young Carers occasionally get invited to a Christmas party but again under 8 years old they are not thought of important enough to support regularly'*.

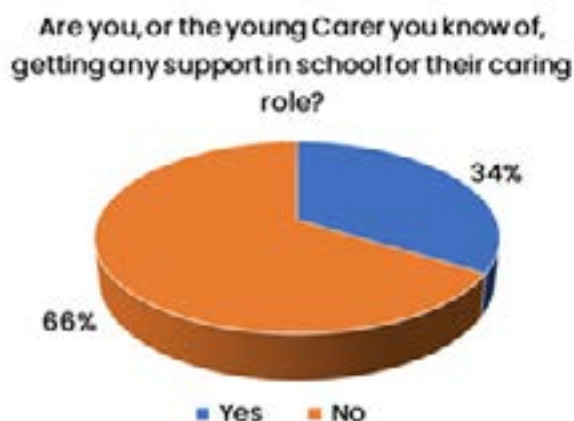
Have you, or the young Carer you know of, attended any ad hoc events facilitated by Central Bedfordshire Council over the last three years? E.g., Christmas event



**Question 6** asked respondents if they, or the young Carer they know of, was getting any support in school for their caring role, and if so, could they provide details.

**66%** indicated they were not getting support in school for their caring role and **34%** said they were. A few respondents were fairly negative about school support which is surprising, comments included, *'no support at all', 'not offered'* and *'not in college'* and one person said, *'once a month support group - not very successful unfortunately'*. One parent commented, *'School is useless, doesn't recognise my son's Carer role. Has even said, I doubt he even realises his life is any different from his peers'*. Another young Carer told us, *'I would like my school to do more for young Carers and understand their stress'*.

When asked for examples of activities, comments varied on the level of support, which reflects the percentage and nature of the question, but some key comments worth noting included, *'my daughter attends a group every Tuesday'*, and *'school puts him in various clubs at lunchtimes and after school to allow him some time for himself away from his caring role'*. Those that did receive support in school were very complimentary, one parent told us *'Because of the team getting involved with my child's school, they started their own support group once a week for other children who are young Carers'*. Others said they received pastoral support at the school, comments included, *'Pastoral care for young carers, they have lunch together doing fun things once a term'*.



**Question 7** asked, to assess how support could be improved, could they tell us in their own words what works and what does not work for them and/or the young Carer they know of. This was an open question, which prompted many comments. Themes for what did work for them are listed below:

### What worked

The Carers Grant

Support groups and residential trips/holidays to get away from home

Half term activities and events

Support from Carers in Bedfordshire

**Attending regular groups and making new friends**

**Email correspondence and information**

**Getting out of the house, having 'me time'**

**Talking to people that can help**

When asked what did not work for them, many once again reiterated they do not receive support, so any support would be good, particularly one to one support, and many also mentioned they did not know where to go to for support. One parent was particularly concerned about the way events are posted and being able to get to events, comments included:

### **What doesn't work?**

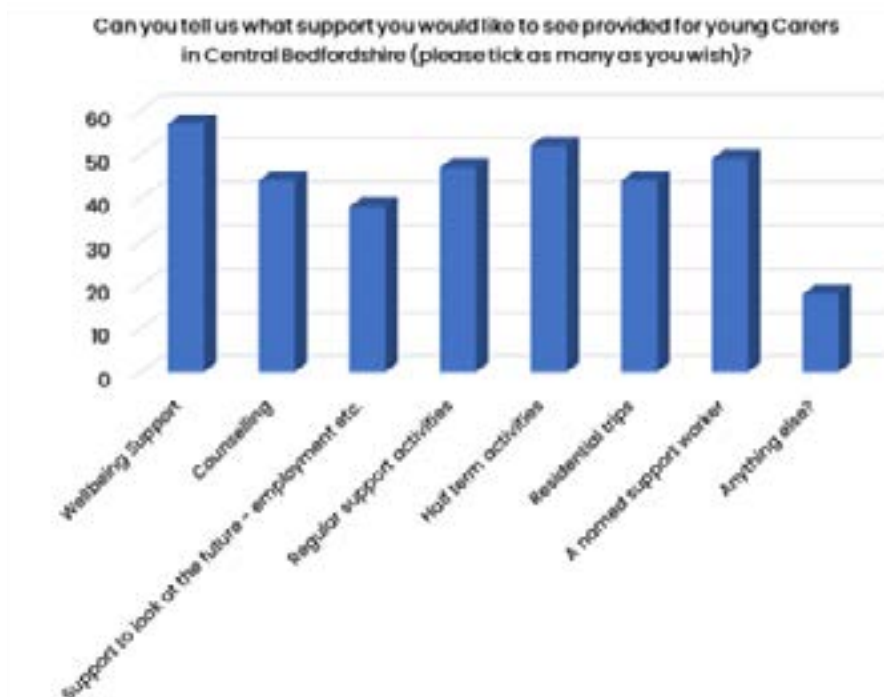
- ◆ *'The way events are posted. Some people get them before others although I have been told they all go out at the same time. My two children haven't been on any events for young Carers because they have gone before the email reaches us. Also, the events they went to in the past are not age appropriate. Far too young for senior school children. It would be nice for regular meet ups during term time not just school holidays. I did actually see there was a group but too far away for us to attend. Something more local would be good due to travel restrictions'.*
- ◆ *'There is very little support - I don't know where to even get support apart from Carers in Beds who say they can do a limited amount'.*
- ◆ *'Nothing available for my age range or in my area. No one cares, least of all my school'.*
- ◆ *'My daughter won't attend as she doesn't know anyone and I'm not allowed to attend as her parent to settle her for the first time'.*
- ◆ *I had no idea the Council could provide support for young Carers - its not obvious anywhere'.*
- ◆ *Not much is accessible in North Beds especially for those who cannot drive'.*
- ◆ *Nothing available for my age range or in my area. No one cares, least of all my school.*



**Question 8** asked what support they would like to see provided for young Carers in Central Bedfordshire? A range of options was given for respondents to select (they could choose as many as they wished).

The most popular was **'wellbeing support'** and a **'named support worker'**, closely followed by **'half term activities'** and **'Counselling'**.

When asked if there was anything else, not included in the list of options, comments included, *'Being able to connect with other young Carers locally, either online or in person'* and *'Regular contact either via school or home'*, plus *'regular emails and local term time activities. Perhaps somethings in schools so there isn't a taboo around being a young Carer, and for the chance for other young Carers in the school to know other young Carers, so they could perhaps make friends and talk to each other if they felt they needed to.'*



Additional comments received for this question are as follows:

*'More things to do at weekends'*

*'Peer mentor support, support closer to home'*

*'Everything that Bedford families can access'*

*'Everything I already go to but more residential trips to help the people that can't go out. They already do some but not all'*

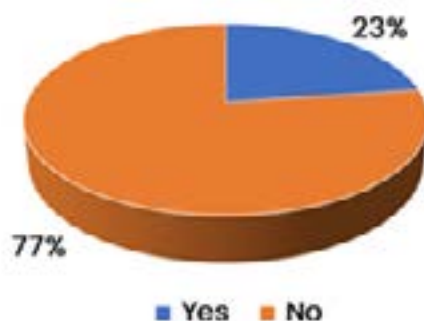
*'Maybe more staff so more children could go each month as places are limited'*

*'Recognise that young Carers can also have their own disabilities alongside our brothers and sisters. Sometimes we are young Carers AND also disabled ourselves'*

**Question 9** asked if they, or the young Carer they are completing this on behalf of, had ever had a Needs Assessment?

Just over two thirds of respondents (**77%**) said that they had not had a Needs Assessment, or the young Carer they were aware of had not had a Needs Assessment. A relatively small **23%** said they had received a Needs Assessment. A few people said they did not know what a Needs Assessment was, or they did not know they could get a Needs Assessment, with some who said they did not feel they needed one. Additional comments included, *'I asked for a Needs Assessment and it was declined'* others said, *'No, we have been told this does not happen anymore'* and *'I can't find how to do this on the Council's website'*. One parent told us, *'My child has a social worker and assessment has been done. He has not accessed the support stated in his assessment yet for his caring role'*. Other comments included, *'Young Carers I am aware of have had assessments when required, by identified need. In EHA's. And have also been given assessments if they have asked for them. Some do not require or request this and just wish to access the core offer of a Carers break'*. Others mentioned they had benefitted from a Carers grant.

Have you, or the young Carer you are completing this on behalf of, ever had a Needs Assessment?



**Question 10** asked if there was any further information they would like to provide. This was an open question, which generated a wealth of comments, unfortunately mainly negative. Positive comments included:

*'My child feels heard and listened to. He loves the teams and different aspects. Likes Young Voice as well for same reasons and that they can come up with ideas'*

*'I have enjoyed meeting new people who also have to care for their families', 'I just think it's really good for young Carers to get away and have a break'*

*'the young Carers stuff is a good stress relief'*

*'It's good to get out and get away from things'*

*'Happy when I'm there (at young Carers)'*



Many of the negative comments focused on a lack of support in the area, as follows:

*'It's a shame we don't live in Bedford. Their support is far better'*

*'I am a member of Carers in Bedfordshire, there are loads of activities they provide for young Carers living in Bedford Borough Council, my young Carer cannot access any of them because they live in Central Bedfordshire. Postcode lottery! Young Carer is 8 years old'*

*'I would like the offer to be the same as what is in Bedford'*

*'There seems to be next to no support locally for young Carers. We occasionally receive emails about events but these are rarely nearby, and this is not the sort of thing my young Carer would be interested in as she has social anxiety. We would much prefer to see support given as well-being check-ups, counselling or regular meetings with school to make sure they are being supported in all areas of their life'*

*'There needs to be more funding available to Carers in Bedfordshire the disparity between Central beds and beds borough is huge!'*

*'Compared to other regions, young Carer support in Central Bedfordshire is very limited'*

*'There is nothing available in our area. There is nothing available for children under 10. There is nothing available that looks at how we can be young Carers for our brothers and sisters and also have our own disabilities and differences'*

*'When we look in the activities... lots of things are available if you live in Bedford but there seems to be less in central beds'*

*'I am not sure how Central Bedfordshire get away with providing so little when Bedford provides so much'*

*'We are not really sure what support is available'*

*'No specialised support for older, young Carers'*

*'I wish there was more emotional support and mental health support available as my daughter struggles with this and does not talk about it either'*

Additional comments included:

*'Please make it more accessible to all young Carers in the area, newsletters so we know what's going on or support out there and speak about it in school so that every child understands what some children have to do, to stop making it a taboo subject and help others understand why not all children can go out when they like due to the restrictions the young Carer might have to be involved with. More awareness. More activities age appropriate'*

*'If you feel trapped and in a dark corner, in your dark times you can always rely on Young Carers'*

*'Being a young Carer is lonely. I wish I had help'*

*'More activities closer to home. Some activities are an hour's drive I need help getting my child to activities'*

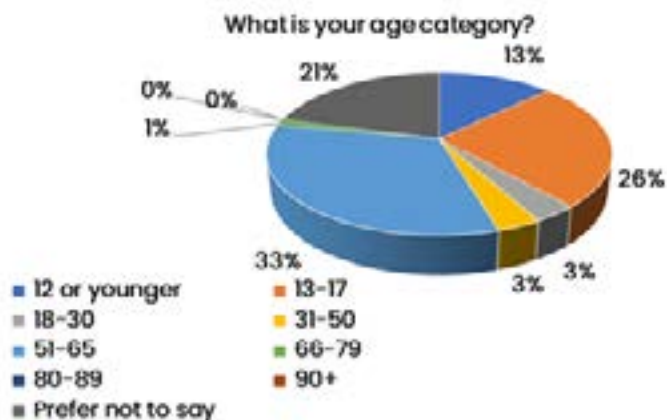
*'Feel they are family and the support they give is essential and don't think of themselves as a Carer. It's nice to be recognised for the support I give'*

*'Young Carers are absolutely amazing. The work they do for families is underrated. They deserve more funding so they can reach more families and offer their services to more families as things get booked so quickly. I can't recommend them enough'*

The remainder of the questions were demographic, as follows:

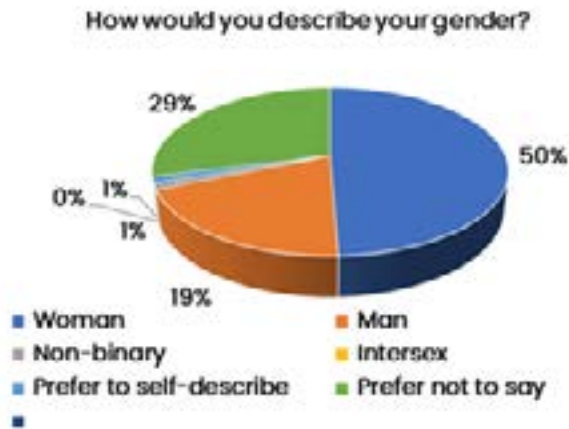
**Question A** asked which age category respondents were.

The results showed that the majority of those who answered were between the ages of 51-65 years old (**33%**), closely followed by 13-17 years old (**26%**), which would fit with many parents or family members completing the survey. **21%** preferred not to say, and **13%** were 12 or younger, **3%** was equal across 18-30 and 31-50, with **1%** for age 66-79. No respondents were above the age of 80 years old.



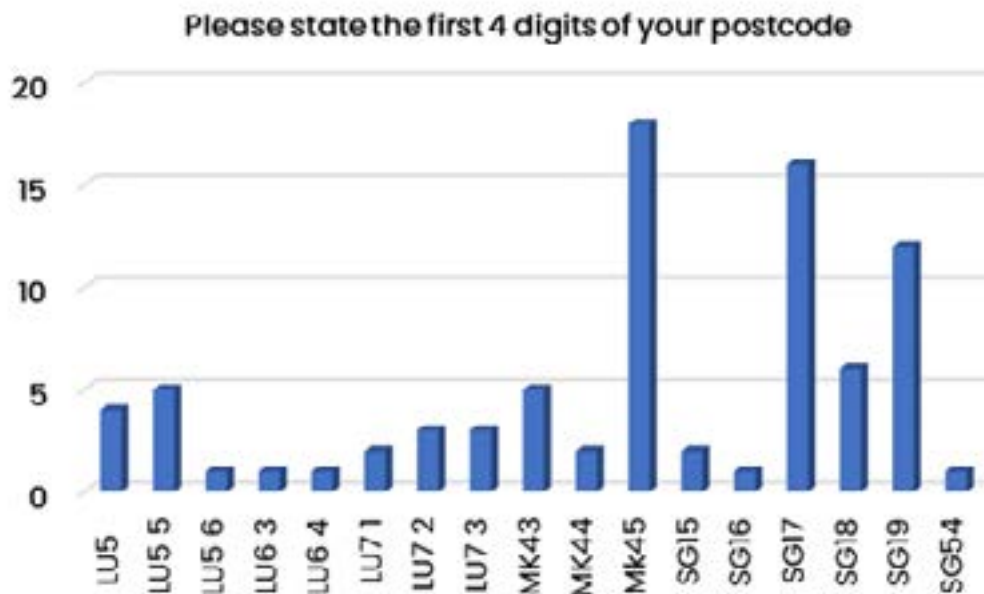
**Question B** asked their gender via an options list.

Half of those who answered this question were women (**50%**), followed by **29%** who preferred not to say, **19%** said men, **1%** preferred to self-describe or were non-binary, and no one answered as intersex.



**Question C** asked for the area, by postcode only, respondents were from.

The majority indicated the MK45 area, closely followed by SG17, SG19 and SG18. We also had respondents from across the LU area and MK4 area.





# Conclusion

This was a snapshot survey that generated over 80 responses with a wealth of additional comments from young Carers, and those that live with young Carers, which clearly shows the depth of feeling about service provision in the area.

From the feedback given, many respondents expressed concern about the current offer for young Carers in Central Bedfordshire, which they felt was not representative of need, or equally received by all young Carers.

The support services that are accessed by young Carers, such as the young Carers grant, Voice Groups, activities and events for young Carers, and the support provided in schools, are very much appreciated and welcomed by all young Carers. This provides much needed respite from their caring role, and one parent who valued this support for her daughter said, *'Time out for my daughter to stop worrying about me for a few hours to get away from things that upset her'*. However, many people said they struggle to find information about support, or activities and events, and when they do, it is often the case that spaces are limited or inaccessible – *'I have tried but there are never any spaces'*.

Many people who responded to the survey felt there was clearly a disparity between services offered in areas outside of Central Bedfordshire, particularly those managed by other voluntary support organisations, and in schools. It was apparent they would like to see equality of service provision, regardless of county boundaries, so all young Carers can be supported and have access to services that address need.

When interviewing young Carers, as part of the Healthwatch England project, they confirmed that schools did support them but to varying degrees. Some schools had set up groups for young Carers to meet weekly or monthly, to help support them, however, some of the 'older' young Carers felt the groups were not age appropriate, with activities aimed at a much younger age group. To help all schools ensure young Carers are identified and linked to internal and external support that is wanted and relevant to their needs, from Spring 2023, Young Carers are for the first time going to be included on the school census return. This will provide a more accurate picture of the number of young Carers in schools, and allow for the data to be used to monitor attendance and attainment of young Carers. Schools may therefore need to think about a designated staff member as a Young Carer's Lead, and have an up to date Young carers/Young adult Carers policy so that all pupils and staff know what support is available to them in their school.

Use of Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC) website to access support for young Carers, was mixed and mainly accessed by a parent or family member. However, of those that had accessed the site, they said, *'The website doesn't offer any support or useful information,'* or they were, *'aware of it, but the information is limited'*. HWCB are aware that a new and updated CBC Young Carers website has since gone live, and offers more information to support young Carers, and how they can access CBC's Carers offer. The website should also help to promote and direct young Carers to access a Needs Assessment which many had said they did not know of, or did not know how they could get one. Of more concern were those that said, *'I asked for a Needs Assessment and it was declined'* or *'No, we have been told this does not happen anymore'* and *'I can't find how to do this on the Council's website'*. The newly improved website should address these issues and future data can be reviewed to determine evidence of an increase in requests for assessments.



When asked what support they would like to see provided, one person said, *'Just more funding so more of the things can be provided. Although all of these are available, more funding would mean more children could get these. There are so few places available it's hard to get on. They need so much more funding to reach more children'*. Analysis of feedback has shown that service delivery in the form of events, groups and activities, are currently supporting many young Carers living in Central Bedfordshire, which helps maintain their wellbeing and makes a difference in their lives. However, some change needs to be made to ensure service provision and delivery is equitable for all, and consideration is given to utilising help and support from other voluntary and community organisations, to ensure that all young Carers in Central Bedfordshire feel supported and valued.

# Recommendations

Divide age groups at Young Carers group meetings so they are more appealing and appropriate for different ages of Carers.

Allow parents to attend a first event to settle the young Carer - *'my daughter won't attend as she doesn't know anyone and I'm not allowed to attend as her parent to settle her for the first time.'*

Increase amount of events / activities offered so more young Carers can take advantage, and/or localise events to create more spaces for young Carers to attend and network.

Initiate more activities during term time, not just during school holidays, and develop an outreach/young Carer awareness strategy that includes schools but also other key professionals to enhance young Carer awareness.

Utilise other community and voluntary organisations to help deliver support services and benchmark activities and events to ensure provision of an equitable service.



As with any service delivered, improvement with some young Carers they are receiving an equitable service. In some cases, no service is provided.

The survey, and interviews, helps to highlight some of the issues to help improve the lives of young Carers in Central Bedfordshire.

Encourage young Carers and their family members to register as a young Carer, through regular promotional material (via new website) and presence at community events, to raise awareness of the benefits and access to support services available to them if they register.

Review current data showing total amount of young Carers who requested a Needs Assessment in the past year to enable an evidenced comparison following the launch of the updated website for young Carers.

Consider a named support worker for young Carers and the offer of counselling in their caring role.

Improve communication and information for young Carers and their family members and consider setting up 'young Carer group chats online', especially useful for those that are unable to physically join group meetings.

Review offer for young Carers in schools to ensure consistency and adherence to change in school census return. Encourage all schools to consider a designated staff member as a Young Carers Lead, and to develop an up to date Young carers/Young adult Carers policy so that all pupils and staff know what support is available to them in their school.



...y there are clear areas for  
...ng Carers who do not feel  
...uitable service, or in some  
...ervice at all.

...s held with young Carers,  
...actions that can be taken  
...life of young Carers in  
...hire, detailed here.

# Advice and Support for Young Carers

- ◆ Central Bedfordshire Council website, [People who can help young Carers](#) | [Central Bedfordshire Council](#)
- ◆ Carers in Beds, [Home - Carers In Bedfordshire](#) ([Carersinbeds.org.uk](#))
- ◆ SNAP Parent Carer Forum, [Who is SNAP?](#) - SNAP PCF - [Central Bedfordshire](#)
- ◆ Carers Trust, [Homepage - Carers Trust](#)
- ◆ Sibs, [Home - Sibs](#)
- ◆ Recovery College, [Bedfordshire and Luton Recovery College](#) | [East London NHS Foundation Trust](#) ([elft.nhs.uk](#))
- ◆ Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service, [Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service](#) | [East London NHS Foundation Trust](#) ([elft.nhs.uk](#))







# Appendix A

## Survey Questions

1a. Are you a young Carer? (please tick)

Yes No

1b. If you answered 'No' to the question above, can you tell us: (please tick)

a. Does a young Carer live in your house or support you?

Yes No

b. Do you know a young Carer, or know of a young Carer?

Yes No

2a. Do you, or the young Carer you know of, know how to access and where to go for any support for young Carers? (please tick)

Yes No

2b. If yes, can you give us an example of what support is provided?

.....

3a. Do you, or the young Carer you know of, currently attend any support services run by Central Bedfordshire Council, such as a regular support group or one to one session? (please tick)

Yes No

3b. If yes, can you provide an example of the support accessed?

.....

4a. Are you, or the young Carer you know of, aware of Central Bedfordshire Council's website, and have you / they ever accessed support, on the website? (please tick)

Yes No

4b. If yes, can you provide an example of the support accessed via Central Bedfordshire Council's website?

.....



5a. Have you, or the young Carer you know of, attended any ad hoc events facilitated by Central Bedfordshire Council over the last three years? E.g., Christmas event? (please tick)

Yes    No

5b. If yes, can you provide an example of the event(s) attended?  
.....

6a. Are you, or the young Carer you know of, getting any support in school for their caring role? (please tick)

Yes    No

6b. Can you provide brief details:  
.....

7a. To assess how support could be improved, can you tell us, in your words, what works and what does not work for you / young Carers currently?

What works?  
.....

What does not work?  
.....

8. Can you tell us what support you would like to see provided for young Carers in Central Bedfordshire (please tick as many as you wish)?

Wellbeing Support

Counselling

Support to look at the future (employment etc)

Regular support activities

Half term activities

Residential trips

A named support worker

Anything else? .....

9. Have you, or the young Carer you are completing this on behalf of, ever had a needs assessment? A needs assessment is when someone from Central Bedfordshire Council meets with you to look at what your needs are and how you can be best supported (please tick below).

(The assessment is a statutory duty of the local authority and is key to the council understanding what the needs are of the population. Further info on what an assessment is can be found here:

<https://Carersinbeds.org.uk/who-we-help/young-Carers/young-Carers-assessment/>

Yes, I / they have had a needs assessment

No, I / they have not had a needs assessment

Any further information you would like to provide .....

10. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about being a young Carer in Central Bedfordshire and the support available?

Finally, some very quick questions about you:

- A. What is your age category? (please tick)

12 years or under

13 to 17 years

18 to 30 years

31 to 50 years

51 to 65 years

66 to 79 years

80 to 89 years

90 + years

Prefer not to say

- B. How would you describe your gender? (Please tick)

Woman

Man

Non-binary

Intersex

Prefer to self-describe

Prefer not to say

Self-description: .....

- C. Please state the first 4 digits of your postcode? .....



# Appendix B

## Full list of comments

**QUESTION TWO:** Do you, or the young Carer you know of, know how to access and where to go for any support for young Carers?

Carers In Bedfordshire mentioned X 12 times
During school, there is a club for young Carers
Central Bedfordshire young carers registered
Young Carers with council Young voice And because of support that we had with central beds team; school now has a young Carers session once a week
Young Carers website
Going to family
Only just been advised about the service, but I think it's a place I can go where I'm not watching out to help mum
There are regular activities and events for fun and friendship building, to afford young Carers a well-deserved break from their caring roles. The children can seek support for their emotions and how they feel through some wellbeing practitioners who attend the young Carers groups. Some children on EHAs or CIN plans have their young Carers needs considered as part of their care plan and get 1:1 visits from their family partner or social worker who cares for their wellbeing and puts support in place. They often visit in schools also. There's also KidsTime which families can access, when the parent is accessing CMHT services. Schools are also supported in the local Borough via the Young Carers Network meetings, where learning is shared around supporting young Carers in schools, which helps us to schools to identify young Carers and run their own groups
I run a monthly Young Carers group in school. These YCs know how to register as a YC and where to get help and support in school.
CiB provide grants and events and support on the phone
I was told I was a young Carer but have never received support
The young Carers lead at school The organisation they are registered with
Support group monthly. Activities in the holidays. Can call and get help when I need it. go to the gym for free.
We get emailed regular group meetings and trips etc



Time out for my daughter to stop worrying about me for a few hours to get away from things that upset her
Mum organises everything
Activities and fun and monthly groups to meet others
I get to do fun things and talk to anyone you want if you need help with anything
I go to fun activities and events, the young Carers groups, and I'm part of the voice group
I come to all of the fun events and I go to the monthly groups too
We had a £300 grant which we used for different activities for our Young Carer to try and work on his confidence We also had got a Carers card
Carers in Bedfordshire offer support though I don't think they are meant to
Days out during school holidays
Monthly evening support group run by Central beds council but can't get there
Only from Carers in Bedfordshire: Half-term and holidays activities for YCs, HAF code to access more half-term activities
Yes but there is nothing suitable for my child. Only activities which they feel unable to attend as they hate leaving their sibling
I have only just signed my youngest son up as a young Carer (his big brother is autistic) so am still finding out what's available for him, thank you.
Prompting, helping with medication. Reading and supporting emotional support
Young Carers provides amazing support to both the young Carers in our family and the adults too. They offer groups for the children to attend as well as days out and residential trips. They keep in touch to see how things are going during difficult times. They provide emotional support for children when we have been unable to get it anywhere else. They have been incredible.
Carers in Bedfordshire are trying to support young Carers but don't have as much funding as beds borough Carers
Very little. A support group session once a month and ad hoc sessions in school holidays
Council - email bulletin
Young Carers central beds



# Appendix B

## Full list of comments

**QUESTION THREE:** Do you, or the young Carer you know of, currently attend any support services run by Central Bedfordshire Council, such as a regular support group or one to one session?

Access to a counsellor specifically tending to young Carers
Young Carers monthly Young voice Holiday craft session Holiday ideas Cooking classes
The children open to early help or children's services all have regular 1:1 visits as part of their support both in school and at home. Some schools run their own young Carers groups that central beds come in and support as well. Some students do attend these school groups alongside the c.beds groups and events
Some of the young Carers I am aware of attend the days out/ events ran by Central Beds Council
I didn't know the council provided support
She attends the activities put on by central beds for young Carers e.g. fun with friends but this is only usually once per school holiday
school holiday activities to get me out of the house.
Monthly young Carer sessions
Thursday at Robert Bloomfield school every 3rd Thursday
They used to access young Carers group but age was changed to 8 and they were deemed not important enough to warrant support anymore as they were too young
Young Carers voice group Activities and events
The young Carers voice group And the monthly meet ups I mostly attend all of the events especially the mead open farm ones I use every opportunity I can to get out
I am part of the voice group I go to the voice group activities and monthly activities
I have done go-karting, I am part of the voice group, I have done a music project, gone to theme parks and monthly groups
I can talk to anyone about being a young Carer and my wellbeing and I go to fun events and things like go karting or zoo trips

I didn't know the council could provide support
Young Carers days out in the holidays
The school support worker has contacted young Carers and central beds and have been told this service no longer happens
The young Carers monthly group and their chatterbooks monthly group
I have tried to but there are never any spaces
Sibling Carer session at Ivel Valley Chatter books Both monthly sessions
Once a month session. No such thing as one-to-one
I didn't know they provided support services
The selection is too limited

**QUESTION FOUR:** Are you, or the young Carer you know of, aware of Central Bedfordshire Council's website, and have you/they ever accessed support, on the website?

I went to a young Carer meeting a few times when I was younger
Usually sent it out no from the team each month Not specifically gone to website
The website has no information
We are very new to this so hoping to get info through the website
The website doesn't offer any support or useful information
Aware of website, haven't accessed support
I have sent the link to all my YCs and notified parents of relevant CBC information
A lot of signposting, and no intro support for my child who has specific needs where he needs personalised support working with them to try new social activities in a new environment amongst new people.
I have had a look and it doesn't help at all. Carers in Bedfordshire's is much better
I get emails but don't know where to find a website
Family probably has but not me

I haven't but mum might have
I have not used it but parents have
My mum uses it
Registered as a young Carer
Looked at the local offer site
The website information is very dated so I wouldn't use it to access relevant information. I go to Carers in Bedfordshire's website.
Aware of it, but the information is limited
My daughter went to a gym activity for young Carers in the holiday for a couple of hours once.

**QUESTION FIVE:** Have you, or the young Carer you know of, attended any ad hoc events facilitated by Central Bedfordshire Council over the last three years? E.g., Christmas event?

Pretty sure it was at a care home where it was held
Places ran out too soon for my son to attend
Christmas Chinese New Year Holiday activities Sailing Days out e.g. Gulliver's
Summer fete and days out
Christmas party
Aware of website, haven't accessed support
Christmas party Chinese New Year Halloween
She went to the Christmas event which was brilliant
Go karting, Christmas party, young Carers voice
Xmas and other event offered Gulliver's land
The younger young Carers occasionally get invited to a Christmas party but again under 8-year-old they are not thought of important enough to support regularly.
I went to a Christmas one which was good
I go to the Christmas ones I went to an Easter one and we made eggs and put stuff on it
I have gone to the Halloween event and carved pumpkins and have gone to the Christmas party. My favourite thing about the Christmas party was the food and the balloon man
I have been to Christmas events like the Christmas party and a Halloween one
I went to the Christmas party in December
Young Carers Christmas party



He attended a few events but I don't think they were organised by Central Bedfordshire, probably by Carers in Bedfordshire
Christmas event run by young Carers, trip to the farm with young Carers and a fun afternoon run by young Carers
My eldest who has the additional needs won't attend and my youngest who helps me with the caring support won't go without her sister
Shooting Soft play

**QUESTION SIX:** Are you, or the young Carer you know of, getting any support in school for their caring role?

We gather together to eat pizza on the last Friday of every month and share our experiences
Help from his grandparents
Because of the team getting involved with my child school, they started own support group once a week for other children who are young Carers.
Harlington upper are not very good at supporting my child
A club at lunch during school to meet other young Carers
Yes, there is a young Carers support group in school.
My daughter attends as she also has needs and helps us both
No support at all.
Regular meetings (in the calendar and ad-hoc). Teachers have been made aware of all my YCs to give extensions to deadlines and any other relevant support.
My child has a social worker and assessment has been done. He has not accessed the support stated in his assessment yet for his caring role.
Yes, they can talk to someone that comes in on a Monday
Young Carers teacher checks I am ok.
Pastoral support
I had a mentor to help which was alright I guess
A support worker comes into school and helps me with how I am feeling
I get LA support for homework and meet up with other young Carers
Not in college
I would like my school to do more for young Carers and understand their stress
Somewhat getting help from school after LA intervening
My daughter attends a group every Tuesday

Attended yoga classes and have parties for young Carers every so often
School puts him in various clubs at lunchtimes and after school to allow him some time for himself away from his caring role.
School is useless, doesn't recognise my son's Carer role. Has even said, "I doubt he even realises his life is any different to his peers."
Once a month support group - not very successful unfortunately
Pastoral care for young Carers, they have a lunch together doing fun things once a term
Young Carers stopped attending the school which is disappointing but the school is running their own monthly group
I asked his teacher at our first parent teacher consultation back in Dec 2022 to note that he is a young Carer and thereafter the school added a piece about young Carers into their weekly newsletter to parents/Carers.
The older young Carers school runs a young Carers group which is invaluable to the children and my youngest child has support at school too
Once a month there is a young carers meeting, where food is provided as well as support
Access to reset room with learning mentor. On waiting list for school counsellor.
Just made the school aware and are receiving some extra support check ins
They are registered as a young Carer at school, but no support offered
Someone to talk to
Not offered

**QUESTION SEVEN:** To assess how support could be improved, can you tell us, in your words, what works and what does not work for you / young Carers currently?

**What works:**

Support groups and residential trips/holidays to get away from home
I'm not sure I could name one thing that works.
Help from grandparents
Being contacted by team. Sailing residential was amazing. Days out - couldn't do it normally. Always have new ideas for activities. Children hv support and can be themselves. Come back happier than when they went.
Having days out for my young Carer
The grant
Good events
Lots of events and activities. Opportunities to talk to adults. Increasing awareness of young Carers is good, and helping schools and professionals to support young Carers better
We currently don't get any support
I didn't even know I was a young Carer until my mum told me after seeing this survey

Camaraderie between YCs in the school (mixed year groups).
Demand avoidance approaches, involving them in the decisions, trust and listening to them
They receive no support
Emails with lots of information and events available
Carers in Beds are great
Carers in Bedfordshire have provided family events
The few activities that are put on in the school holidays
I have been to an event run by Carers in Bedford. This was good
the activities
Attending regular groups and making new friends
Getting out of the house and having me time
The range of activities they do
Monthly young Carers meeting are great
The activities, getting out and away from things. Meeting other people
Get to go to fun places, get to talk to people if you need help, and can make friends
I like the activities coz they are fun and I like the monthly groups
Grant
The support
Carers in Bedfordshire are supportive
My school talk to me
Early help team has been amazing for us
Local support
Half term and holiday activities are nice
The day trips with young Carers
1-2-1 with us as a family
We currently don't get any support
Specific events that interest
The support young Carers gives
Flexible timings
Easy access supplied to young carers needs
Actually provide support
Locality of sessions times of sessions
The monthly sessions are enjoyed
The gymnastics session worked
Very little works. I'm not sure the council even know that I have a young Carer
Nothing works. Central Bedfordshire don't seem to recognise there is a need for young Carers. Look at the support in Bedford for what works

### What doesn't work:

Unsure, haven't experienced enough varieties of support
I don't have any support
Awaiting assessment for his own diagnosis of autism or ADHD like his mum
Not enough places each month.
it would be great if someone did provide support for young Carers where I live. The council don't care
Sorting out transport so she can attend
Revision because I have to spend more time with my parents
No services for 16-17year olds. Support angled towards young people.
Not close enough to me
Sitting around telling 'our story'
We currently don't get any support
I don't know where my daughter can go to access support
There isn't any support from the local authority. They run one group and a handful of events. My child needs support for them as a person
Unfamiliarity
Identifying YCs in the first place. Middle schools haven't been forthcoming with YC information so I'm working from scratch.
Generic autistic strategies and approaches to what they call social inclusion. Not taking into consideration his autistic style of socialising and seeing as everyone socialises in the same way. (which is not true)
They receive no support
I have no support. Nobody cares
I had no idea the council could provide support for young Carers. It's not obvious anywhere
Some of the older young Carers are hesitant to engage in group sessions
Very limited individual support for my son
There is very little support - I don't know where to even get support apart from Carers in Beds who say they can do a limited amount
There is no individual support
Having a regular, local support group
The way events are posted. Some people get them before others although I have been told they all go out at the same time. My 2 children haven't been on any events for young Carers because they have gone before the email reaches us. Also, the events they went to in the past are not age appropriate. Far too young for senior school children. It would be nice for regular meet ups during term time not just school holidays. I did actual see there was a group but too far away for us to attend. Something more local would be good due to travel restrictions.
Some of the children at young Carers have additional needs and this means i don't get to have time away from those behaviours

Only provide support for 20 out of about 240 known Carers at a monthly group, it's not enough, under 8's are struggling to why are they not important anymore
Need more trips
There can be quite limited spaces for some activities can be disappointing
There is no other support for parent Carers or sibling Carers.
Hardly any local groups
Majority of events being in Bedford
The sharing of what's available and the location of them.
My daughter won't attend as she doesn't know anyone and I'm not allowed to attend as her parent to settle her for the first time
Not much is accessible in North Beds especially to those who cannot drive.
There is no support within school or groups to attend where he can meet other Carers.
This half term there is only one event for Young Carers below 10 yrs. old. I don't know about any other support and that is more than needed - my young Carer struggles with mental health a lot and there is no help (CAHMS failed us, nothing targeted)
Not enough support
Separate actives away from the family unit
We currently don't get any support
Again, still new to this so not accessed anything yet but I have made a joint application for a Carer's grant.
Attending groups
The difficulties we have had trying to get my children emotional support from the likes of chums. The only people who have helped are the school and young Carers.
It would be great if the council recognised young Carers but they don't
I didn't think young Carers could access support
Lack of services cut back all the time
There needs to be more young Carers face to face sessions like Bedford Borough have.
My child has no support.
Not enough individualised support
Meetings in person
Nothing available for my age range or in my area. No one cares, least of all my school.
Everything. My child is on their own with no support
Lack of groups, clubs and support in school
The lack of activities in Central Beds
No support, no services
No local events offered to my child
There is no support, no-one who knows what a young a Carer is
No support

**QUESTION EIGHT:** Can you tell us what support you would like to see provided for young Carers in Central Bedfordshire?

Someone who can help me not my brother.
Maybe more staff so more children could go each month as places are limited.
Someone to talk to
i cannot see my child accepting wellbeing and counselling support here as he is unfamiliar with you and needs to develop a trusting relationship
Regular emails and local term time activities. Perhaps somethings in schools so there isn't a taboo around being a young carer and for the chance or other young carers in the school know other young carers so they could perhaps make friends and talk to each other if they felt they needed to.
Everything I already go to but more residential trips to help the people that can't go out. They've already do some but not all
Support for the future about jobs and things. Everything else they already do
Being able to connect with other young carers locally, either online or in person. Regular contact either via school or home
Support from school, with homework and other activities.
More things to do at weekends
Just more funding so more of the things can be provided. Although all of these are available, more funding would mean more children could get these. There are so few places available it's hard to get on. They need so much more funding to reach more children.
Peer mentor support, support closer to home
Someone to talk to
Recognise that young carers can also have their own disabilities alongside our brothers and sisters. Sometimes we are young carers AND also disabled ourselves.
Activity with person they care for
Everything that Bedford families can access

**QUESTION NINE:** Have you, or the young Carer you are completing this on behalf of, ever had a needs assessment?

Staff are amazing. The support and ideas they come up with are brilliant. Always come back from an event full of joy and confidence.
I don't know what this is
I have been allocated 8 hours funding but cannot find anyone suitable to take on the role so it's pretty pointless at the moment for us
Young Carers I am aware of have had assessments when required, by identified need. In EHAs. And have also been given assessments if they have asked for them. Some do not require or request this and just wish to access the core offer of a Carers break
I asked for a needs assessment and it was declined.
I have and we have a social worker.
I don't know what a needs assessment is
Thank you for thinking about my daughter. It seems like no-one recognises her needs
I didn't know I could get a needs assessment
She has benefitted from a Carers in Beds grant
I don't need an assessment.
No
I don't feel like I need one
I have had one, but I don't remember
Yes, I had a worker, and she did one
My first ASD child finds it extremely difficult to leave the house. My youngest and child gets extremely frustrated as he cannot leave the house
I can't find how to do this on the council's website
I had a parent Carer needs assessment but we were refused a family assessment as the special needs have not yet been confirmed with diagnosis as we are awaiting an appointment.
I have had a needs assessment, my young Carers haven't.
No, we have been told this doesn't happen any more
I believe I had an assessment myself during Covid, over the phone.
We have had a needs assessment and because of my husband's salary we are not able to get any financial help which given the fact I'm an amputee with three kids is extremely hard when we are trying to manage alone.
It wasn't very helpful

**QUESTION TEN:** Is there anything else you would like to tell us about being a young Carer in Central Bedfordshire and the support available?

My child feels heard and listened to. He loves the team and different aspects. Likes young voice as well for same reasons and that they can come up with ideas.
No specialised support for older, young Carers
It's a shame we don't live in Bedford. Their support is far better
I am a member of Carers in Bedfordshire, there are loads of activities they provide for young Carers living in Bedford Borough Council, my young Carer cannot access any of them because they live in Central Bedfordshire. Postcode lottery! Young Carer is 8 years old
I wish there was more emotional support and mental health support available as my daughter struggles with this and does not talk about it either
Please make it more accessible to all young Carers in the area, newsletters so we know what's going on or support out there and speak about it in school so that every child understands what some children have to do, to stop making it a taboo subject and help others understand why not all children can go out when they like due to the restrictions the young Carer might have to be involved with. More awareness. More activities age appropriate.
I have enjoyed meeting new people who also have to care for their families.
The supper is lacking and not fit for purpose not reaching enough young Carers, some ones book onto the stuff all the time as first come first served so go so quickly, only reach a small portion of Carers, changed the age range so the young ones lost out no provision for them yet they are struggling to
I just think it's really good for young Carers to get away and have a break
If you feel trapped and In a dark corner, in your dark times you can always rely on young Carers
We are not really sure what support is available
It's good to get out and get away from things
Happy when I'm there (at young Carers)
The young Carers stuff is a good stress relief
More activities closer to home. Some activities are an hour's drive I need help getting my child to activities
Being a young Carer is lonely. I wish I had help
There seems to be next to no support locally for young Carers. We occasionally receive emails about events but these are rarely nearby, and this is not the sort of thing my young Carer would be interested in as she has social anxiety. We would much prefer to see support given as well-being check-ups, counselling or regular meetings with school to make sure they are being supported in all areas of their life.



Feel they are family and the support they give is essential and don't think of themselves as a Carer. It's nice to be recognised for the support I give,
Young Carers are absolutely amazing. The work they do for families is underrated. They deserve more funding so they can reach more families and offer their services to more families as things get booked so quickly. I can't recommend them enough
There needs to be more funding available to Carers in Bedfordshire the disparity between Central beds and beds borough is huge!
Compared to other regions, young Carer support in Central Bedfordshire is very limited
There is nothing available in our area. There is nothing available for children under 10. There is nothing available that looks at how we can be young Carers for our brothers and sisters and also have our own disabilities and differences.
I would like the offer to be the same as what is in Bedford
When we look in the activities... lots of things are available if you live in Bedford but there seems to be less in central beds
I am not sure how Central Bedfordshire get away with providing so little when Bedford provides so much
Transport help



# Do health and care services know what you really want?

By sharing your ideas and experiences you can help services hear what works, what doesn't, and how care could be better in the future for Young People and the current challenges they face.



it starts with  
**YOU**

**T. 0300 303 8554**

**[www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/  
young-healthwatch](http://www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/young-healthwatch)**

**E: [eleanor.ryles@healthwatch-  
centralbedfordshire.org.uk](mailto:eleanor.ryles@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk)**

**YOUNG  
healthwatch  
Central Bedfordshire**



Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire exists to make health and social care services work for the people that use them, especially young people.

Our role is to ensure that local decision makers and health and care services put the experiences of young people at the heart of their work.

We believe no one should be afraid to speak up .... because our opinion is as good as anyone else's.

Our volunteers have received appropriate 'Enter & View' training and are keen to put their learning into practice by visiting health and social care services such as hospital wards, surgeries and care homes. The young people will then be able to report their findings from their unique perspective. If you would like a group of young Healthwatch volunteers to visit your service please contact [elleanor.ryles@healthwatchcentralbedfordshire.org.uk](mailto:elleanor.ryles@healthwatchcentralbedfordshire.org.uk).

There is a lot more information on the Young Healthwatch website, <https://healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/young-healthwatch>, including the great achievement of one of our volunteers who has secured a fantastic apprenticeship with Cancer Research UK.

If you are under 25, why not consider becoming a member of Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire? Get in touch for more information, email [elleanor.ryles@healthwatchcentralbedfordshire.org.uk](mailto:elleanor.ryles@healthwatchcentralbedfordshire.org.uk) or call **0300 303 8554**.





Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire  
Capability House  
Wrest Park  
Silsoe  
Bedfordshire  
MK45 4HR

[www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk](http://www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk)

tel: 0300 303 8554

e: [info@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk)



@YoungHWatch



Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire



yhwcentralbeds

Registered Address: Capability House,  
Wrest Park, Silsoe, MK45 4HR  
Registered Company No: 08399922  
Registered Charity No: 1154627



Healthwatch [Central Bedfordshire](http://www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk)