

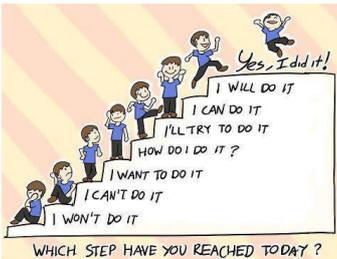


New Free Service

Positive Realities has been funded by the Edinburgh Community Health Partnership from Scottish Government Carer Information Strategy money to provide a service to support young carers and young adult carers across Edinburgh, called '*Staying on Course*'. To refer someone please contact Lorna Wynn in the first instance at the contact details below

Do you know someone who is young carer, or helps support someone in their family?

If they are aged 11-25 years old and live in Lothian we offer:



1-1 Free Life Coaching (all our coaches are trained and PVG checked)

What is life coaching?

It lets you talk about your life, decide what you want and work towards getting this.

You can change your life and reach your goals.

A trained coach will meet you for six sessions and help you handle difficulties and celebrate your successes!

Two support groups for young adult carers studying in Edinburgh. We would like to set these groups within the college/ university setting

What are support groups?

These are groups that let you share your experiences with other young people in the same situation. This can be a powerful way of feeling supported and sharing tips and ideas on how to make your life better.



Background Information on Positive Realities

STAYING ON COURSE

Positive Realities is a community organisation providing direct life coaching, emotional and advocacy support to assist young people aged 11-25 years across Lothian to make a positive transition into adulthood.

Our committee is chaired by an experienced health manager with responsibility for developing services for carers, including young carers, in Edinburgh. She holds full membership of the Institute of Healthcare Management.

Other members include an advocacy specialist with many years' experience working to support children and young people, a health specialist focusing on developing support for children and families and two young disabled adults with experience as both recipients and providers of support.

We believe our combined knowledge and expertise in delivering support to young people enables us to offer high quality services delivering robust outcomes within established budgets and timescales.

Young Carers and Young Adult Carers

The current strategy for young carers in Scotland 'Getting it Right for Young Carers' (Scottish Government, 2010) notes the negative impact excessive caring responsibilities can have on the health and wellbeing of young people and acknowledges the protective of dedicated support for young carers.

In Edinburgh it is estimated there are 5,000 young carers (Edinburgh Young Carers Project web data) and research has identified at least 2,000 children affected by parental substance misuse in Edinburgh (Fitzgerald and Johnston, 2012).

Research suggests young carers are more susceptible to increased levels of anxiety, depression, fear, changes in behaviour and social patterns (as noted by Aldridge and Becker, 1999).

For instance, a study of 61 young carers in Edinburgh identified significant worries and problems in relation to their well-being, and that these were over and above any 'normal' adolescent difficulties (Cree, 2003).

Talking to someone can help an escalation of problems, and whilst mothers are often a key source of support for young people, many report reported fears of being a burden to mothers or of contributing to their stress (Shucksmith et al., 2009).

This may well be exacerbated for young carers, given the majority care for their mothers (Dearden and Becker, 2003).

The service proposed here would offer young carers mechanisms for creating safe spaces to talk about their lives enabling expression and reflection on their situation to generate more positive life outcomes.

Proposed activity

This project will be called '*Staying on Course*' in recognition of the benefits support offers young carers in enabling them to work towards their own life goals whilst providing unpaid care.

Thus, our overall objective will be to strengthen abilities of young people to manage and review their caring responsibilities whilst guiding them towards achieving their own personal life goals.

In addition, we wish to develop approaches that complement existing provision for young people in Edinburgh.

For instance, we are conscious of the lack of availability of one to one support for young carers and of services to support young adult carers in this area. Our proposal outlined below will go some way to developing support in these areas.

This initiative involves two key areas of work, firstly we would provide a life coaching service to 30 young carers and secondly we would operate two fortnightly support groups in further/higher education establishments for a minimum of 20 young adult carers.

Both elements of the project will measure the extent to which outcomes for young carers have improved in the following areas:

- Knowledge about their caring role
- Health and wellbeing
- Confidence and self-expression
- Social and leisure opportunities
- Relationships
- Education/career
- Ability to shape services

Young people referred to, or self-referring to, the project will be asked to complete a questionnaire to assess the degree of caring responsibilities of young people using the 'Multidimensional Assessment of Caring Activities' tool (Joseph, Becker and Becker, 2009).

Those found to have a high or very high amount of caring activity will be prioritized for coaching support to ensure that this intervention is targeted at those most in need of support.

Life coaching

In order to offer young carers an opportunity to talk about, and address, specific issues relating to their caring situation a life coaching service will be offered to 30 young carers aged between 11- 25.

Each young carer will be offered six sessions of coaching in the first instance. Topics addressed by the coaching would be wide ranging and would directly relate to the outcome areas noted above. This would be achieved using a pictorial 'wheel of life' aide memoire to focus discussion.

Young carers would be supported to set a broad goal that they wish to achieve with a view to improving their lives, and then would be guided, challenged and encouraged to set and meet milestones in subsequent sessions.

In session five a sustainability plan would be created with each young carer in order to encourage self-development work beyond the coaching input.

A choice of five / six coaches will be offered to young carers, using a sheet with a photo and information about each coach.

Each coach will have been PVG checked and successfully obtained a Certificate in Multidisciplinary Coaching. This course is run by Coaching Direct Scotland, which has approved accreditation by the Association for Coaching, UK's leading governing body for coaches.

Coaches will receive coaching supervision from Coaching Direct Scotland every two months within a group setting.

Support groups

In recognition of the lack of current support for young carers who have progressed to post-school education, two fortnightly support groups will be established for students up to age 25 living in Edinburgh during term time. (Older students will be signposted to adult carer services).

Such support may enable young adult carers remain in education rather than drop out due to combined pressures of caring and studying.

The purpose of the groups will be to provide information about carer support, financial advice and to facilitate peer support. A range of speakers will be invited to give presentations depending on the specific interests of members.

Support groups could be located in college/ university bases and links, established with student welfare services (e.g. counseling, hardship funds) to encourage referrals from these sources.

Each group meeting will be able to cater for a maximum of 10 young adult carers, but over the course of the year it is anticipated as many as 30 carers will benefit from attendance.

If you think someone you work with might want to refer please contact

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