

6. CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

6.18 Young Carers

This chapter covers the provision of services for Young Carers. The Young Carers service is provided by Carers Bucks as part of a joint contract with Adults. A Young Carer is defined as a child or young person under the age of 18 years who is providing regular ongoing care and/or emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances. The service provided to them under the contract is to improve their social connections, provide group activities and 1:1 support where needed.

6.18.1 Importance

There is evidence pointing to an adverse impact on the health, educational attainment, future employment opportunities and social and leisure activities of young carers. This arises partly out of the demands on their time created by providing care and emotional and physical stress.

Many young carers may not even consider themselves to be Carers. They see caring as an extension of their role as children, relatives and friends of the person they look after. Often they are proud and independent, and some may even feel that there is a stigma about asking for help. Many have no expectation or awareness of help being available or of their role being recognised.

6.18.2 Information about Young Carers

The 2011 Census counted 166,363 young unpaid carers (5 to 17 years old) in England. Of those, 24,974 were identified as living in the South-East with a slight majority of those being female. From the census and additional information in a 2010 BBC Survey, it is estimated there are approximately 2,000 young carers currently residing in Buckinghamshire which if accurate would equate to around 8% of carers in the South East and around 1% nationally.

Further breakdown of the census data shows that nationally and within the South-East, the vast majority of Young Carers (>90%) provide between one and 19 hours per week of unpaid care. Of those working providing more than 50 hours per week, there is evidence that they are a significantly greater risk of being in poor general health.

Currently, Carers Bucks provides a service to 648 young carers with ongoing efforts to identify and provide a service to even more through publicity campaigns in schools, GP surgeries and among social workers and the CAHMS service. The aim is to ultimately identify and provide a service to as many Young Carers within Buckinghamshire as possible.

6.18.3 Trends

According to comparison of the 2001 and 2011 censuses, there was an increase in the numbers of young people carrying out unpaid care work across all regions of England but the largest increase was recorded in the South-East at 7,282 additional young carers identified. This can be partly attributed to the population growth in the South-East being above the national average but also that between 2001 and 2011, greater awareness of the issue of unpaid care work had materialised.

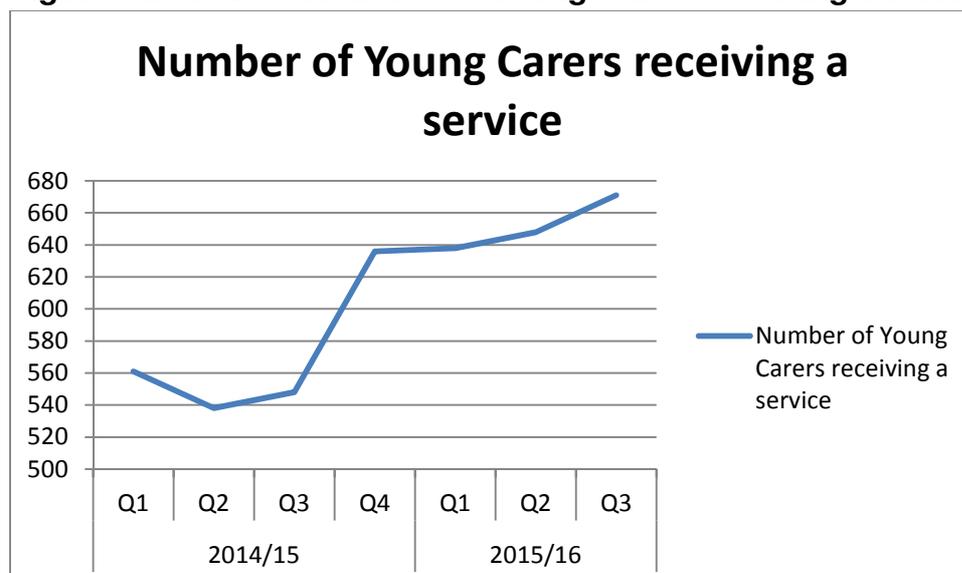
Over the lifetime of the contract with Carers Bucks to provide services for Young Carers in Buckinghamshire, the following total numbers of Young Carers receiving a service have been reported:

Table 1 Total number of Young Carers receiving a service

2014/15				2015/16		
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
561	538	548	636	638	648	671

It is clear therefore that an increasing number of Young Carers are being identified and are receiving a service. The contract requires the provider to work actively to identify and assess Young Carers. Additionally, since 1 April 2015, there has been a statutory responsibility under Section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to conduct Young Carer's Needs Assessments which is aimed at increasing service provision for Young Carers.

Figure 1 Increase in number of Young Carers receiving a service



6.18.4 Inequalities

As is the case nationally, the evidence produced by the census and the 2010 BBC study shows that the majority of Young Carers are female. Of the most recent equalities data available for the Young Carers who currently receive a service from Carers Bucks in Quarter 2 of 2015/16, it was reported that 45 Young Carers were female and 29 Male. 48 were recorded as White British with 17 as British Asian, 8 as mixed heritage and one as Black British. While it is apparent that the ethnicity of all service users has not been captured by Carers Bucks, it appears that the ethnicity of those who have been surveyed are broadly representative of the population of Buckinghamshire as a whole.

In terms of location, it appears that the majority of Young Carers also reside in Buckinghamshire's largest centres of population: High Wycombe and Aylesbury. A full breakdown of areas of residence is below.

Table 2 Breakdown of area of residence of Young Carers

Aylesbury	39
High Wycombe	25
Buckingham	4
Marlow	1
Princes Risborough	1
Chiltern	2
Wing/Wendover	0
South Bucks	2
Out of County	0

The following table shows a break-down of service users by ethnicity and gender

Table 3 Breakdown of service users by ethnicity and gender

White British	Female 223 Male 273
White Irish	Male 1
White other	Male 5 Female 9
Mixed Heritage W/B	Male 13 Female 21
Mixed Heritage W/Asian	Male 4 Female 7
Asian British Indian	Male 2 Female 3
Asian British Pakistan	Male 14 Female 12
Asian British Asian	Male 17 Female 21
Black / Black British Caribbean	Male 8 Female 9
Chinese other	Male 2 Female 4

6.18.5 Demand and Horizon Scanning

It is expected that the demand for the service will continue as it is thought only around 30% of Young Carers in Buckinghamshire have been identified and a condition of contract is that Carers Bucks must endeavour to identify and provide a service for as many Young Carers as possible. The demand will therefore be continual and unrelenting for the foreseeable future.

6.18.6 Public views

Carers Bucks regularly seek feedback from Young Carers and Parents and use this feedback to shape the service. Below are some examples of feedback from Young People about the service. Service users have consistently reported feeling less isolated and more engaged with their peers and increased confidence as a result of using the service.