



**WIRRAL
INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE**

JSNA: Young Carers

**Wirral Intelligence
Service**

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JSNA: Young Carers

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Background to JSNA – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

What is a JSNA?

A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, better known as a JSNA, is intended to be a systematic review of the health and wellbeing needs of the local population, informing local priorities, policies and strategies that in turn informs local commissioning priorities that will improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities throughout the Borough.

Who is involved?

Information from Council, NHS and other partners is collected and collated to inform the JSNA and this reflects the important role that all organisations and sectors have (statutory, voluntary, community and faith) in improving the health and wellbeing of Wirral's residents.

About this document

This JSNA section looks to contain the most relevant information on the topic and provides an overview of those related key aspects

How can you help?

If you have ideas or any suggestions about these issues or topics then please email us at wirralintelligenceservice@wirral.gov.uk or go to <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/>

Version Number	Date	Authors
1.0	January 2018	Elaina Quesada, Wirral Council, Aileen Alexander Barnardos John Highton, Wirral Intelligence Service
2.0	November 2019	Paula Hume, Barnardos John Highton, Wirral Intelligence Service, Wirral Council

Key findings

- Census 2011 suggests that there are 2,840 Wirral young people aged between 0 – 24 providing some form of unpaid care.
- There was an increase from 2,539 self-reported Wirral young carers in 2001 to 2,840 in 2011.
- At Census 2011 Wirral had 748 self-reported young carers aged 0 – 15 years and 2,092 between 16-24 years.
- Other research suggests that we can estimate that between 2,061 and 2,375 secondary-age Wirral school children could have additional carer responsibilities.
- Young Wirral Carers (2011 Census) are 45% Male and 55% Female, with just over 73% under 15 and over 26% aged 15-24 years with the vast majority providing 1 – 19 hours (72.4%) then 20-49 hours care (15.3%) and 50+ hours of care per week (12.3%).
- From 2001 to 2011 Census the percentage of Wirral Young Carers has increased by age as 2% (0-15 years), 14% (16-24 years) but this is below North West (11% for 0-15 and 19% for 16-24) and England (18% for 0-15 and 23% for 16-24).
- The increase between Census 2001 and Census 2011 is 2% for 0-15 year old young carers and 14% those carers aged 16-24 and 11% overall.
- Between 2001 and 2011 Census:
 - Male young carers fell by less than 1%
 - 0-15 year old young carers decreased by 2.5% with 16-24 year olds increasing to 73.7%.
 - More young carers are providing more unpaid care hours with 20-49 and 50+ hours increasing by over 2% between Census 2001 and 2011.
- Young carers self-reported health from both 2001 and 2011 Census is worse than people who have no recorded caring responsibilities.
- For 2018/19 service data then almost 27% of Young Carers who are accessing Barnardos support are aged 13 or 14 (21 of 77 young people).
- Both the 2001 and 2011 Census suggest that more Young Carers live and provide care in Wirral wards experiencing the highest levels of deprivation.
- Conditions of Cared for Adults (2017/18 and 2018/19 data)
 - Almost 33% of young carers were caring for adults with a diagnosed mental health illness.
 - Almost 22% children were caring for adults with a Physical/illness disability
 - 10% children were caring for adults have a Neurological Condition (e.g. MS Brain Tumour, Stroke, Dementia).
 - Less than 5% were caring for adults with a terminal illness.
- Of the 168 carers accessing Barnardos Young Carer service for 2017/18 and 2018/19 the key headlines in terms of household composition are:
 - 58% of young carers live in lone parent households.
 - 79% of young carers care for one adult family member.
 - Almost 80% of Young Carers being supported where from Birkenhead and Wallasey.

Wirral JSNA: Children, Young People and Families: Young Carers

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What do we know?

For the purposes of this JSNA section we will use definition provided in the [Children and Families Act \(2014\)](#).

A Young Carer is defined in law as a ‘*person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care to another person*’. This includes ‘providing practical or emotional support’ which is ‘not under or by virtue of a contract or of voluntary work’....

More broadly, a carer is‘A person who provides support or who looks after a family member, partner or friend and who needs help because of their age, physical or mental illness or disability’ ([Care Act 2014](#)).

Together, both Acts provide a clear framework for Local Authorities to take a whole family approach to:

- Assessing and supporting adults and young carers
- Delivering support in coordinated whole family way
- Children and young people at risk of undertaking inappropriate caring roles are identified and protected
- Amendment in the [Children Act 1989](#) and duty to assess young carers on appearance of need

Introduction

According to the [2011 Census](#) there were 748 young people aged 0-15 identified themselves as an unpaid carer, as did a further 2,092 young carers/young adult carers aged between 16-24. Of these, 350 reported that they were delivering 50 or more hours of unpaid care per week.

However, these figures could potentially be an underrepresentation of numbers and subsequent need. Many young carers tend to come from hidden and marginalised groups, including children caring for family members with mental illness and parental substance dependency. Also, according to Social Care Institute of Excellence (2005) there could be a lack of awareness among many professional groups of young carers’ needs and concerns and, moreover, young carers’ own lack of awareness of their entitlements, and their reluctance to seek formal help. This group of young carers is unlikely to have been captured in the 2011 census data and so possible needs are being missed (ONS, 2013).

Barnardos (2006) suggested that there was a growing evidence-base which suggested caring has a significant impact on many young people, especially on their educational outcomes and employment opportunities.

Local Government Association analysis (2014) of the Children & Families Act 2014 points to the need for local authorities to assess whether young carers within their area have support needs and, if so, what those needs are. The right to an assessment of need for support extends to all young carers under the age of 18, regardless of whom they care for, what type of care they provide and how often they provide it. Local authorities must also take reasonable steps to identify the extent of young carers within their area who have needs for support.

With regard to the Care Act 2014, Clause 10 'Carers Assessment' and Clause 12 'Family Assessment' have important implications for local authorities and relevance to young and young adult carers.

Carers Trust (2014) suggests that carers will, for the first time, have the same rights to an assessment on the appearance of needs as their cared for. For carers, this means that the previous requirement to provide 'substantial' and 'regular' care will be removed. The whole family will also be entitled to an assessment. Assessments will need to consider what else (apart from the provision of support) would help to meet desired outcomes. This needs careful consideration so that local authorities do not unduly rely on family (including young and young adult carers) and friends to provide care and support.

This brief overview of the legislative framework relevant to young and young adult carers highlights why the local identification and support for this population is a significant issue. Wirral partners should not expect children to be relied upon to undertake caring which negatively affects their own development, well-being, education and employment opportunities - not only in the here and now but, as The Children's Society (2013) suggests, so much so that it also casts a shadow forward and affects their futures and prospects in later life.

Research

Still Hidden still ignored

This report [*Still Hidden, Still Ignored Who cares for young carers?* \(Barnardos 2017\)](#) suggests that as adult social care is considered to become more squeezed and thresholds for support are seen to be set higher, then more and more young people will be providing care in the home to their relatives (predominantly parents) than previously. These relatives may have a physical disability; a long-term illness; emotional and mental health problems; or drug/alcohol dependencies or other support needs.

The care the young carers provide ranges from administering medicines, washing and bathing, cooking, financial management and emotional support. It also often incorporates taking care of siblings.

The impact the responsibility of this care can have on a young person is profound and long-lasting, and outcomes for these children are significantly lower than their counterparts.

Barnardos set out to conduct research with their service practitioners, with teachers and young carers themselves, with the results forming the basis of the report. The policy and service recommendations they suggest can be seen in Appendix One of their report. They identify an overriding need for partners across organisations and settings to embed the responsibility for the effective identification and access to support for young carers needs.

This would be helped with clear pathways for practitioners both working with adults and children to ensure that these children and young people do not continue to struggle with caring responsibilities alone. A full list of recommendations for change can be found in here.

Barnardo's approach to this research was to partner with YouGov to undertake a survey of over 800 teachers in September and October 2017 to give a fuller picture of the reality for young carer support in schools. Barnardo's also undertook interviews and in-depth surveys from over forty Barnardo's Young Carer Practitioners who worked across their twenty Young Carer Services in England. Barnardos directly surveyed seventy-nine (79) young carers who have been using Barnardo's services in England aged between 7 and 24 years old.

The surveys covered a range of issues from support needs, school support, legislation change and identification and provided both qualitative data and quantitative evidence. In addition, Barnardo's held focus groups with young carers aged between 9 and 25 years in Preston, Newcastle and Liverpool and interviewed practitioners and service managers in these areas.

The key findings were:

Teachers and Education/School leaders

- 75% of educators and a staggering 81 % of head/ deputy head teachers think more should be done within UK schools to support young carers.
- 34% of all teaching professionals and 48% of head/ deputy head teachers think there are young carers at their school who are not sufficiently supported.
- Only 13% of teachers think schools are doing the right amount for young carers.
- 45% of secondary school teachers said they did not feel confident they would recognise a young carer and over a third (36%) said they did not feel confident about how to refer young carers for external support.
- More than 9 in 10 of all teachers felt that caring responsibilities could result in young carers being late or absent from school and difficult for young carers to keep up with work.

Young Carers

- Two thirds of the young carers stated that they began caring whilst they were still in primary school and 1 in 8 had started caring at the age of 5.
- 22% of young carers were identified and referred by a parent, 15% by a teacher, 15% by a social worker and only 5% by a GP.
- 45% of the young carers support their siblings and over 80% of them are caring for their mum.
- 90% of young carers were caring for someone with a physical disability, a mental health issue or a long-term health issue.
- Over 50% of young carers said that their emotional health and wellbeing had been impacted by their caring role.
- 56% said that being a young carer made them feel anxious and worried

Practitioners

- 100% of those surveyed told us
 - that some of the young carers they worked with had suffered from anxiety with nearly 15% saying this affected all of their young carers.
 - had worked with young carers who had depression and felt isolated.
 - had received referrals from young carers under the age of 8.
 - that young carers experience difficulties balancing their caring and schoolwork.
- 95% cited that schools can help with the identification of young carers and the engagement with their families.

[Access Still Hidden, Still Ignored Who cares for young carers? \(Barnardos 2017\) report here](#)

Hidden from View

A key and recent research submission to this important area of need is the Children's Society's report, *'Hidden from View: the experience of young carers in England'* (2013). This study drew on government commissioned data on over 15,000 pupils aged 13 and 14. It examines how many of these children had caring responsibilities, the socio-economic characteristics of their families, young carers' educational attainment, and their chances of being in training or paid work. The size of the sample should give local service commissioners and policy makers' confidence in the findings, many of which confirm earlier research.

The Hidden from View report is based on new evidence on young carers from the Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England (LSYPE). The LSYPE was commissioned by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) as a major innovative panel study of young people. It began in 2004, with over 15,000 young people aged 13 and 14 completing questionnaires and finished in 2010 with over 9000 young people in the original cohort still completing questionnaires.

The LSYPE therefore provides a rich source of information on young people's lives and their journeys through compulsory education and into adulthood. Of the 15,427 young people who completed the first wave, 689 (4.5%) said yes to the question:

'Some people your age may have to look after other people.

This could be a brother or sister, a relative or someone else who is disabled or sick. Is there anyone like this who lives here with you that you have to look after on a regular basis?'

The LSYPE study provides rich data around young carers' circumstances, lives and outcomes. The Hidden from View report presents analysis of the data specific to young carers, publicly for the first time.

The main findings were that:

- One in 12 young carers is caring for more than 15 hours per week and around 1 in 20 miss school because of their caring responsibilities
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to be from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, and plus twice as likely to not speak English as first language
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to have a special educational need or a disability and families with young carers earn around £5,000 less a year than families without a young carer
- There is no strong evidence that young carers are more likely than their peers to come into contact with support agencies, despite government recognition that this needs to happen
- Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers e.g. the difference between nine B's and nine C's
- Young carers are more likely than the national average to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) between the ages of 16 and 19
- Children with a parent who has a mental health problem are known to be 3 times more likely to suffer from low levels of mental and emotional health and this group therefore emerges as a particularly vulnerable cohort. They are also the least likely group to be offered an assessment

Circumstances Affecting Young Carers' Daily Lives

The Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England (LSYPE) data is useful in helping to understand the circumstances affecting the daily lives of young carers. The data has been used to look at household economic factors, parental characteristics, family structure, and young carers' contact with different agencies. **Figure 1** below shows the factors that have a significant and strong association with being a young carer, in comparison with their peers:

Figure 1: Significant and Strong Associations (taken from Hidden from View)

Factor	Relationship
Family income	The median family income for families including a young carer was £5000 less than families without a young carer
Adults in the household in work	Young carers are over four times more likely to live in a household where no adults are in work
Maternal education levels	Young carers are 1.6 times more likely to have a mother who has no educational qualifications
Adults with a limiting disability	Young carers are over twice as likely to live in households where at least one adult has a limiting disability
Number of children in the family	Young carers are 1.6 times as likely to live in households where there are three or more other children living

Source: [Hidden from View](#)

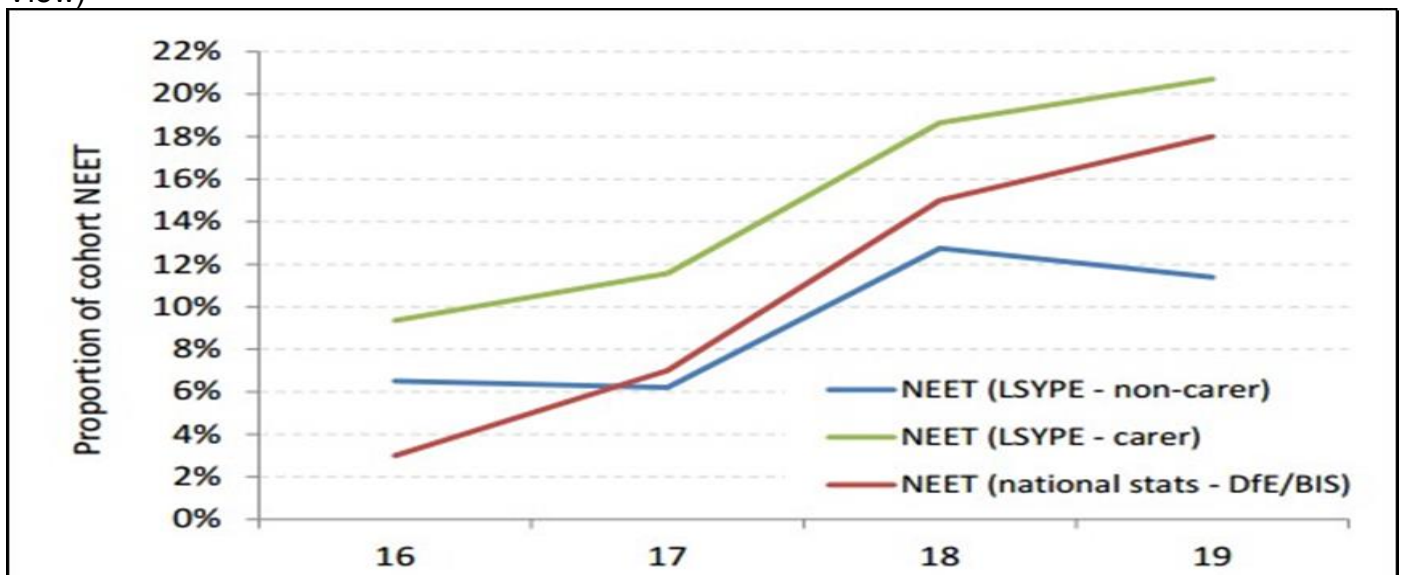
Effect on Young Carers' Education and Employment Outcomes

Missing school because of caring duties, according to Dearden and Becker (2000), is likely to affect longer term education and employment outcomes. Research has also found that young carers may not reach their educational potential due to the disadvantages they face. This underachievement subsequently affects their teenage and young adult lives, restricting their opportunities and reducing the likelihood of them being students, engaging in further education (Yeandle and Buckner, 2007), training or employment (Frank, Tatum and Tucker, 1999).

Analysis of the LSYPE data adds weight to these findings. The average total GCSE points score for a young person who had caring responsibilities in year 9 was 333, compared to 386 for young people who were not young carers in year 9. This is a difference of 53 points, equivalent to nine GCSE grades overall, or the difference between nine B's and nine C's¹⁶.

The LSYPE data also shows a relationship, although not as strong, between caring in year 9 and being NEET between 16 and 19 years old. **Figure 2** below shows the difference in NEET profiles between a group of young carers and a group of young people without caring responsibilities at those ages. There is a one in three chance that a young carer in year 9 will become NEET between the ages of 16 and 19, compared to a one in four chance for those without caring responsibilities. **Figure 2** also shows that the NEET profile for young carers is higher than the national profile.

Figure 2: NEET Profiles for Different Groups within the LSYPE Cohort (taken from Hidden from View)



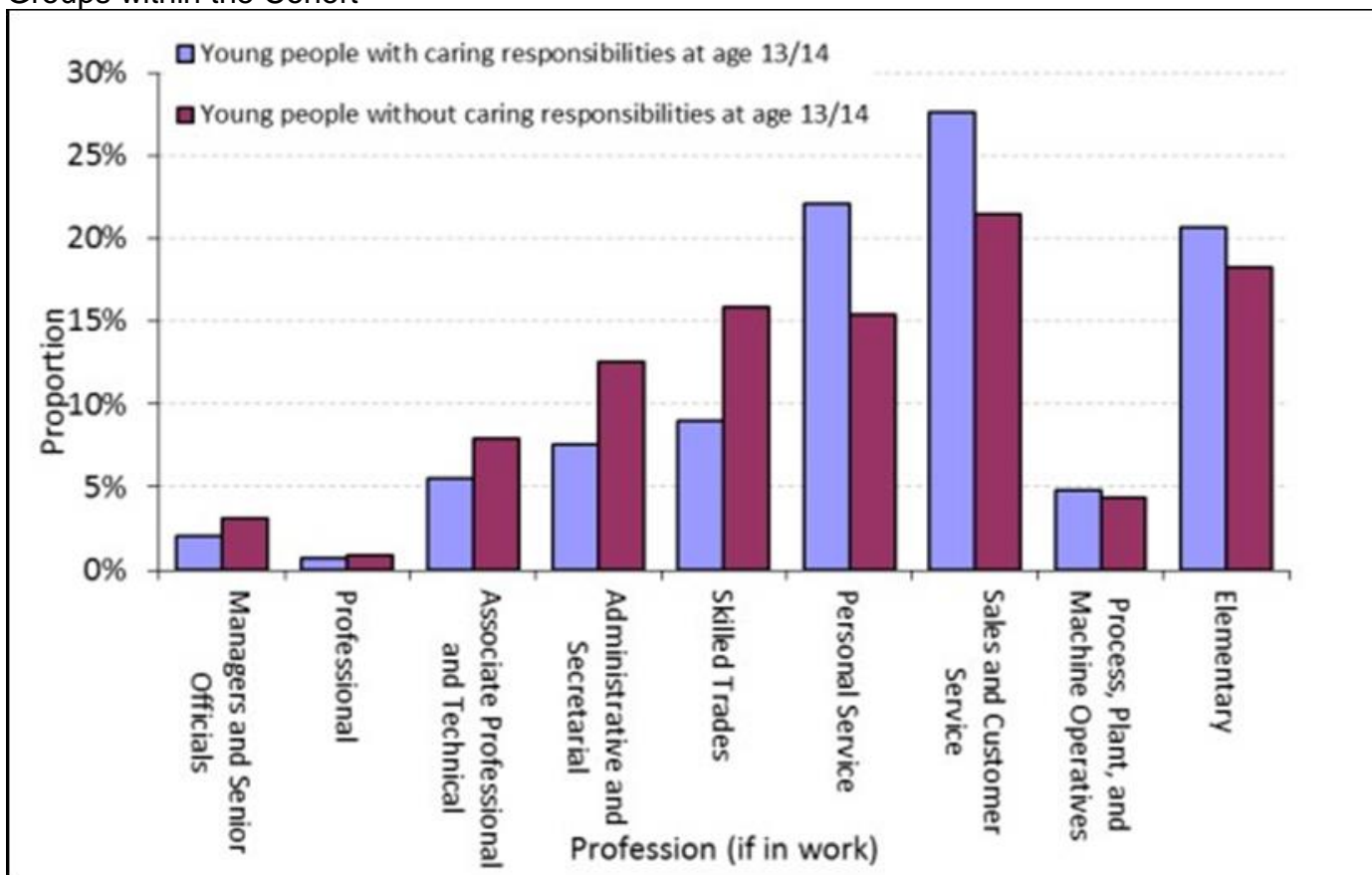
Source: [Hidden from View](#)

Effect on Early Employment

The LSYPE data also shows that young carers in work at age 20/21 are more likely to be in lower skilled occupations, although again this is not as strong as the GCSE.

Figure 3 below shows that young carers are more likely to be in professions such as personal service, sales or customer service than their peers, and less likely to be in managerial, associate or skilled trade roles. Dearden and Becker (2000) point to young carers sometimes being influenced by the skills gained through their experiences, for example, applying for work in the 'caring professions'.

Figure 3: Occupations for Young People Who Were in Employment at Age 20/21 for Different Groups within the Cohort



Source: [Longitudinal Study of Young People in England \(LYPSE\)](#)

The LYSPE data demonstrates a significant association between young people caring in their mid-teens and lower educational attainment by the age of 16.

There is also a clear association between being a young carer and having lower job prospects and educational opportunities between 16 and 19, and between being a young carer and the likelihood of being in lower skilled occupations at age 20/21. This evidence provides a strong rationale for tackling the problem of young people taking on a caring role during their teenage years.

Young Adult Carers at School

Research in 2013 by Dr. Joe Sempik and Professor Saul Becker was based upon work commissioned by the Carers Trust and supported by the University of Nottingham.

Their research set out to investigate the experiences and aspirations of young adult carers in relation to school, further and higher education, and work. A total of 362 people viewed the survey from which the responses of 295 young adult carers aged 14–25 were then analysed.

The first report explored the experiences and perceptions of school by young adult carers who were still at school (Sempik and Becker, 2013a).

A summary of the key findings from this research is outlined below:

- A survey of young carers (average age 15.5 years) who were still at school shows that two thirds were providing a high or very high level of care
- Almost a third (29%) reported that their own physical health was 'just OK', and 38% reported having a mental health problem
- Only half had received additional support from a member of staff at school. 42% said there was not a particular person at school who recognised them as a carer and helped them
- Less than half (46%) thought they had received good careers advice and only 19% of the total sample thought that it took their caring role into account
- The majority of young adult carers (78%) considered they were doing well at school but less than half (48%) actually said they enjoyed school
- The majority (84%) said they intended to go to university or college. However, 24% thought they could not afford to go, and 41% were 'unsure' whether they could afford it
- Most young people (67%) informed school staff that they were a carer but the majority of those who did not felt that 'there was no point' in telling anyone
- A quarter of those asked (26%) were bullied at school because of their caring role
- Few (15%) had received a formal review or assessment of their needs, and only half felt that their family received good support and services
- The majority of respondents who attended a young carers project or a young adult carers project (65%) felt that it had improved their confidence, and 54% thought that they had more friends as a result. Also 39% felt they had performed better at school because of the project

Based on these findings, [the report makes a number of recommendations](#).

Young Carers at College and University

Young adult carers are often an overlooked group with limited services that meet their needs and little awareness among professionals and the wider public about the challenges they face.

'*Young Carers at College and University*' was the second report published by Sempik and Becker (2013b). In this second report, the experiences and perceptions of 101 young adult carers who are in further and higher education were explored. A summary of the key findings from this research is included below:

- The 101 young adult carers who were in further or higher education showed that on average they provided a 'very high' level of care
- 39% rated their physical health as either 'Just OK' or 'Poor'; and 45% reported having mental health problems
- Despite most respondents (79%) enjoying college or university, over half of them (56%) were experiencing difficulties because of their caring role
- 16% were concerned that they might have to drop out of college or university.
- Those who reported that they found college or university difficult had significantly higher caring responsibilities
- 75% of respondents informed college or university staff of their caring role. Despite this, 45% said there was no one who recognised them as a carer and helped them

- Of those who did not inform college or university staff, the main reason for not doing so was that there was 'no point'
- The majority of respondents (62%) had not had a formal assessment by a social worker or other health/social care professional. Almost a third (30%) believed they had not received good services as a young carer or adequate support for their families (31%)
- 56% of respondents received a bursary to help with their studies, including 12 of the 17 at university. Only 4.6% of respondents (4 of 87) received Carer's Allowance, and 21% (13 of 62) were in receipt of some other form of benefit
- 60 of the respondents were currently attending a young carers' or young adult carers' service. Of these, almost all (95%) felt that their confidence had improved as a result and that they had more friends (87%)

Based on these findings, [the report makes a number of recommendations.](#)

Young Adult Carers and Employment

Young adult carers are often an overlooked group with limited services to meet their needs. There is also little awareness among professionals and the wider public about the challenges they face. In the series by Sempik and Becker (2013c), the third report, '*Young Adult Carers and Employment*', explores the experiences and perceptions of carers who are in employment, or not in employment, education or training (NEET) (n=77). The key findings from this research are:

- A survey of 77 young adult carers who had left school and were either in work, or NEET showed that, on average, they provided a 'very high' level of care. 27 of the young adult carers (39.1%) who responded did not think that their families were receiving good support and services
- 45% reported that their own physical health was 'Just OK' or 'Poor', and over half (51%) reported having a mental health problem
- Of the 77 respondents, almost half (49.6%) were unemployed. This represents 21% of the total young adult carers in the wider survey who were no longer at school (n=183)
- The most frequently reported highest qualification held by the respondents was GCSEs at grade D–G (28%). Of those respondents no longer in education, only a small percentage (8%) had no qualifications. Qualifications of the rest ranged from GCSEs (49%) through to degrees (12%)
- Of the 37 respondents who answered the question, over half (54%) felt that they would have got better grades at school if it was not for their caring role
- 87% (of 37 respondents) felt that they had not received good career advice at school and that the advice did not consider their caring role
- Of the 38 respondents who had been to college or university, 11 (29%) had dropped out because of their caring role which is four times greater than the national average for degree courses
- Of the 39 respondents who were in work, 17 (44%) had chosen the job because it was not far to travel and they could continue to care; 38% of the young adult carers had also considered flexibility of working hours (so that they could care) when choosing their job
- On average, young adult carers were absent from work for the equivalent of 17 days per year and were late or had to leave early on approximately 79 days per year because of their caring responsibilities. This suggests that ongoing caring commitments can have a substantially disruptive effect on workplace attendance
- 32 young adult carers in work (67%) informed their managers of their caring role, 41% of these reported that their managers were not supportive
- Only a small proportion of the sample, (6 of the 77 respondents), were in receipt of any benefits. Many more would have an entitlement to some form of financial support but for whatever reason had not claimed, or had not received, any assistance

Based on these findings, [the research author's make a number of recommendations.](#)

Overview

Results from [2011 Census](#), reveal that nationally there are 166,363 young carers (aged 0 – 24) in England, compared to around 139,000 identified in the [2011 Census](#). This is likely to be an under representation of the true picture as many remain under the radar of professionals.

In its report, [Hidden from View \(2013\)](#), the [Children's Society](#) highlights that:

- One in 12 young carers is caring for more than 15 hours per week.
- Around one in 20 misses school because of their caring responsibilities.
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to be from black, Asian or minority ethnic communities, and are twice as likely to not speak English as their first language.
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to have a special educational need or a disability.
- The average annual income for families with a young carer is £5,000 less than families who do not have a young carer.
- There is no strong evidence that young carers are more likely than their peers to come into contact with support agencies, despite government recognition that this needs to happen.
- Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers e.g. the difference between nine B's and nine C's.
- Young carers are more likely than the national average to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) between the ages of 16 and 19.

Results from the 2011 Census shows that the percentage of people with 'Not Good' general health was generally higher among those providing unpaid care compared with those not providing it, and that this percentage rose with greater amounts of unpaid care provided. This pattern has been shown to be reflected among both adult and young carers.

In addition to general health, there is a clear relationship between poor mental health and caring. The [Liverpool Public Health Observatory Report \(2012\)](#) Merseyside highlights that one third of young carers care for someone with a mental health problem. Furthermore, children with a parent who has a mental health problem are known to be more likely to suffer from low levels of mental and emotional health and this group therefore emerges as a particularly vulnerable cohort.

Missing school because of caring duties is likely to affect longer term education and employment outcomes. [Research by the Audit Commission in 2010](#) found that young adult carers between the ages of 16 and 18 had a much greater chance of being not in education, employment and training (NEET). Of these, 75% had been NEET at least once (compared with 25% of all young people) and 42% had been NEET for six months or more (compared with 10% of all young people).

[Research from the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education](#) shows that for young adults on-going caring responsibilities mean that young adult carers are less likely to be in further or higher education. Among young carers aged 16-24, fewer than 16% of women and 21% of men who were caring for more than 20 hours per week were in education, in comparison to a 25% average for their peers with no caring responsibilities.

National and Regional

This section highlights comparative data to statistical neighbours, North West and England.

Table 1 below highlights unpaid care from Census 2011 by age, gender and statistical neighbours.

Table 1: Percentage of unpaid care by Gender, Age-bands and Hours of Unpaid Care by Statistical Neighbours, 2011 Census.

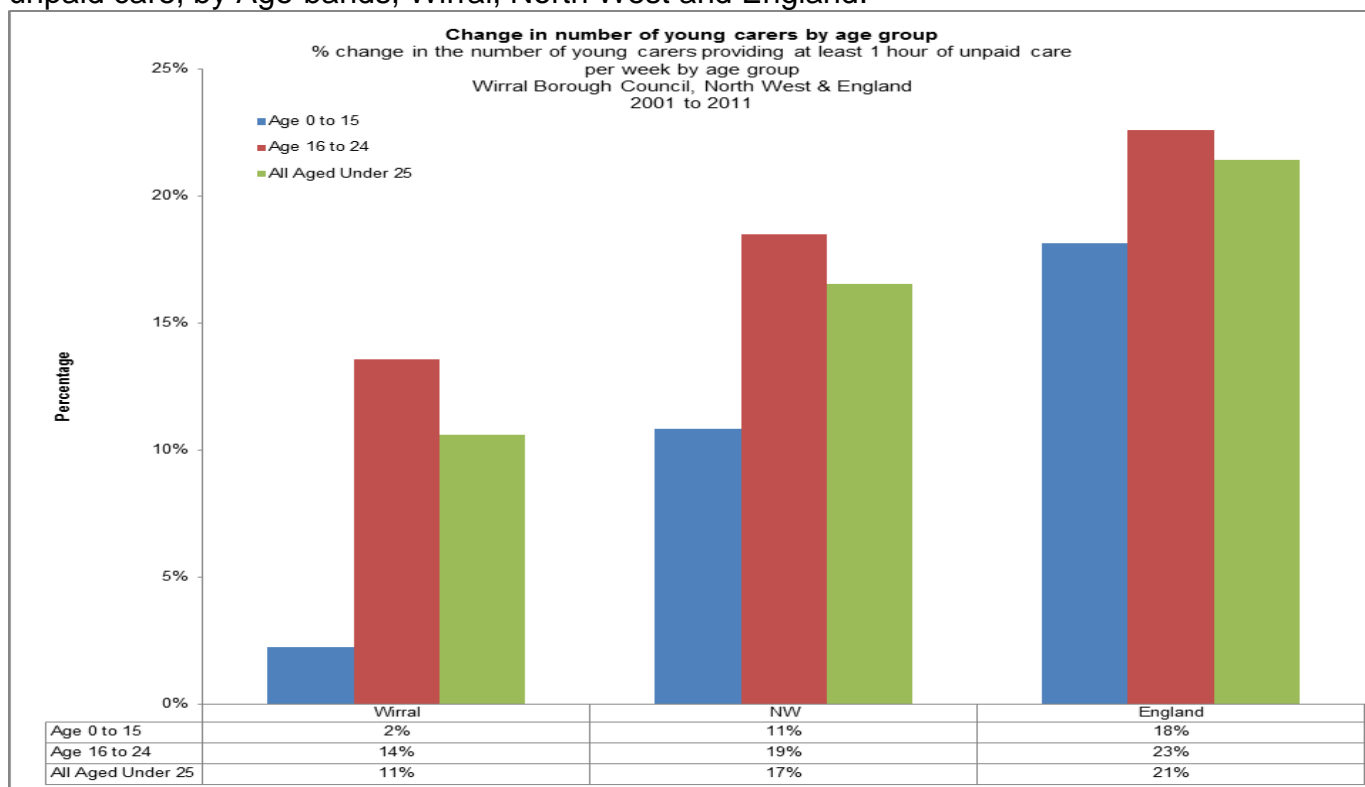
Geography	Gender		Agebands		Hours of Unpaid Care		
	Male	Female	0-15	16-24	1-19	20-49	50+
Halton	45.8%	54.2%	27.6%	72.4%	68.3%	19.1%	12.5%
Sefton	46.1%	53.9%	25.6%	74.4%	74.6%	15.1%	10.3%
St. Helens	45.1%	54.9%	24.2%	75.8%	69.2%	19.2%	11.6%
Wigan	45.0%	55.0%	26.6%	73.4%	72.8%	16.8%	10.4%
Wirral	44.7%	55.3%	26.3%	73.7%	72.4%	15.3%	12.3%
Darlington	46.3%	53.7%	26.6%	73.4%	71.3%	16.3%	12.5%
Hartlepool	44.1%	55.9%	23.9%	76.1%	67.7%	18.6%	13.7%
North Tyneside	44.8%	55.2%	27.6%	72.4%	76.4%	13.6%	10.1%
Redcar and Cleveland	43.2%	56.8%	24.1%	75.9%	70.5%	16.4%	13.1%
Stockton-on-Tees	45.0%	55.0%	23.3%	76.7%	69.8%	17.9%	12.2%
North West	45.2%	54.8%	25.6%	74.4%	73.9%	16.2%	11.5%
England	45.7%	54.3%	26.9%	73.1%	76.7%	14.7%	11.1%

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> , Census 2011

As we can see Wirral has similar percentages to statistical neighbours but with slightly higher under 24 female carers. In terms of age-bands and hours of unpaid care they are both similar to others.

In **figure 4** below are percentage change between 2001 and 2011 Census with Wirral seeing overall increases in that time but with greater increases seen at North West and England respectively

Figure 4: Change between 2001 and 2011 Census in numbers of young carer of at least 1 hour unpaid care, by Age-bands, Wirral, North West and England.



Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> , Census 2011

Wirral

Results from the 2011 Census (**table 2**) show that 2,840 people in Wirral aged under 25 identified themselves as providing unpaid care. There are in the region of 90,000 residents aged 24 and under, so this equates to around 3% of that age group providing care, with 350 self-reporting that they provide 50 or more hours unpaid care a week. These are likely to be underestimates.

Table 2: Hours of care provided by Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers - aged 0-24 from Census 2011 data

Care given (Hours)	Number
Provides 1 to 19 hours unpaid care a week	2,057
Provides 20 to 49 hours unpaid care a week	433
Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week	350
Total Number providing unpaid care	2,840

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> Census 2011

Table 3 below suggests that 748 of Wirral's self-reported young carers are aged between 0 – 15 with 2,092 between 16 and 24 years

Table 3: Age bands of Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers - aged 0-24 from Census 2011

Age-band of Carers	Number
Age 0 - 15	748
Age 16 – 24	2,092
Total aged 0 – 24	2,840

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> , Census 2011

Research in 2010, in the form of a [BBC and University of Nottingham survey](#) of more than 4,000 UK school pupils, found one in 12, or over 8%, had moderate or high levels of caring responsibility. This was four times what the official census figures in 2001 showed. This research suggests that the official figures may underrepresent the level of need identified through the 2011 Census.

This may be because many young carers often come from hidden and marginalised groups, including children caring for family members with mental illness and parental substance dependency.

For Wirral this equates to in the region of 2,061 and 2,375 secondary school children depending upon the population age ranges are considered. The underpinning research is not specific for the term 'secondary age' children and as such we have taken this measurement from both those aged 11 to 17 and 11 to 18 to provide us with the figures above.

Young Carers within Wirral Wards

In **table 4** below young carers are identified by their self-reported Ward location in 2011 Census. Bidston and St. James (12.7%), Birkenhead and Tranmere (12.2% and Seacombe 11.2%) have the highest numbers/percentages of unpaid carers aged 0 – 24 compared to the number of self-reported carers in the ward. West Kirby and Thurstaston (4.1%), Clatterbridge (4%) and Heswall (2.6%) have the lowest numbers/percentages of young carers on this comparative basis.

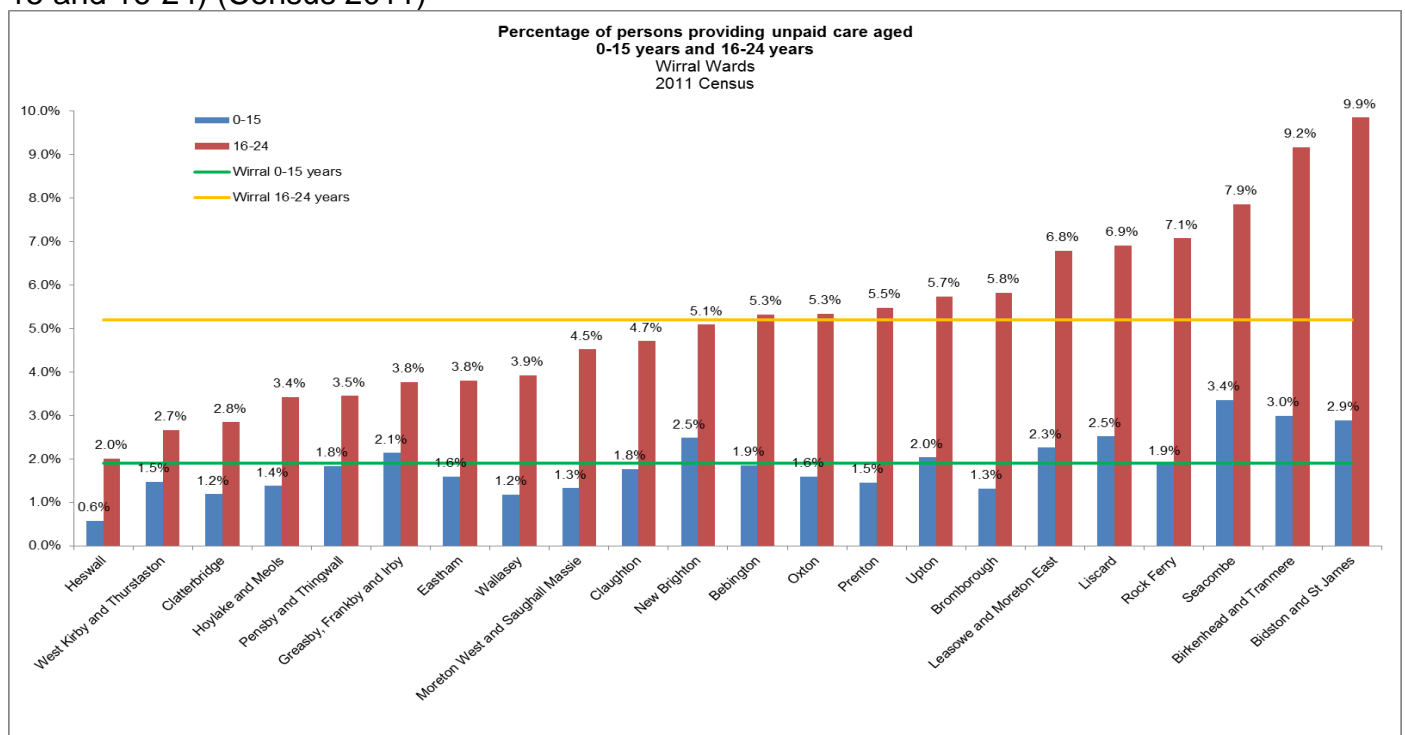
Table 4: Numbers and Percentages of unpaid carers by Wirral Ward by age-bands (0-15, 16-24 and 0 - 24) (Census 2011)

2011 ward	0-15		16-24		0-24		All Unpaid Carers as Ward Population
Bidston and St James	49	2.9%	167	9.9%	216	12.7%	1,695
Birkenhead and Tranmere	47	3.0%	144	9.2%	191	12.2%	1,570
Seacombe	59	3.4%	138	7.9%	197	11.2%	1,756
Liscard	47	2.5%	129	6.9%	176	9.4%	1,868
Leasowe and Moreton East	42	2.3%	126	6.8%	168	9.0%	1,857
Rock Ferry	30	1.9%	113	7.1%	143	8.9%	1,598
Upton	43	2.0%	121	5.7%	164	7.8%	2,109
New Brighton	43	2.5%	88	5.1%	131	7.6%	1,730
Bebington	36	1.9%	103	5.3%	139	7.2%	1,936
Bromborough	24	1.3%	106	5.8%	130	7.1%	1,821
Prenton	27	1.5%	101	5.5%	128	6.9%	1,845
Oxton	29	1.6%	97	5.3%	126	6.9%	1,818
Clughton	32	1.8%	85	4.7%	117	6.5%	1,805
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	46	2.1%	81	3.8%	127	5.9%	2,147
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	25	1.3%	85	4.5%	110	5.9%	1,879
Eastham	28	1.6%	67	3.8%	95	5.4%	1,759
Pensby and Thingwall	34	1.8%	64	3.5%	98	5.3%	1,855
Wallasey	24	1.2%	80	3.9%	104	5.1%	2,037
Hoylake and Meols	23	1.4%	57	3.4%	80	4.8%	1,666
West Kirby and Thurstaston	26	1.5%	47	2.7%	73	4.1%	1,761
Clatterbridge	23	1.2%	55	2.8%	78	4.0%	1,933
Heswall	11	0.6%	38	2.0%	49	2.6%	1,895
Wirral	748	1.9%	2,092	5.2%	2,840	7.0%	40,340

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> Census 2011

This distribution of young carers across Wirral wards can also be seen in **figure 5 and Map 1** below. These figures could be relative to the overall age structure of these wards. With those with lower numbers of young carers having an older population profile and visa-versa for those with higher young carer numbers.

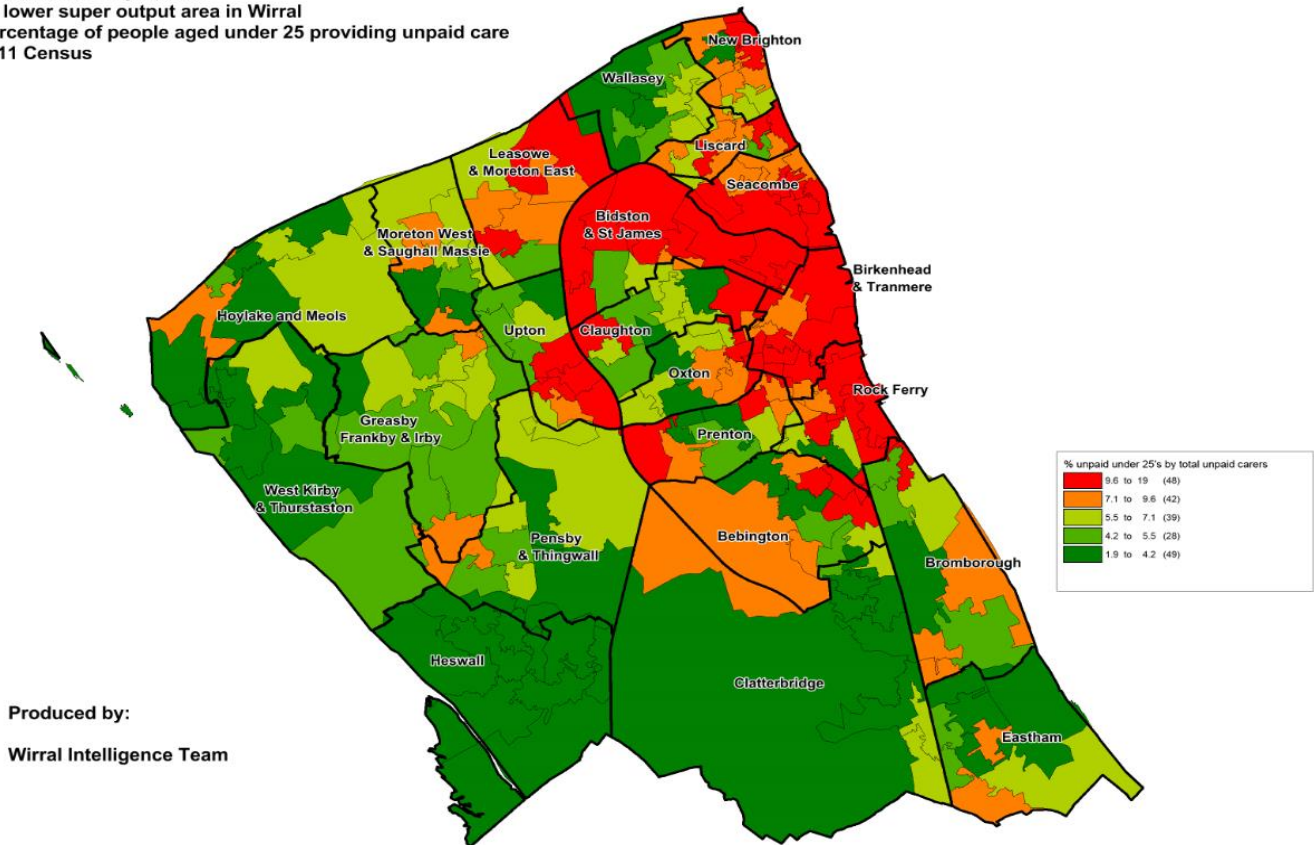
Figure 5: Comparison of unpaid Young Carers by Wirral Ward as percentage, by age-bands (0-15 and 16-24) (Census 2011)



Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> Census 2011

Map 1: Comparison of self-reported unpaid Young Carers by Wirral Lower Super Output Area (0-24) (Census 2011)

Provisions of unpaid care by lower super output area in Wirral
Percentage of people aged under 25 providing unpaid care
2011 Census

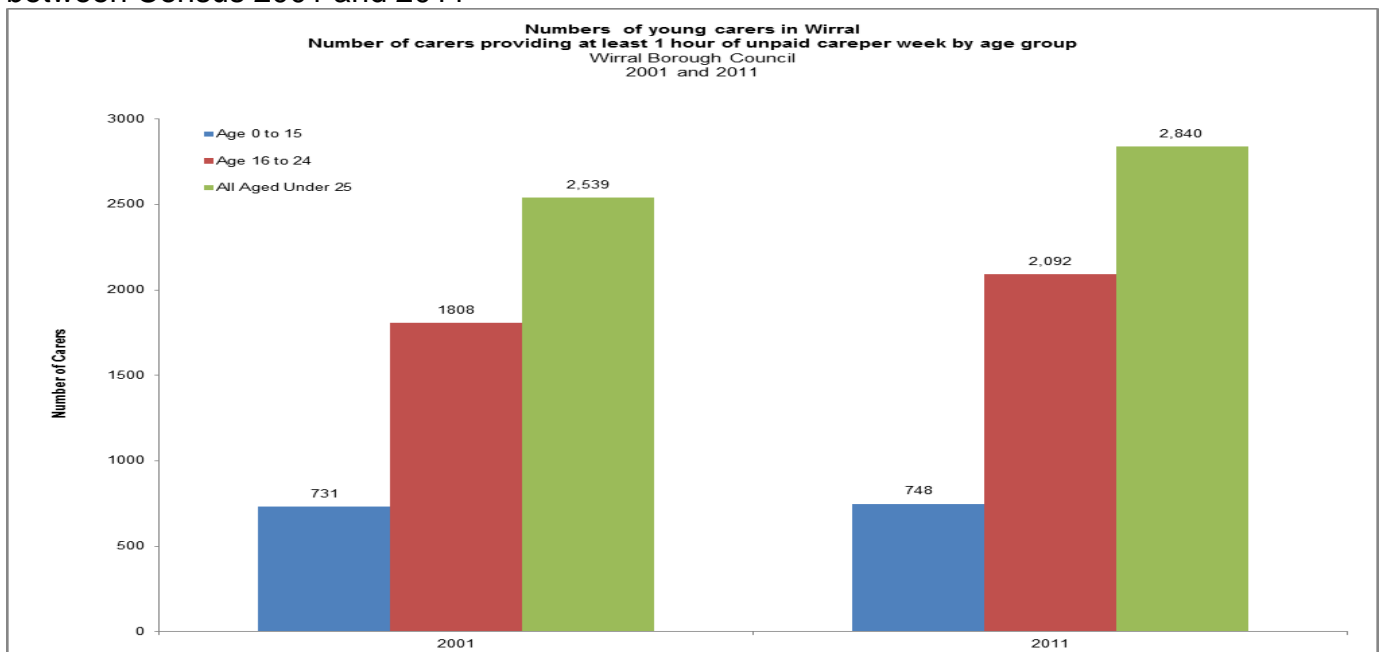


Produced by:
Wirral Intelligence Team

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>, Census 2011

Changes between Census 2001 and 2011

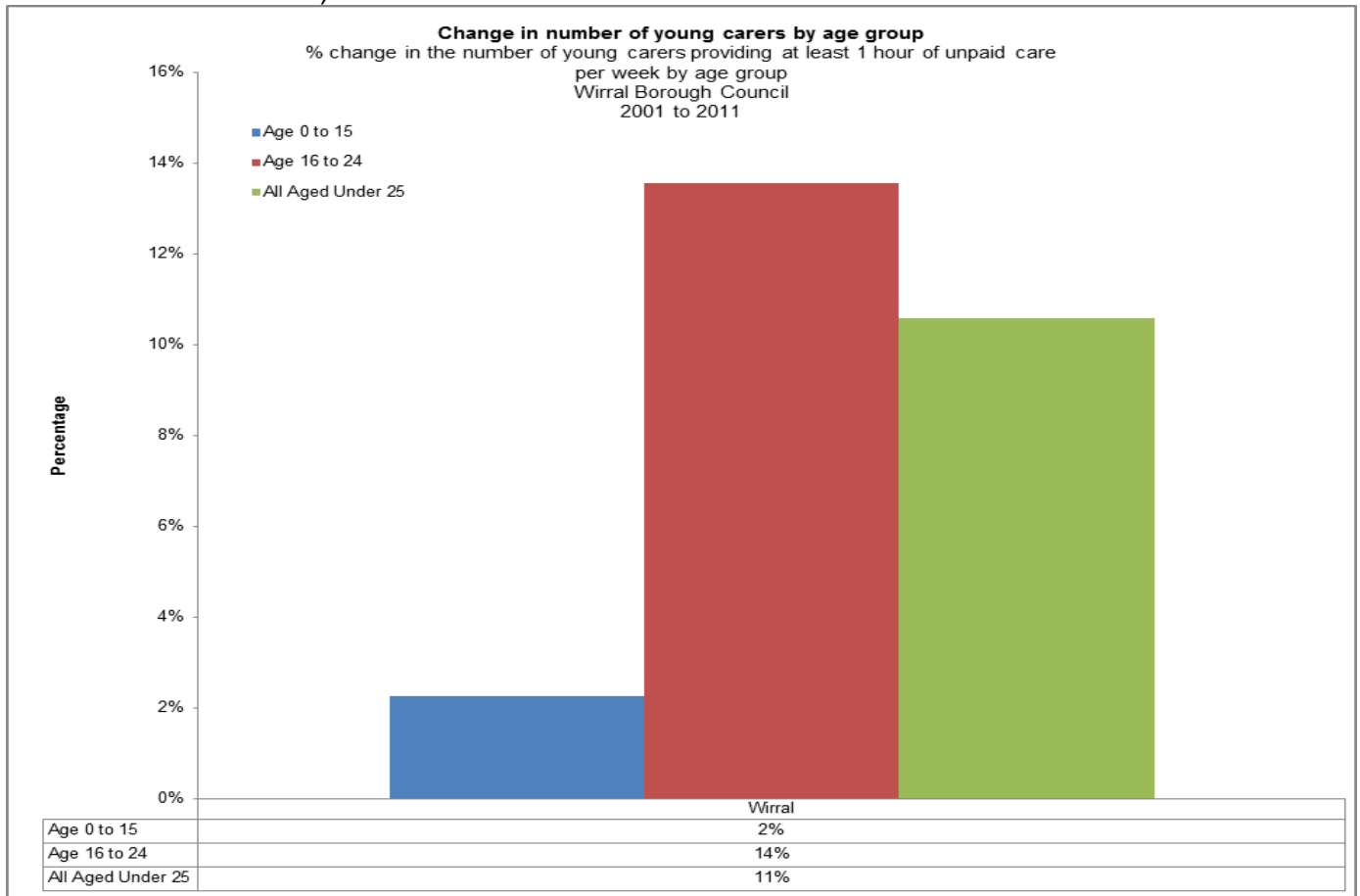
Figure 6: Comparison of number of unpaid Wirral Young Carers, by age-bands (0-15 and 16-24) between Census 2001 and 2011



Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>, Census 2011

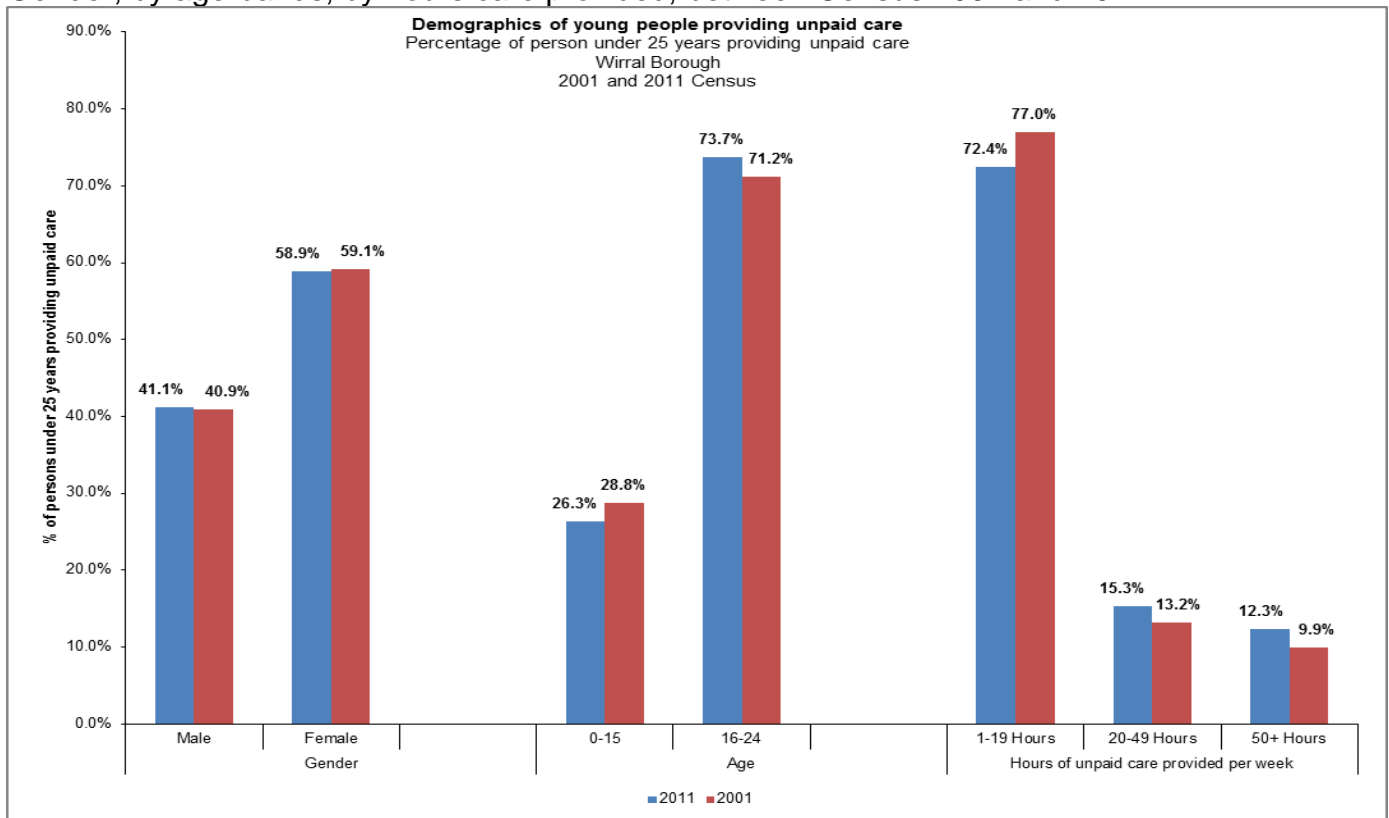
In **figure 6** above is comparison between 2001 and 2011 census results. There was an overall increase from 2,539 self-reported young carers in 2001 to 2,840 in 2011. **Figure 7** describes this change as a percentage between 2001 and 2011 as 2% increase in 0-15 year old carers, 14% those carers aged 16-24 and 11% overall.

Figure 7: Comparison of percentage change of unpaid Wirral Young Carers, by age-bands (0-15, 16-24 and all under 25) between Census 2001 and 2011



Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> , Census 2011

Figure 8: Demographic comparison as percentage change of unpaid Wirral Young Carers, by Gender, by age-bands, by hours care provided, between Census 2001 and 2011



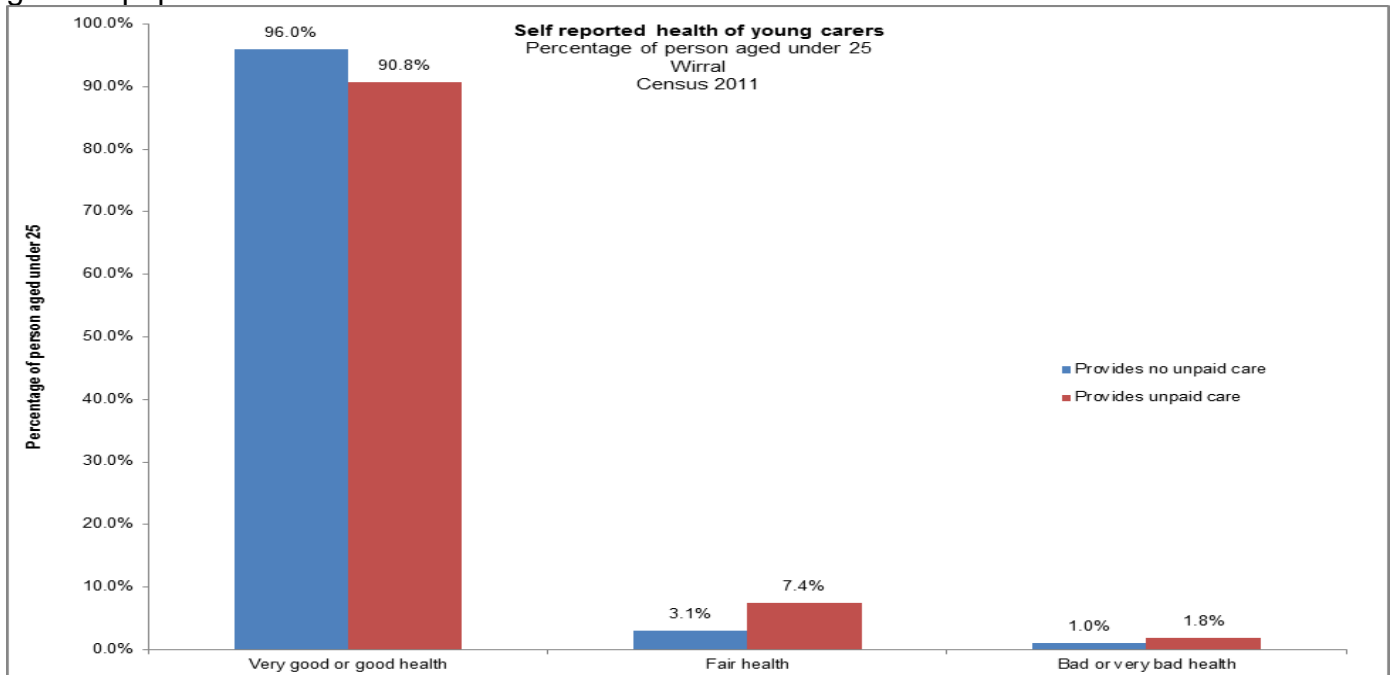
Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> , Census 2011

Figure 8 provides an overall demographic comparison between 2001 and 2011 Census:

- Male young carers fell by less than 1%.
- 0-15 year old young carers decreased by 2.5% with 16-24 year olds increasing to 73.7%.
- More young carers are providing more unpaid care hours with 20-49 and 50+ hours increasing by over 2% between Census 2001 and 2011.

Health of Young Carers

Figure 9: Self-reported health of unpaid Wirral Young Carers by all under 25, compared to general population Census 2011



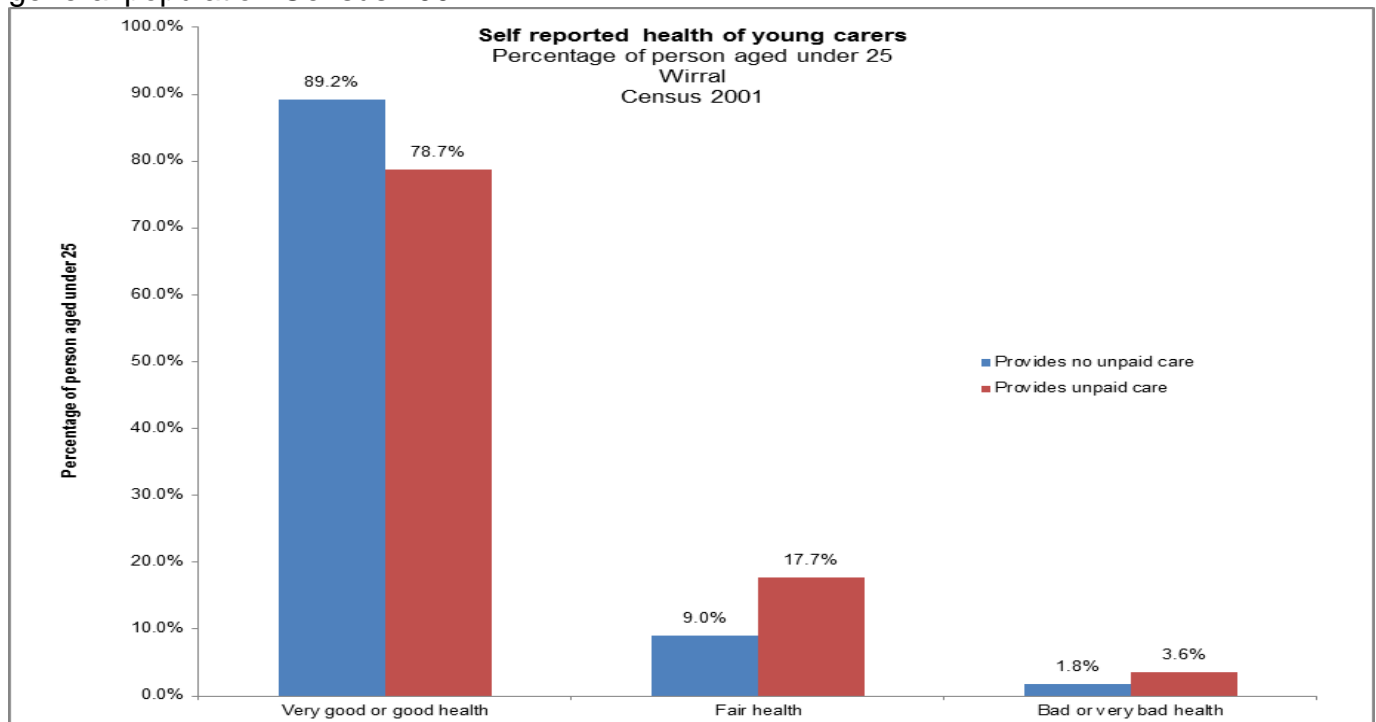
Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> Census 2011

In **figure 9** above the Census results, when comparing self-reported health of carers and non-carers then young carers have lower very good or good health with almost double (1.0% to 1.8%) reporting bad or very bad health compared to non-young carers.

However, compared to the same results in Census 2001 (**Figure 10**) then it highlights the 2011 results as being a significant improvement on the previous reported outcomes.

- Self-reported young carer health increased from 78% satisfaction in 2001 to 90% in 2011
- Bad or poor health reduced from 3.6% in 2001 to 1.8% in 2011

Figure 10: Self-reported health of unpaid Wirral Young Carers by all under 25, compared to general population Census 2001



Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>, Census 2011

Local Provider - Barnardos Action with Young Carers

Barnardo's [Action With Young Carers Wirral](#) is commissioned to assess and support children and young people under 19 who live in Wirral who provide regular or ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.

The service work within a whole family approach to reduce the negative impact of caring by enabling access to support for the young carer and family members where there is an identified need.

As such this provides the most reliable source of information about Young Carers in Wirral though efforts should be maintained and where possible increased to improving the identification of young carers across the area and also the quality of available data.

In the year April 2017- March 2019, the service supported 168 young carers aged 5-18 in total, or support for 91 in 2017/18 and 77 in 2018/19.

Of those, 92 cases were newly identified young carers, and 89 were closed to the service with the primary illness or disability of the person being cared noted as mental illness, and this accounting for over a third of young carers.

Mental illness was also a factor identified in caring for people with drug & alcohol issues and physical disabilities *mental health is fluid within all referrals that stem from depression, anxiety, domestic violence, change in physical health

Staffing changes within the service had impacted during the period between 2017 and March 2019

Age of young carers

From performance data supplied by Barnardos in **Table 5** below is the age breakdown of the service users. The majority of service users are between 9 and 17 though there is a wide range supported by the service.

Table 5: Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers – age breakdown from Barnardos Activity data for 2017/18 and 2018/19

Age	Year 2017/18		2018/19	
	Number	%	Number	%
6	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
7	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
8	suppressed	suppressed	5	6.5%
9	7	7.7%	suppressed	suppressed
10	5	5.5%	7	9.1%
11	10	11.0%	9	11.7%
12	8	8.8%	6	7.8%
13	8	8.8%	11	14.3%
14	14	15.4%	10	13.0%
15	12	13.2%	8	10.4%
16	11	12.1%	5	6.5%
17	5	5.5%	6	7.8%
18	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
19	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Total	91	100.0%	77	100.0%

Source: Data Captured by Barnardos Action with Young Carers 2019

Notes: Numbers and percentages in some cases in the above table are suppressed as they range between 0 and 5 and could potentially identify individuals if disclosed. Also - age at start of year for carried over cases or case open for new cases

Where in Wirral?

Of the 168 carers accessing the service between 2017/18 and 2018/19 and the distribution by constituency area of Wirral in **table 6** and by wards within those constituencies in **table 7**.

Table 6: Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers – distribution across Wirral Constituencies - breakdown from Barnardos Activity data for 2017/18 and 2018/19

Area	Year 2017/18		2018/19	
	Number	%	Number	%
Wallasey	27	29.7%	29	37.7%
Birkenhead	35	38.5%	28	36.4%
Wirral West	18	19.8%	15	19.5%
Wirral South	11	12.1%	5	6.5%
Total	91	100.0%	77	100.0%

Source: Data Captured by Barnardos Action with Young Carers 2019

In 2018/19 almost 75%, or 57 of 77, Young Carers that were being supported lived in Birkenhead and Wallasey Constituencies.

Table 7: Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers – distribution across Wirral Constituencies and Wards breakdown from Barnardos Activity data for 2017/18 and 2018/19

Wallasey Constituency/Wards	2017/18	2018/19
Leasowe & Moreton East	7	6
Liscard	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Moreton West & Saughall Massie	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
New Brighton	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Seacombe	7	7
Wallasey	<i>suppressed</i>	10
Total	27	29
Birkenhead Constituency/Wards	2017/18	2018/19
Bidston St. James	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Birkenhead & Tranmere	15	13
Claughton	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Oxton	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Prenton	10	7
Rock Ferry	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Total	35	28
Wirral West Constituency/Wards	2017/18	2018/19
Greasby, Frankby & Irby	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Pensby & Thingwall	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Hoylake & Meols	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Upton	8	8
West Kirkby & Thurstaston	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Total	18	15
Wirral West Constituency/Wards	2017/18	2018/19
Bebington	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Bromborough	6	<i>suppressed</i>
Clatterbridge	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Eastham	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Heswall	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Total	11	5
Total (all)	91	77

Source: Data Captured by Barnardos Action with Young Carers 2019

Notes: Numbers and percentages in some cases in the above table are suppressed as they range between 0 and 5 and could potentially identify individuals if disclosed.

Number of people cared for

Of the 168 carers accessing the service between 2017/18 and 2018/19 the number of people being cared by young carers across Wirral can be seen in **table 8** below. The majority, almost 80% in 2018/19, care for one person but some young people can care for two or more dependents.

Table 8: Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers – number of people being cared for breakdown from Barnardos Activity data for 2017/18 and 2018/19

Number of People cared for	Year 2017/18		Year 2018/19	
	Number	%	Number	%
1	66	72.5%	61	79.2%
2	21	23.1%	suppressed	suppressed
3	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Not recorded	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Total	91	100.0%	77	100.0%

Source: Data Captured by Barnardos Action with Young Carers 2019

Notes: Numbers and percentages in some cases in the above table are suppressed as they range between 0 and 5 and could potentially identify individuals if disclosed.

Household composition

Of the 168 carers accessing the service between 2017/18 and 2018/19 the key headlines in terms of household composition (**table 9**) are:

- 59% of young carers live in lone parent households
- So, 41% of young carers live in families with more than one parent present

Table 9: Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers – Lone Parent families being cared for - breakdown from Barnardos Activity data for 2017/18 and 2018/19

Lone Parent families	Year 2017/18		Year 2018/19	
	Number	%	Number	%
Yes	54	59.3%	45	58.4%
No	37	40.7%	32	41.6%
Total	91	100.0%	77	100.0%

Source: Data Captured by Barnardos Action with Young Carers 2019

Notes: Numbers and percentages in some cases in the above table are suppressed as they range between 0 and 5 and could potentially identify individuals if disclosed.

Ethnicity of Young Carers

Almost all young carers involved in the Barnardos programme, between 2017/18 and 2018/19, were from White- British ethnic group as seen in **table 10** below.

Table 10: Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers – Ethnicity of young carers - breakdown from Barnardos Activity data for 2017/18 and 2018/19

Ethnicity	Year 2017/18		Year 2018/19	
	Number	%	Number	%
White	90	98.9%	74	96.1%
Other Ethnic Groups	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Mixed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Total	91	100.0%	77	100.0%

Source: Data Captured by Barnardos Action with Young Carers 2019

Notes: Please see notes in table 9

Condition of the cared for

Of the 168 carers accessing the service between 2017/18 and 2018/19 the range of conditions of the cared for can be seen in **table 11** below.

Table 11: Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers – health conditions of those being cared for - breakdown from Barnardos Activity data for 2017/18 and 2018/19

Health Condition of Cared for	2017/18		2018/19	
	Number	%	Number	%
Mental Ill Health	54	28.1%	55	32.9%
Physical Disability	29	15.1%	36	21.6%
Chronic Ill Health	40	20.8%	26	15.6%
Neurological Condition	25	13.0%	17	10.2%
Learning Difficulty/Disability	17	8.9%	15	9.0%
Sensory Impairment	10	5.2%	10	6.0%
Drugs/Alcohol	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Terminal Illness	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Other	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>	<i>suppressed</i>
Total	192	100.0%	167	100.0%

Source: Data Captured by Barnardos Action with Young Carers 2019

Notes:

Numbers and percentages in some cases in the above table are suppressed as they range between 0 and 5 and could potentially identify individuals if disclosed.

Numbers and percentages do not total to overall responses or 100% as multiple answers as to health conditions were offered.

The **table 11** above suggests that as the most prevalent condition of those being cared for are mental health issues and this was recorded by over 50% Young Carers. Then others seen in significant numbers include chronic ill-health 30% of those cared for (n~45), physical disability at 26% (n~39), and both neurological condition and Learning Disability at 22% (n~34 and n~33 respectively).

Conditions of Cared for Adults

- Almost 33% of young carers were caring for adults with a diagnosed mental health illness.
- Almost 22% children were caring for adults with a Physical/illness disability
- Chronic Ill Health (15.6%) required young carers to support their parents/family members
- Just over 10% children were caring for adults have a Neurological Condition (e.g. MS Brain Tumour, Stroke, Dementia)
- Some young carers are supporting their parents who had identified drug and alcohol issues and in treatment.
- Some young carers were caring for adults with a terminal illness

Referral source

Of the 168 carers accessing the service between 2017/18 and 2018/19 the range of referral sources is considerable and is noted in **table 12** below. There is a range of referral routes to the service.

Table 12: Wirral Young and Young Adult Carers – referral source - Barnardos Activity data for 2017/18 and 2018/19

Referral Source	Year 2017/18		Year 2018/19	
	Number	%	Number	%
Adult Mental Health	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Adult Social Care	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
CAMHS	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Child Health, (School Health, Paediatrician)	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Children's Centre	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Children's Social Care	17	18.7%	17	22.1%
College	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Early Intervention Team	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Family Support Worker	suppressed	suppressed	6	7.8%
Family/Self	28	30.8%	18	23.4%
Health Visitor	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Not recorded	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Occupational Therapy	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Other	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
School - Learning Mentor	12	13.2%	6	7.8%
School - Other	5	5.5%	8	10.4%
School - Teaching Staff	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Voluntary Organisation	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Youth Service	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed
Total	91	100.0%	77	100.0%

Source: Data Captured by Barnardos Action with Young Carers 2019

Notes: Numbers and percentages in some cases in the above table are suppressed as they range between 0 and 5 and could potentially identify individuals if disclosed.

Local, Community and Stakeholder views

Through a broad variety of consultation and engagement events, and feedback from young carers and families supported through Barnardos Action with Young Carers service young carers and their families living in Wirral.

Young carers said in the link to [No wrong door video](#) produced by Wirral Young Carers that:

- have no one to talk to
- are scared to tell anyone about their home circumstances
- are tired and hungry, frightened and isolated
- are stigmatised, ashamed and guilty
- are worried about things like finances or being put into care
- are looking after siblings as well as parents
- have difficulty getting to school on time/stay in the whole day
- find it difficult to concentrate and hold on to their tempers
- need in information and explanations
- lack confidence

Parents said that:

- fear of losing children and the reality of this happening
- uncertainty and complexity of their lives
- feeling of being 'on trial' for their parenting abilities
- fear of asking for help
- suffer isolation and stigma
- impossibility of parenting without family and social networks

Other examples of Young Carers (and Cared for) voice

- Request by Teach Magazine to include a Young Carers experience in 'Dear teacher' letter piece supported by Barnardo's media ([Letter](#))
- Support and work with Barnardo's media for young people's voices in Liverpool Echo (Liverpool Young Adult Carer and Wirral Young Carer) ([Article](#))
- Headline responses from Parents and Young Carers as gathered by Barnardos related ([Document](#))

What is this telling us?

Young carers could potentially lagging behind at school and missing out on their childhoods because of the demands placed on them, or not achieving in the employment arena according to [Hidden from View that was released by The Children's Society](#) to coincide with census statistics in 2013. Although great strides have been made young carers continue to need the support of local services and agencies.

Groups most at risk

There are a number of aspects and situations that suggest young carers are more at risk of having to provide support or having to curtail their lives to give support. Some examples are below:

Young Carers and Sibling Care

Young carers may also be caring for siblings along with an adult that impacts on emotional health and wellbeing and education. This includes social interaction with peers as there can be a reliance on the Young Person to assist. There may be another adult in the family home, but this may still fall onto young person if the second adult looking after first adult also. Emotional impact of sibling care whether because of an ill parent or that the sibling has severe learning or physical difficulties is quite high both for lack of support, less family time and/or understanding of the impact on young person.

Reliance on Young Carers

The key issue facing both Children and Young People and Adult Service leads is ensuring that vulnerable people do not rely on their children to carry out an inappropriate caring role. Whilst ensuring that this is achieved, support should be given to the young carers and their families to reduce the impact of the caring role on the child or young person while minimising any potential risk to the young carer or the adult needing care.

Young Carers and Parental Substance Misuse

In the report produced by the [Princess Royal Trust for Carers](#) „At What Cost To Young Carers' the authors suggest that the implications of being one of the UK's 175,000 known young carers, heighten the impacts such as the greater risk of truancy, under-achievement, isolation, mental and physical ill health, poverty and stress are exacerbated.

These risks are particularly acute for young people affected by parental substance misuse, parental alcohol and parental mental health problems.

Missing school through caring responsibilities

Anecdotally, young carers' services regularly receive referrals of young people who are missing most or all of their schooling in order to care for someone. This relatively small group of persistent absentees is nevertheless a significant one: in England, just under 3% of all pupils account for 50% of truancy statistics and the Department for Education and Skills (now the Department for Education) has identified that 13,000 pupils in 200 schools in England are the young people whose needs are most acute.

In [research carried out by Aldridge and Becker, 2003](#) on 2001 National Census they identify the impact on young carers absence and their attainment. In more extreme situations, absence from school is a result of caring responsibilities or the nature of relatives' illness. For example, children may be afraid to leave parents, especially when they have a history of self-harm or suicide. Some physical illnesses are marked by periods of exacerbation and remission and during acute phases children stay at home to 'be there' in case they are needed. This can lead to low educational attainment if regular or persistent.

Ethnicity

Over 9 in 10 young carers known to Barnardos identified themselves as White British. This is above the ethnicity profile for Wirral as a whole; the relatively small number of individuals makes it difficult to know whether this is a true reflection of the ethnicity of all young carers in the area.

Electoral Wards

Figures from the Census show that proportion of unpaid young carers is highest in Bidston & St. James, Birkenhead and Tranmere and Seacombe with a combined 21% with over 600 young carers in these three wards alone.

Mental Health of Young Carers

As above with sibling care and impact of caring in general, young people's mental health concerns are increasing as they worry about family circumstances, impact on family dynamic, isolation and loss of peer group and/or connection as a young person, loss of confidence and self-esteem, not being able to talk about their own emotions/thoughts due to guilt or lack of being overshadowed by ill parent/sibling difficulties. The issues of isolation can also have an opposite effect of risk taking behaviours due to their circumstances, no parental boundaries as unable to, young person feeling invisible or resentful of their caring role.

Key issues and challenges

- Earlier identification for services across Wirral.
- Pathways to ensure that all agencies are on board and spotting the potential signs of a Young Carer.
- Supporting agencies for earlier identification and enabling an opportunity to access services effectively.
- To identify Young Carer champions in schools and policies to support Young Carers in education.
- To keep Young Carers on agenda and ensure that every young person is aware of their right to a statutory assessment and be supported to access this for the most appropriate identification of caring role.
- To ensure that Young Carers pathways and routes to access are embedded in training.

- Recognition that the young people are caring for an adult in the family home that often includes sibling care and the need to look at the support regarding siblings across Wirral.
- Earlier identification not just in Children's services also including Adult Services given that if there is an ill parent there will be a struggling young person in the family home

What are we doing and why?

Barnardo's Action with Young Carers is commissioned to complete statutory Young Carers assessments on behalf of the local authority to:

- Identify those who may be Young Carers and offer 1:1 support with a robust support plan and reviewing of the caring roles
- Reduce negative impact of caring roles and identify inappropriate caring roles
- Support a whole family approach and ensure most appropriate support in place for both young person/s and family members
- Ensure young person's voice is heard
- Raise awareness of Young Carers and encourage earlier identification
- Support services/young people and families to identify need for support and encourage referral to help and support
- Work with agencies/partners to ensure young people and families have the support they need throughout their lives
- Ensure young people are appropriately safeguarded
- Ensure Young Carers are able to aspire, be supported to engage in events, breaks, activities to increase confidence and self-esteem, are introduced to other Young Carers and to form positive friendships
- Ensure Young Carers emotional health and wellbeing is addressed and reduced anxieties/worries
- Advocate on behalf of young people/families where there is difficulty and ensure understanding of needs of Young Carers
- Ensure young people have the right to a Young Carers assessment and are aware of this
- Ensure organisations are giving the message to young people & families that they have the right to a Young Carers assessment
- Organisations encourage this process to gauge supporting needs

Current activity and services

Barnardos Action with Young Carers, Wirral Support provided by the Service

A range of support available based on the assessment of need and includes:

- Support, someone to talk to who will listen.
- Support around emotional health & well-being.
- Group work (focused/targeted).
- Participation in service design.
- Information & advice about illness & disabilities of the cared for person.
- Breaks from caring.
- Opportunity to meet other young carers.
- Support around education, employment and training.
- Emergency planning.
- Support for the cared for person including referral to adult services to address unmet need.

Contact: Barnardo's Action with Young Carers 0151 650 5488 or drop-in to The Lauries in Birkenhead.

What are the challenges?

Key gaps in knowledge and services

Improve the identification of Young Carers

As a Wirral Partnership there should be the continued and increased effort to improving the identification of young carers in Wirral and subsequent quality of the available data. There may be opportunities for improvement within the current school census process.

Young Carers remain a hidden population of vulnerable children and young people, often coming to the attention of services when there is a crisis. The 2011 census statistics reveal there are 166,363 young carers in England, compared to around 139,000 in 2001. This is likely to be an under representation of the true picture as many remain under the radar of professionals. The Care Act and the Children and Families Act bring a responsibility to assess young carers on identification of need. There is work to be done to ensure that there is 'no wrong door' for young carers and that they are identified and receive the appropriate support at the earliest stage. The service receives a relatively low number of referrals from adult services; the development of a young carers' pathway for adult and children's services as well as workforce development are current areas for development. The Memorandum of Understanding between Statutory Directors for Children's Services and Adult Social Services, 'Working together to support young carers' could be used as a catalyst for this.

The majority of referrals come through the service referral form; few are directed to the service through a request for services via the Integrated Front Door via a request for services. A young carer referral pathway linked to the early help pathway might help to address this issue.

Barnardos see this work effectively within Liverpool Local Authority and the learning from this for Young Carers including Barnardo's Liverpool also commissioned to provide services for Young Adult Carers with a smooth transition from Young Carers to adulthood and linking The Carers Centre post 25.

The services across both Liverpool and Wirral took part in a Transitions consultation led by the Department of Health and Social Care with the Children's Society taking on the consultation. This highlighted the work across both authorities and the forward thinking from Wirral and Liverpool in supporting Young Carers & Young Adult Carers.

The low number of referrals from both adult and children's services could be an indication of a lack of young carer awareness within the workforce; this could be an area the authority wishes to consider as part of their workforce development programme.

The service was previously involved in the workforce development programmes and made a difference to raised awareness of Young Carers. In Liverpool, there is a dedicated Development Worker that is attached to the Young Carers service and works with Schools to champion Young Carers and identify key links, support policies and Carers Awards including training across the workforce with Children's and Adults Services.

[See Improving assessment and support for young carers transition into adulthood produced by The Children's Society and Department for Health and Social Care \(2019\)](#)

This is a key factor in ensuring all agencies are identifying and making links within the services to support young people who may be Young Carers. All Early Help Assessments (EHAT) pathways and Graded Care Profile training references Young Carers at every point including Identification within the assessment process.

Investment within Liquid Logic and embedding existing assessments, support plans and Processes with Barnardo's Young Carers has made a difference to the outcomes for Children and young people.

Continue to provide access to support services

An ageing population, reduction in health and social care budgets, welfare reforms and FACS eligibility criteria highlights the importance of ensuring that all young carers are able to access a range of personalised support services to support them to learn, develop and thrive and to enjoy positive childhoods. Therefore, to ensure best use of available resources and take advantage of the support delivered via universal services and within young carers own communities to meet need then continued development of creative partnerships could enable improved outcomes for young carers.

Carers Assessment and Support Plan

To have access to a quality Carers Assessment and Support Plan that recognises and values their caring role and the contribution they make but which also identifies the outcomes that they need to meet to enable them to learn, develop and thrive and to enjoy positive childhoods.

Poverty

Research from Barnardos shows that the average annual income for families with a young carer, is £5,000 less than families who do not have a young carer. Barnardos suggest they have witnessed first-hand the impact of the welfare reform austerity measures on the families they support.

The reduction of household income seems to have disproportionately affected those who are sick and disabled and has added to the emotional strain of family life. Barnardos have assisted families in trying to relieve these effects by; providing letters of support and attending benefit appeals to reverse decisions to remove or reduce benefits, supported applications for discretionary housing benefit to counteract the impact of the bedroom tax, provided food vouchers, and obtained funds for household items and family breaks.

Young Adult Carers

The Care Act gives Local Authorities a duty to assess young carers in transition if they have an appearance of need post 18. Barnardos suggest that national research shows that young adult carers age 18-25 have particular issues and needs and benefit from targeted support, and the work of Barnardos for example with other Young Adult Carers in a neighbouring authority provides useful evidence for what works which may be of value to Wirral in planning for meeting this requirement.

Assessment and identification of young carers

Further consideration of Adult Services Involvement in Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Early Help Assessments (EHAT) plus Team Around the Family (TAF). Whilst there are examples of positive impact of adult services involvement in TAF yet Barnardos suggest that further work could be undertaken to embed a whole family approach to assessment and identification of young carers.

Sharing and Recording of Assessments

Legislation implies that the Young Carers assessment should be considered alongside the assessment of the adult. Currently there is no agreed mechanism for the storage of the assessments by the local authority (currently they are stored by Barnardos) or a formal information sharing protocol with adult or children's services.

What are possible further actions?

- **Assessment** - The Care Act 2014 sets out the entitlement of young carers to request a statutory assessment themselves. This was previously only requested via professionals. Since 2016 the Barnardo's Young Carer's service has provided this statutory assessment of needs. In line with the work by Barnardo's Wirral has been working on the development of a Young Carer's assessment on liquid logic and exploring the potential for young carers aged 12 upwards to fill in a self-assessment online. Wirral are also moving forward with an agreement for adult social care to take on this assessment for Young Carers aged 16 -18 allowing a smoother transition to adult services.
- **All Age Carers Strategy** - Wirral has been developing an All Age Carers Strategy. Bringing children's and adults services together in this way is significant as the major impact upon Young Carer's is from the adult in their life and services therefore need to work together and have a holistic focus. There has been a focus on developing a clear integrated pathway for all young carers and adult young carers. The Memorandum of understanding between adults and children's services has recently been updated that outlines how both services work together.
- **Re-commissioning** - As part of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) - By going out to tender for a range of contracts that sit within the voluntary sector there is a risk that the sector could be destabilised leading to a negative impact on jobs and the services people receive. For 2017-18 the Young Carers service will be re-commissioned as part of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) in Wirral.

The SPV brings together a range of voluntary organisations and has been developed by early intervention and prevention services from adult social care, the CCG, public health and Children's services. Bringing together these organisations within the scope of procurement rules will enable small, expert organisations that might otherwise be unable to compete for larger contract and will therefore lead to better quality public services.

- **Projected service use in 3-5 years and 5-10 years** -There is an inevitable tension in projecting service use. Other parts of the country have attempted to use data over time to estimate future increase and/or decreases in use of young carer services. As there is no national requirement to publish data on young carers it has been difficult to measure accurately how Census and local data for young carers compares to all its statistical neighbours. Estimating future demand remains an important if difficult outcome to achieve.
- **Unmet needs and service gaps** – changes from 2001 to 2011 Census and acceptance of the likely under self-reporting of young carers in turn suggests that we are under estimating numbers of young carers in Wirral. It suggests that there are could be significant number of young carers who are currently either unknown to statutory and voluntary sector agencies or deciding not to access services.
- **Raising the profile of Young Carers service with local stakeholders** e.g. Children and Families Social Care Team; Schools and Health Service and others.

Relevant and related National and local strategies

[Wirral Carers Strategy \(2014 – 2017\)](#)

Latest Wirral Carers Strategy – currently in draft form – will be published in the near future.

[The Care Act 2014](#) places a duty on local authorities to proactively identify, assess and consider how they can meet the needs of carers in their area who might have support needs that are not being met. The Care Act defines a carer as anyone who provides any amount of unpaid care. The Care Act requires local authorities to identify carers' needs through statutory Carers Assessments.

This duty extends to all carers, including the carers of citizens who are not receiving social care support. Under the Care Act, carers are recognised in law in the same way as those for whom they care, regardless of whether that person has eligible care needs, or not. The Care Act defines a carer as anyone who provides any amount of unpaid care. From April 2015, councils have had a duty to carry out assessments for all carers who ask for one, and to pro-actively identify and offer assessments to carers.

Once the assessment is complete, the local authority must decide whether the carer's needs are 'eligible' for support from the local authority. This approach is similar to that used for adults with care and support needs. In the case of carers, eligibility depends on the carer's situation. The carer's needs can be met by providing care and support directly to the person that they care for, for example, by providing replacement care to allow the carer to take a break, as long as the person needing care agrees.

In such cases, where the local authority charges for the type of care offered, the authority must carry out a financial assessment of the person who is cared for - the carer cannot be charged in such cases. An adult caring for a disabled child can get support through children's services.

Local authorities must also provide information and advice on local services to prevent carers' needs from developing further.

[The Children and Families Act 2014](#) amended the Children Act to make it easier for young carers to get an assessment of their needs and to introduce 'whole family' approaches to assessment and support. Local authorities must offer an assessment where it appears that a child is involved in providing care.

This legislation is aligned with similar provision in the Care Act 2014 requiring local authorities to consider the needs of young carers if, during the assessment of an adult with care needs, or of an adult carer, it appears that a child is providing, or intends to provide, care. In these circumstances the authority must consider whether the care being provided by the child is excessive or inappropriate; and how the child's caring responsibilities affects their wellbeing, education and development.

Local authorities have a clear duty to undertake an assessment of a young carer's needs for support on request or on the appearance of need. Local authorities are required to ensure that young carers are identified and to consider whether the young care is a 'child in need'.

The Government have indicated that the amendment to the Children Act works with provisions in the Care Act 2014 so as to apply equally to both children's and adult services. The Guidance for the Care Act reinforces this and stresses those young carers should not be left with inappropriate levels of caring responsibilities. The key difference in considering support for young carers compared to adults is that adult carers have a choice in their caring role that young carers lack.

[The National Carers Strategy Action Plan 2014-16](#) had key priorities to support carers to care effectively and safely; look after their own health and well-being; fulfil their education and employment potential; and have a life of their own alongside caring responsibilities.

By providing effective support for carers we will improve the carer's quality of life, reduce incidences of poor mental health and physical injuries amongst carers, and support carers to further their education, careers and other interests. This can help reduce carer breakdown and enable carers to continue to carry out their caring roles.

Note: After over 2 years being promoted as a future action, the intended National Carers Strategy, was replaced with an alternate approach in November 2017, when the Minister announced that a cross-Government action plan will be launched in the New Year to improve support for carers informed by evidence from carers (still awaiting latest position (March 2018)

'[No wrong doors: Working Together to Support Young Carers and their Families](#)' is a local memorandum of understanding (based on a national template) between statutory Directors of Children's and Adult Social Services.

It reflects the important new duties and powers placed on local authorities by the Care Act 2014, Children and Families Act 2014, and reinforced in the Young Carers Assessments Regulations 2015, the Guidance related to both of these Acts and "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (DfE – 2015). The memorandum promotes working together between Adult's and Children's social care services and Action for Young Carers.

Links

- Wirral Council <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/support-carers/support-young-carers>
- Teen Wirral <https://www.teenwirral.com/>
- Wirral's Local Offer page <https://localofferwirral.org/listing/barnardos-action-with-young-carers-wirral-2/>
- Wirral Early Help Assessment Tool: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/what-is-early-help/>
- Graded Care Profile 2: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/graded-care-profile2/>
- Wirral Safeguarding: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/young-carers-2/>
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's): <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces/>

- Barnardos
[https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/our work/young_carershttp://www.barnardos.org.uk/youngcarersnorthwest/nw_young_carers_north_west-awyc-wirral.htm](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/young_carershttp://www.barnardos.org.uk/youngcarersnorthwest/nw_young_carers_north_west-awyc-wirral.htm)
- National Young Carer websites
 - [The Children's Society](#)
 - [Carers Trust](#)
 - [Action for Children](#)
 - [NHS and Young Carers](#)
 - [ChildLine](#)
 - [Child Law Advice](#)

Also see

- [Disabled Persons \(Services and Consultation and Representation\) Act 1986, S8 \(external link\)](#)
- [The Children Act 1989 \(external link\)](#)
- [NHS and Community Care Act 1990, S47 \(external link\)](#)
- [Carers \(Recognition and Services\) Act 1995, S1 \(external link\)](#)
- [National Service Framework for Mental Health 1999 \(PDF 403KB external link\)](#)
- [The Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000 \(PDF 339KB external link\)](#)
- [Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 \(external link\)](#)
- [The Children Act 2004 – which established the five Every Child Matters Outcomes \(external link\)](#)
- [The Carers \(Equal Opportunities\) Act 2004 \(external link\)](#)
- [Practice guidance to the Carers \(Equal Opportunities\) Act 2004 \(SCIE 2005\) \(external link\)](#)
- [The Common Assessment Framework 2005. \(external link\)](#)
- [Mental health Act 2007 \(external link\)](#)
- [Putting People First: a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care \(DH 2007\) \(PDF 339KB external link\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 \(external link\)](#)

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http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/sites/default/files/Access_to_education_and_training_for_young_adult_carers.pdf

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<https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing11/>

Children and Families Act (2014) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

Care Act (2014) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

[Edward Timpson announces plans to improve young carer identification March 2017](#)

[No wrong door video](#) produced by Wirral Young Carers

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