

A Caring Voice



The Magazine for and about Young Adult Carers

Issue 2

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VOICE GROUP

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Welcome to our second edition of A Caring Voice! This quarterly magazine is for carers and professionals to keep Bridgend informed of the fantastic work Young Adult Carers do. The Young Adult Carer Voice Project is part of Community Voice.

The Community Voice: Needs Must/ Pan fo Angen portfolio project is funded by the Big Lottery Community Voice grant scheme. The projects aim is to increase the voice of citizens and especially those most marginalised in local policy and planning processes. Consisting of seven Bridgend County Borough third sector projects, Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations is the lead organisation.

Please send any comments you may have to:
rhian.bennett@actionforchildren.org.uk



ID Cards



In February 2014, the Bridgend Young Carers and Young Adult Carers Voice Group took part in a consultation run by Children in Wales about the use of a Young Carers ID Card and what benefit this may have on them. As a result of this consultation it was clear that an ID card would benefit them in school and health settings. The results showed that in a school the cards would be useful if homework was late, if they are extremely tired in school, if they are late or have to leave early. The idea of an ID card has now been endorsed by

Bridgend Country Borough Council and is quickly making its way into comprehensive schools in Bridgend. Once the cards are secure in schools, we will also encourage their use in GP's and hospitals.



Consultations

We carry out regular consultations with our Young Adult Carers. Recently they have been involved in a consultation for Saul Becker at the University of Birmingham where they fed into research about the barriers young carers face to go on to further education and the impact caring can have on their identity. They were also a part of research on young carers carried out by the Welsh Assembly Government and took part in the Youth Cymru Llais Ifanc consultation which will feed into the Young People's manifesto and be presented to the Welsh Assembly Government early next year. The forum is a well-established, confident group who are enthusiastic about feeding into consultations about local services that affect them in Bridgend. If you are a professional or an organisation who would like to consult with the Young Adult Carer Voice Group please contact Rhian Bennett on rhian.bennett@actionforchildren.org.uk

Getting our (Welsh) Voices Heard

Our Welsh speaking young adult carers have recently been on high demand to spread the word on young adult carers through the medium of Welsh. Jodie, Keeley and Iestyn have all been interviewed for S4C and Radio Cymru on what it means to be a young adult carer and how this has affected their opportunities in life.



Peer Mentors

In July 2015, the Bridgend Young Adult Carer Voice Group began their Peer mentoring programme. Seven of our young adult carers are now trained to give peer mentoring sessions to new young carers who wish to join the group. The programme will allow any young carer aged 16 – 25 to have support from a peer who is going through a similar circumstance to them, get to know other young people and support them in developing confidence and accessing the group.

External Grants

We have been lucky enough to receive a grant from Carers Trust and Comic Relief to give young carers and young adult carers opportunities to have a break from their caring role. We shared this money with Bridgend Young Carers project to give as many young carers as possible some well deserved activities. These included a Graffiti workshop, Go Ape, Young Adult Carer pamper day, rugby tickets, Infinity trampolining, Laserzone and many more! Without this money we would not have been able to treat our young carers to these opportunities.



Me, My Life and My dreams

In October half term, we held a workshop called 'Me, My Life and My Dreams' which was run by Valley and Vale. The young adult carers spent the whole day taking part in drama and art activities to help them explore who they are as a young carer and identify their aspirations for the future. The workshop was an excellent way to motivate our young carers to achieve something for themselves whilst still being able to manage their caring role.





Infinity Trampolining

In September 2015, we ran a fun-filled trip to Infinity Trampolining in Cardiff to give our young adult carers a break from their caring role. They really enjoyed playing trampoline dodgeball, basketball and having a delicious meal afterwards in TGI Friday's.



Laserzone

In October half term, we took our young adult carers to Laserzone in Swansea followed by a fantastic meal in Las Iguanas.



Wales Vs Ireland

We used some of the Carers Trust grant to take our young adult carers and their families to a Wales vs Ireland test match at the Millennium Stadium in August 2015. We didn't win but we had a great day anyway!



<http://matter.carers.org/> is a website set up by Carers Trust for Young Adult Carers aged 16—25. It is a place to get support, Information, friendship and chat with other carers.



Mindfulness

We also used some of the Carers Trust and Comic Relief grant to provide Mindfulness sessions to young adult carers. Mindfulness is a way of helping you to enjoy the world more and understand yourself a bit better. Gareth Clode will be running a full day Mindfulness workshop for young adult carers at Bridgend Carers Centre during February half term 2016.

Meet the Young Adult Carers



Name: Chris

Age: 20

Cares for: Mother

Condition of cared for: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

Caring since the age of: 16

Caring role includes: cleaning, doing the dishes, shopping for food, carrying heavy things, financial support, emotional support.

Part of the Young Adult Carer Voice Project since: April 2014

Comment from the Young Adult Carer:

My caring role includes doing lots of things around the house such as cleaning and arranging rooms when we are changing the house around, going shopping for her and helping her through her day to day activities. To me my caring role can be quite challenging at times however it is rewarding knowing that I am able to help. The impact that caring has on my life is that things can get quite hectic and I don't really have much time to myself. I enjoy going to the group because it gives me some time out of the house and talk to people in the same situation as me.



In the News

Carers Trust Wales have launched a campaign called 'Here for Carers' with Community Pharmacy Wales and Public Health Wales to raise awareness of unpaid carers of all ages amongst pharmacists, and ensuring carers are aware of how pharmacists can assist them. To ensure carers take advantage of the support offered by pharmacists, a free bilingual booklet 'A Carer's Guide to Managing Medicines' will be available from all pharmacies in Wales, and Carers Trust Wales are asking all pharmacists to be on the lookout for carers, ensuring they are identified and supported as much as possible, wherever possible. Pharmacies will be displaying a 'Here for Carers' campaign poster encouraging carers to speak to their pharmacist about how they can help.

An online version of 'A Carer's Guide to Managing Medicines (2014)' can be found at <http://www.cpwales.org.uk>

Carers Open University Course

What about me?

The Open University, in partnership with Carers Trust Wales, have created a free personal development course for carers in Wales called 'What about me?'

This short course is available in English and Welsh and is designed for carers of any age and ability to help carers recognise and reflect on their skills and experiences. The course is very flexible carers and can boost confidence, show

Carers how Open University study works and be used as a stepping stone to further learning or employment.

For more information on this course go to <http://www.open.edu/>



OpenLearn Cymru |



Upcoming Events

Please be aware that these dates are provisional . More information regarding the events will be sent to you closer to the date. Should you require more information or are not on our contact list please contact Rhian on 01656 658479.

November 11th – Meal for all who attended Me, My Life and My Dreams workshop

December 8th – Christmas Party @ Winter wonderland Swansea - 5pm – 9pm

January 12th – YAC group

January 28th – Young Carers Awareness Day (events to be confirmed)

February 2nd – YAC group

February 16th—Mindfulness workshop

Other Services

The Samaritans

The Samaritans can offer support 24/7 via email, telephone, text , drop in services and through Facebook. Visit www.samaritans.org for more information.

Health and Well-being bus

Outside KPC Youth every Thursday from 10am offering sexual health and well-being advice, condom distribution, substance misuse support and advice and pregnancy testing. No appointment needed. KPC Youth—01656 745399.

The Bridge Mentoring Plus Scheme

One to one support for young people aged 10-25 using trained volunteer mentors. The Bridge MPS provide educational, recreational and social activities to enhance confidence and self-worth. They provide Emotional Wellbeing Programmes for young people and adults addressing self-management, relationships, peer support, etc.

The Bridge MPS— 01656 647891

Young Adult Carer Editor: Ronnie Walker

We hope you have found the second issue of A Caring Voice useful. Every effort is made to ensure all information used in this magazine is correct. The Young Adult Carer Voice Group, Action for Children and Bridgend Carers Centre can accept no liability for errors and omissions. If you would like to contribute to the next newsletter please contact rhian.bennett@actionforchildren.org.uk

Next issue due out March 2016

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