



EDINBURGH YOUNG CARERS

CashBack for Brighter Futures

IMPACT REPORT 2023-2024

EDINBURGH
YOUNG
CARERS



Welcome!

This is the first year that Edinburgh Young Carers has been working in partnership with CashBack for Communities and we are delighted to be part of Phase 6 to learn from, and work alongside our Phase 6 colleagues.

Our vision at Edinburgh Young Carers (EYC) is to make a positive difference in the lives and futures of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers, and their families, across the City of Edinburgh. Throughout 2023-2024, we have continued to provide long-term emotional and practical support to each young person in our service, providing them with a break from their caring role in a friendly, supportive and fun environment where they can be themselves and leave worries behind.

This report aims to share the impact our programme – ‘CashBack for Brighter Futures’ has made throughout the year and highlight our young carers amazing achievements.

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CashBack for Brighter Futures...

This project will provide a holistic service for children and young people caring for a parent affected by alcohol/substance use.

These young carers report more negative health effects than other young carers, are generally less happy and report more stress and sleep difficulties. Their home environment and multiple **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** can lead to negative coping strategies including alcohol/drug use, self-harm, attempted suicide, isolation, anger and anti-social behaviour. The majority live in the most deprived areas of Edinburgh, and face challenges associated with poverty including communication skills, low expectations of themselves and others, and lower attainment and aspirations.

Meet the Team:



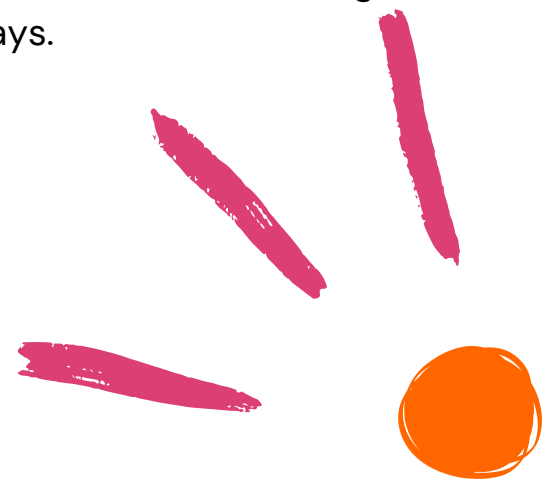
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Each young carer has an individualised development plan comprising some or all of:

- **Mental Health Support** including fortnightly respite groups,
- **Smaller groups/playdates,**
- **One-one support/Counselling** for young carers who have been identified as being especially vulnerable to poor mental health and/or risk-taking behaviour.
- **Core Skills Development** through activities supporting literacy, motor skills and environment awareness. The content is determined by the young people and may include equine therapy, outdoor skills, educational programmes, swimming and support with school transition.
- **Respite activities,** allowing young carers a break from caring responsibilities and an opportunity to share their experience with peers. This includes days out, camping trips and 2-5 night residential breaks during school holidays.

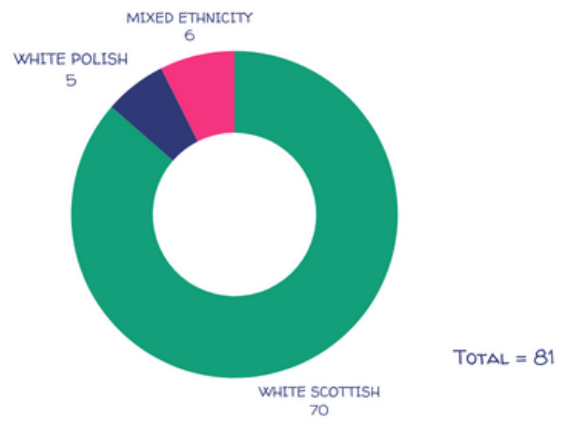


the young people we support in CASHBACK FOR BRIGHTER FUTURE

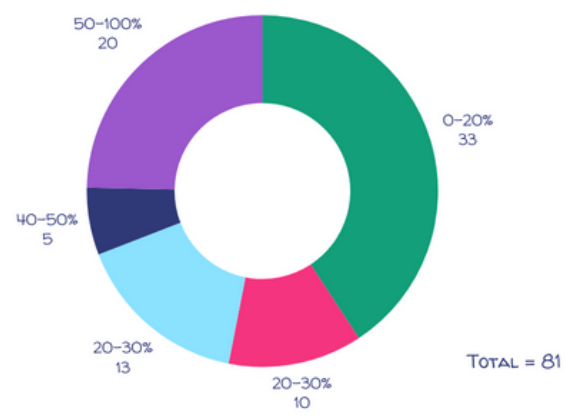
we have supported
81
young carers

21
were new to
our service
this year

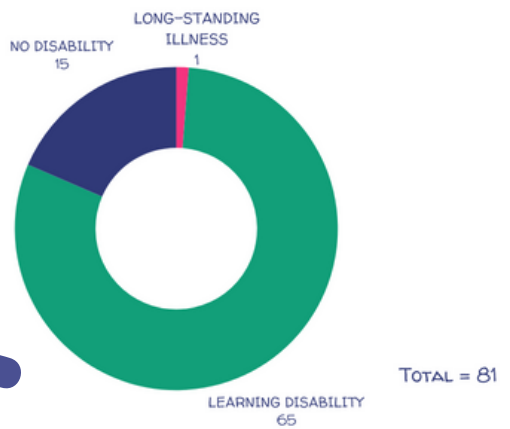
ETHNICITY



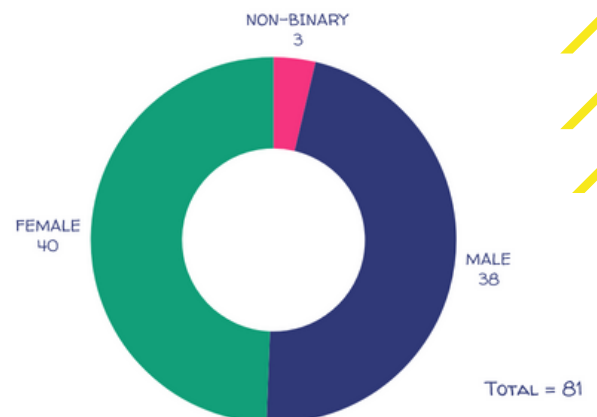
SIMD PROFILE



DISABILITY



GENDER



"1-1's have helped me... to shift my focus from anything that could be stressing me out, in a safe environment where I know I can say anything and know I'm being listened to."

2023–2024 Programme

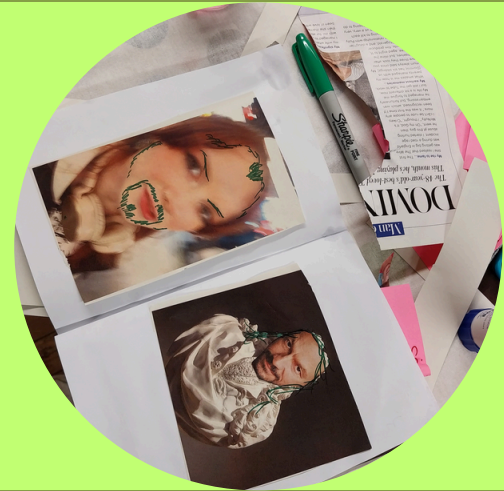


Core Skills Groups

Swimming, cycling and horse-riding groups are offered to young carers. The aim of these core skills groups is to develop coordination and motor skills, spend time outdoor, develop awareness of the city exploring different areas, practice safety on the road and in the water.

Urban Identities

Young carers aged 13–15 years were given then opportunity to take part in a photography project in partnership with The Portrait Gallery. They developed creativity and self-awareness, and explored the architectural identity of the city of Edinburgh.



2 x Residentials with The Green Team

The focus of these residentials was to develop outdoor skills, practice independence and healthy eating habits, increase confidence and make new friends. Young carers also had the opportunity to volunteer their time for the local community: young people built a bridge in the Ampherlaw and Falla Woods (Lanarkshire) and did more conservation tasks in Pressmennan Woods (East Lothian).

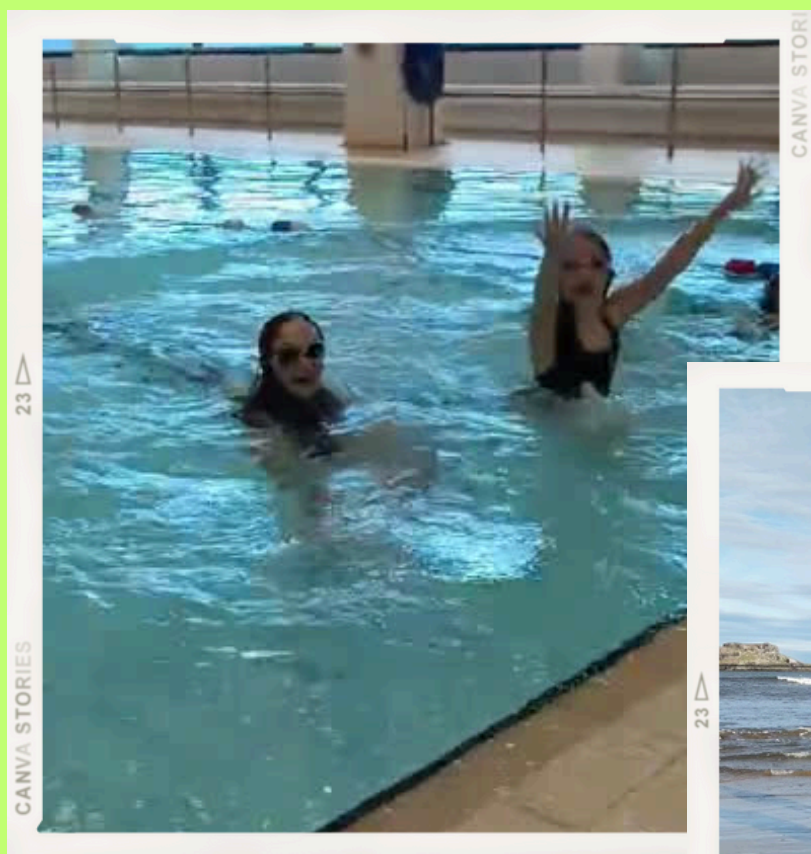


Growfitti Group

This project was delivered in partnership with Bridgend Farmhouse, which combined graffiti and gardening skills to design a growing area at Bridgend. We worked with young carers aged 13+ years and focused on outdoor learning, connecting young people with local spaces in the community and developing creativity.



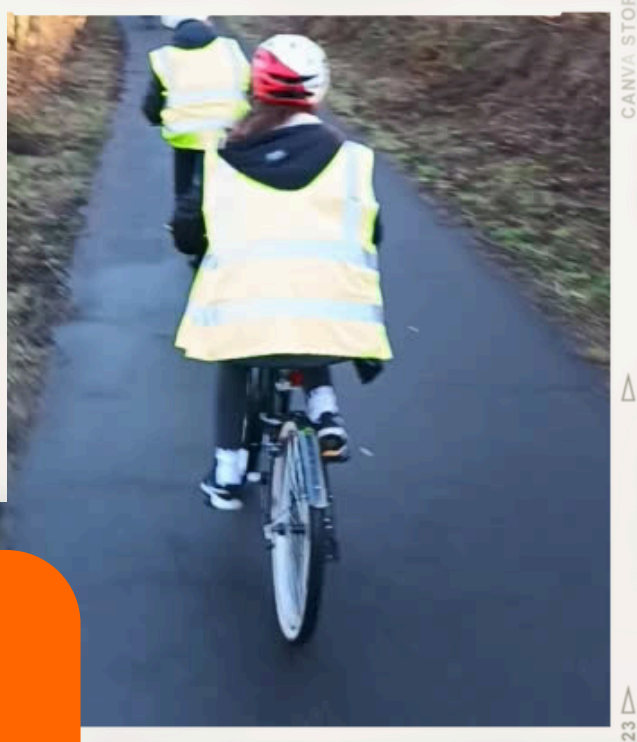
30 swimming sessions



4 days of horse-riding

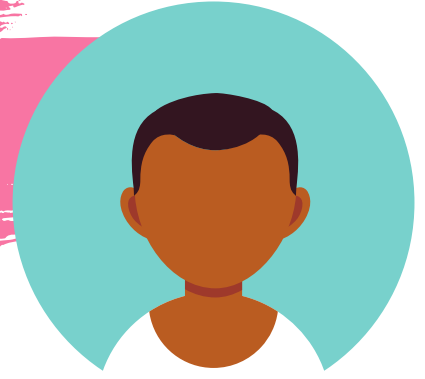


185 1-1 sessions



4 cycling sessions

John's Story



John is a young man, age 19, who moved to Scotland from South America 5 years ago, to live with his father.

John's father has multiple mental health disabilities and alcohol dependency. John's everyday life included going to college, working at McDonald's to financially support the household, shopping, cooking, and cleaning the house.

At times when John's father had a relapse, he could act violently towards him, making the home environment feel unsafe. In the last 6 months John had to increase his working hours at McDonald's to contribute financially to the household, due to his father relapsing. Unfortunately, this meant that John no longer could continue his studies at Edinburgh College. John is quite socially isolated, he does not have any friends in Edinburgh, and does not easily develop trust and open up for communication.

John received 1:1 support over the last 5 months – working on developing trust and went at his pace. Getting John to open up and engage with the support has been a success in itself. We discussed his home situation, looked into options for independent housing, change of employment, and financial support. We applied to various grants on his behalf. We have been able to support him with a gas and electric credit, which has alleviated some of the financial burden. Through CAB, John applied for universal credit, which would complement his monthly income. We also applied for a grant that would allow John to pursue some self-care. These are things that brighten his mood and allow him to maintain a more positive outlook on life.

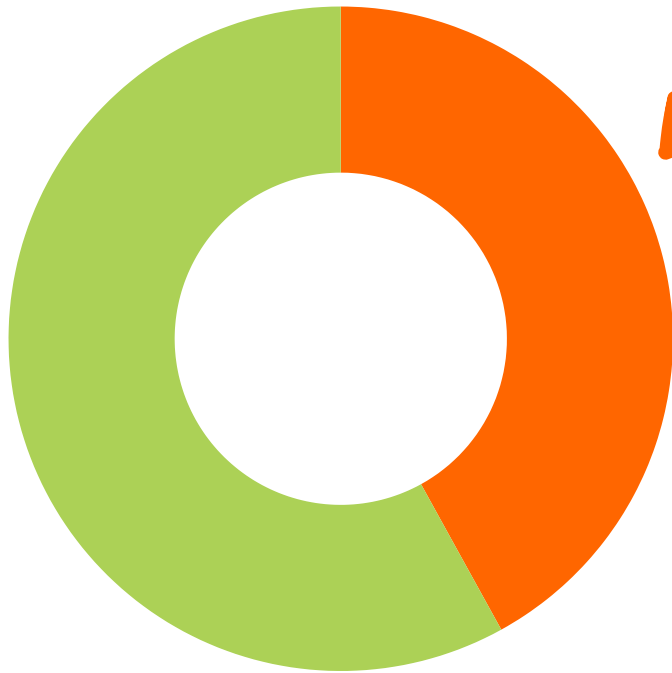
John now feels much more supported than he did before: **"it's amazing that people care about me in this country, like you actually take the time to meet me and help me!"**.

John is dedicated to start college again in September, but, in the meantime, we are looking for suitable apprenticeship programs, so that he could develop his skills and professional qualifications. John is an ambitious and hard-working young man, but struggles to navigate the UK system. We are sure that with a little bit of signposting, he will be able to achieve a lot. We will continue to work with John on a 1 to 1 basis, to look for suitable solutions together to the challenges that he faces. When a crisis occurs, John actually reaches out for help. This is a big and positive change, since previously he would not trust anyone with the private challenges of his life. Being able to ask for help, means that there is a higher chance that he will receive the support that he needs and is entitled to.

"I know it's been difficult to help me, really sorry. I don't get time or I change my mind. But I'm really thankful for what you are doing to help me."

Our Outcomes and Achievements

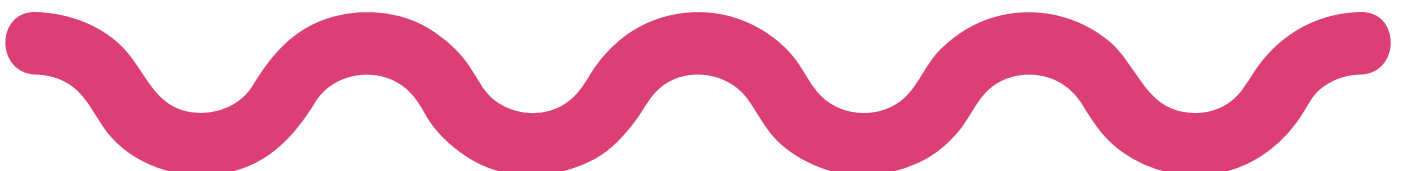
OUTCOME 1: YOUNG PEOPLE ARE DIVERTED AWAY FROM ANTISOCIAL, CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR AND INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



34 young people (target = 32) report that they feel less inclined to participate in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour

Over the year we have been able to assess, monitor and discuss some young people's involvement with anti-social behaviour, including gambling, school fighting etc.

One to one support will continue to be the focus of our project and we will continue to monitor antisocial behaviour and apply suitable interventions when or if required, liaising with school and getting other specialist agencies involved.



Our Outcomes and Achievements

OUTCOME 2: YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITY WHICH IMPROVES THEIR LEARNING, EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS (POSITIVE DESTINATIONS)

31 young people (target = 3) have taken up volunteering opportunities

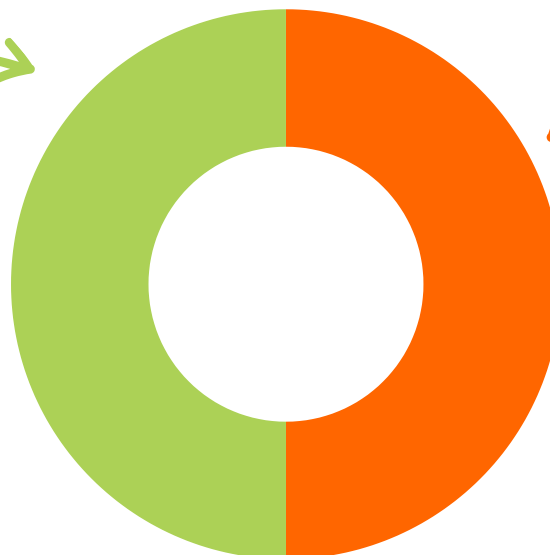
19 young people (target = 3) gained a college or university place

66 young people (target = 32) report an improved relationship with their school

4 young people (target = 3) undertook work experience where it was part of a recognised course or programme or start a training placement

10 young people (target = 3) gained employment or a Modern Apprenticeship

66 young people (target = 32) report improved attendance at school

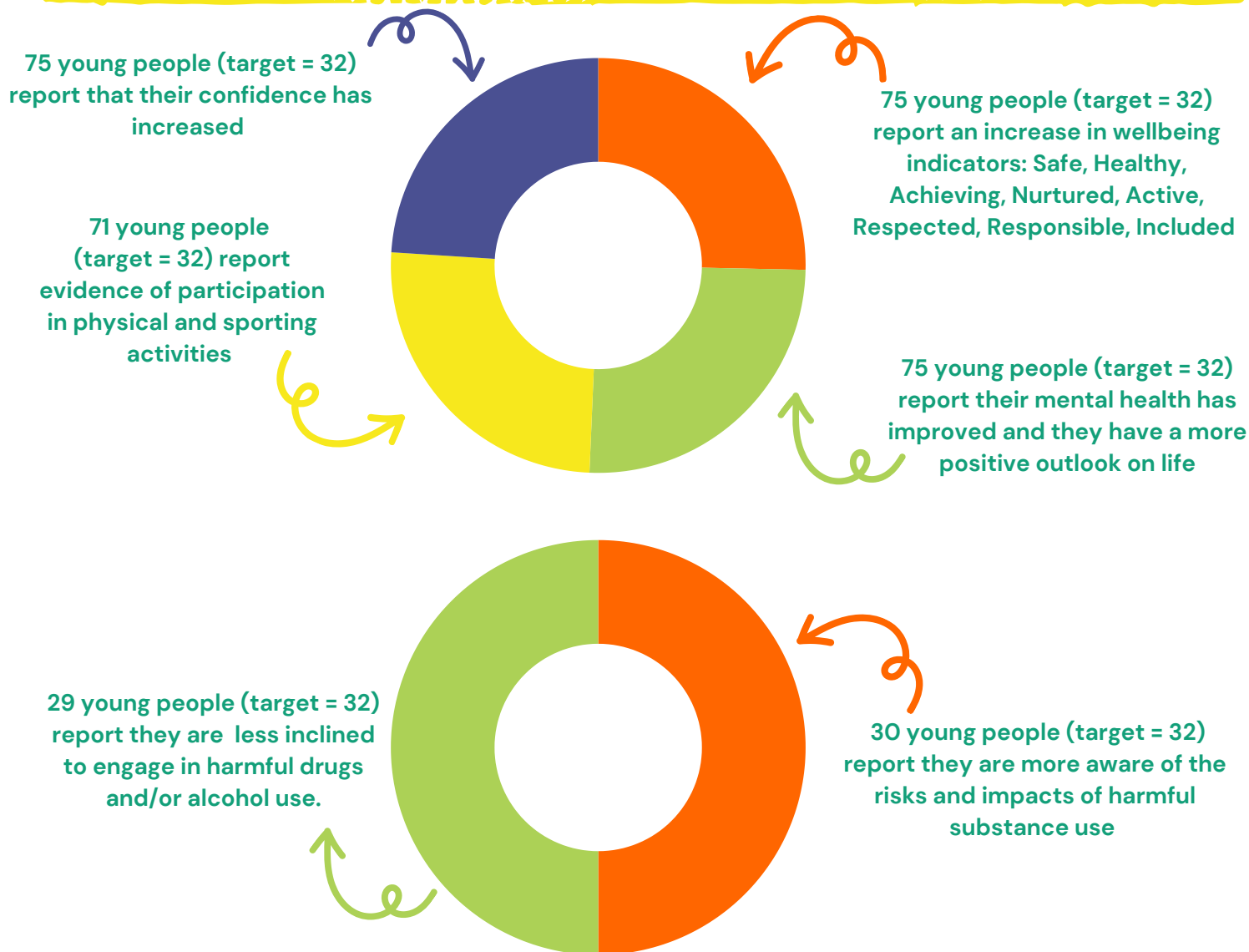


Over the year we have supported young people towards positive destinations. This includes supporting college and university applications, providing opportunities to gain employability skills, taking on volunteering roles and to encourage young carers to remain in education.

Our role is to work in partnership with professionals around the young person and to co-ordinate support in order to promote school attendance, a positive relationship with school and often advocate for a child's specific needs in the school environment.

Our Outcomes and Achievements

OUTCOME 3: YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPROVES



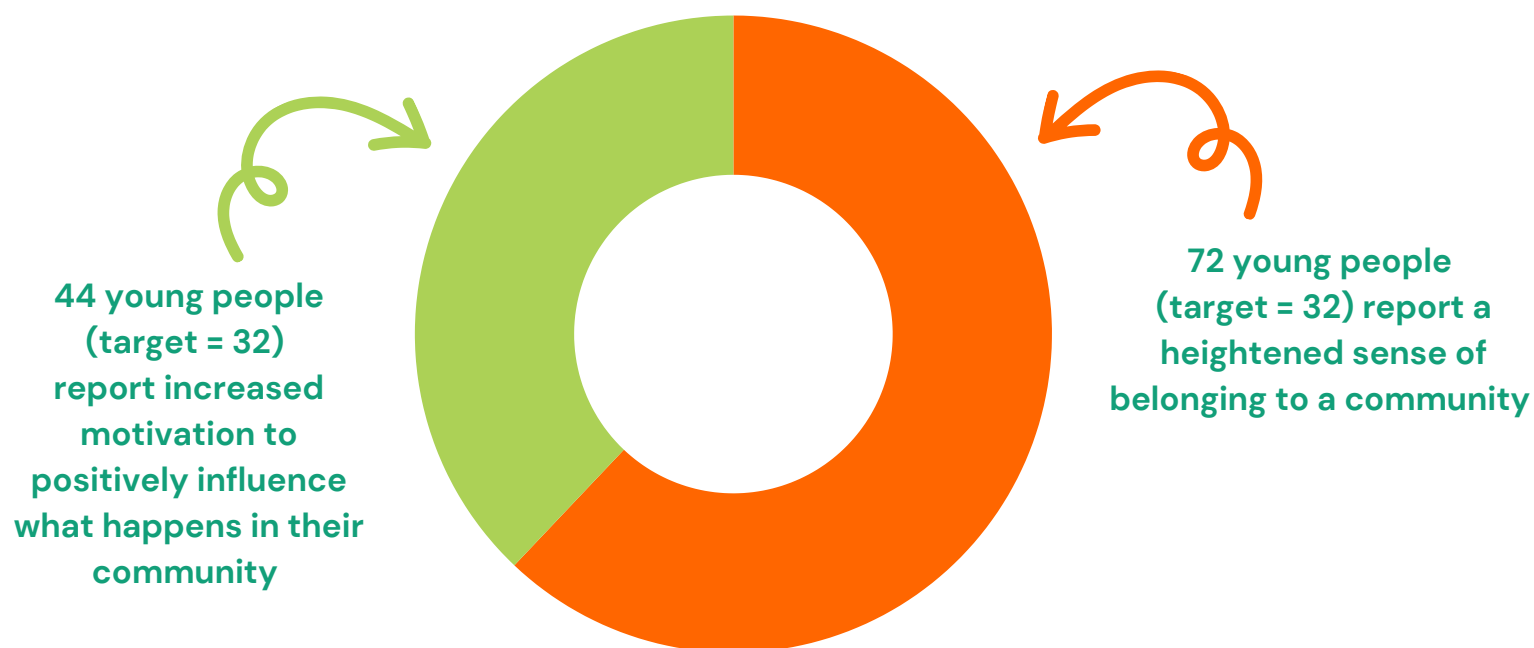
We review young people's feelings against SHANARRI indicators. Young people reported improvement against at least two SHANARRI indicators, especially activity and inclusion.

To promote mental health and well-being we offer regular one-to-one support sessions and the opportunity to access counselling to those young people needing extra support.

The risks and impacts of harmful substance use are a topic often covered during our support sessions. Over the next year we will be delivering a series of workshops in partnership with Crew2000 to raise awareness and promote harm reduction around substance misuse (including vaping and smoking) with young people aged 13+.

Our Outcomes and Achievements

OUTCOME 4: YOUNG PEOPLE CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO THEIR COMMUNITIES



Every project run by our service utilises community spaces with the aim of promoting accessibility to local resources.

This outcome was measured using evaluation forms after each project.

We continued to run swimming classes at the Royal Commonwealth Pool and cycling sessions in partnership with A Wee Pedal (Bridgend Farmhouse).

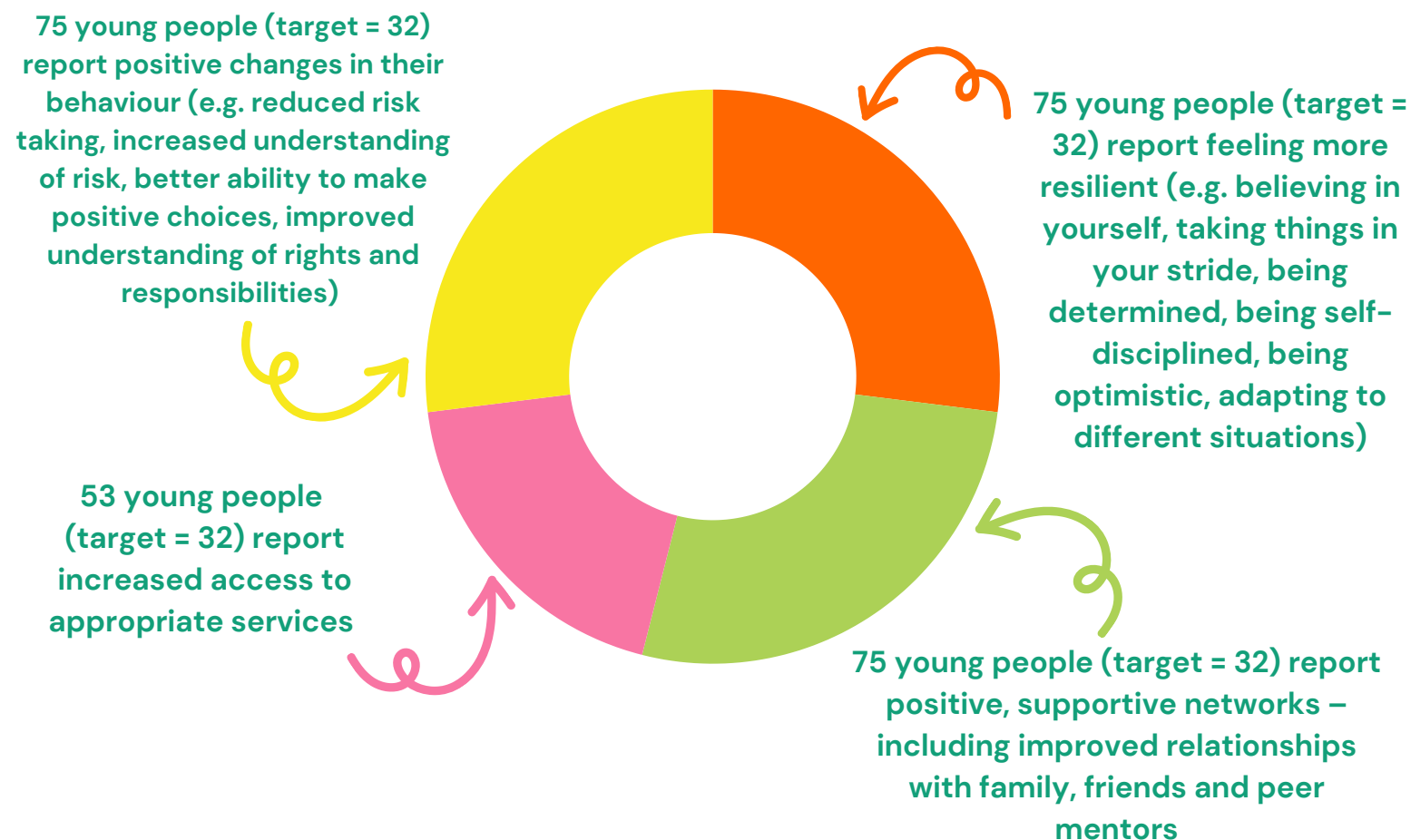
We also offered art workshops in partnership with the National Galleries and were able to visit several galleries and exhibitions and had sessions with local artists.

The locations of these groups are primarily run in areas of social deprivation within South East and North East Edinburgh.



Our Outcomes and Achievements

OUTCOME 5: YOUNG PEOPLE BUILD THEIR PERSONAL SKILLS, RESILIENCE AND BENEFIT FROM STRENGTHENED SUPPORT NETWORKS AND REDUCE RISK TAKING BEHAVIOURS



When we review the young people's support plan, we assess positive changes in different areas of their wellbeing as a result of the support they have received. Every young person reported their confidence has increased, which had an influence in positive changes in the young people's behaviour, improved school attendance and engagement with other services. This outcome has also been measured with ongoing communication with other professionals supporting the child, parents/guardians and by colleagues within our service who work with the young people in a group setting. Young people reported increased access to appropriate services, including social services, education, support services, mental health support and respite services. Support services accessed included befriending support, The Rock Trust to access housing support, and several families/young adult carers were referred to our CAB service for financial wellbeing advice.


Our Outcomes and Achievements

IMPACT...

One of our amazing young people started our swimming group in partnership with Edinburgh Leisure. She was terrified of water and it took her over a year to overcome her fear. Here is a video of her going under the water for the first time supported by a friend. It was a magic moment!



Stories of Impact and Change

 A young carer we support aged 12, cares for their mum and dad who struggle with poor physical/mental health and alcohol use. Due to mum and dad's ongoing difficulties with their alcohol use, the young person has been exposed to several episodes of domestic violence.

This situation can be very unpredictable and it's a real source of anxiety for them. We believed that the young person would benefit significantly from an opportunity to be with other children and to have a safe space where they can be relieved of their caring role. They would also benefit from positive role models and adults who can offer appropriate support and guidance to if needed. Through the support received, the young person managed to establish meaningful friendships in group, which had a huge impact in their engagement and confidence. They had previously struggled to maintain friendships in school, so this was a real success for them. The young person is currently living with her paternal grandmother in kinship care and feels able to share their worries with the professionals and trusted adults around. Providing the young person with positive role models and trusted adults and a consistent safe space to share worries and anxieties has proved to be crucial for their wellbeing. The next step in their support is to get them involved in local youth clubs to increase opportunities for socialisation and promote independence and self-traveling.



Lisa lives with her dad and sister, and spends long weekends at her mum's who she also cares for.

She expressed that she does not get the chance to do fun things with her mum, and that she would like to have adventures together with her, to make some nice memories. EYC sorted a Young Carer Grant for her to go on a trip with her family. The whole family organised an overnight trip to Glasgow, where they attended the Science Museum. Lisa loved the outing, she learnt a lot of new things, got to explore a new city and felt that it made her relationship with her mum more joyful and light hearted. Quality time spent with her family, where she does not have to assume a caring role has been very positive for her wellbeing and relationships.

Thank you to our Partners!

In partnership with 'A Wee Pedal' <https://aweepedal.com> we were able to deliver four sessions around cycling and safety.

Young carers went on two 2-hour cycle rides around Edinburgh. Cycle lessons provided the young people with a key-skill that they can use practically through their life. The lessons provided by 'A Wee Pedal' focussed on the development of fine motor-skills and coordination, and to build confidence and safety awareness.

Leanne went above and beyond to be able to provide sessions for our young carers, either free of charge or at a very low rate. Young Carers and their parents have been able to access confidence rides sessions for free as well.



EYC and Citizens Advice Bureau have established a partnership project, funded by British Gas, with the intention of supporting families across Edinburgh who are affected by the cost-of-living crisis to feel more financially secure and in control of their money.

The financial wellbeing service offers families and young adult carers 1-1 time with an advisor who can support and advise on benefit entitlement, low level debt advice (referring to debt specialists if needed) and energy advice. Since November, 16 families have accessed support to look at how they can maximise their income to improve their financial wellbeing.

There have been many positive outcomes for our families, including accessing grants for energy (fuel vouchers, funding for future consumption and energy debt funding) to the value of **£1210.93**, providing families with energy saving products (lightbulbs, airfryers, draft excluders) to the value of **£351.92**. In total, benefits awards worth **£4,300** were secured for families as a result of benefit checks or support completing benefit forms.

"Karen was here today and made me so happy by helping me with the energy bill. She got me £500 back from what I've paid to the company. And changed me to a cheaper provider... thank you so much."

ORGANISATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Launching EYC Membership

Our new Information & Advice Service

To read more of our highlights from 2023, check out our Impact Report [here](#).

In June 2023, Edinburgh Young Carers launched an Information and Advice Service that aims to support young carers and their families. At present, we are privileged to assist 50 young carers and their families with this new service, which encompasses a range of supports, including emotional assistance, advice, and referrals to other agencies as deemed necessary.

We understand the importance of providing the necessary support to young carers and their families at the right time, which is why we always strive to improve our services by enhancing our advice and referring them to other supporting agencies that can cater to their specific needs. Recently, we referred a family to Vocal for funding to access a "wee break" grant as both parents of the young carer require support, and as a result, there is not much family time outside the home. Additionally, we have supported applications to the Young Carers Grant Fund to allow family days out and enable young carers to access activities in their free time.

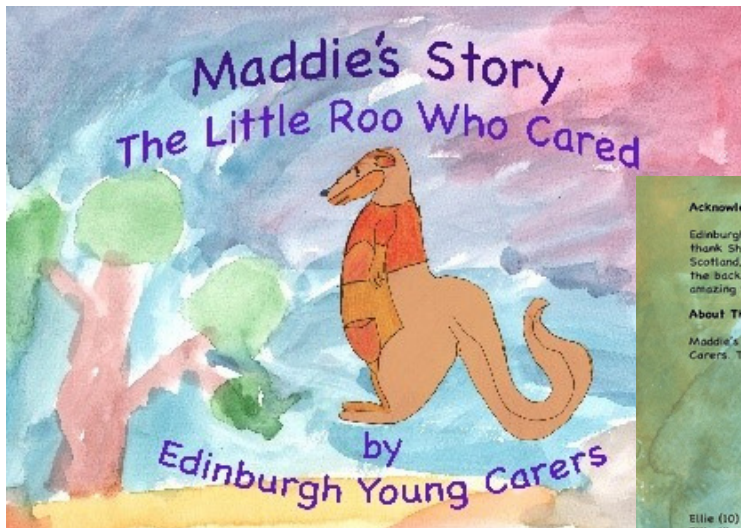
The EYC Membership Service was launched at an event on Friday 9th June in Norton Park. It was attended, by 72 people – young carers, young adult carers and their family members. Professionals were also invited to attend to find out more about the service and the criteria for referring. On the day we provided a range of interactive activities including a silent disco, photo booth, family portrait corner and face painting, and a quiet/sensory room was also provided where young people and families could have some time out of the busy conference hall if needed. Information was provided about the new service in the form of leaflets and posters, and staff were available to discuss and answer questions. All young carers who attended were also provided with their young carer ID card. We invited a member of staff from Young Scot to give advice and information on applying for the Young Scot Young Carer Package. We provided snacks, cakes and hot and cold drinks. Overall, the day was an enormous success, and feedback from families was extremely positive.



ORGANISATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

EYC's Big Book Project *The Little Roo Who Cared...*

To read more of our highlights from 2023, check out our Impact Report [here](#).



We wanted to create a story entirely using young carers' real voices and experiences. At EYC we have an 'Adventure Club' which aims to develop the literacy skills of young people, across all age groups, who are impacted by parental substance misuse. Many of the participants in the group have low school attendance or are school refusers, which impacts their literacy skills. The overall aim of the group was to empower the children to re-engage with reading and writing more creatively so producing a book is a wonderful outcome for these young people.

The group came together in small sessions where we played literacy games and orally created a story; we were thrilled to be joined by a young person, Ellie, who is keen to be an illustrator when she grows up. Ellie listened to the group's ideas and began to illustrate the key characters in the story and ideas for the front cover and page backgrounds. We discussed different types of stories and what makes a story successful. The children felt that animals are a great way to convey an idea because the child is not impeded by the age, gender or appearance of the main character, it is all about the story. The group has created a story about a baby kangaroo called Maddie who lives in the Australian outback with her mum. Sadly mum had an accident and needs Maddie to provide care for her. Maddie feels overwhelmed by her responsibilities, so she asks lots of animals for help (koalas, spiders, platypus, wombats etc), but it is a group of animals who come together to offer Maddie respite and some time away from her caring role.

Our intention is to use this book to engage with young primary school aged pupils when we deliver awareness-raising work in schools, as an impactful and unique way to discuss young carers, and how they can be supported by their peers, and others.

CashBack for Brighter Futures Expenditure

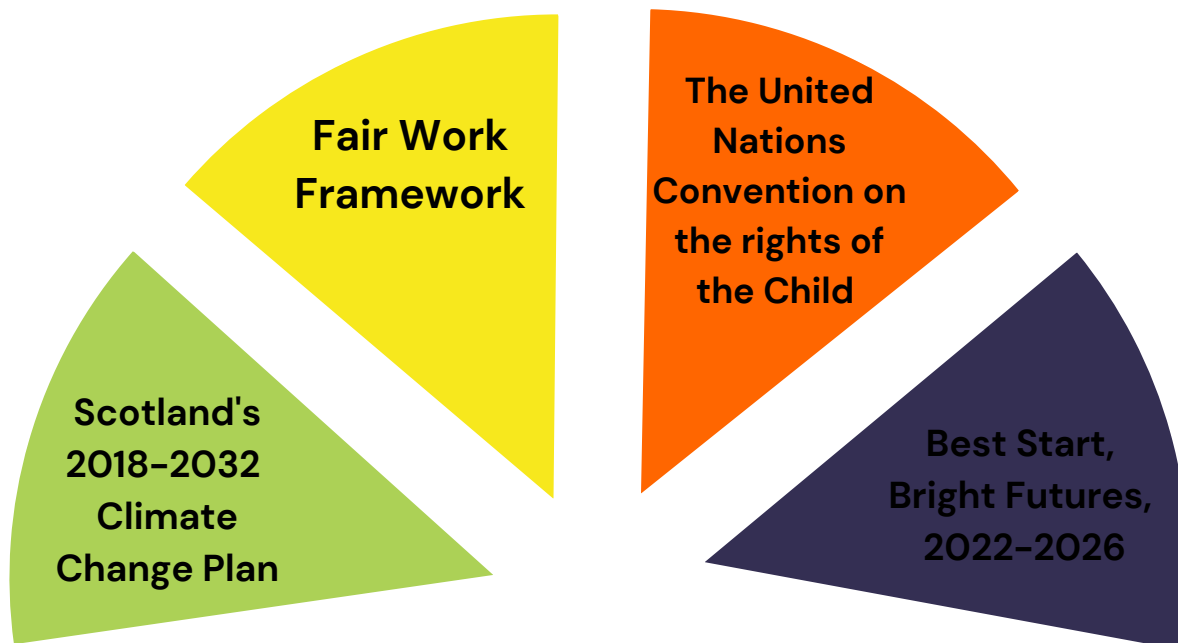
| Description | Value (£) |
|---|------------------|
| Salary Costs FT Worker | 29,615.00 |
| Salary Costs PT Worker | 16,474.00 |
| Sessional and Instructor Costs | 2,940.00 |
| Staffing Sub Total | 49,029.00 |
| Staff and Young Person's Travel | 2,218.00 |
| Events, Outings and Refreshments | 7,263.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 231.00 |
| Non-Staffing Sub Total | 9,712.00 |
| Total Project Activity Total | 58,741.00 |
| Management and Marketing | 5,874.00 |
| Management and Marketing Sub Total | 5,874.00 |
| Total Expenditure | 64,615.00 |

*all expenditure was for activity within the City of Edinburgh local authority



"I want to thank you for all the support and help you've given me with O and C over the year. It's been very much appreciated. You and your team do an amazing job."

Links to Scottish Policy



Scotland's 2018–2032 Climate Change Plan.

Our educational and outdoor activity programme includes a significant element of environmental awareness, including instilling the importance of recycling and taking litter home, and taking part in beach/park clean-ups. We provide water bottles for our young people to reduce consumption of single-use items. We work in partnership with *A Wee Pedal* who run a cycling and learn to ride programme for our young carers and to keep this learning going and a local bike mechanic donated refurbished bikes for our young carers. Another exciting project was our *Growfitti Group*, delivered in partnership with *Bridgend Farmhouse*, which combined graffiti and gardening skills to design a growing area. We worked with young carers aged 13+ years and focused on outdoor learning, connecting young people with local spaces in the community and developing creativity.

Following the Scottish Government's introduction of free bus travel for young people ages 12–21 all of our young carers are supported to access this bus pass.

Edinburgh Young Carers operate a largely paperless organisation, and use eco-friendly paper when we have to print. We operate a '*Cycle to Work*' scheme for staff and have access to e-bikes for meeting travel. Our staff also attended virtual climate training with Youth Scotland which focussed on engaging young people in climate action within their community. We comply fully with our landlord's environmental policy e.g. it measures impact by monitoring energy consumption, recycling weights and EPC rating of building. This policy is available on request.



Fair Work Framework

Edinburgh Young Carers are committed to ensuring fair working practices for all permanent staff, sessional staff and volunteers. We have a Fair Working Policy to ensure staff are treated fairly, well-rewarded, well-motivated, well-led, and have access to appropriate opportunities for training and skills development.

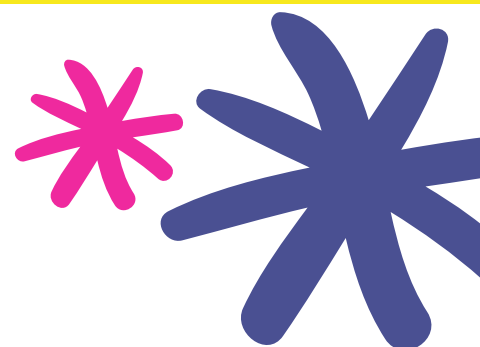
We are committed to paying our staff above the appropriate rate of national living or national minimum wage. To help with stability of employment, we try to employ on a permanent basis and will only utilise temporary or casual employment where it is absolutely necessary.

We recognise that all staff play a crucial role in ensuring the success of the organisation and is therefore committed to providing training and development to improve the skills and competence of all of its staff.

We recognise the benefits of a diverse workforce and are committed to providing a working environment that is free from discrimination. Our Equal Opportunities and Diversity and Harassment and Bullying Policies demonstrate the organisations overall commitment to equality of opportunity. To assist staff with a better work life balance we offer flexible/hybrid working. Our Flexible Working Policy has been developed to outline this. Our family friendly policies also provide guidance and entitlements for staff on all their statutory rights.

We believe that to ensure a healthy and respected working environment it is important to ensure there are effective communication processes established between management and staff. In order to achieve this, systems are in place to facilitate the flow of information throughout the organisation both from management to staff and vice versa.

Staff are consulted on all organisation Strategies and Operational plans and are encouraged to make suggestions which they believe may assist in improving our services or to raise any concerns they may have.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The rights and wellbeing of the young people we work with are paramount in everything we do.

We respect, consider and promote children's human rights in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the

Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Our **Children's Rights & Wellbeing Impact Assessment** is reviewed yearly and can be accessed [here](#).

On our website we promote a 20-minute [Children's Rights Introduction training tool](#) that all our staff undertake, and highlight relevant links for anyone who wants or needs to better understand children's rights.

Best Start, Bright Futures:

The Scottish Government's Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, 2022–26

CashBack for Better Futures contributes significantly to **supporting children to learn and grow**. We have two dedicated school liaison Development Workers to work alongside school staff to help reduce the barriers young carers may face to accessing a full education as a result of their caring role. The project also targets health and wellbeing, identified in the CPDP as key to successful outcomes. We support Young Carers (16+) with transition to becoming Young Adult Carers and moving into employment and further education. Their family circumstances make them even more likely to become NEET. Our local partnerships reduce that likelihood.

Support around income maximisation is important for our young carers and their families. By engaging with families, we can identify specific collective and individual needs. The partnership between **EYC and the Citizen's Advice Bureau** has already been discussed as a good practice example of our partnership working throughout this project, and one that is helping to prevent young carers and their families from entering poverty. Tackling fuel poverty we organised reciprocal training with Home Energy Scotland, which has given our staff extensive knowledge and confidence to signpost families to support available

During the pandemic, we were also able to secure external funding to ensure that the most vulnerable young carers had access to their own phone/iPad, enabling them to engage with schools, support workers and peers, therefore reducing social isolation. We have sourced Christmas presents and ad hoc gifts for young carers from low income families. Our Winter Warmers Fund provides school uniform and other items. Our social and residential activities provide the young carers with a break or holiday which would normally be inaccessible to the family.

"Hi Laura hope you're doing well. I just thought I'd give you an update on what's going on in general. I started working in a nursery late January and I'm still there and loving it..."

Young carer who exited our service but checked in to let us know some good news for them.



Priorities for Year 2

CashBack for Brighter Futures

Across 2024 - 2025, the focus of year 2 will be to continue to provide long-term individualised support to young carers. We will continue to promote core skill development including fine and gross motor skills, coordination, social skills, literacy skills and independence.

36

swimming
sessions

12

cycling
groups



3

horse-riding
sessions

7

Happy Heids
groups

We will continue to nurture our partnerships with ***A Wee Pedal, Green Team, The Drum Riding School*** and ***Edinburgh Leisure***.

In the first 6 months of year 2, we will be delivering a series of workshops in partnership with ***Crew2000*** to raise awareness and promote harm reduction around substance misuse (including vaping and smoking) with young people aged 13+.

Finally, we plan to run First Aid sessions in partnership with ***St Andrew's First Aid*** and fire safety sessions in partnership with ***Fire Scotland***.



Edinburgh Young Carers

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EYC Board of Trustees

Jess Wade, Chair

Anna Carr

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Brian Gordon

Eunice Reed

Craig Wilson

Shona Montgomery, Minute-Taker

**Special thanks also to our
team of Sessional Youth
Workers and all of our
Volunteers, including our
corporate volunteers from
Global Logic.**

EYC Staff Team

Margaret Murphy, Chief Executive

Mel Aitken

Bella Balloch

Jamielee Balloch

Mo Colvin

Kelly Dunnett

Jimmy Gordon

Helen Guy

Louise McKinlay

Marina Perez-Romero

Laura Piunti

Gareth Richardson

Gary Shaw

Chloe Sklaroff

Tracey Stewart

Masie Stewart-Mcilwraith

Anna Marta Sveisberga