



CHAMPIONS E-BULLETIN -Autumn 2009

Funding Focus

As you will all know, the majority of the project is funded through the Fairer Scotland Fund, which comes to an end in March 2010. The project has been audited by the FSF team with a successful outcome. The project will undertake a best value review and will be bench marked with the Edinburgh Young Carers Project. It will then be down to the Dundee Partnership to make decisions on the future of the project and services for young carers in the City. The YCP has made a significant difference to the lives of young carers and their families and the continuation of these services are vital for the future. We hope to know the outcome of the Partnerships decision early next year.

Social Work and Health also reviewed the work of the Centre including the Young Carers Project. The following findings were from the review of service users:

- 88% rated the project as Very Good
- 100% said that their worker regularly checks that they are happy with the service they receive
- 100% of respondents said they never found it difficult to get help from the project
- 94% said that they thought the project did a good job for young carers in Dundee
- 88% agreed that their radical and cultural needs were given sufficient attention/consideration by the project

The following comments came back from the review of stakeholders:

*'Provides strong support to young carers within the city'
'I am happy with the services offered to my particular young person. The worker communicates with me through phone contact and tries to engage the young person in a variety of activities/events'*

Work in Schools

The project continues to build on and develop its work within schools in the city. Workshops to secondary school S2 pupils have taken place over the past year with Harris, Braeview, Baldragon, Grove and Morgan Academy's. Lunchtime drop-in sessions have been held at Menzieshill and St John's RC High School's. Two Champions have been secured in Grove Academy and are now contacts within the school regarding young carers issues.

Staff have attended a parents night at Kingspark School, speaking to carers and young carers and raising awareness of services and an awareness raising afternoon has also been held at Lochee Primary for staff and pupils.

The Education Resource Pack continues to be promoted and staff from the project are now building relationships with staff from primary schools with a view to facilitating workshops, in addition to those currently held in secondary schools.

National Carers Week 2009

National Carers Week (June 8-14th) enabled the young carers to work with the local press to produce a large feature, highlighting adult and young carers. Three different families told their stories of caring, including a 10 year old young carer. The feature also gave information about the organisation and the support services it provides. Further publicity in the local media is planned for September 2009 (the 10th anniversary of the Young Carers Project and Dundee Carers Centres' 20th anniversary).

Scottish Young Carers Alliance Event

Staff from the project were asked to showcase a specific area of work by the Scottish Young Carers Alliance at an event in Edinburgh during May. The piece of work showcased was the projects' involvement in the consultation and development of the NHS Carers Information Strategy and the associated Information Pack for Carers and their Families. Representatives from young carers projects across Scotland were in attendance, along with MSP's from the Scottish Government and staff from local authorities and the NHS.

Pilot of Assessment Tool

Part of our Upbeet service, is funded by Comic Relief. Due to this, the project was asked to help to pilot the assessment tool entitled "Manual for Measures of Caring Activities and Outcomes for Children and Young People" which has been launched by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers. The project was the only one in Scotland chosen to take part in the pilot. The manual is intended to provide researchers and practitioners in the field of caring with relevant and accessible tools for the evaluation of caring activities and caring outcomes in young carers. This pioneering and exciting development is a major advance in outcome-based work with young carers and their families. The tools (or questionnaires) have been generated by a team of experts at The University of Nottingham - Young Carers International Research and Evaluation.

Cross Generation Project

The second Cross Generation Project brought young carers and adult carers together to create a piece of work. This year they decided to record a song and write poems which were about their experiences of caring. Three full-day events were held in March to prepare for and record the material and the final Cross Generation Presentation Event was held in April, in partnership with Showcase the Street.



The presentation event enabled participants to showcase their song 'Try Being Me' and their poems. The official CD containing this was launched at the event. Wave 102 were there to present participants with certificates and then played the song live on air later that afternoon. Local poet Mark Thomson who supported the participants to write their poems during the full-day events, was also there to showcase some his work. The song can now be downloaded from the project's website.

Following on from this, the Cross Generation Project became an example of good practice, when The Scottish Centre for Regeneration used the project as a subject for one of its Learning Points. Learning Points are a series of publications designed to share the lessons learned from national regeneration activities, research and evaluation.

UPBEET Project

UPBEET supports young adult carers between the ages of 16 and 21 years old to enable them to access employment, education or training. This is done through building on their practical skills and personal development, including their confidence and self-esteem. They can also access our services with regard to benefit entitlements.

Following on from a year of hard work, a conference is to be held on the 17th of February 2010 to showcase the research carried out by the project, in conjunction with The University of Nottingham, through the Comic Relief Fund. Young people are involved in planning and organising the event.

Volunteer Opportunity – UPBEET

In the coming weeks, a young person engaging with Upbeet will take up a one day a week, three month volunteer placement in the Dundee Carers Centre. The placement is an opportunity for gaining experience and knowledge in various areas of work that the Centre as a whole, is involved in.

Family Support Work

Family Support Work continues to have a very strong take up with parents and guardians. Part of this work included an 8 week course which ran at the start of the year. Speakeasy which is an accredited Family Planning Association (FPA) course. The course was run jointly by the Young Carers Project and the FPA. Feedback has shown that the course helped to give parents confidence when talking to their children, provided social contact and allowed them to gain an accredited award which could help them into further training or employment. Two of the participants have gone on to train to become peer educators in Speakeasy themselves, through the FPA.

What have our young people been up to?

So many activities have taken place since the last bulletin to mention. Here are just a few of them –

- Holiday programmes take place during all the schools holidays, to give young carers the opportunity for respite and a break from their caring role. These have included trips to Stonehaven Outdoor Swimming Pool, Cairnie Farm, M&D's amusement park in Strathclyde and
- In-house training programmes have run during Summer 09's holiday programme and will continue to be run during the October holiday programme.
- Residentials have taken place to London, Dalguise Outdoor Education Centre and Blue Sky Adventures.

Scottish Young Carers Festival 2009

The second Scottish Young Carers Festival took place in West Linton on the 29th and 30th of August and young carers from across the country came together to share experiences, raise the profile of young carer issues in Scotland and most importantly, have fun! Those attending participated in activities including Visual Arts, SFA Football, workshops run by the Scottish Youth Parliament, Dance and DJing and a Question Time Debate. The festival provides young people with an opportunity to take a break from their caring responsibilities at home, have some social interaction with their peers.

At the festival, Shona Robison, Public Health Minister spoke about the extra £200,000 of funding which the Scottish Government has given to the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, to be used for projects across the country.

Befriending Pilot

The project is piloting a Befriending support service, aimed at young carers between the ages of 5 and 8 years. This pilot will run for three months, at which time it will be reviewed. Currently one young carer is being supported by one of the projects' volunteers

Anniversary Week

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Young Carers Project, along with the 20th anniversary of the Dundee Carers Centre, a week of events is being held w/b 21st September. The project will be holding a Civic Reception, at which certificates will be given out to all young carers who have gained an accredited award recently. These are in conjunction with other events which are being held by the Dundee Carers Centre during the same week.

New Corporate Brand

Our new corporate brand is to be officially launched at the Dundee Carers Centre's AGM, by Alan Baird, Director of Social Work on the 25th of September 2009.

As part of the new brand, our new logo, featured at the top of this bulletin, was designed by a student from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art.

New Website

In June 2009, the project launched its re-developed website, www.youngcarers.co.uk
The site contains information about all of the projects services, including downloadable leaflets and forms. Young people were consulted on the new site and feedback has been extremely positive. The site also features the new logo, as previously mentioned.

The project is always looking to recruit new Champions. If there is anyone you think may be interested in joining the Champions Group or who you would like to nominate, please contact the office.

Until the next bulletin, if there is anything you would like to discuss or ideas that you have regarding our on-going work or future activities, please do not hesitate to contact one of the team.