

Eyres Monsell Young Carers Project

We have been running a young carers group for 6 years, funded by the Big Lottery for three years. We have now received support through the Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales to continue for another 3 years.

Two part time members of staff work with a group of young carers, aged 11 – 17 years, every fortnight. The group develop, plan, deliver and evaluate a programme of activities aimed at providing young carers a break from their caring responsibilities. The programme provides a range of activities which support the development of new skills e.g. cooking, budgeting and organisational. The group members provide peer led support for each other as they are all be from similar circumstances and have a greater understanding of the issues young carers face. Young people are encouraged to take part in volunteering opportunities within our organisation. Additional support can be brokered by the staff from other agencies if appropriate.

As young carers they are often unable to attend after school provisions or have friends visit them at home. They are not able to attend other facilities as there is no one to take them. Many do not tell their schools or friends that they are carers as people will not understand what this means for them. This results in young people feeling isolated. This group enables them to come together with young people who understand their situation and offer peer support, learn new skills, how to access support they need, or simply have a break. We use our mini bus to collect them from home and return them afterwards which is unique to most groups. We provide a young person led programme encouraging them to plan and organise their own group activities. Activities are evaluated by young people and staff and quarterly meetings are held to discuss young people's progress. Each year we also take the group on a residential experience to enhance their team building skills, and self confidence.

If you know a young carer from the Eyres Monsell area of Leicester and would like to make a referral to the group just contact us at our Head Office. A referral form will be sent and a meeting arranged. This can take place wherever is most suitable for the young person.