SHEFFIELD YOUNG CARERS

IMPACT REPORT 2025-26



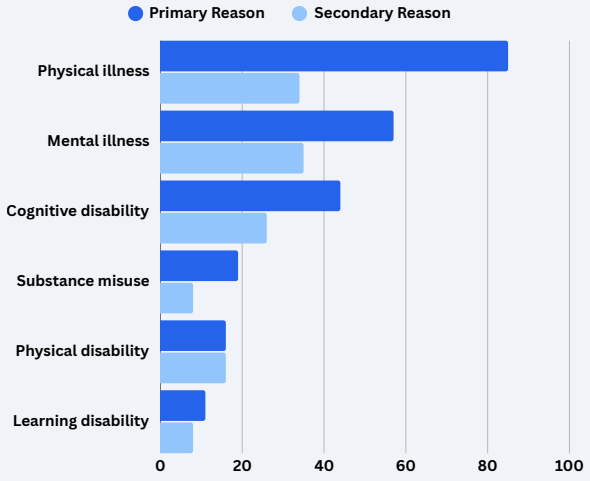
Working with young people
to make a difference for life

Our year in numbers

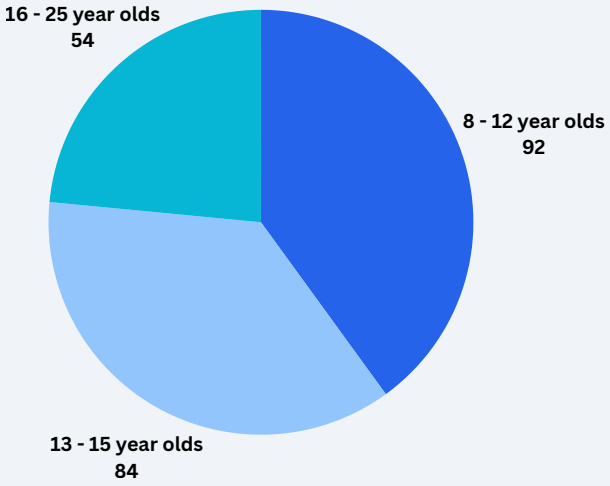
In 2025/26:

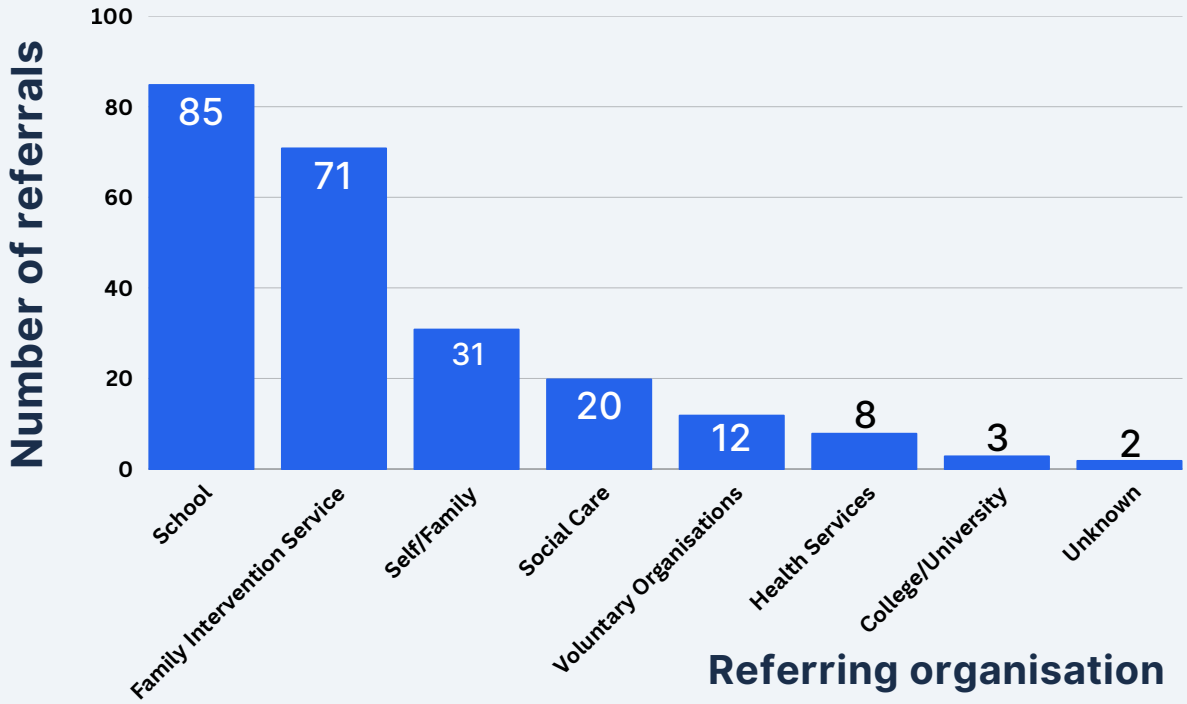
- We supported a total of 232 young people and 97 families.
- We delivered 911 one-to-one support sessions with 153 young people.
- We ran 96 term-time group sessions, attended by 94 young people.
- We provided 17 school holiday group activities, attended by 109 young people.
- We held 27 Action Group sessions, attended by 27 Action Group members.
- We provided 63 families with one-to-one support through our Family Project.
- We secured 16 holidays from the Family Holiday Association worth £12,800.
- We worked with over 164 schools, colleges, universities and other educational settings to help them identify and support young carers.
- 174 professionals from a range of education, health and social care backgrounds successfully completed our e-learning course.

Reason for referral to our service

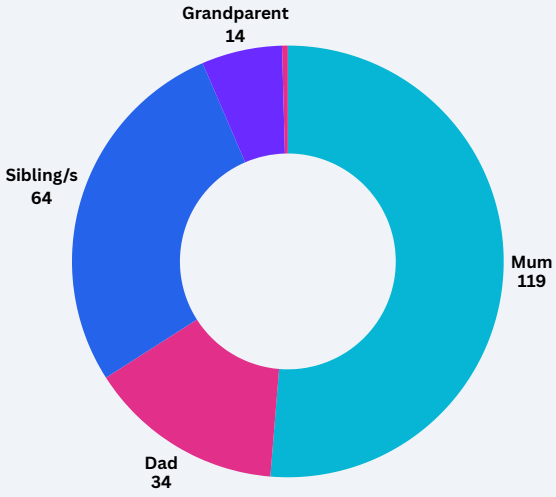


Age range of young people

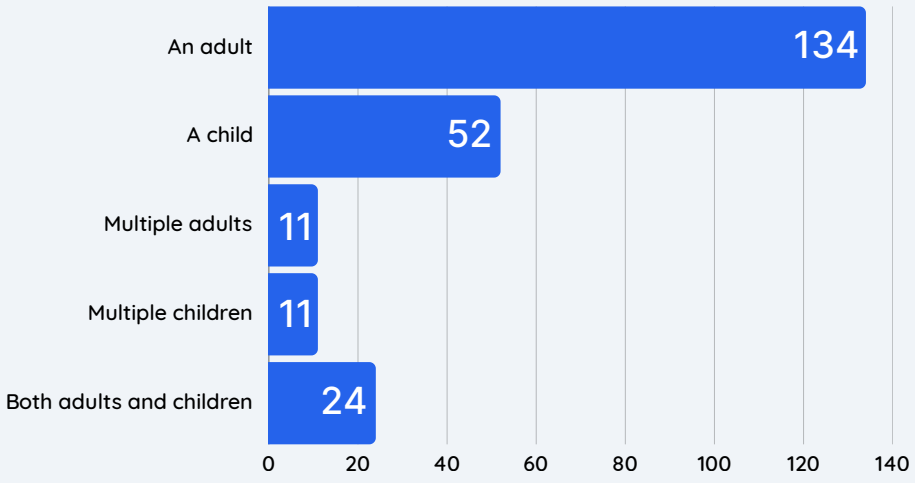




Person with care needs and/or substance misuse issues



Person with care needs and/or substance misuse issues



Our work with young people

Our Young People's Team provide tailored support to young people who are referred to SYC. They also work closely with schools, family support services and lots of other organisations to help young people get their voices heard and their needs met.

In 2025/26:



- We provided **911 one-to-one sessions** to **153** young people, giving practical and emotional support, the chance of a break, and access to wellbeing activities. Young people use these sessions to get what they need, whether that is someone to talk to, information about their family's illnesses, disabilities and/or substance misuse, and strategies and information to help them care for themselves and plan for their futures.



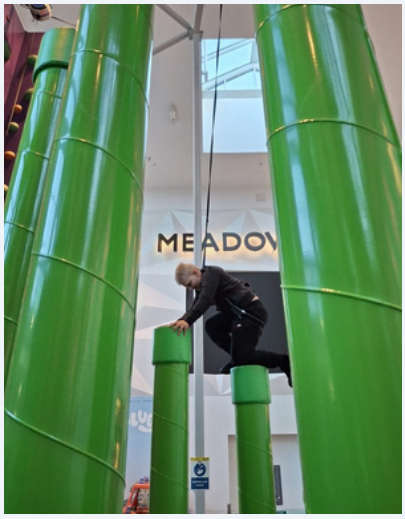
- We ran **96 term-time group sessions**, attended by **94** young people, giving them the chance to meet others in similar situations, make friends, have a break, build confidence and resilience, gain skills, and have lots of fun! Every week we look at different topics, such as staying healthy, confidence building and keeping ourselves safe. We also do lots of creative and physical activities to promote wellbeing and have a break.



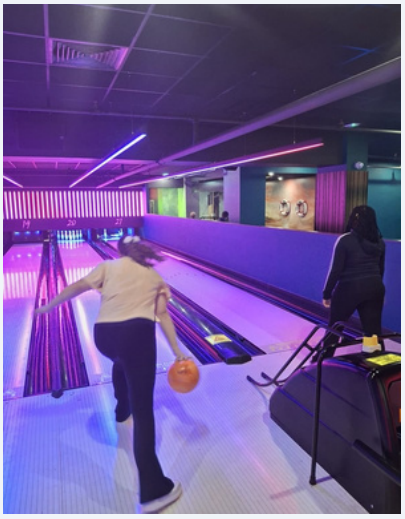
- We delivered **17 school holiday activities**, attended by **109** young people, to help them have some fun, build skills and try new things. These included rock climbing, horse riding, ice skating, open air swimming, alpaca-trekking, recording in a music studio, a silent disco, forest adventure session, cooking and laser tag.

The three areas that young people reported the most progress in during their work with SYC in 2025/26 were:

- Close to goals: **96%** of young people felt closer to their personal goals since joining SYC.
- Managing emotions: **77%** of young people felt that they can better manage their emotions since joining SYC.
- Taking part in activities: **76%** of young people felt more comfortable in getting involved in activities since joining SYC.












Young people's voice and influence

Our **Action Group** is for young people who are current or recent users of our service who want to have more of a say in the running SYC and improve services for young carers locally and nationally. Empowering young people to use their expertise to make positive change is at the heart of SYC.

In 2025/26:

- Met with the **Lord Mayor** and with **Gill Furniss MP** for Sheffield Hillsborough and Brightside
- Reviewed Sheffield Teaching Hospital's **Carer's Passport** with Aisling Redmond-Thomas (Patient Experience Manager) and gave their views on how young people can be supported in the transition from the children's hospital to adult's hospitals.
- **Four** young people attended the Sheffield's Carers Implementation Strategy Review meeting and gave a presentation, as well as launching our new 'Top Tips for Professionals' video and infographic.
- **One** young person attended a roundtable meeting in the House of Lords with Baroness Smith of Malvern (Secretary of State for Skills), joining other young adult carers to explain the difficulties young carers face in further and higher education.
- **Five** young people attended **three** Young Carers National Voice events, which included meeting with His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills, Sir Martyn Oliver, to discuss their experiences of education and also why it's important Ofsted encourages schools to support young carers. This meeting directly resulted in Young Carers being included as an Ofsted standard, which is already increasing school engagement with young carers.
- Participated in a workshop with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and **discussed the themes for youth strategy** and how that impacts young carers.



- **Four** young people attended SYC's annual strategic planning meeting to held us decide on the direction of SYC in the coming years, working alongside cared for parents, staff and trustees.
- **Five** young people performed the 'Who Am I?' poem at the Sheffield Cares Excellence Awards to a room of 300 people!
- Collaborated with Healthwatch Sheffield to **create a resource** for the NHS to be aware of, identify and support young carers. The key findings, actions and recommendations were put into the 'Invisible in Plain Sight: Young Carers and Cared-For Parents' Experiences in Health and Social Care Settings' report.
- **Co-produced** the wording of the council's website about the new Young Carers Assessment and the pre-assessment booklet for young carers.
- **Hosted** visitors from The Nippon Foundation, Japan, during their visit to find out more about our support for young people and families.
- Helped **plan and host** SYC's online AGM.
- **Three** young people formed an interview panel for the recruitment of our new Participation and Development Manager.



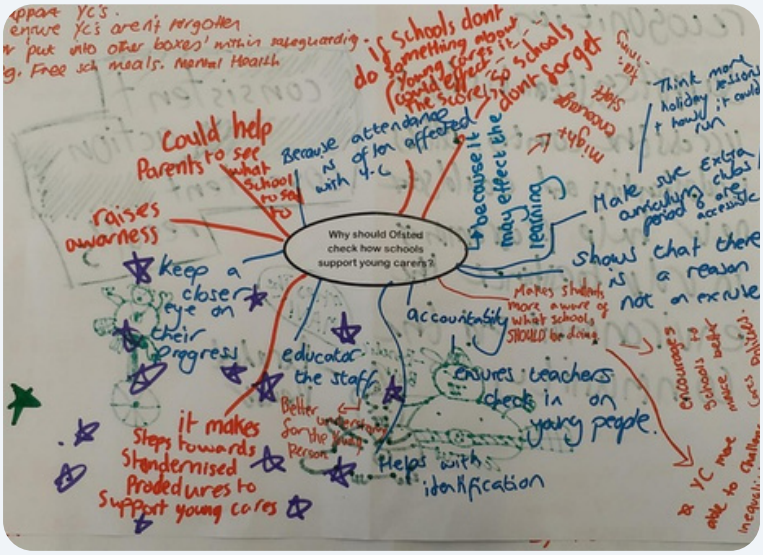


Action Group also participated in several pieces of research during **2025/26:**

- **Maddy** from **Little Dreamers Australia** researching best practice with young carers with the International Churchill Fellowship.
- Group of **South Korean students** researching different ways young carers are supported as new legislation has come into law in the country which legally recognises young carers for the first time.
- Focus groups and interviews for a PhD research programme with researcher **Jo Goodman** from **Lancaster University** looking at effects of parental alcohol misuse effects on secondary education.
- Research conducted by **The University of Sheffield** about young carers' leisure activities, opportunities and challenges.

Young Carers National Voice

Sheffield Young Carers has proudly hosted **Young Carers National Voice (YCNV)** since 2020 and this year marked an important transition for the network as it moved to the Carers Trust. Our young people, particularly our Action Group members, continue to participate in the network. To mark this transition, we produced a five-year impact report.





As well as **meeting with His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Ofsted**, Sir Martyn Oliver, to discuss their experiences of education and why Ofsted recognition of young carers is vital, other YCNV meetings involved **creating a framework** to give to Ofsted and attending the All Party Parliamentary Group for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers drop in, **speaking to MPs and Peers** from the House of Lords about how the government can better support young carers. They were also part of a group that dropped off **15,000 postcards** to 10 Downing Street with messages from young carers to the Prime Minister.

We are **incredibly proud** of YCNV, and of the fact that young carers are now influencing strategic policy at a national level. This has elevated their needs in policymakers' minds, and we look forward to this momentum continuing, with young carers playing a leading role in shaping the services and national policies that affect them. **Thank you** to everyone who has played a part in making YCNV what it has been so far!

Read the full YCNV report here

Our work with families

Our **Family Project Team** work with whole families where there is a young carer to help reduce the overall impacts of caring and make life better for the young person and their family.

In 2025/26:

We changed how our Parent Network Events worked, holding them monthly and in different community venues around the city to enable wider participation. This meant that we held **twelve** events for **32** families, which have been a mix of social, parent-led and skills based activities including:

- A bespoke session on **managing challenging behaviour for ASD**.
- A **woodland wellbeing session**.
- Sailing on the **Ethel Barge** and a walk around **Tinsley Marina**.
- Blend kitchen **cooking session**.
- Manor library **social and peer support session**.
- A **first aid workshop**.
- Discovering **volunteering opportunities** at the volunteer centre.



Our Community Engagement Worker delivered **112** interactions including:

- **Three** newsletters (also sent as audio versions) providing information on local free family friendly activities and services.
- **38** families received tailored information, advice and signposting including how to make a self-referral for an Autism Assessment using the right to choose, support with small business set up, and free courses.

35 referrals for **23** families were made to other services including:
Adult Social Care for a care assessment, FASD workshops (Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder), Sheffield Theatres Youth Theatre Programme, Food bank/vouchers, Counselling (Roshni, Door 43, SODIT, MIND, SRASAC), Victim Support, IDVA, Aids and Adaptations and SAVTE for language support.

We also:

- Worked with **41** new families during the year and **63** families received one to one support through a hybrid model, which delivered **72** face-to-face and **127** telephone case work sessions.
- Secured goods and funds for **33** families including; vouchers and grants for foodbanks, essential clothing, equipment for college courses and essential household goods.
- Visited Rufford Abbey Country Park with **seven** families.
- Celebrated the festive season by going to watch the pantomime Aladdin with **ten** of our families.
- **Twelve** families received Tramlines Festival tickets.
- Joined Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Board and Sheffield Safeguarding Children Partnership to develop mechanisms for a **Cared for Parents scrutiny panel** to participate in a review of children's safeguarding policies.



"All the staff at young carers who have supported me and the grandkids have been our rock, thank you for giving us an opportunity to share our stories with people who can change things and hopefully make things better for other families"

Cared for parent







"If it wasn't for you and all at young carers our story would be a different one, so thank you all for standing by us whenever we have needed someone"

Cared for parent



Our education work

We work with **schools and post-16 providers** across the city to help them identify and support their settings young carers. There are currently **146** members of our Schools Network from primary schools, secondary schools and other education settings, as well as **18** members in our Post-16 Network.

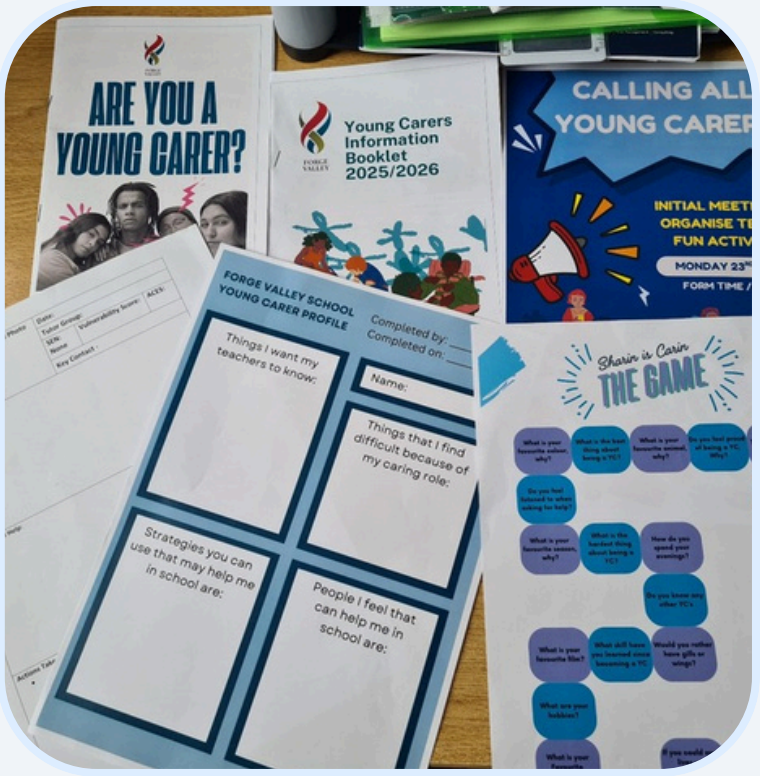
In 2025/26:

- We held **three** Schools Network meetings and **three** Post-16 Network meetings with a total of **63** attendees.
- We produced **five** Schools/Post-16 Network briefings that included national and local updates, reports, news about young carers in education, new young carer resources, and opportunities for young carers and education settings; **100%** of readers found these briefings useful.
- We organised and accompanied **17** young carers to **three** university/college experience days to build confidence and belief around higher education.
- We delivered a presentation to **120** Designated Safeguarding Leads as part of statutory advanced refresher training, as well as **five** training sessions to **85** Post Graduate Certificate in Education students from both Sheffield Universities.
- We developed **multiple** resources which include a post-16 resource pack, younger young carers resource, recorded assembly, staff training slides, a Young Carers Lead pack and an awareness-raising and transitions pack.

"I have a deeper understanding, empathy and ignited passion to support young carers in school"

Education Network Member





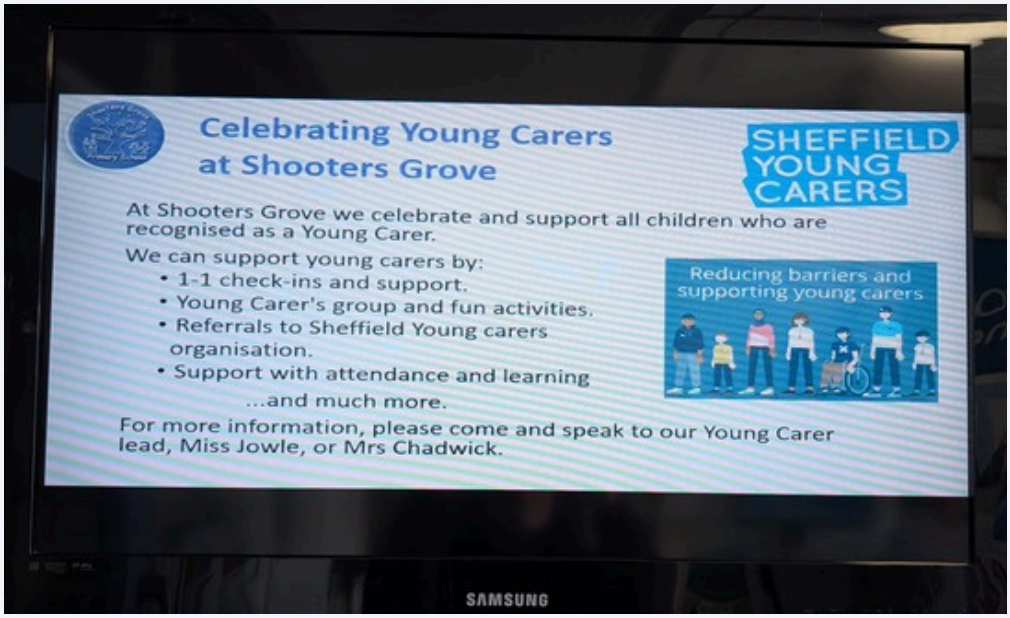
Our School Cares Project

Our School Cares provides **bespoke training**, **practical tools** and **ongoing specialist support** to help schools identify and support young carers, enabling them to improve attendance, attainment and wellbeing while meeting statutory expectations. We work intensively with select schools per year, providing staff training, high-quality resources and ongoing specialist advice, creating stronger outcomes from young carers in those schools.

Across the ten schools supported in the first two years of the programme, there was a **268%** increase in the number of young carers identified within the schools taking part. Attendance improved for **56%** of the young carers identified, and attainment improved from **27%** of young carers identified.

Between January and July 2025, we worked with **seven** lead staff from **four** schools to offer a tailored package of support that gave them the knowledge and skills to confidently identify and support young carers, to train other staff and to embed a whole school commitment to young carers.

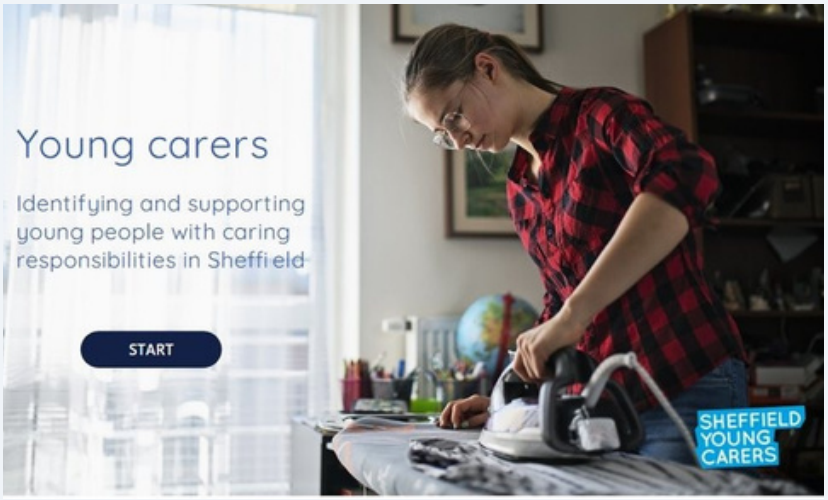
In just **six** months, the number of identified young carers at the four participating schools rose from **31** to **83**. All of the lead staff felt more confident about running staff training, identifying young carers, putting support plans in place and setting up a young carer group. **Five** new resources were produced, including a Young Carer Policy template (endorsed by Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership), a staff training template and a post-16 resource pack.



"I learned a lot from this workshop. Very thought provoking, with lots of links to further resources. Thank you"
Professional who attended an education workshop

Our training and awareness work

Building capacity in other agencies is critical to increasing the identification and support for young people who are carers and/or impacted by familial substance misuse. We achieve this through our **training**, **awareness**, **research** and **campaigning work**.



174 professionals from a range of education, health and social care backgrounds successfully completed our e-learning course 'Identifying and supporting young people with caring responsibilities in Sheffield', which was co-produced with young people from our Action Group, is CPD accredited and is available free on the SYC website.

100% of learners rated our course as 'excellent'

Feedback from learners included:

- **Better understanding** of how to support young carers.
- **Increased awareness** of identifying young carers and spotting less recognised signs.
- **Improved communication** with young carers, ensuring their voices are heard.
- **More confident in signposting** young carers and their families to appropriate support services.
- Conscious of **including siblings** who are young carers in assessments.

As well as this:

- We delivered **one** multi-agency awareness training session alongside the Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership to **24** participants from a range of adult mental health, education and social care services.
- We also delivered **awareness training** to the 'See It Be It' careers network, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services community team, NHS eating disorder service for children and young people (SEDATT) team and the Early Intervention team at Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust.
- We **presented** as part of an International Diversity Week event.

Our strategic and policy work

Sheffield Young Carers is engaged with a number of partnerships and networks at a **local**, **regional**, **national** and **international** level. This strategic development work aims to influence policy and practice and lead to change for young carers in our city and beyond. We share some examples below of our work to influence change.

Local work in 2025/26:

- Several years of hard work came to fruition in November 2025, as Sheffield launched a **new Young Carers Assessment service**. This means that all young carers who want one can receive a full assessment of their needs through a holistic process, which can then link them and their family into relevant services, not just to SYC. Young carers from our service led on the development and design of the assessment, as well as co-producing a booklet to help young carers prepare for their assessment.
- We worked with Sheffield Children's Hospital to **provide training** for CAMHS staff and to bring them into the city's Carers Action Plan Implementation Group.
- We collaborated with Sheffield University Health Partnership (formally Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust), who achieved their **second Triangle of Care star** this year. There are further plans for them to sign up to the Young Carers Covenant.
- Sheffield Teaching Hospitals have adapted their online system to now be able to **record carers aged under 18**.

Regional work:

- Alongside Sheffield City Council and other local authorities across South Yorkshire, we contributed towards the development of the new **'Carer Connect'** app. The app provides free, 24/7 to help carers access trusted information, guidance, and local support.
- We continued to meet regularly as part of a **South Yorkshire-wide young carers network** with Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster young carers services.



National work in 2025/26:

- We have continued working with organisations across Sheffield to support them in signing up to **'No Wrong Doors'**, a national memorandum of understanding about services working together to identify and support young carers.
- We delivered **two** presentations at the Young Carers Futures Conference organised by Carers Trust and Young Carers Alliance, including

  'Breaking the Silence' - a presentation on improving access to support for young people impacted by addiction in the family, based on SYC's MPACT work and Finding My Way booklet.





International work in 2025/26:

- We had a visit from Maddy Buchner, the founder of **Little Dreamers** (Australian young carers organisation).
- We hosted two delegations from **South Korea**. South Korean government passed the first legislation recognising young carers in 2024 and are now developing a programme of support to be funded from 2026. We were interviewed by a delegation of journalists and then filmed by a documentary filmmaker.
- We shared information about our rights and campaign training with researchers from **Sweden** and **Belgium** who are interested in developing their young carers' participation.
- We also hosted a researcher from **Seitan University** in **Tokyo**, who is researching education support for young carers, sibling young carers and the whole family approach.



"I was deeply impressed by all the activities carried out at Sheffield Young Carers. Learning about your comprehensive approach to supporting both children and their families, I truly felt that this is exactly the kind of model I aspire to develop in my own work".
Maddy Buchner

"Their work demonstrates how a local service can act as both a frontline support provider and a driver of systemic change, ensuring that the realities of young carers are understood across education, health, and local government"
Researcher from Seitan University

Our research work

Alongside our strategic development work, SYC has developed its work with **academics** and **universities** to bring our practitioner **expertise** to **national research projects**.

- We continue to collaborate with London School of Economics' Care Policy and Evaluation Centre on national research work funded by the National Institute for Health Research. Our current research project **'REBIAS II'** is exploring the **whole family approach to the identification and support of young carers**. We coordinate the young carers and the cared for parents research advisory groups.
- We launched our **Participation and Power toolkit**, based on the research done with the University of Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire Young Carers. We presented our Participation and Power toolkit at the national 'Young Carers Futures' conference in London and to a national Participation Community of Practice, coordinated by Carers Trust.
- The **Inappropriate Care Toolkit** developed following Co-CEO Sara Gowen's research is now being trialed by professionals in Sheffield. The toolkit has been shared with the council team delivering young carer assessments, as well as social work teams in north and south Sheffield. SYC staff will also use the toolkit in their one-to-one work.
- We worked with a PhD student researching the **impacts of parental alcohol use on secondary education**. Five young people from SYC took part in focus groups and interviews and co-produced a resource for schools called 'Feeling Seen'. This has been shared with schools across the country, a national charity (NACOA) is planning to integrate this into their schools training and the researcher will be presenting the research and resource at the **International Young Carers Conference** in Berlin in autumn 2026.

Networks, Partnerships and Working Groups:

- SYC works in partnership with agencies across Sheffield and nationwide. We would like to thank our partners for their **support**, **sharing their learning** and **working together** to improve the lives of the young people and families we support.
- There are too many partnerships and networks to mention, but we would like to highlight a few who have helped us make an impact in 2025-26. Thanks to Sheffield Carers Service and Sheffield Parent Carers Forum; Sheffield City Council's Young Carers Assessment Team; Carers Strategy Implementation Group; Carers Safeguarding Task and Finish Group; Hidden Harm Implementation Group; Children and Young People's Partnership Network and VCS Leaders Network; and Young Carers Alliance.

We couldn’t have done it without...











From the fantastic **grant providers** and **corporate partners** who provided us with funding to all of the amazing **individuals** who laced up their running trainers to take part in the Sheffield 10K; those who raised money through community events and charity of the year partnerships and to everyone who made **generous one-off/recurring gifts**, we can’t thank you all enough for your support for our work with young people and families.

Our wonderful staff and trustees:

- Our **Board of Trustees** continue to guide us as an organisation, bringing lots of expertise from their own backgrounds to ensure that we run effectively and efficiently.
- We wouldn’t have the impact that we do without our **brilliant staff team**. Across our organisation, we have so many terrific individuals who are dedicated to make a lasting difference for young people and their families.
- Finally, a big thank you to some of the staff who have left SYC during 2025/26: **Laura Cole** (Participation and Development Manager), **Raphy Poon** (Young Carers National Voice Co-ordinator), **Newton Shambare** (Young People’s Project Worker) and **Rachel Cundy** (Family Project Worker).

If you'd like to know more about getting involved, we'd **love** to have a chat. You can get in touch with us by email at **fundraising@sycp.org.uk** or call **0114 258 4595** and ask for a member of the Fundraising Team.