

About Family Action

Family Action has been a leading provider of services to disadvantaged and socially isolated families for 140 years. We work with over 45,000 families every year providing practical, emotional and financial support through over 100 services based in communities across England. We build on families' strengths, supporting them to fulfil their potential and make a positive contribution to their community. We use this experience to campaign for a society free from disadvantage and social isolation.

Family Action Central Office

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Family
Action

Young Carers'
Services

supporting families since 1869

Young Carers' Services

It is estimated that there are some 139,000 children and young people across England under the age of 18 who provide some level of unpaid care to another family member who has a physical disability or illness, mental ill-health, learning difficulties or a substance misuse problem. 16% (22,000) of these are reported to be caring for between 20 and 50 or more hours per week (ONS, 2003).

Without support, these young people's educational achievement and development can be significantly affected, not least because they don't have time to do homework or socialise with friends.

In the Government's carer's strategy published in June 2008 (Carers at the Heart of 21st Century Families and Communities) young carers themselves cited better support for the family and the person cared for as their top priority (p133).

Working with the whole family is at the heart of all Family Action's work, including our Young Carers' services so, as well as these specific services, we offer family support and advice and arrange activities involving all family members.



Family Action Young Carers' Services:

- work to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes and use outcome-based evaluation systems
- help young people to access other services in the community
- advocate on behalf of young carers and their families
- provide information to young carers about a parent's illness or disability
- support young carers with any issues they may have at school (some of our services work within schools, providing counselling or discussion groups)
- provide group work and regular activities, often linked to the creative arts
- arrange activities and holidays with other young carers, children and young people in the community and for the whole family
- provide the opportunity for new experiences, to learn new skills and to be involved in how the service is run.

Family Action's services can be home or centre-based, providing individual support and information to help children to understand their parents' illness or disability and to express and understand their own feelings about their situation.

Our service in Rochdale is part of a wider Carers' Service, which was awarded Beacon status in 2005. Our Islington service forms part of a successful Family Pathfinder service in the London Borough of Islington, and we now provide a country-wide service in Nottinghamshire. These services, as well as others in Luton, Kensington and Chelsea, Waltham Forest and Tower Hamlets (where we support children and young people affected by the poor mental health of a parent) adopt a 'whole' family approach to supporting young carers.

For more information about Family Action's Young Carers' Services please contact:
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Visit our website at www.family-action.org.uk/youngcarers