

Access to and use of health and social care services by young carers in Bromley

Healthwatch Bromley
Spring 2025



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About Healthwatch

Healthwatch Bromley (HWB) is the statutory, independent consumer champion for health and social care users in Bromley, set up by the Health and Care Act 2012. We aim to put people at the heart of care. We ask what users like about services, and what could be improved and share their views with those with the power to make change happen.

Our purpose is to help make care better for people by:

- Providing information and advice to the public about accessing health and social care services and choices in relation to those services.
- Obtaining the views of residents about their need for, and experience of, local health and social care services and making these known to those who commission, scrutinise and provide services.
- Reporting the views and experiences of residents to Healthwatch England (HWE), helping it to perform its role as national champion.
- Making recommendations to HWE, to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to carry out special reviews of or investigations into areas of concern.

YVHSC

Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC) is an independent organisation which gives people a voice to improve and shape services and help them get the best out of health and social care provision. YVHSC holds the contract for Healthwatch Bromley (HWB). HWB staff members and volunteers speak to local people about their experiences of health and social care services. Healthwatch engages and involves members of the public in the commissioning of health and social care services, through extensive community engagement and continuous consultation with local people, health services and the local authority.

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Disclaimer

The information presented within this report describes the experiences of young carers and parents we spoke to as part of our young carers project. The findings provide a snapshot of experiences and key insights from these individuals. The report cannot cover the totality of experiences but can be used to guide service improvements and identify further research required.

How to read this report

The report starts with an Introduction, followed by Project Background.

Key Findings and Recommendations can be found on pages 19 – 20 and 21 – 26 respectively.

Photos from the Young Carers can be found on pages 15 – 17

Two case studies can be found on pages 27 – 28.

The appendices, from page 31, include:

- Data and charts covering survey responses
- Event posters and marketing materials
- Letters to local partners and schools
- Survey templates.

Introduction

Healthwatch Bromley is committed to empowering local residents to make best use of health and social care services. We initiated this research project to collect insights from and analyse the needs of Bromley young carers aged 11 – 19, in response to suggestions that this potentially vulnerable group might need targeted support to make better use of these services.

Young carers play a crucial role in providing care for family members or friends facing various health challenges, but their individual experiences and needs can be hard to recognise.

This project aimed to gather comprehensive feedback on how young carers navigate health and social care services for themselves and the people they support. By identifying barriers and challenges they face—ranging from lack of emotional support to access to resources—our goal is to inform and enhance the delivery of services tailored to their circumstances.

Aligned with the objectives of Bromley's Children and Young People's Plan, the research engaged with young carers directly through surveys and focus groups, leveraging their insights to inform practical recommendations for policymakers and healthcare partners.

Through this initiative, Healthwatch Bromley seeks to highlight the experiences of young carers and foster meaningful improvements in the support available to them, ultimately ensuring they receive the recognition and resources necessary for their well-being.

Project Background

Bromley's Children and Young People's Plan, 2021 – 2024 was the joint strategy of local partners on how they would work together to improve children's wellbeing and ensure their safety. The commitments in this plan aimed to make Bromley a place for "children and young people to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home". Bromley is the sixth most populated borough in London, with most people living in the north of the borough. Though it is the fourth least deprived London borough, there are extremes of wealth and poverty, and five wards are in the most deprived 10% nationally.

Young Carers

A young carer is defined as someone aged 25 and under who cares for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, could not cope without their support.

There are various ways a young person can care for someone, e.g. providing emotional support, helping someone communicate or take their medicines and/or spending a high proportion of their time in the home to support them.

Being a young carer may negatively affect a person's health. Young carers can be particularly vulnerable, for example due to restricted access to peer activities and usual adult support. They are likely to need and benefit from specialist support and advice.

According to Carers Trust the 2021 Census identified approximately 120,000 young carers, aged between 5 and 17 years, in England and 8,200 in Wales and stated "This is widely believed to be the tip of the iceberg because of a small number of young carers being identified. Some estimates suggested that as many as one in five school children are young carers, with this number increasing during the COVID-19 pandemic*. The quotation highlights how difficult this population can be to reach and therefore how important it is to conduct targeted research.

* <https://carers.org/about-caring/about-young-carers>

Aims and Methodology

Aims

The project's aims were to:

- Generate a report detailing Bromley young carers' experience of accessing health and social care services
- Identify any barriers or challenges young carers face in achieving and maintaining positive health and well-being
- Make evidence-based recommendations to policymakers and healthcare partners aimed at improving health and social care services for young carers in Bromley
- Identify any possible knowledge gaps and areas for future research.

Methodology

To gather comprehensive insights into the experiences of young carers and the individuals they care for, we employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. These included a survey available in both digital and paper formats to enable accessibility for a wide range of participants. The digital version was promoted via our website and social media platforms, while a poster with a QR code was used to direct individuals to the survey.

We provided self-addressed freepost envelopes to support respondents who preferred the paper version, enabling a smooth process for submitting responses.

Hard copy versions were sent to local partners for distribution, to extend the reach of the survey. Additionally, voluntary sector organisations played a key role in promoting the research, sharing the survey through their websites, newsletters, and other communication channels.

As part of our engagement efforts, we hosted four face-to-face events in partnership with Bromley Well Young Carers (BWYC) at the Community House Café on:

- 28th October 2024
- 29th October 2024
- 21st February 2025
- 14th April 2025

We also organised online events with BWYC support on 6th and 13th December 2024, though Zoom. Following a discussion with BWYC, the event on 6th December was cancelled due to low attendance.

We attended the following community engagements organised by local organisations:

- 20th August 2024 – BWYC activity day, yoga and gong bath (in-person)
- 27th August 2024 – One Bromley and BWYC career support event (in-person)
- 30th August 2024 – Matthew McKenzie’s ethnic mental health carers forum (online)
- 30th October 2024 – BWYC Halloween party (in-person).

To achieve maximum outreach, we contacted all secondary schools in the borough in November 2024 and January 2025 to inform them of the research and encourage participation. None of the schools responded to this outreach, which was unexpected given the nature of the engagement. Copies of our two outreach letters are appended below. (Appendices 14, 15)

We also reached out to scout groups, football clubs, food banks, and libraries requesting their support in distributing the survey.

We contacted local GP surgeries to ask if they maintain patient lists identifying young carers, aiming to explore how GP practices might assist in identifying this group for future support.

This mixed-methods approach, combining surveys, events, and direct outreach, allowed us to gather diverse perspectives and ensure inclusivity in our research.

Bromley Well Young Carers

Bromley Well Young Carers supports children and young people aged 4 to 19 who help care for a family member or friend due to illness, disability, mental health needs, or substance misuse. The service is designed to help young carers manage their responsibilities while still enjoying their childhood. It offers emotional support, access to counselling, and opportunities to connect with peers through social activities, workshops, and a dedicated Young Carers Forum. Additionally, Bromley Well provides resources such as a Young Carers App and newsletter to keep carers informed and engaged. The service also assists with life transitions, such as moving schools or preparing for adulthood, ensuring that young carers receive comprehensive support tailored to their individual needs.

“

It has been a privilege to partner with Bromley Well Young Carers from the outset of this project through to its completion. Their collaborative approach, responsiveness, and willingness to support and develop the ideas brought forward by the Healthwatch Bromley team have played a key role in shaping and delivering this young carers research project. Their team brought valuable insights and expertise, helping to design activities that were both meaningful and engaging for young carers.

In addition to contributing to the planning and design stages, Bromley Well Young Carers provided essential support during events, helping to create a safe and welcoming environment where young carers felt comfortable to share their experiences. Their presence added a sense of trust and continuity that encouraged open dialogue and participation. They consistently went above and beyond—whether through logistical support, facilitation, or offering guidance—and their commitment to improving outcomes for young carers has been evident throughout.”

Healthwatch Bromley

How GP practices identify young carers

We reached out to all GP practice managers in Bromley to inform them about our research study. We asked if their practice has a system to identify patients listed as young carers. We received the following responses back from eight different practices.

1. The surgery has an 'Is a young carer' code within their clinical system, however, it is not frequently used, as coding for young carers across SE London is generally quite poor. One reason is that many healthcare professionals may not routinely ask about or identify young carers, and therefore this specific code is not consistently applied.

The surgery does not currently maintain a formal register. The reason they have not developed one is that they have not been directly involved in any initiatives or programmes specifically targeted at young carers. It would be fairly easy to do if they ever needed to identify this cohort, but it would not identify many people as the coding for young carers is not widely used.

2: The surgery currently identifies, and codes young carers based on clinician recognition during consultations, discussions with family members, or information received from secondary care. A healthcare professional, such as a GP or nurse, may recognise a young person as a carer during an appointment with them or their dependant relative.

Additionally, if secondary care providers note caring responsibilities in clinical correspondence, this information may be used to update the patient's medical records. Once identified, the young carer is coded accordingly and this is recorded in their file.

3: The surgery identifies and codes young carers by reviewing registration forms for any patients under 18 who have indicated they have caring responsibilities. The registration team has been reminded to check these forms and apply the appropriate coding.

If a young person is identified as a carer, they are coded as "Is a young carer," while patients who have a young carer supporting them are coded as "Has a young carer." This coding allows the practice to offer support directly to the young carer or refer them to appropriate agencies through their own GP if necessary.

4: The carers are coded when they present and self-identify usually, then a "SNOMED" code* is added to their clinical record.

*SNOMED CT stands for Systemised Nomenclature of Medicine – Clinical Terms.

This surgery was happy to send young carers and their guardian/parent a text with a link to Healthwatch Bromley's questionnaire.

5: The surgery uses the code "Is a young carer" and then provides free text information relevant to this. They keep an up-to-date list of all carers at the surgery, so it is easy to keep track of the young carers

The surgery was happy to send a text message inviting young carers to share their experience with Healthwatch Bromley as part of research project.

6: The surgery's coding for carers improved over the pandemic due to vaccine eligibility criteria. Some are coded as young carers, some just "is a carer".

The surgery was happy to send a text message and letters inviting young carers to share their experience with Healthwatch Bromley as part of research project.

7: The surgery has a list of young carers, but they are unsure how up to date this is and if they are still carers.

They were happy to display HWB posters with QR code for the questionnaire.

8: The surgery identifies young carers through audits within their clinical systems. They suggested that the Integrated Care Board (ICB) may have access to Bromley-wide data that could help identify young carers more effectively.

Additionally, they mentioned that Bromley Healthcare's IT department has a team capable of reviewing anonymised service user data, which may assist in identifying young carers within their service user population.

Below is the text that the above eight GP practices, who confirmed they were happy to support the project, sent out to young carers registered with their practice:

Hi! Would you mind taking 5 minutes to complete this form? We want to hear about young carers' experiences of accessing and using local health and care services.

This survey is confidential and completely voluntary. You can skip any questions you are unsure about or don't feel comfortable answering. We will not be able to identify you, or the person for whom you care, from your answers.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HWBromley/>

Young carers events

28th October 2024

The event took place at Community House Café, with a set-up that included clay pumpkin and sun catcher paintings, Jenga and Lego building, Snakes and Ladders, cupcake and cookie decorating. Despite nine young carers registering in advance, only four attended. Feedback was gathered, and the activities were well-received.

29th October 2024

This event featured similar activities, with additional elements like a vision board station and a motivational speaker discussing resilience. Two new young carers joined, along with two returnees from the previous day. The speaker took the time to engage with both young carers and parents. Valuable feedback was collected, and the event was enjoyed by all those who attended.

6th December 2024 (Online)

This event was cancelled due to low registration numbers. Only four young carers had registered, and two later cancelled. BWYC recommended cancelling the event, as having just two attendees might have made the young people feel shy or uncomfortable.

13th December 2024 (Online)

This event was held online via Zoom. This event had five attendees. To break the ice, the group answered fun questions: *If you could have any superpower, what would it be and what would be the first thing you'd do? If you could teleport anywhere in the world right now, where would you go and what would you do?* After the icebreakers, the young carers were invited to share more about their experiences, including who they care for, how they support them, and what they enjoy most about their caring role.

14th April 2025

This event had 18 registered – eight attended on the day, with feedback collected from four young carers and one parent, with the others having previously completed the survey forms. The event featured various activities including jewellery making, decorating plant pots and planting giant sunflower seeds, Lego building, ceramic Easter egg painting and a game of Jenga. A local muralist also attended to support the event, creating personalised name drawings for the young carers to colour in.

The difference between the numbers registered and the number of attendees shows how unexpected events can happen in young carers' lives to affect their ability to follow plans through.

These events focused on offering young carers a chance to relax, engage in creative activities, and receive support, having a significant impact on both the attendees and the organisers.

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“I had a great time at the Young Carers event in Community House in Bromley. Heathwatch Bromley had created a very chilled and creative vibe and the YP seemed relaxed and engaged with all the activities. The range of creative tasks meant there was something for everyone! It was great to see how popular the Lego was and how the group bonded over playing with the bricks. Sometimes the simple things are the most effective. It was my absolute pleasure to illustrate customised name colouring pages and see the participants colour them in! Funnily enough, one of the YP had already seen my Mural in Orpington and I had facilitated a cartoon workshop and had been invited to talk at an assembly in their school. Another child had seen the Community House Mural as part of the Art Trail. This was a wonderful surprise to see some familiar faces and such a joy to feel embedded in the community in this way!”

Beci Ward

“

“It has always been a pleasure meeting young carers...they walk through the door smiling and ready to participate in various activities. I have really enjoyed every moment spent with them.”

HWB Volunteer

“

“It has been a pleasure collaborating with you and your staff. I know how much hard work goes into organising these events.”

BWYC Staff

“

“I was very impressed with the organisation of the Young Carers event: meticulously planned and resourced mainly from HWB staff's own personal treasure trove of games and activities, the young people were fully engaged and having a fun break from their family responsibilities. One older attendee also told me how much he appreciated being able to sit quietly and have some thinking time to complete our survey.”

HWB Committee Member

Photos from YC events



Photos from YC events



Photos from YC events



Participants

We heard from 54 people about their experiences. 51 were young carers in Bromley who care for a family member. We also spoke to 3 parents of the young carers.

Of the 51 young carers:

- 32 identified as female, 12 as male (Appendix 9)
- The majority (64%), were White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British (Appendix 13)
- We identified 78% as students, 58% in receipt of free school meals (Appendix 10)
- 18% considered themselves to have a long-term health condition (Appendix 11) and 11% were disabled (Appendix 12)
- 33% said they were between 14 – 17 years (Appendix 1)
- The majority live in BR1 and BR2 (Appendix 8).

Equalities Analysis

During outreach and engagement visits, we collected demographic data from people who gave consent.

During our examination of survey responses, we analysed feedback from different demographic groups, on their experiences of community mental health services. We did not find any discernible variations in experiences based on factors such as gender, age, or ethnicity.

Key Findings

Young carers play a crucial role in supporting their loved ones, yet their experiences reveal significant emotional, social, and practical challenges. The feedback collected highlights key themes which illustrate the impact of their caregiving responsibilities on their well-being, education, and social life.

Experiences in accessing health and social care services

Young carers' experiences of accessing health and social care services, including GPs, dentists, pharmacists, social workers, and hospitals, reflect both positive interactions and areas needing improvement. Many young carers described staff as kind, helpful, and supportive. They valued moments when professionals listened, showed empathy, and provided personalised care. Positive experiences included receiving small gestures of kindness, such as stickers at the dentist or compassionate treatment during procedures. Social workers were also recognised for offering valuable support.

However, some young carers reported inconsistencies in care quality, difficulty accessing timely GP appointments, and communication challenges. A few felt their age and caring responsibilities were not always fully understood by professionals. Emotional difficulties, such as fear of medical procedures and of possible unpredictable staff behaviour, were also mentioned.

Emotional strain and worry

43% (Appendix 5) of young carers experience ongoing anxiety about their loved ones' health and well-being. Concerns about unpredictable medical conditions, emotional distress, and the uncertainty of the future create a significant mental and emotional burden. Several carers worry about their parents' or siblings' safety, especially when left alone, while others struggle with guilt, fearing they may not be doing enough.

Balancing responsibilities with education and social life

Juggling school, caregiving duties, and personal time is a major challenge. Of the young carers we have spoken to, 21% (Appendix 5), find it difficult to split their time between academic commitments and caregiving, often feeling stretched between their responsibilities. The additional pressures impact on their ability to focus on studies, maintain friendships, and engage in activities that their peers take for granted.

Physical and mental exhaustion

The demands of caregiving often lead to fatigue, with some carers struggling with sleep disturbances due to the needs of their family members. Several young carers mention feeling drained, both physically and mentally, making it harder to concentrate in school or enjoy recreational activities.

Social isolation and lack of understanding

Some young carers, **9%** (Appendix 5), feel different from their peers and express frustration at being misunderstood by friends and others around them. The responsibility of caregiving sometimes means having to leave social events early or missing out on activities, which can lead to feelings of isolation. Some struggle to explain their circumstances, finding that others do not fully grasp the extent of their responsibilities.

Challenging behaviours and person safety

Managing challenging behaviours, such as violent outbursts or emotional distress from family members, is a significant concern for some young carers. Some describe feeling unsafe or overwhelmed when trying to de-escalate situations, while others struggle with household tasks that feel too difficult to manage alone.

Childhood

Some young carers, **16%** (Appendix 5), express sadness over missing out on typical childhood experiences. Whether struggling to find time for personal interests or feeling unable to fully engage in activities with siblings, many describe a sense of lost youth. They also highlight the mental burden of growing up too quickly due to their responsibilities.

Key statistics from survey responses

The survey revealed several important insights into the experiences of young carers. Only **11%** had seen a dentist in the past year, and just **1%** had accessed mental health services, suggesting limited engagement with healthcare. Over half of respondents (**56%**) were in receipt of Free School Meals, indicating a high level of socioeconomic need. In terms of support, **26%** said they would like more help with being a young carer. These findings offer a snapshot of the challenges faced by young carers in relation to health, financial wellbeing, and access to support.

Recommendations

Young carers play a vital role in supporting their families, balancing significant responsibilities alongside their own development and education. To ensure they are recognised, supported, and given the opportunity to thrive, a coordinated approach across local authorities, schools, and health services is essential.

The following recommendations set out practical steps that can be taken to better identify YCs, provide emotional and educational support, and create opportunities for respite, inclusion, and recognition.

Recommendation for Health and Social Care Services

1. Improve Access to Mental Health and Emotional Support

- Train primary care staff to recognise signs of emotional distress in young carers and make appropriate referrals (e.g. to CAMHS or community-based services).
- Embed emotional wellbeing screening into routine family health checks, where appropriate.

2. Introduce Flexible Educational Support

- Share relevant information (with consent) that may affect a young carer's education.
- Address educational support within family assessments where appropriate.

3. Establish Clear Identification Pathways

- Incorporate carer identification questions into GP, nurse, and health visitor appointments.
- Use existing clinical coding systems (e.g. Read/SNOMED codes) to record carer status in health records.

4. Increase Access to Breaks and Personal Time

- Signpost families to available respite services and YC programmes during appointments.
- Work with local partners to raise awareness of existing offers.

5. Provide Safety Planning and Crisis Support

- Flag households with complex needs and ensure clinicians consider risks faced by young carers.
- Refer families to early help and support teams where appropriate.

6. Create Opportunities for Social Connection and Inclusion

- Display information about young carer services in clinics and GP surgeries.
- Signpost families to local community and social events relevant to young carers.

7. Recognise and Celebrate the Role of Young Carers

- Acknowledge the contributions of young carers during clinical interactions.
- Promote positive conversations, validating their role while identifying needs and support.

Recommendations for London Borough of Bromley

1. Raise the profile of Young Carers

- LBB Children and YP Services raise the profile of Young Carers in the Primary and special schools head teachers' forum and the Secondary schools head teachers' forum and encourage each school to:
 - Identify a Young Carers Champion
 - Set up a Young Carers Group
 - Properly record the number of Young Carers via the school census, an action that was included in the Carers Plan.*
- Monitor the number of Young Carers reported in the School Census.*
- Lead local awareness campaigns around Young Carers Action Day.
- Support the inclusion of young carers in youth voice panels and consultation.

2. Improve Access to Mental Health and Emotional Support

- Commission targeted mental health services that are easily accessible to young carers, such as drop-in counselling at youth hubs or online support.
- Invest in emotional wellbeing programmes co-designed with young carers to meet their specific needs.

3. Introduce Flexible Educational Support

- Encourage education providers to embed young carer support in their safeguarding and inclusion strategies.
- Monitor how schools are meeting the needs of young carers through the local offer or SEND framework.

*<https://www.bromley.gov.uk/downloads/file/2893/bromley-carers-plan>

*<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2024-25>

4. Establish Clear Identification Pathways

- Develop borough-wide protocols for identifying young carers across health, education, and community settings.
- Establish a joined-up referral process and data-sharing agreements where appropriate.

5. Increase Access to Breaks and Personal Time

- Fund respite programmes, activity days, and holiday schemes specifically for young carers.
- Partner with voluntary sector organisations to deliver creative and therapeutic breaks.

6. Provide Safety Planning and Crisis Support

- Connect young carers and their families are linked into safeguarding services where appropriate.
- Offer family support, parenting programmes, and crisis intervention where there is a risk of harm or breakdown.

7. Create Opportunities for Social Connection and Inclusion

- Fund peer support groups and local events for young carers.
- Facilitate partnerships between schools and community organisations to host regular meet-ups.

Recommendations for schools

1. Improve Access to Mental Health and Emotional Support

- Provide in-school wellbeing check-ins and accessible counselling where possible.
- Appoint a Young Carer Champion or pastoral lead to offer ongoing support and signposting.
- Collaborate with local health and youth services to refer students requiring additional support.

2. Introduce Flexible Educational Support

- Provide reasonable adjustments such as flexible deadlines, attendance expectations, and homework extensions.
- Assign a named staff member to monitor young carers' progress and offer tailored support.
- Engage with families to understand the impact of caring responsibilities on learning.

3. Establish Clear Identification Pathways

- Include optional questions about caring responsibilities in school admissions and transition forms.
- Provide safe and confidential opportunities for students to disclose their caring role.

4. Increase Access to Breaks and Personal Time

- Provide access to extracurricular and enrichment activities at no cost for young carers.
- Offer flexibility with timetables and transport to support participation.
- Work with local partners to raise awareness of existing offers.

5. Provide Safety Planning and Crisis Support

- Train staff to recognise when a young carer may be in distress or at risk.
- Establish clear safeguarding and referral procedures in line with statutory guidance.

6. Create Opportunities for Social Connection and Inclusion

- Establish young carer groups, lunch clubs, or drop-in sessions within schools.
- Promote awareness and reduce stigma through assemblies, PSHE lessons, and whole-school campaigns.
- Ensure that Young Carers are included in enrichment activities such as Cadets or The Duke of Edinburgh Award.

7. Recognise and Celebrate the Role of Young Carers

- Recognise young carers through school events, newsletters, certificates, and assemblies.
- Involve them in shaping relevant school policies and inclusion strategies.

Case studies

During our engagement visits, we asked young carers and family members for more detailed responses about their experience. We had two individuals willing to share their experience in depth, and have developed their feedback into anonymous case studies, with their consent. The first is as written by the patient's carer.

Case study one:

One young carer shared how valuable it is to have time away from their caring responsibilities. They highlighted how days out—such as a planned trip to the London Dungeon and the London Aquarium organised by Bromley Well Young Carers — offer a rare opportunity to relax and simply enjoy being young.

While they find comfort in their routine, they also acknowledged the challenges of maintaining a social life. This young carer's experience reflects the need for consistent, accessible respite opportunities that allow young carers to take a break, connect with peers, and feel supported in balancing their responsibilities with their own wellbeing.



"I like to help around the house...I have a dog as well and the TV, so I enjoy being indoors.

Sometimes it can be difficult going out with friends. I can't say yes to everything because I have responsibilities. My friends aren't young carers, so they don't have the same responsibilities."

Case study two:

A local resident relies on their child for daily support following the loss of her husband two years ago. Living in a property that is only accessible via multiple flights of stairs has become increasingly difficult due to her ongoing health condition. Despite repeated attempts to secure more suitable accommodation through the council, her housing applications have been unsuccessful. The situation has been further strained by a rent increase, which is no longer fully covered by their benefits.

Her only financial support comes from Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and she is currently prescribed several medications, many of which have challenging side effects. With no family in the UK and minimal social support, it often feels isolating.

Despite these challenges, the resident spoke highly of the care provided by their GP, who has referred them to mental health services when needed. She also expressed deep appreciation for the Bromley Well team, who have offered invaluable support.

Her child, who is registered as a young carer with Bromley Well Young Carers (BWYC), has taken part in BWYC activities, and the family uses the BWYC app to stay connected. The school has also shown strong support, though her child sometimes struggles when peers do not understand the responsibilities she carries at home.

The young carer shared how she supports her mother in her day-to-day life, with her medical condition that sometimes stops her from moving and means she is not always able to do what she would wish for her daughter. Despite her responsibilities, the young carer still finds time to enjoy herself. This case illustrates the complex and overlapping challenges faced by families with young carers —particularly around housing, financial strain, and isolation—and underscores the importance of accessible, joined-up support services.



"I help with the washing and ironing, especially things like my school uniform. I also go with my mum to the dentist, doctors, and hospital. I help with the shopping and sometimes with cooking too. I like going shopping with my mum—she cooks really nice food. I get to do fun things with my friends twice a week."

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bromley would like to thank all the local people who shared their feedback, and our committee, interns, work placement students and volunteers for their contributions and on-going support. We would also like to thank the following local partners:

- ABC Book Club
- Action For Children
- Anerley Team Ministry Foodbank
- Bromley Christian Centre (BCC) Foodbank
- Bromley Central Library
- Bromley Children & Families Voluntary Sector Forum
- Bromley Council
- Bromley GP Alliance
- Bromley Healthcare
- Bromley Parent Carer Forum (BPCF)
- Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB)
- Bromley SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Service
- Bromley Well
- Bromley Y
- Carers Lewisham
- Carers Trust
- CASPA (Community Autistic Support, Pride & Advocacy)
- Chislehurst Library
- Clarion Futures
- Community House Bromley
- Community Links Bromley
- Downham Library

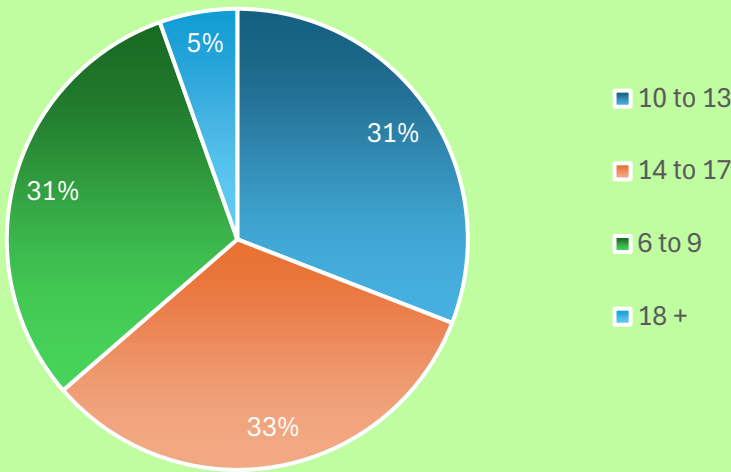
- Downham Library
- Go Beyond
- Hayes Community Foodbank
- Hygiene Bank Bromley
- King's College NHS Foundation Trust
- Knoll Medical Practice
- Living Well Bromley
- Matthew McKenzie
- Mottingham Foodbank
- Mottingham Hamblr
- Oakfield Surgery
- Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
- South East London ICB (SEL ICB)
- Social Prescribing Link Workers
- St Nicholas Orpington Community Larder
- Studio Beci
- Trussell Trust
- Unity Church Foodbank

Appendices



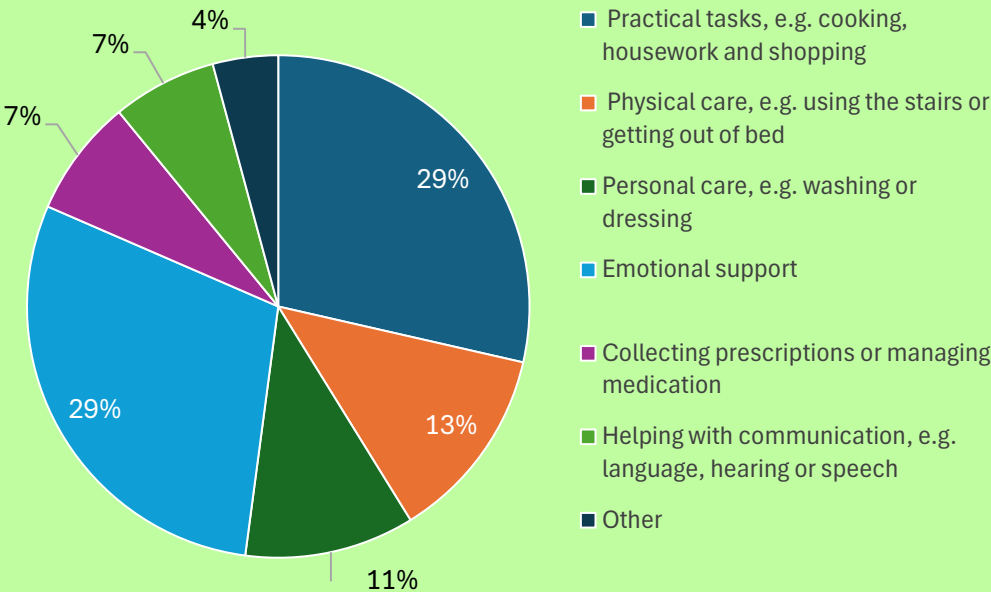
Appendix 1

How old are you?

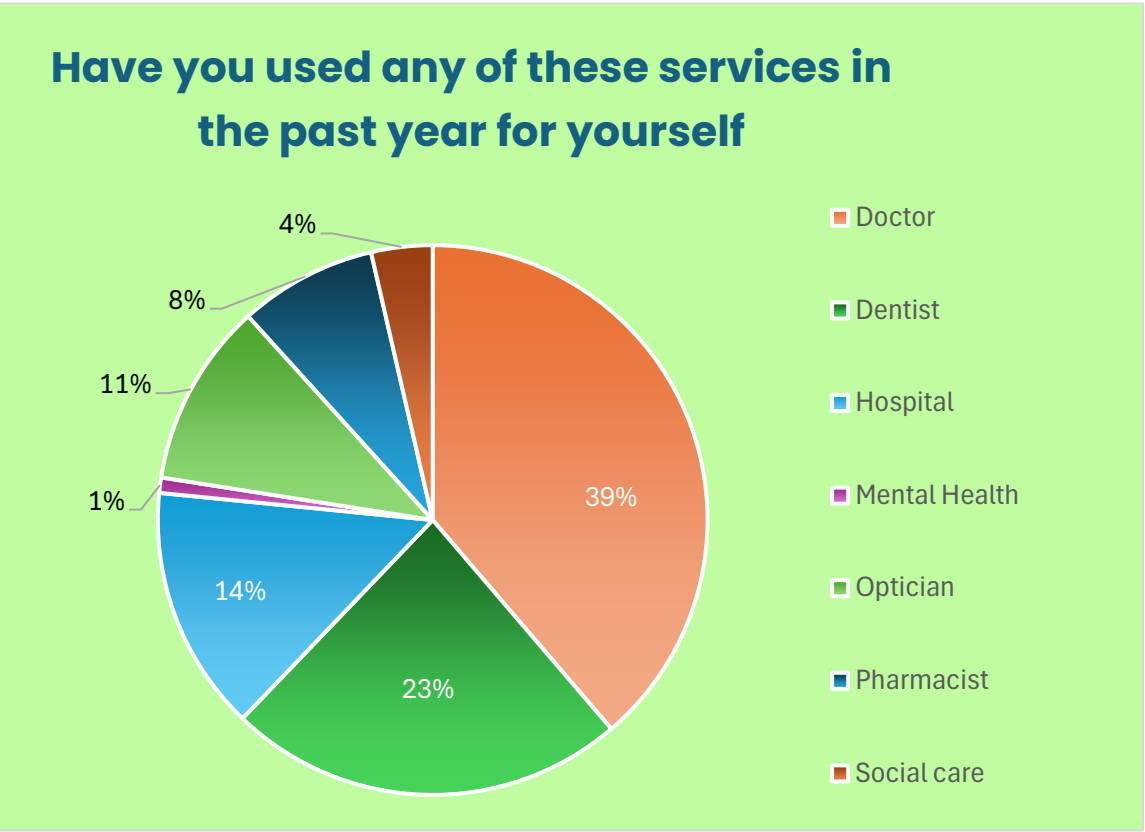


Appendix 2

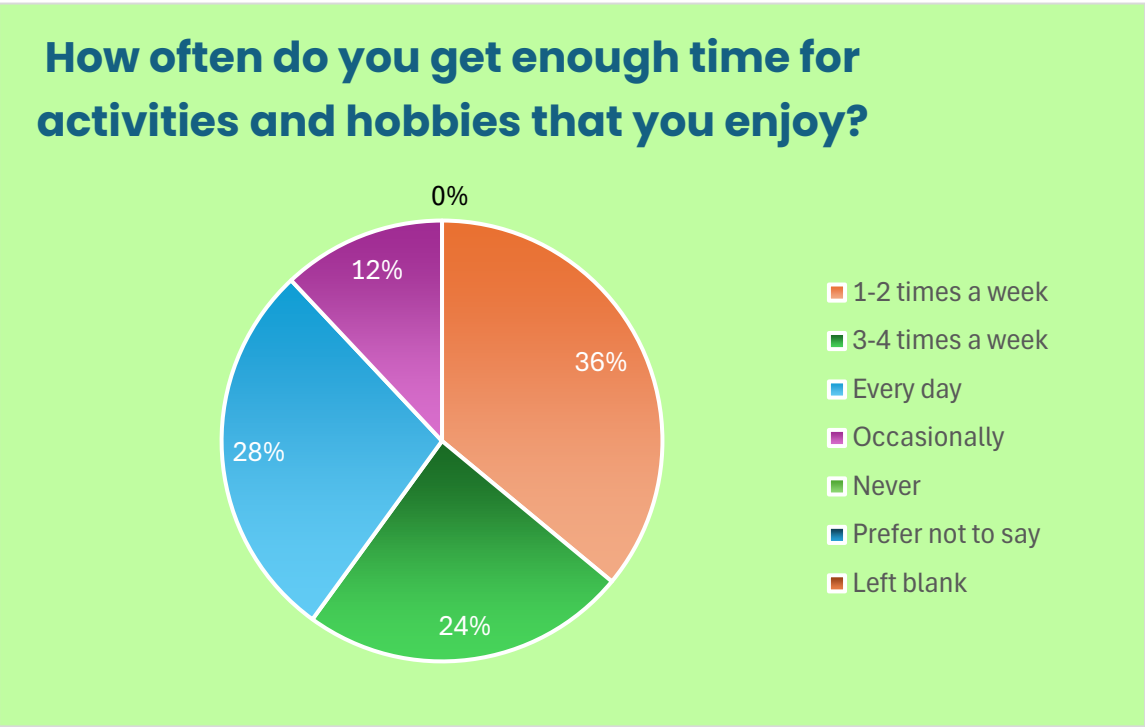
What do you regularly help your family with?



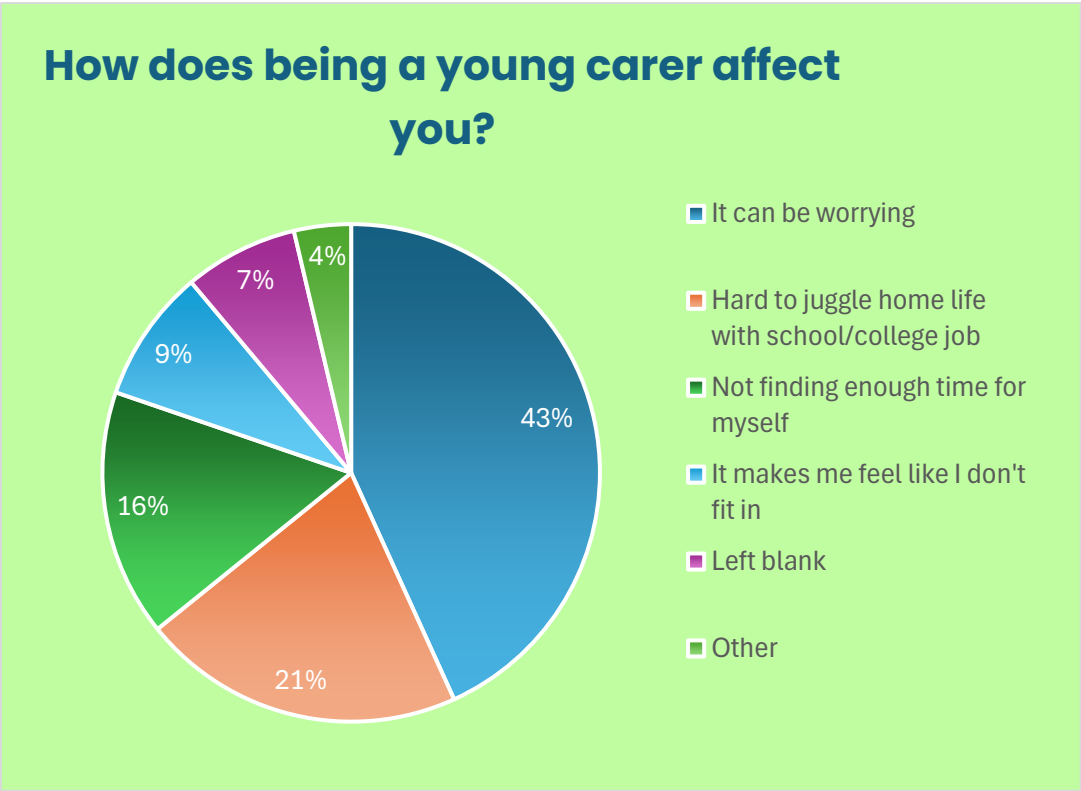
Appendix 3



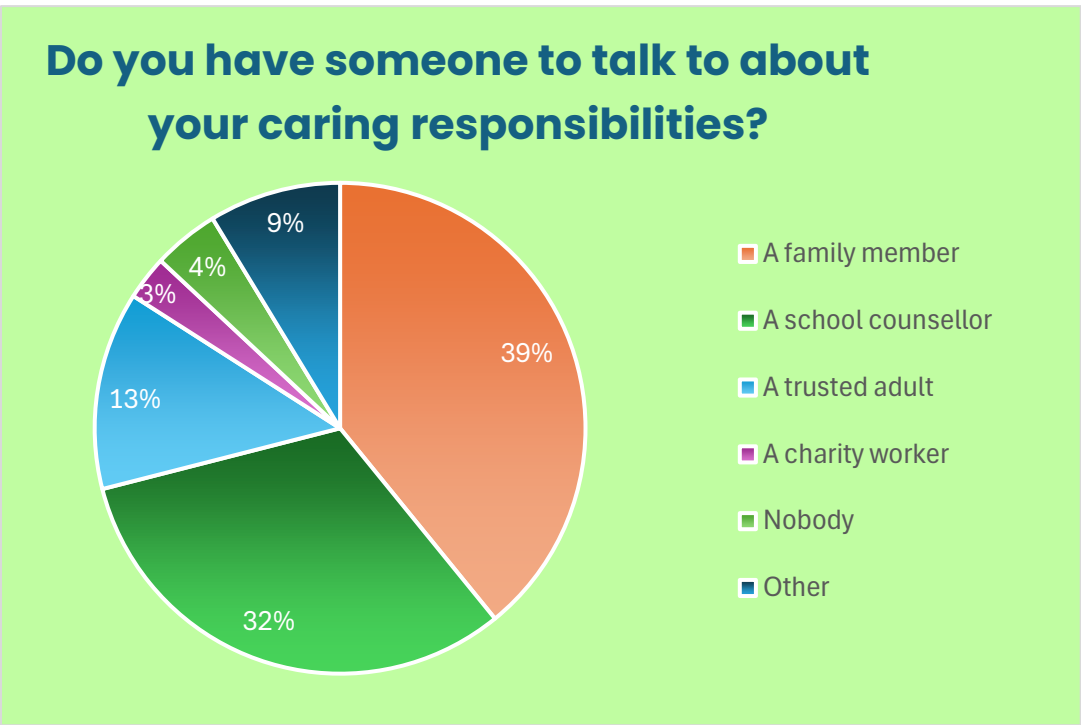
Appendix 4



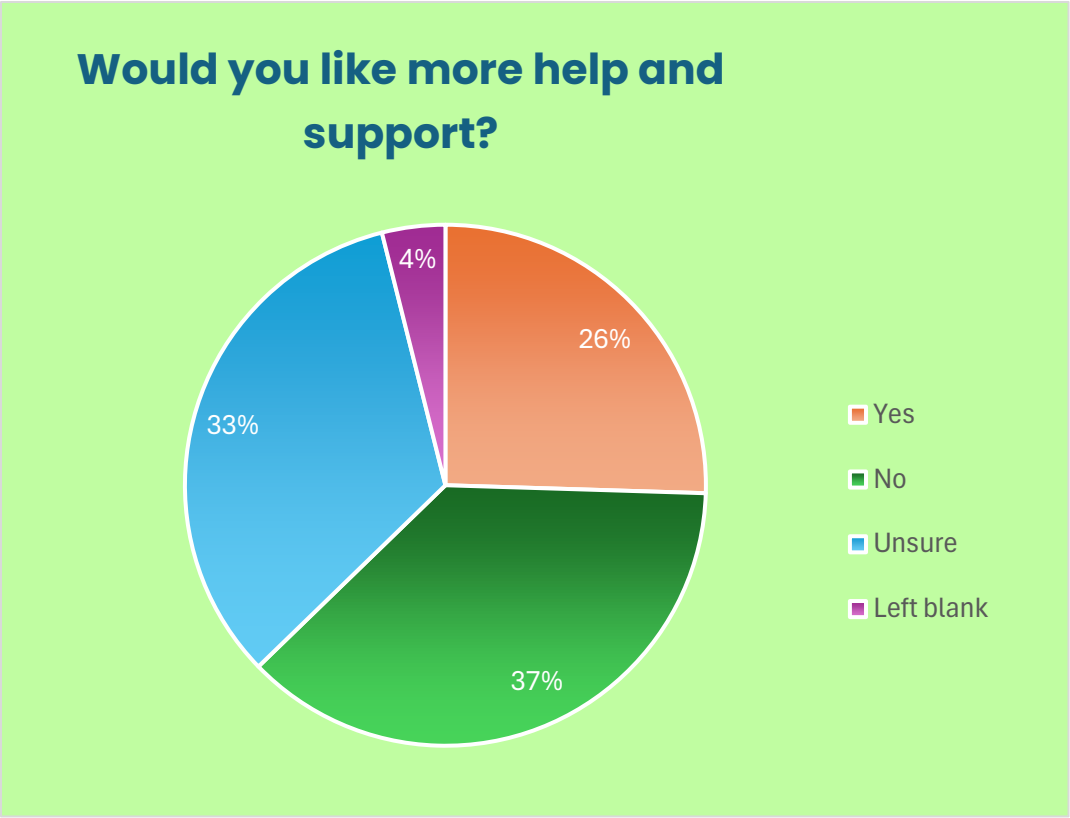
Appendix 5



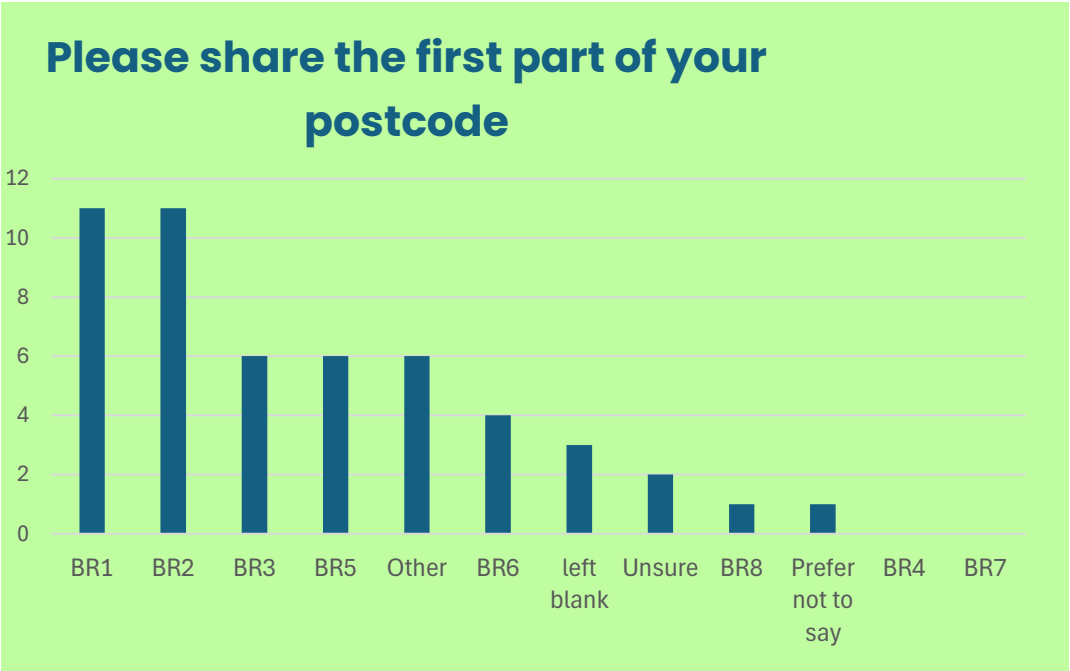
Appendix 6



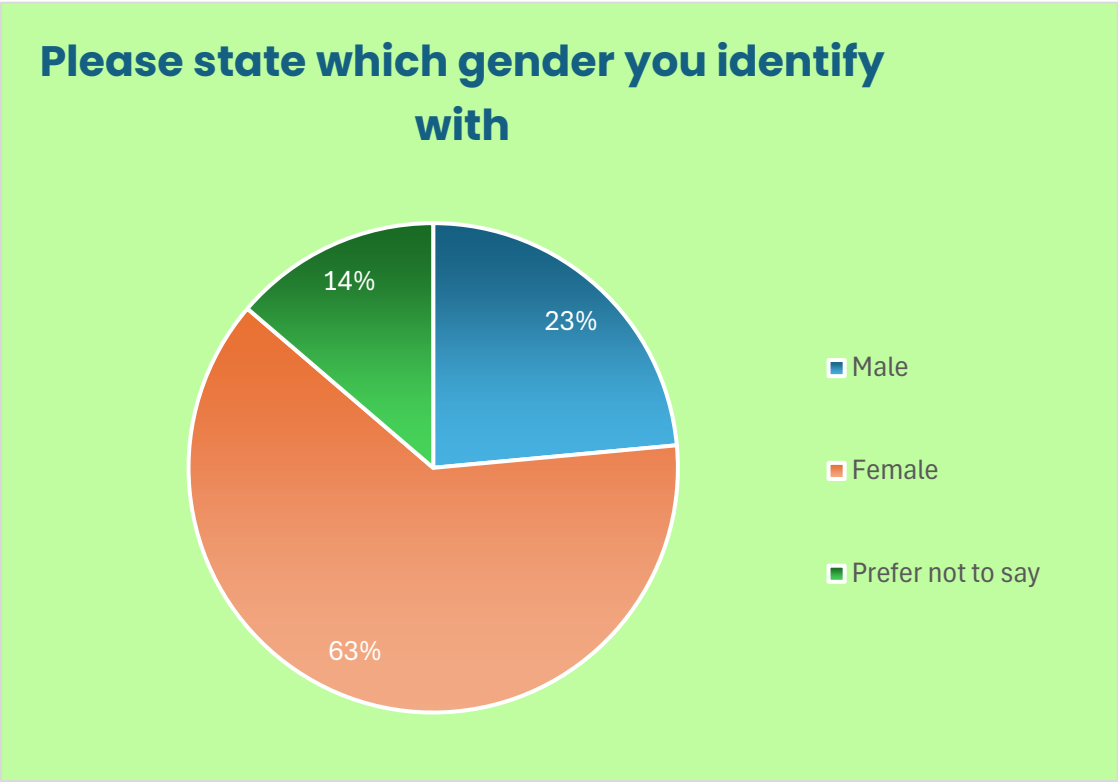
Appendix 7



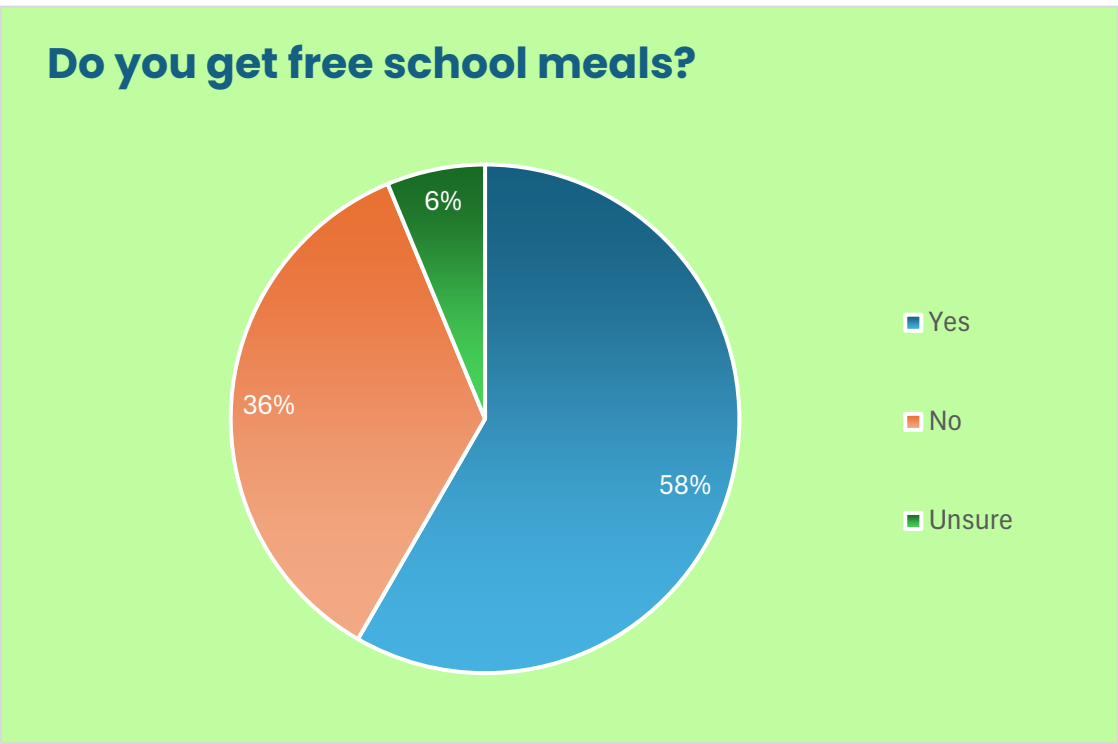
Appendix 8



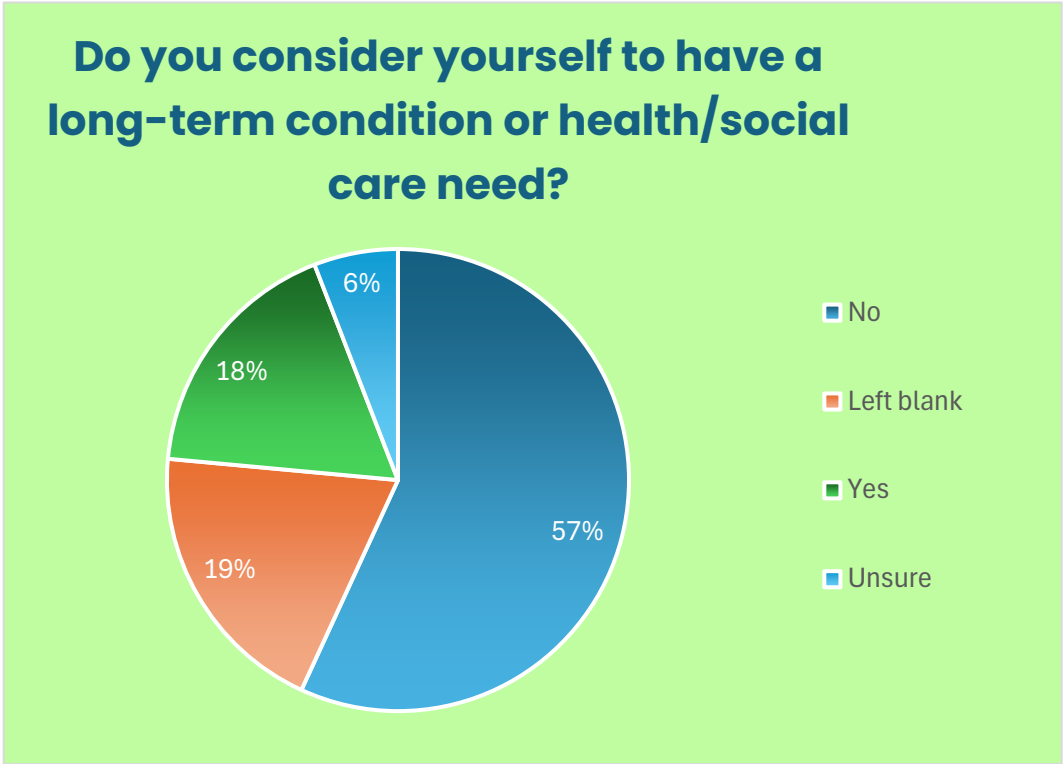
Appendix 9



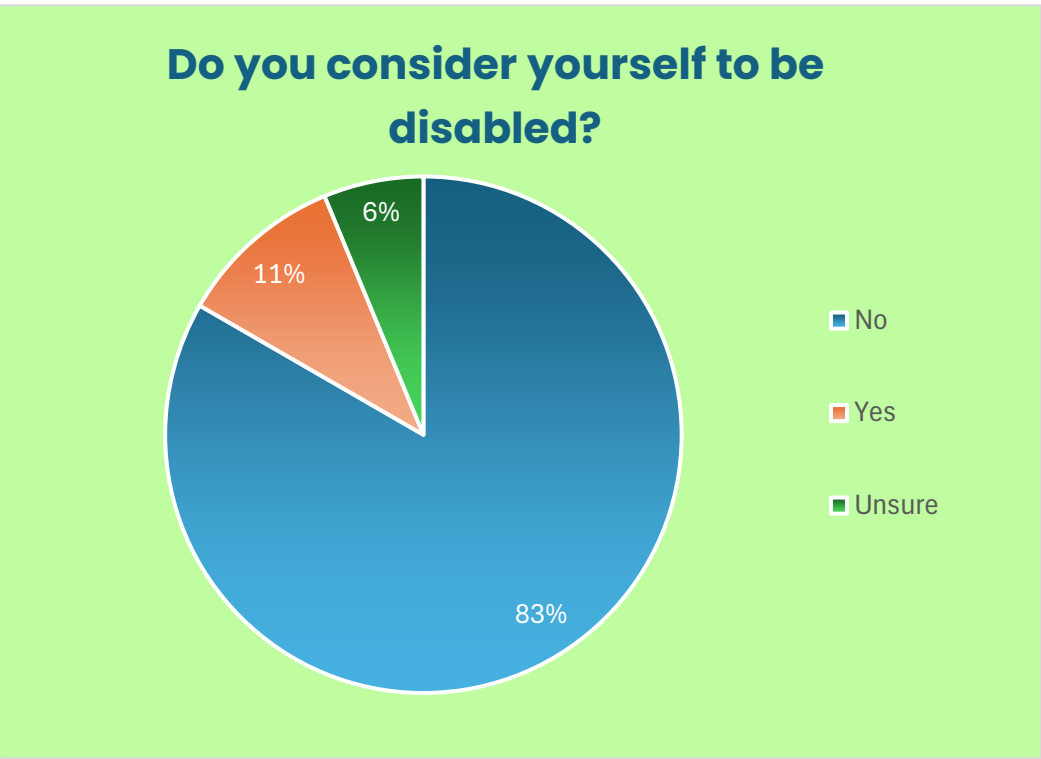
Appendix 10



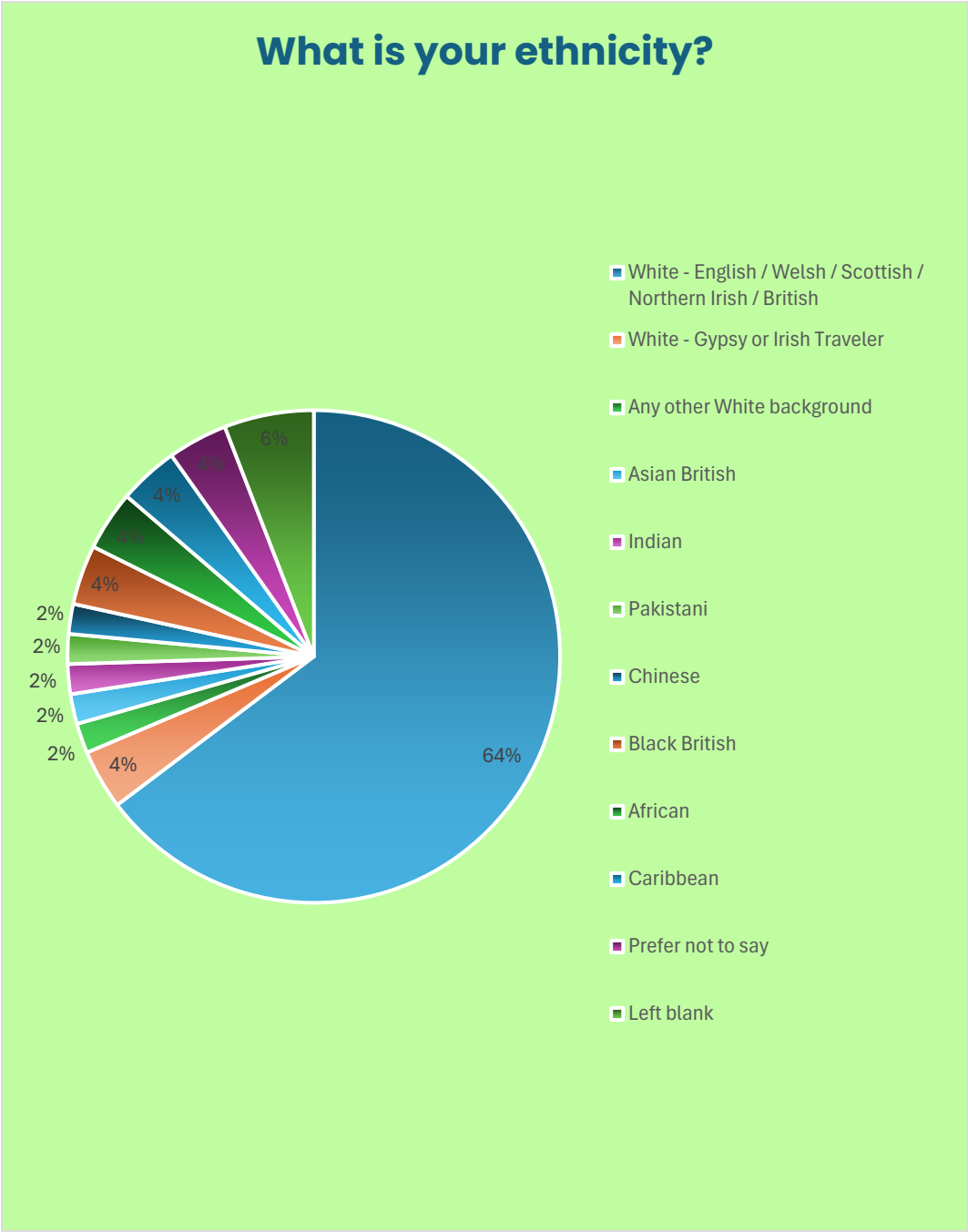
Appendix 11



Appendix 12



Appendix 13



Appendix 14

FAO Safeguarding Lead,

My name is Reedinah Johnson, I am the Project Officer for Healthwatch Bromley.

Healthwatch Bromley have launched a research project - 'Access to and use of health and social care services, by young people who care for family members in Bromley (young carers)'. We are looking to engage with young carers aged between 11 - 19 years old.

The survey is now live, and we have created promotional materials too. The posters attached include a QR code to make it more accessible, and the link to the survey is below.

We have been working closely with Bromley Well in terms of our approach and survey design. If you have any young carers, we would love to discuss opportunities to engage with them. We would be most grateful for your support in distributing this survey.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HWBromley/>

Appendix 15

FAO Headteacher

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Reedinah Johnson, and I represent Healthwatch Bromley, an independent consumer champion for health and social care in Bromley.

We are currently conducting a research project focused on understanding the experiences of young carers in accessing health and social care services in the London Borough of Bromley. Our aim is to:

- Identify which aspects of health and care services are effectively supporting young carers and highlight areas for development.
- Understand the barriers or challenges young carers face in maintaining positive health and well-being, including personal care, financial and administrative support, domestic activities, and emotional well-being.

As part of this initiative, we are reaching out to secondary schools across Bromley to raise awareness about our work and engage directly with young carers within the school community. We would love the opportunity to visit your school and present during an assembly to:

- Introduce our organisation and its mission.
- Connect with young carers and hear their invaluable perspectives on their experiences.

We believe this collaboration will empower young carers to share their stories, ensuring their voices are at the heart of shaping the services they rely on. We would be happy to adapt our presentation to suit your school's assembly schedule and requirements.

We have designed a survey and have created promotional materials too. We have been working closely with Bromley Well in terms of our approach and survey design. The posters attached include a QR code to make it more accessible, and the link to the survey is below.

Could we arrange a convenient time to discuss this further or schedule our visit? Please feel free to contact me directly via email or telephone on 07300 232152.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to support young carers in Bromley. We look forward to working with you to make a positive difference in their lives.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HWBromley/>

Share your feedback: Access to and use of health and social care services, by young people who care for family members in Bromley (young carers)

What is this survey about?

We want to hear about young carers’ experiences of accessing and using local health and care services. If we identify any barriers or challenges, we will recommend to policy makers and service providers how the services could be improved to support Bromley young carers better.

This survey is confidential and completely voluntary. You can skip any questions you are unsure about or don’t feel comfortable answering. We will not be able to identify you, or the person for whom you care, from your answers.

Please tell us what you think by completing this survey and returning it to one of our team members. If you prefer to complete the survey over the phone or would like to describe your experiences in more detail, please phone us on **020 3886 0752**.

1. If you are happy to answer the questions, please complete the following (Parent/Guardian to complete if under 13):

I am years old

- ☐ I have read and understood the information above
- ☐ I am happy to answer the questions in this survey
- ☐ I understand that I can stop at any time while answering these questions
- ☐ I care for one or more of my family members because they have a physical or mental illness, disability or addiction and they need my support

2. What do you regularly help your family member with? You can tick more than one box

- ☐ Practical tasks, e.g. cooking, housework and shopping
- ☐ Physical care, e.g. using the stairs or getting out of bed
- ☐ Personal care, e.g. washing or dressing
- ☐ Emotional support
- ☐ Collecting prescriptions or managing medication
- ☐ Helping with communication, e.g. language, hearing or speech
- ☐ Other, please write here:.....

3. Have you helped the person that you care for access any of the following in the past year? You can tick more than one box:

- ☐ Doctor / GP
- ☐ Dentist
- ☐ Hospital
- ☐ Mental Health
- ☐ Optician
- ☐ Pharmacy
- ☐ Social care (e.g. social workers)
- ☐ Other service, please write here:

4. Is there anything you would like to tell us about your experience, good or bad?

.....

.....

5. Have you used any of these services in the past year for yourself?

- ☐ Doctor / GP
- ☐ Dentist
- ☐ Hospital
- ☐ Mental Health
- ☐ Optician
- ☐ Pharmacy
- ☐ Social care (e.g. social workers)

6. Is there anything you would like to tell us about your experience, good or bad?

.....

.....

.....

7. How often do you get enough time for activities and hobbies that you enjoy (e.g. reading, socialising, going to the movies)?

- ☐ 1-2 times a week
- ☐ 3-4 times a week
- ☐ Every day
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Prefer not to say

8. How does being a young carer affect you?

- ☐ Not finding enough time for myself
- ☐ Hard to juggle home life with school /college / job
- ☐ It can be worrying
- ☐ It makes me feel like I don't fit in
- ☐ Other, please write here:.....

9. Do you have someone to talk to about your caring responsibilities (You can tick more than one box):

- ☐ A family member
- ☐ A school counsellor
- ☐ A trusted adult (e.g. a teacher)
- ☐ A charity worker
- ☐ Nobody
- ☐ Other, please write here:.....

10. What are the biggest challenges of being a young carer?

.....

.....

11. Would you like more help and support?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure

12. If yes, what help and support would you like?

.....

.....

Tell us a bit about you

Tell us a bit about you (or the person for whom you are completing this survey, if you are doing so on their behalf). These questions are completely voluntary.

Please share the first part of your postcode

- ☐ BR1 ☐ BR2 ☐ BR3 ☐ BR4 ☐ BR5 ☐ BR6 ☐ BR7 ☐ BR8
- ☐ Other, please write here:
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Please state with which gender you identify:

- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Do you get free school meals?

- ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure ☐ Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

- ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure ☐ Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to have a long-term condition or health/social care need?

- ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your ethnic group?

White

- ☐ English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- ☐ Irish ☐ Roma ☐ Any other white background.....

Asian / Asian British

- ☐ Asian British ☐ Indian ☐ Bangladeshi ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Chinese ☐ Any other Asian/Asian British background.....

Black, African, Caribbean, Black British

☐ Black British ☐ African ☐ Caribbean ☐ Any other Black, African, Caribbean background.....

Mixed, Multiple Ethnic Groups

☐ White and Asian ☐ White and Black African ☐ White and Black Caribbean ☐ Any other mixed / multiple background.....

Other Ethnic Groups

☐ Arab ☐ Any other ethnic group.....☐ Prefer not to say

What is your religion?

☐ Buddhist ☒ Christian ☐ Hindu ☐ Jewish ☐ Muslim ☐ Sikh
☐ Spiritualism ☐ No religion ☐ Prefer not to say ☐ Other, please write.....

Would you feel comfortable sharing your sexual orientation?

☐ Unsure ☐ Prefer not to say

Are you currently pregnant or have you been pregnant in the last year?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your employment status?

☐ Not in Employment (student) ☐ In unpaid voluntary work only
☐ Paid work: 16 or more hours per week ☐ Paid work: less than 16 hours per week
☐ Not in employment (seeking work) ☐ Not in employment & unable to work
☐ Prefer not to say

How we use your information

The information you share with us will also be accessed by our national body Healthwatch England and shared with local health and care commissioners and providers. This helps us spot trends both nationally and locally to identify areas for improvement. We may use quotes in our reports, but we will not use any information that will identify you. Our full privacy statement can be found at:

[\[Privacy Policy – Healthwatch Bromley\]](#)

Confirmation of consent

☐ I consent to sharing my information with HWB as part of their research into young carers. I understand that my information will be stored in the HWB system for 12 months and will only be used for this piece of research and any updates related to this project.

Thank you for sharing your experience! We recognise that health and care issues can be extremely personal, and we appreciate you giving us your time.



We want to hear from young people who care for a family member in Bromley (young carers)



Share your feedback: Access to and use of health and social care services

Why is Healthwatch Bromley doing this research?

We want to hear about young carers' experiences of accessing and using local health and care services. If we identify any barriers or challenges, we will recommend to policy makers and service providers how the services could be improved to support Bromley young carers better.

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Healthwatch Bromley
www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk
Telephone: 0203 886 0752
Email: info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk

healthwatch
Bromley



Share your feedback: Access to and use of health and social care services

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healthwatch
Bromley

Young Carers Events



PRESENTS



Young Carers

Aged 11 - 14 years old

FUN DAY

Community House Cafe

MONDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2024
10.30 AM – 1.00 PM

Parents welcome

Come along for a morning filled with fun and laughter!

HALLOWEEN GAMES & ACTIVITIES
FOOD & REFRESHMENTS
CRAFTS & WORKSHOPS



COMMUNITY HOUSE CAFE
SOUTH STREET
BROMLEY BR1 1RH
info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk



PRESENTS



Young CARERS

Aged 15 - 19 years old

EPIC HANGOUT

Come enjoy an afternoon of creativity, fun, and support, with interactive activities, and a workshop to help you shape your future!

TUESDAY
29 OCTOBER
2 PM TO 4 PM

Vision board making • Games • Snacks & Refreshments • Cookie decorating • Personal statement / CV workshop • Crafts • Guest motivational speaker



Community House Cafe,
Bromley, South Street, BR1 1RH

 info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk

Parents welcome



PRESENT

YOUNG CARERS VIRTUAL

Chill - Play - Chat



Friday 6th December
5.00 - 6.00 pm



Location:

Online via Zoom

Contact:

youngcarers@bromleywell.org.uk

Cost:

Free



PRESENT

YOUNG CARERS VIRTUAL

Chill - Play - Chat



Friday 13th December
5.00 - 6.00 pm



Location:

Online via Zoom

Contact:

youngcarers@bromleywell.org.uk

Cost:

Free





YOUNG CARERS FUN DAY

Get ready for a day filled with laughter,
exciting games, delicious treats, and
endless activities for all ages.

- Gaming station
- Vision board making
- Creative writing workshop
- Arts & Crafts
- Jewellery making
- Cookie decorating



Friday, 21st February



10.30 am - 12.30 pm



Community House
Cafe, BR1 1RH



Parents Welcome

reedinah@healthwatchbromley.co.uk

50



Easter Fun day



Get ready for a day filled with laughter, exciting games, delicious treats, and endless activities for all ages!



TUESDAY, 15th April



10.30 am – 12.30 pm



**Community House Cafe
South Street, Bromley BR1 1RH**

- Gaming station
- Easter crafts
- Jewellery making
- Lego building
- Paint and pot
- Cookie decorating



Parents welcome

Glossary of Terms

BWYC	Bromley Well Young Carers
CQC	Care Quality Commission
GP	General Practitioner
HWB	Healthwatch Bromley
HWE	Healthwatch England
ICB	Integrated Care Board
LBB	London Borough of Bromley
LA	Local Authority
SNOMED	Systemized Nomenclature of Medicine
YC	Young Carer
YVHSC	Your Voice in Health and Social Care

Distribution and Comment

This report is available to the public and is shared with our statutory and community partners. Accessible formats are available. If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences, please contact us.



Do you feel inspired?

We are always on the lookout for new volunteers, so please get in touch today.

www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk

0203 886 0752

info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk



Healthwatch Bromley
The Albany
Douglas Way
London
SE8 4AG

w: www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk

t: 0203 886 0752

e: info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk

 [@HWBromley](https://twitter.com/HWBromley)

 [Facebook.com/healthwatch.bromley](https://www.facebook.com/healthwatch.bromley)

 [@healthwatchbromley](https://www.instagram.com/healthwatchbromley)



**Committed
to quality**

Healthwatch was established in 2013 in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Within this legislation [Arrangements to be made by relevant bodies in respect of local Healthwatch Organisations Directions 2013] Healthwatch has a right to a reply within 20 working days to Reports and Recommendations submitted by Local Healthwatch to a service provider.

Report & Recommendation Response Form

Report sent to	Director of Education Children, Education and Families, London Borough of Bromley
Date sent	02 July 2025
Report title	Access to and use of health and social care services by young carers in Bromley
Date of response provided	6 August 2025
Please outline your general response to the report including <u>what you are currently doing to address</u> some of the issues identified.	<p>Young Carers is an identified priority area for the Education department and within the wider local safeguarding partnership, of which Education and schools are key partners. Work to date has been informed primarily by the School Health Education Unit (SHEU) survey, undertaken annually across a wide range of school pupils. This has historically focused on Year 10 secondary pupils, but has been extended in the past round to primary schools, enabling Year 5/Year 6 pupils' views to be captured. The SHEU survey has identified that the cohort of young carers self-report concerns about their access to a support network and a fear of isolation. Comparative analysis exemplifies that young carers are a vulnerable group, who self-report poorer outcomes on the majority of wellbeing and safety measures covered by the survey, which include having a trusted adult to speak to, fear from harm and bullying and happiness.</p> <p>This evidence base led to the prioritisation of the cohort and specific actions being taken forward by the service and partnership. These actions include a specific focus at the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leads Network, with Bromley Well Young Carers attending to provide presentations and signpost to resources and support, plus regular discussions with senior school leaders about how young carers were identified and supported within schools and settings. Secondary schools in particular acknowledged that not all young carers were being identified and provided training and guidance to staff to improve this, with a view to being able to support young carers and for some schools to take into consideration these young</p>

	<p>people's specific circumstances in respect of behaviour and attendance policies.</p> <p>Young Carers will continue to be a priority area for education and the partnership, until we are satisfied that outcomes for this cohort of young people are at least equitable with their peers.</p>
Recommendation 1	<p>Improve Access to Mental Health and Emotional Support - this has been an identified priority following SHEU survey data on adverse outcomes for this cohort. We will consider and seek to further improve the support to young carers through the MHST teams led by Bromley Y and will seek to involve the young carer voice into this service design.</p>
Recommendation 2	<p>Introduce flexible education support - this action is already in train, through the discussions that are taking place with school leaders about the identified of young carers and a flexible approach to supporting them, taking into consideration their individual circumstances. Schools are encouraged to signpost to services and make appropriate referrals and this will be further reinforced over the year ahead.</p>
Recommendation 3	<p>Establish Clear Identification Pathways - the education department will work with partner agencies to take these recommendations forward.</p>
Recommendation 4	<p>Increase Access to Breaks and Personal Time - the department will review the Holiday Activities and Food offer for the year ahead to specifically consider young carers, working with partners to improve the offer.</p>
Recommendation 5	<p>Provide Safety Planning and Crisis Support - please see response from Children's Social Care</p>
Recommendation 6	<p>Create Opportunities for Social Connection and Inclusion - the LA has facilitated discussions between schools and community organisations through the MHW Leads Network and this will be repeated for the year ahead.</p>
Recommendation 7	<p>Recognise and Celebrate the Role of Young Carers - the department will consider this with our partner agencies, including seeking to increase the representation of young carers in our various engagement groups.</p>
School recommendations	<p>The majority (96%) of Bromley schools are academies and operate outside of LA control. Nevertheless, we work closely with all school leaders and receive excellent engagement. We will share the recommendations with school leaders and discuss these at strategic Headteacher forums planned early for the new academic year.</p>
Signed	By email
Name	Jared Nehra
Position	Director of Education

Dear (Healthwatch Bromley Committee Member)

Tue 01/07/2025

Thank you for your email of 9 June asking, *'is there any guidance, please, on how schools, including academies and independent schools, should best manage the needs of Young Carers'*.

Since April 2015, every young carer is entitled by law to an assessment to ensure they get the support they need. The government has published information on how and where young carers can get help and support, encouraging them to speak to someone they trust at their school or college, like a teacher or school nurse, about their caring responsibilities and how this might affect them. <https://www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/support-and-benefits-for-carers/help-for-young-carers/>.

Schools should evaluate how they are identifying and addressing the needs of young carers. As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf, Designated Safeguarding Leads are required to undergo training to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary for their role, including an understanding of and sensitivity to the needs of young carers. Additionally, schools should encourage young carers to speak to trusted individuals, such as teachers or school nurses, about their caregiving responsibilities and how these might impact them.

Whilst the Department for Education doesn't publish guidance specifically aimed to help schools manage the needs of young carers, charities such as Carers Trust, the Children's Society and MYTIME produce a range of resources on this subject that you might find helpful. You can access these resources via their respective websites.

I hope you found this reply useful.

Yours sincerely

Ministerial and Public Communications Division

Web: <https://www.education.gov.uk>

X (formerly Twitter): <https://www.x.com/educationgovuk>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/educationgovuk>



Department
for Education

We are the department for **opportunity**

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Within this legislation [Arrangements to be made by relevant bodies in respect of local Healthwatch Organisations Directions 2013] Healthwatch has a right to a reply within 20 working days to Reports and Recommendations submitted by Local Healthwatch to a service provider.

Report & Recommendation Response Form

Report sent to	Community Services Manager Bromley Mencap	
Date sent	02 July 2025	
Report title	Access to and use of health and social care services by young carers in Bromley	
Date of response provided	26.7.2025	
Please outline your general response to the report including <u>what you are currently doing to address</u> some of the issues identified.	All recommendation made on the report are for Health and Social Care Services, London Borough of Bromley and Schools. No direct recommendations for Bromley Well Young Carers but we have identified some of the recommendations that BWYC will support.	
Recommendation 1	Improve Access to Mental Health and Emotional Support N/A Recommendation for Health and Social Care Services	
Recommendation 2	Introduce Flexible Educational Support N/A Recommendation for Health and Social Care Services	
Recommendation 3	Establish Clear Identification Pathways N/A Recommendation for Health and Social Care Services	
Recommendation 4	Increase Access to Breaks and Personal Time N/A Recommendation for Health and Social Care Services	
Recommendation 5	Provide Safety Planning and Crisis Support N/A Recommendation for Health and Social Care Services	
Recommendation 6	Create Opportunities for Social Connection and Inclusion Display information about young carer services in clinics and GP surgeries - supported by BWYC Signpost families to local community and social events relevant to young carers - supported by BWYC, using social media and the Young Carers App	

	Recommendation for Health and Social Care Services	
Recommendation 6	<p>Recognise and Celebrate the Role of Young Carers</p> <p>Acknowledge the contributions of young carers during clinical interactions - BWYC to support hosting celebration events to acknowledge young carers.</p> <p>Promote positive conversations, validating their role while identifying needs and support Recommendation for Health and Social Care Services - BWYC to support at initial assessment visit.</p>	
Recommendation 1	<p>Improve Access to Mental Health and Emotional Support</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for London Borough of Bromley</p>	
Recommendation 2	<p>Introduce Flexible Educational Support</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for London Borough of Bromley</p>	
Recommendation 3	<p>Establish Clear Identification Pathways</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for London Borough of Bromley</p>	
Recommendation 4	<p>Increase Access to Breaks and Personal Time</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for London Borough of Bromley</p>	
Recommendation 5	<p>Provide Safety Planning and Crisis Support</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for London Borough of Bromley</p>	
Recommendation 6	<p>Create Opportunities for Social Connection and Inclusion</p> <p>Recommendations for London Borough of Bromley - BWYC to support</p>	
Recommendation 7	<p>Recognise and Celebrate the Role of Young Carers</p> <p>BWYC to support with celebration events.</p>	
Recommendation 1	<p>Improve Access to Mental Health and Emotional Support</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for schools</p>	
Recommendation 2	<p>Introduce Flexible Educational Support</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for schools</p>	
Recommendation 3	<p>Establish Clear Identification Pathways</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for schools</p>	
Recommendation 4	<p>Increase Access to Breaks and Personal Time</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for schools</p>	
Recommendation 5	<p>Provide Safety Planning and Crisis Support</p> <p>N/A Recommendations for schools</p>	
Recommendation 6	<p>Create Opportunities for Social Connection and Inclusion</p> <p>Recommendations for schools - BWYC to support with outreach and workshops.</p>	
Recommendation 7	<p>Recognise and Celebrate the Role of Young Carers</p> <p>Recommendations for schools - BWYC to support with celebration events.</p>	
Signed	Sharon Morgan	
Name	Sharon Morgan	

Position

Community Services Manager Bromley Mencap

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Report & Recommendation Response Form

Report sent to	02 July 2025
Date sent	Director of Children's Services, London Borough of Bromley
Report title	Access to and use of health and social care services by young carers in Bromley

Date of response provided	30 th July 2025
Please outline your general response to the report including <u>what you are currently doing to address</u> some of the issues identified.	<p>We have recently reviewed how we co-ordinate our intel on this group of children. Certainly, we promote the awareness in social work assessments that all children in families are considered for all their individual needs and believe we do this well. We commission Bromley Y as a tier 2 support service for children with mental health (MH) needs, they are also run MH support services in schools for children focussing upon early intervention. Children that are young carers are able to access short break provisions which can be packaged in several formats, these are generally specific to families where a child has disabled and the short break is supported by the local authority (LA) for the carers, including young carers.</p> <p>Certainly, increasing funding would be advantageous for this cohort of children and is something as senior leaders we will discuss. You will be aware of budget concerns that all councils are facing currently , but also equally aware of the government social reform plans in enabling earlier support to families through the Families First model, meaning we will be combining our current early help offer with our work with children in need, making it a single multidisciplinary offer that is seamless and helps families earlier.</p> <p>Our existing Early Help offer, provides a wide range of parenting support programmes and these will continue and there will be no changes to our commitment to safeguarding all children.</p> <p>To strengthen our focus upon young carers we have extended the role of one our staff members, who will shortly be</p>

	commencing on becoming our Young Carers liaison lead. Meaning she will be in contact with yourself and other agencies and act as the conduit between social care services and voluntary /private sector agencies that offer support to young carers.
--	--

Signed	
Name	David Dare
Position	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care, Safeguarding & Care Planning Services

Healthwatch was established in 2013 in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Within this legislation [Arrangements to be made by relevant bodies in respect of local Healthwatch Organisations Directions 2013] Healthwatch has a right to a reply within 20 working days to Reports and Recommendations submitted by Local Healthwatch to a service provider.

Report & Recommendation Response Form

Report sent to	02 July 2025
Date sent	Integrated Strategic Commissioner, London Borough of Bromley
Report title	Access to and use of health and social care services by young carers in Bromley

Date of response provided	09/07/2025
Please outline your general response to the report including <u>what you are currently doing to address</u> some of the issues identified.	Report findings seem to be consistent with broad discussions in carers meetings and through service contract meeting reviews. The Bromley Carers Plan includes specific activities to address some of these issues as detailed below

<p>Recommendation 2 Introduce Flexible Educational Support</p> <p>Encourage education providers to embed young carer support in their safeguarding and inclusion strategies.</p> <p>Monitor how schools are meeting the needs of young carers through the local offer or SEND framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work being done with 0-19 project in terms of schools embedding young carers support into operational provision through identification of and referral to appropriate services.
<p>Recommendation 3 Establish clear identification pathways</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bromley Carers plan includes a priority to support young carers and young adult carers (priority 5) We will use the recent change made to the annual schools' census to better identify and record young carers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LBB is undertaking review of data held on young carers to develop more targeted support for families and carers • Public Health through 0-19 service and work with schools looking at identifying and working with young carers in schools • LBB working to ensure that where personal assessments of adults take place, any young carers in the household are identified
Recommendation 4 Increase access to breaks and personal time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of short breaks strategy (as part of LD and short breaks strategy) • Respite care being remodelled through co-production with stakeholders to enable access to all carers
Recommendation 6 Create Opportunities for Social Connection and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LBB commissions Bromley Well which has developed the young carers app which connects young carers. • LBB also commissions Community Links Bromley which provides a range of resources for young carers-Search Results - Community Links Bromley • BromleyWell also support young carers with grant applications to promote social connection • LBBs loneliness strategy includes a commitment to increase social connections
Signed	
Name	Ola Akinlade
Position	Integrated Strategic Commissioner