

Dear schools, academies, and colleges in Sutton,

National Carers Week 2022 is finally here!

National Carers Week is an annual campaign to not only recognise, celebrate and raise awareness of Young Carers and Adult Carers, but to also highlight the challenges they face and overcome on a daily basis, and to recognise the contribution Carers make to both families and communities throughout the UK. This also provides an opportunity to help people who may not identify themselves as having caring responsibilities to recognise themselves as Carers and receive the support that they may require and deserve.

This year, Carers Week takes place between the 6th - 12th June and its theme is '**make caring visible, valued and supported**', following on naturally from the Young Carers Action Day (16th March, 2022) theme, 'Taking Action on Isolation'. It is estimated that Carers save the country at least £132 billion a year for the unpaid caring that they do and Young Carers contribute to this immense figure.

National research report findings (Carers UK):

- More than half (**53%**) of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers said the amount of time they spend caring per week had increased in the past year.
- At least a third of respondents said that their caring role resulted in them either 'always' or 'usually' feeling 'worried' (**36%**), 'lonely' (**33%**) or 'stressed' (**42%**).
- **40%** of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers responding to the survey said they 'never' or 'not often' had someone to talk to at school about being a Young Carer.
- **52%** of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers responding to the survey said they 'never' or 'not often' got support from their school, college or university in balancing study with their caring role.

Young Carers tell us they can be:

- **Lonely** or feel as though **no one else understands** - often hiding their caring role, as they do not want to feel different. They may not even realise that they are a Young Carer.
- **Isolated** - they may miss school, out-of-school activities, or meeting-up with friends. They may have little free time because caring takes priority over socialising.
- **Anxious** - worrying about the person or people they support when they are away from them.
- **Overwhelmed** - Managing lots of responsibilities can mean that they don't have time or the right environment to complete homework. Some Young Carers miss school completely as caring duties mean they feel they can't leave the person they support, often facing sanctions on return to school, further isolating them.

Every uncertainty and challenge can present us with the opportunity to see and do things differently. Often, all it takes is listening to a different perspective and adjusting our own lens.

This **National Carers Week 2022**, we wanted to get in touch to ask Sutton professionals, partners and colleagues:

- *Do we, as professionals working in Sutton schools and organisations, do enough to recognise Young Carers?*
- *Do we see their needs?*
- *Are their voices being heard and amplified?*
- *Are our policies and processes supportive of their needs?*

What events are happening this year?

Here, at Sutton Carers Centre, our Young Carers Service will be running Carers Week-themed versions of our weekly support groups for Young Carers. We also will be leading with the Adult Carers Service on a range of special events to help raise awareness of Carers in Sutton, and to help ensure that they feel visible, valued and supported within the community.

We would particularly like to highlight a couple of key events happening across the week:

Our **'Wellbeing Open House'** event will be taking place from **10am – 8pm tomorrow (7th June)**, where we will be opening our doors to all Carers in Sutton, offering information & advice, health checks and other wellbeing activities (plus a few treats!). The invite is also open to professional colleagues (especially those of you juggling caring alongside your paid work), so we would like to welcome you to come along and connect with Carers and meet our staff and volunteer team.

Also, **throughout the week**, you can visit the London Borough of Sutton **Carers Creative Arts Display**, which offers an incredible showcase of artwork produced by Young, Parent, and Adult Carers at **Sutton Central Library on Level 2**. Come and see the amazing paintings, poetry, embroidery and woodwork created by our Sutton Carers of all ages, with each piece representing what caring means to them.

You can view a full calendar of events for Sutton partners [here](#). Please visit our website [here](#) for more information on other Carers Week activities and events.

Our simple ask of you:

More and more schools and professionals are able to recognise Young Carers and their skills. This is why, this year, we invite you to take a moment to think of Young Carers and to look at creating a community where they feel **visible, valued and supported**.

How can you get involved?

- Be a part of Carers Week - check out the resources available [here](#).
- Continue to work with us to identify Young Carers. If you need refresher training for staff or for young people, please contact us to discuss.
- Keep updated with Young Carers' issues, support services and events by following us on Instagram [@SuttonYoungCarers](#), Twitter [@SuttonCarers](#), Facebook [@SuttonCarersCentre](#), YouTube [@SuttonCarersCentre](#) or via our website [here](#) and our Carers Trust page [here](#).
- Stay connected nationally to Carers Trust by following them [@CarersTrust](#) or via their website [here](#), which has lots of information for professionals.
- Volunteer your time or your expertise - we have roles waiting to be filled.
- Fundraise for Young Carers and their families.
- Donate directly via our JustGiving page [here](#).
- Share your good work with us so it can be celebrated. We can learn from you, and we can build the local and national evidence-base of what works best for Young Carers and their families.
- Don't forget to share with us what you are doing this Carers Week to 'make caring visible, valued and supported'. Take photos and share these on Twitter and Facebook with us. Please post directly onto Twitter or Facebook using the hashtags **#CarersWeek2022** and **#SuttonCarers**. Please tag [@CarersTrust](#) and not forgetting [@SuttonCarers](#) on Twitter, or [@SuttonCarersCentre](#) on Facebook.

If you would like to find out further information, or get more involved, please contact the Young Carers Team at Sutton Carers Centre on the details below.

We would appreciate it if you could pass this on to spread the word!

With best wishes,

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Julia Kerr: SYCiE lead (Sutton Young Carers Senior Support and Development Worker)

Anna Hetherington: Sutton Young Carers Engagement Activities and Participation Worker

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