



BEING A YOUNG CARER IN NORTHUMBERLAND REPORT

JANUARY 2025

INTRODUCTION

In late 2024 we asked young carers registered with Carers Northumberland to complete our young carers survey. 81 young carers responded and told us how being a young carer impacted them. Carers Northumberland would like to thank all of the young people that responded and shared their experiences with us.

The survey focused on the impact of cost of living, education and wellbeing.

In the 2023 Carers Trust report “Being a young carer is not a choice, it’s just what we do”, their findings reflect the Northumberland report where over half of the young people responding were impacted by the cost of living. Unlike the national picture, around 36% of young carers in Northumberland were caring more, compared with the 56% nationally. 50% of young carers in Northumberland felt as though they were not supported in education, compared with 40% of young carers nationally.



Young Carer foreword

My name is Jess. I am 15 and I am a member of Carers Northumberland but most importantly I am a young carer. I care for my mam and my grandparents. I have cared for them for a while. I also look after my siblings a lot. This impacts me because I struggle to get all of my homework done and get it handed in on time. Since then I have become a young carer ambassador and represent Northumberland in the young carers National Voice. I will forever be grateful to the young carers service for the support I have received since registering. The workers are always willing to listen and they do whatever they can to help.

They have given me so many opportunities and have given me more confidence speaking to people. I have loved going on the carers trips, they are always really fun and gives me a chance to relax, and meet others who live with the same thing.

Jess Turnbull

Forum member, ambassador and young carer

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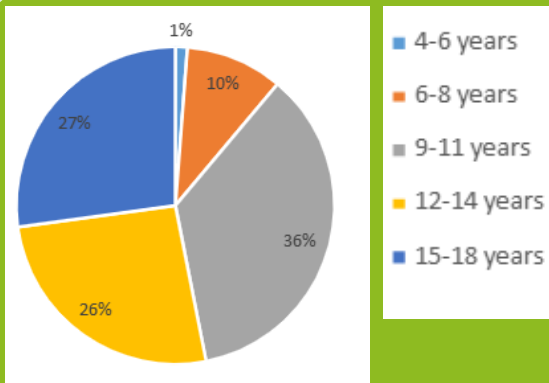


YOUNG CARERS

Registered with Carers
Northumberland (Jan
2025)

DEMOGRAPHICS

In section 1 young carers were asked about their age, the age of the person they care for, the hours they spend caring each week and who they care for.



The majority (36%) of young carers who completed this survey were aged between 9-11 years old



36% care for a parent
56% care for a sibling
4% care for a grandparent
2% care for an aunt or uncle



65% of young carers spend up to 20 hours caring a week
22% care for up to 49 hours
12% said they provided more than 50 hours of care a week

36% of young carers said they provide more care than last year



“ The hardest thing about being a young carer is having the responsibility to look after her and making sure the house is clean”

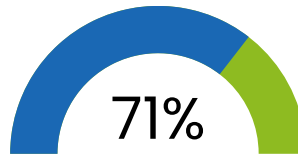
“ I don't like seeing my parents sick and ill as I want them to be better and to be like other parents. It really stresses me out when my parents are ill because I worry a lot.”

FINANCE

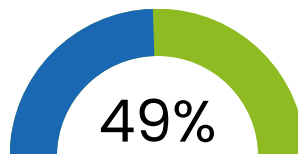


Carers Northumberland have helped young carers access grants for;

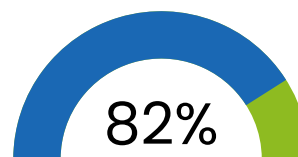
- Food
- Energy arrears / costs
- White goods
- Driving lessons
- School trips



told us they have worried about money. 26% of those young carers said they always worried about money.



told us their family doesn't have enough money. 37% saying they usually have enough money and only 15% reported they always had enough money.



told us their family has been affected by the cost of living crisis.

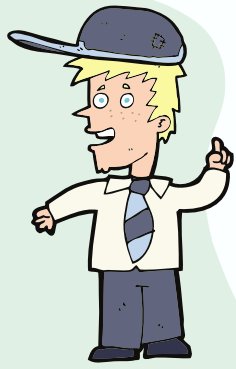
"I would like to go on the school trips but they are so expensive"

The 2023 Carers Trust national report "Being a young carer is not a choice" found that 56% of the young people responding had been affected by the cost of living, however our survey results showed a much higher impact with 82% of young carers saying they had been affected by the cost of living crisis.

Young Carers Support Fund

A total of £13,022 has been accessed since the 1st April 2024 enabling 115 young carers to access a grant to enable them to take a break from caring.

EDUCATION

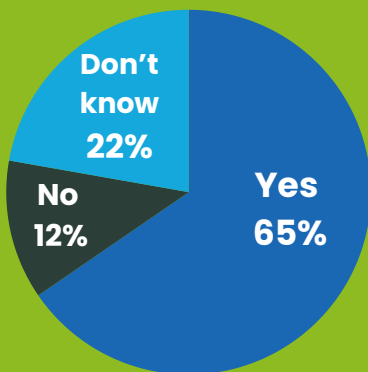


We wanted to find out if young carers felt supported in their school environment, barriers they face and the impact being a young carer has on them in education.

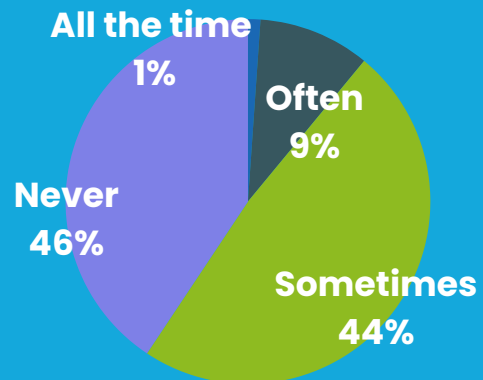


GREAT NEWS! 50% OF YOUNG CARERS FELT SUPPORTED IN THEIR SCHOOL!

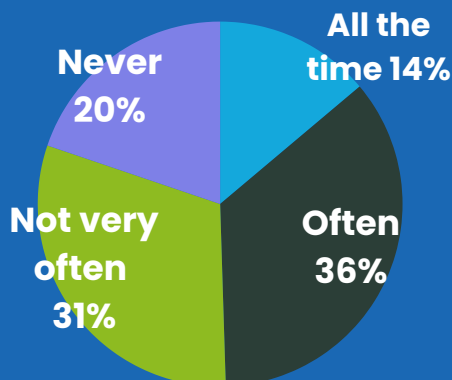
65% OF YOUNG CARERS TOLD US THEIR SCHOOL KNEW THEY WERE A YOUNG CARER



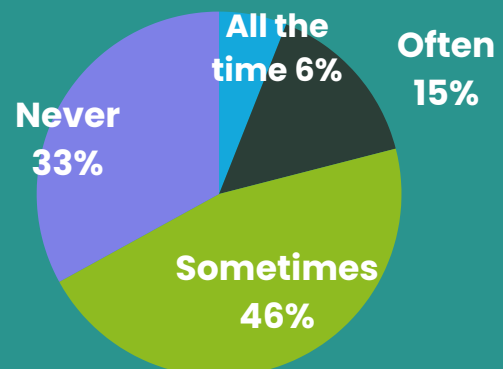
OVER 50% OF YOUNG CARERS HAVE EXPERIENCED BULLYING



50% OF YOUNG CARERS HAD FELT UNSUPPORTED IN SCHOOL



ALMOST 70% OF YOUNG CARERS HAD STRUGGLED TO COMPLETE HOMEWORK OR JOIN IN WITH AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES



“(worst bit is) Being tired for school because of the person you care for”

“They are understanding of my situation at home so they do allow a little lateness now and then ”

YOUNG CARERS TOLD US THIS WOULD HELP IN SCHOOL

"Just sometimes be a bit understanding that I have feelings and emotions"

"A space to take a break"

"Be more flexible in due dates for work outside of school (homework)"

"Have more empathy"

"Be more understanding when I'm tired as I might of had a bad night with my brother "

"A support person in school I can talk to if needed "

"Less pressure about attendance and homework."

"Give me time in the mornings if I've had a rough night because of my care!"

"Stop issuing detentions for lateness"

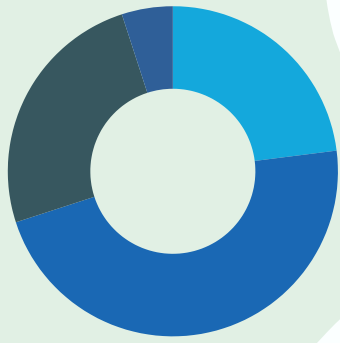
"Deal with issues when they occur"

"Listen to me"

60% said their friends didn't understand what it was like for them being a young carer



WELLBEING



Do you get enough sleep?

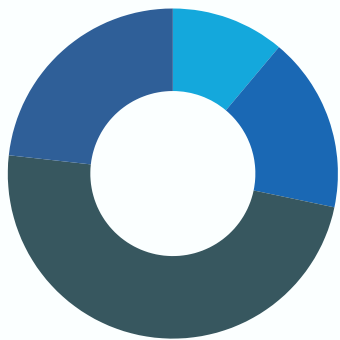
Always - 23%

Usually - 47%

Sometimes - 25%

Never - 5%

30% of young carers did not get enough sleep



Do you ever feel stressed or worried about being a young carer?

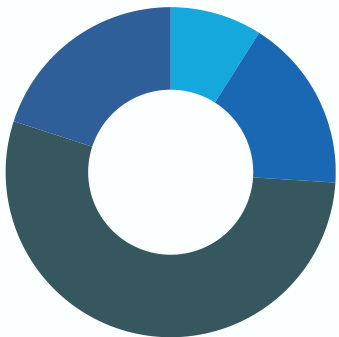
Always - 11%

Usually - 17%

Sometimes - 48%

Never - 23%

28 % of young carers said they usually or always felt stressed



Does looking after someone affect how much time you spend with friends?

Always - 9%

Usually - 17%

Sometimes - 54%

Never - 20%

80% of young carers said their caring role had impacted upon friendships



Do you feel included in all of the things your friends do?

Always - 14%

Usually - 27%

Sometimes - 49%

Never - 10%

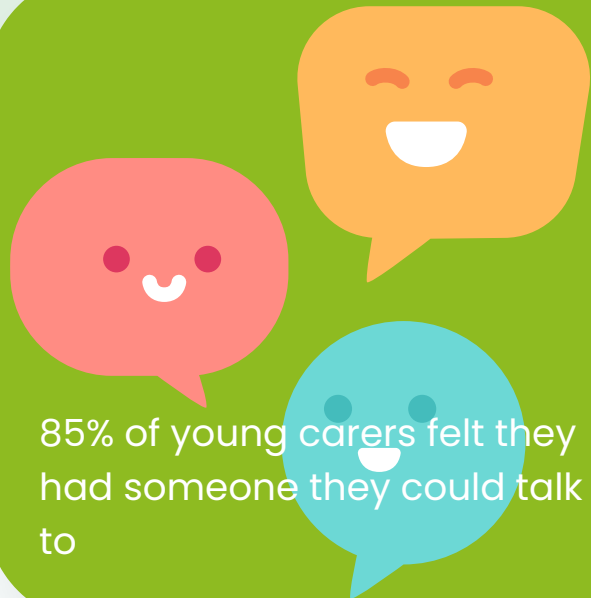
90% of young carers had felt excluded at some point.

"We don't get to go do things like my friends do, as my brother is poorly a lot".

"(worst bit is) Having the responsibility to look after her and making sure the house is clean "

SUPPORT

We asked the young carers about the support they receive from Carers Northumberland's young carers service. This is what they told us



"The young carers is a really good and fun service "

"You are the best for me thank you x "

"I got my gym pass and get to do fun activities with friends. I really enjoyed doing the pumpkin and looking forward to the pantomime"

" I just like that I can come do this and it's just for me we don't need to look for a escape plan if it's busy or plan around my brothers meds not that he can help it"

SUMMARY

The report highlights how being a carer can impact upon relationships for young people. 80% of young carers who responded to our survey said their caring role had impacted their friendships, over 50% reported they had felt excluded from friendships and over 50% reported experiencing bullying. To help tackle social isolation, Carers Northumberland provide respite activities that many young carers have found key in developing lasting strong friendships with other young people who understand what its like being a carer.

Carers Northumberland's school work is making progress, with 65% of respondents telling us their school knew they were a young carer, however we aim to have more of our registered young carers schools knowing about their caring role. With over 50% of young carers responding to the survey saying they do not feel supported in school, Carers Northumberland are working in collaboration with other organisations across the county to support schools to identify and support young carers.

Overall those who responded to the survey felt Carers Northumberland supported them as young carers, enabling them to have someone to talk to and attend activities to meet with peers.



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Attached appendices show original survey questions sent to carers and their individual responses to questions 5, 6, 19 and 26

APPENDIX 1

Annual survey questions

All about you

Tell us a little about yourself

1. How old are you? *

Enter your answer

2. Who do you help look after? (please tick all of the people you help take care of this can be more than one person) *

☐ Parent (your mam or dad)

☐ Brother or sister

☐ Grandma or Grandad

☐ Aunt or Uncle

☐ Other

3. Thinking about the last year has the time you spend caring increased or decreased? (This means you are either helping more or less, or just the same) *

☐ I do more

☐ I do less

☐ I do the same

4. How much time do you spend look after the person you care for each week? *

☐ 0-20 hours

☐ 21-49 hours

☐ More than 50 hours

5. What is the best thing about being a young carer? *

Enter your answer

6. What is the worst thing about being a young carer? *

Enter your answer

7. Do you ever feel stressed or worried about being a young carer? *

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

8. Do you get enough sleep? *

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

9. Does looking after someone effect how much time you get to see your friends? *

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

10. Do you feel included in all of the things your friends do? *

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

11. Do your friends understand your needs as a young carer? *

- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Not very well
- ☐ Not at all

All about money

Tell us a little bit about how you manage money

12. Do you worry about the cost of living and things being more expensive? *

- ☐ Always
 - ☐ Usually
 - ☐ Sometimes
 - ☐ Never
-

13. Does your family have enough money? *

- ☐ Always
 - ☐ Usually
 - ☐ Sometimes
 - ☐ Never
-

14. Has your family been affected by the cost of living crisis? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ On occasion
- ☐ No

All about school

Tell us how your school supports you as a young carer

15. Does your school know you are a young carer? *

- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Don't no
-

16. Do you get enough support in school? *

- ☐ All the time
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Not very often
- ☐ Never

17. Do you get bullied? *

- ☐ All the time
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

18. Do you get to school on time? *

- ☐ All the time
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

19. Is there anything your school can do to help you? *

Enter your answer

20. Do you struggle do homework or after school activities because you are taking care of someone? *

- ☐ All the time
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

All about your support needs

Tell us a little bit about the kind of help and support you need

21. Do you come along to our young carer activities? *

- ☐ All the time
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

22. If not, why?

23. Do you have someone to talk to about being a young carer? *

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

24. If you would like someone to talk to, please give us your name and contact details (these can be your parents details) we will contact you or your parents to talk about the support we can offer you.

Enter your answer

25. Do you feel you get enough support from the young carers service? *

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

26. If never, please tell us what we can do to support you more

Enter your answer

27. Is there anything you would like to tell us about the young carers service or anything you would like us to be doing for young carers? *

Enter your answer

28. **Thank you for completing our survey. These answers help us to build a service that supports all young carers. If you need help with anything we have asked you about please get in touch. Leave your contact details below:**

APPENDIX 2

Annual survey all quotes

What is the best thing about being a young carer?

- The support that I receive
- I don't know, I don't really think about it because he's my brother
- Making friends that I know have the same family problems
- I can tell when they are having a good day
- making new friends
- Being able to relate to others and n time of need
- Helping at home and going on trips
- Trips
- Being able to help my Mum.
- I feel like I am helping my brother
- I get to help my mum and spend time with her
- I'm not sure
- Not sure
- Being able to give something back
- Enjoying quality time with my little brother
- Doing activities with my brother
- Helping my brother and making him feel lived safe and happy
- Helping my dad
- Getting to help mam and dad with Alfie my brother.
- That I get a break from my brother with the active northumberland pass
- Getting rewarded by my parents for helping my little brother
- It makes me feel better when I'm helping my grandma and grandad as they look after me and my sister full time since my mam passed away
- knowing that mums okay
- Meeting other young carers
- Nothing
- looking after my brother and keeping him safe
- Getting to spend time with who I care for
- Being helpful
- The fact that if I do what the person I am caring for wants, they'll be nicer to me.
- Being able to help the people in my life who need help
- I get to learn new things and experience new things as a carer
- Helping with my brothers needs
- Seeing my brother get better at things
- I get to spend time with my family and know that I am helping them to be well. I like to help my parents with important jobs at home. I like spending time with my family because I love them.
- Responsibility
- I love my brother.
- Going on trips and meeting other young carers and doing the activities
- I feel like an adult and can help my mom
- Feeling valued as a carer
- Helping people achieve things they struggle to do
- Family time we get treats
- The support I receive
- I love being helpful and making my brother happy

- I get a break from the chaos and I'm able to clear my mind
- Helping my mam
- Getting time out at the gym
- I don't know
- I like to help
- I think I learn a lot about people like my brother that I might not know in the future if I didn't live with him
- Activities, making friends through activities.
- Helping my brother
- Spending time together as a family
- I am doing a good job and helping my parents! I love helping and doing fun things with my family
- I get to see family get better with my help.
- Spending quality time with my brother
- Being of help to someone
- Access to young carers group as super friendly
- I get to help my parents with my brother
- I help my mam because she can't do things anymore
- Looking after and making my brother at all times
- Being able to help my brother play and being able to understand him and help make him happy. He doesn't like people but he likes me
- I get to help someone
- I love to help my brother and I love to make him smile.
- Looking after people
- The fun activities 😊
- I got more support than my friends
- The amount of time I get to spend time with my mum
- My mam is so happy when I can help her
- I feel I'm doing a good thing when I can help take care of my mother. She has always done her best for me and my sisters and I like to return that love and care back to her
- About being there for my Dad
- Not sure
- Being able to play games with my little sister
- Just caring for my little brother because I love him
- I like to care for people I love
- I like spending time with people
- That you help people
- That you help people in need
- I like helping people
- That we always do fun things with other people
- It's fun
- Helping my sister get

What is the worst thing about being a young carer?

- Again I don't know, I just help my brother
- Stress and worry
- Not being able to go out with friends
- Lack of self time
- Stress
- Nowt their sound
- Worrying about my Mum.
- Doesn't give me much time to myself
- Not being able to do what I want to do all the time
- When my brother is ill
- Sometimes his behaviour is hard
- Seeing my mum struggle and hit of my brother and feeling helpless for my brothers sensory feelings and how he feels to things
- Seeing my dad in pain
- it can be hard sometimes as he doesn't want to do something and i was looking forward to doing it.
- When I get no privacy as my brother can be quite annoying
- Some of the things I do to help care for my little brother, like throwing noosed out in the bin
- We don't get to go do things like my friends do, as he is poorly a lot.
- Having the responsibility to look after her and making sure the house is clean
- Being tired for school because of the person you care for.
- Mood swings
- sometimes I miss doing things with my friends
- Having to care for some else whilst still learning to take care of myself
- The stress
- Having the person I care for rule my life and having to do everything they want.
- Not having much of a social life
- Feeling different to others because I'm caring
- Sometimes I miss out doing things I would like
- It's annoying sometimes because it means I have to stop what I am doing like playing on my xbox
- I don't like seeing my parents sick and ill as I want them to be better and to be like other parents. It really stresses me out when my parents are ill because I worry a lot.
- I can't play myself.
- Sometimes I don't want to do anything, but just want to play
- Tiring and not having enough self time especially due to college time included
- seeing people struggle
- It's tiring when my brother has meltdowns
- Honestly i wouldn't know as young carers is a great service
- Not being able to do a lot
- Not always able to do what I want to do
- Not being able to do the things i used to
- It can be tiring
- When he has a melt and it stops us going somewhere or takes my mums time up
- Overwhelming and no many friends
- It interests my gaming time
- Not being able to do anything just me and my mummy and daddy because someone always has to be with my brother

- I have anxiety and sometimes I cannot do things because I need to care for my parents
- Not being able to go out with friends
- The fact that it's never ending
- Getting time for self
- It is sometimes stressful
- Sometimes I want to play on my games
- Not being able to go out as much as I would like
- Not being able to do what I want to
- Don't get much time to myself
- My brother struggles with noise and busy places so I miss out on quite a lot of things.
- Can be tiring at times
- We have to do what my autistic brother wants
- I worry about her when she goes for operations all the time and get upset when she's in pain.
- When mam is in hospital all the time. I hate it.
- Sometimes I have to miss out on time out with my friends. We do try as a family to keep this to a minimum but sometimes it can't be helped
- Everything
- Looking after them all the time and not being able to do my own things
- That it's noisy
- Not aloud to do the things I want to do

Is there anything your school can do to help you?

- Less pressure about attendance and homework. Deal with issues when they occur
- Nothing they help me with everything
- I have someone to talk to
- being more understanding
- Be more flexible in due dates for work outside of school (homework)
- Have more empathy and space to take a break
- Stop children from taking my things
- Give me extra time for homework
- Don't think so
- I've never asked
- Help to understand some of my work and for things to be repeated if needed
- Just sometimes be a bit understanding that I have feelings and emotions
- I am home schooled
- No but I am going to cyps now because of things that's happened in the past not because I help my grandma
- Give me time in the mornings if I've had a rough night because of my cared one
- Be included in the activities at school
- Understand me more when I'm tired it might be because I've been up with my brother through the night!
- Not relating me being a carer
- Listen to me
- They do
- No they are already providing help
- Less homework
- Less restrictions
- More help
- Stop being on me case all the time
- Have better consequences for nasty people
- Not sure. Have some support in place. But feel like they could support more
- I do not go to school, I am home schooled
- They are really helpful to me
- Give me extra time for homework
- Stop issuing detentions for my lateness
- My mam talks to teachers
- Be more understandable when I'm tired as I might of had a bad night with my brother banging his bedroom door!
- Listen to me.
- Student services and also support person in school can talk to if needed
- I would like to go on the school trips but they are so expensive
- Sometimes I want to be with mam and especially on the days she is in hospital
- There is not really a lot they can do. They are understanding of my situation at home so they do allow a little lateness now and then

Is there anything you would like to tell us about the young carers service or anything you would like us to be doing for young carers?

- More trips for younger carers but some trips just for the older ones.
- Everything is good
- More range in activity for all ages so there more age appropriate.
- Thank you
- No you are sound
- I like doing activities with you
- Can't get on line to access days out
- Let other children know about disability and how hard it can be for siblings
- I really enjoyed doing activities with my friends for friend again and also they help my mum talking and telling her activities on for him I am grateful they got involved
- Loved the boxing
- It's good that yous do trips and help support family's
- Just for someone to get in touch, I did send a text along time ago but no one got back to me
- Thank you for supporting me
- I wish you still did the active Northumberland pass
- Check up on the younger cares more
- No everything is okay
- Make us stand out more and involve us county (aka out the wilds of Northumberland)
- I really enjoy going to the gym with my dad with my pass but I am finding it hard to fit it in with homework and caring for my parents and Milo (puppy) I am also more tired as the work is alot harder and have to concentrate alot more.
- I find homework hard with the technology as my dad is no help and mum finds it very difficult on her phone but have always managed to hand it in on time. I have also had my mum write out the large amounts of writing because I couldn't do it on my phone and my hand is sore with all of the work.
- I think the one to one sessions with Anne-Marie were very helpful when they came to see me at school!
- I enjoyed doing the crafty activities alot and the cooking too. I like having the young carers groups and like having x with me now too. Xx also walks me to school and I talk to her so I have different friends that know what I do.
- My friends don't really know what I do for my parents as I never told them really as I just moved schools and I not with the same people anymore. I have been bullied but not because I am a carer but school do know about it and sorted them out and it's stopped now.
- I was hoping to have a holiday but my mum found the forms too hard to fill in because of needing the quotes to be able to fill in the forms with so we didn't manage to do it.
- To tell other new carers of the book the late crew as I really enjoyed that book and still have it now! I really enjoyed ridley park and the mini beasts.
- I like they offer a lot.
- Thank you for all your support 🧡
- More competitions like the recent Christmas card design competition as this is something easy and can be done at home while being included in activities
- Maybe a Roblox voucher to be won or like phone credit
- Thankyou for the stuff you have had on which I have been involved in
- That it is amazing it it would support others struggling with family members who have disabilities

- Grant for gym is very useful
- Like more residential trips
- I just like that I can come do this and it's just for me we don't need to look for a escape plan if it's busy or plan around my brothers meds not that he can help it
- Help support other young carers
- You did it anyway
- I got my gym pass and get to do fun activities with friends. I really enjoyed doing the pumpkin and looking forward to the pantomime?
- I would like to go horse riding again as so much fun.
- Also a trip to flamingo land would be amazing.
- I would like to go ice skating.
- I enjoy the activities with Karen on zoom.
- More family days out as I love my dad and mum joining me on fun days out.
- To design a sweatshirt to wear when we go on trips out to help tell others I am part of your group??
- More activities in Blyth
- You are the best for me thank you x
- I really love the beamish day out every year and would like more trips like that
- They have been very kind to us.
- Making activities more accessible for myself
- The young carers is a really good and fun service
- Thank you for the opportunities
- Remind mam to book things
- Although I haven't used the service a lot I have always found that if myself or my mother were to contact them we always get a speedy reply. Also they have been very supportive of anything they can help with
- More help for the very young carers
- More activities