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*Appendix 1 – legislation and policy context*

*Appendix 2 – consultation findings*

*This document and other information is available to download on:*

[www.forhighlandsyoungcarers.co.uk](http://www.forhighlandsyoungcarers.co.uk)

## Executive Summary

*Our vision is to achieve an appropriate level of support for young carers, in the context of their families, wherever they live in Highland*

These are the three main outcomes that the strategy needs to realise

### *1. Enhance universal support to enable early intervention and an integrated service for families.*

The main advantages of this approach is that it

- enables young carers to access some support in a way that does not identify them or their families.
- will promote a standard package of care for young carers.
- develops sustainable and equitable provision for young carers across Highland.
- is a model of support which can reach most young carers in Highland by developing the skills and capacity of mainstream services.

“Ensuring that the issues concerning young carers are part of the mainstream agenda provides the most effective means of delivering real and lasting improvements for young carers” (HMle 2008). As Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) is rolled out across Highland the opportunities to identify and support young carers will grow. Professionals in health, social work, police, education and other agencies should, with the consent of the child or young person inform their named person of their caring role.

### *2. Reduce the number of inappropriate caring roles taken on by young carers.*

Inappropriate caring roles are most likely to develop when

- **Community care packages rely on the caring role of a child**

There are examples in Highland of parents being discharged from hospital into the care of children as young as 12 who did not feel comfortable taking on this role. Some young carers in Highland are coping with running households, looking after younger siblings, part-time work to supplement household income, attending school and caring for the person with care needs.

- **The condition of the cared for person is hidden or stigmatised**

Many young carers remain hidden, in particular those caring for someone with HIV or AIDS, substance misuse or mental illness because of the stigma that these conditions continue to attract.

- **The child or young person chooses to care or feels pressured to do so by family members**

There may be times when, for example, in the final stages of parental terminal illness, or to prevent agency intervention, a child or young person chooses to provide a high level of care.

- **There are no services available to meet the needs of the family**

In all of these circumstances the needs of the child or young person should be considered alongside those of the cared for person and not secondary. This requires someone, most often in health, to

identify the likelihood of a child or young person taking on an inappropriate caring role, either now or in the future, to ensure the young carer has their needs assessed, to demonstrate a willingness to challenge parental refusal of services and for appropriate support to be put in place in response to the needs of the young carer(s).

### ***3. Facilitate development of specialist provision to support those young carers who would benefit from this type of support.***

In consultation with young carers a recurring wish expressed by most of them is to meet with other young carers. The benefits of meeting with others to share experiences can help to promote resilience, boost self esteem, and develop networks of informal peer support. Many young carers told us that they struggle to see friends because of a lack of time or because they can't have friends in their homes. Some young carers have become isolated from their peers, may have been excluded from school, and may be unable to access some services because of various aspects of their social exclusion such as poverty, lack of transport or social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The current contribution of Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers and The Young Carers East Sutherland (TYKES) in providing specialist support for young carers is highly valued by the young carers themselves and their families as well as the communities in which they are based. The historic context of these two high level support projects is unique. They, along with Highland Carers Project, have been instrumental in putting services for young carers to the forefront. A small number of other young carers' groups have developed, often as part of a wider service. They offer a different level of support such as weekly meetings either for group work or one to one support.

In conclusion, we need to have a strategy to ensure that young carers have the same opportunity as their peers to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected and responsible and included. Caring can be a barrier to learning and have a negative impact on a child's health and wellbeing. However, with the right support, caring can promote resilience "from increased maturity, confidence and coping skills, to strong bonds with the parent or relative being cared for".<sup>1</sup> It is important that choice and control remain with the young carer where possible as every young carer's situation is unique and some do not wish to be identified. Young carers and their families, throughout Highland, should be able to have clear expectations about a standard approach to supporting them that will enable them to come forward with confidence. This means that all young carers should have opportunities to identify themselves, to get accessible information about the condition of the person they care for, request an assessment of their needs and access additional support for themselves or extra help for the person they care for, if necessary. These rights for young carers are specified in legislation and policy detailed in Appendix 1 and should form part of mainstream services for children and young people.

### Why do we need a strategy?

There is a commitment at national and local government level to ensure that all children and young people can become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society and at work. To achieve these, children need to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected and responsible and included, known as SHANARI. The core message of GIRFEC is that ***“Everyone has a responsibility to do the right thing for each child and we must all work towards a unified approach, with less bureaucracy and more freedom to get on and respond to children. This will mean earlier help and the child getting the right help at the right time packaged for their particular needs.”***

There are examples throughout Highland of health professionals, social work and education staff, youth workers and voluntary organisations providing a high level of support to individual young carers but this varies greatly between individuals, services and areas. Getting it right for every child promotes a shared approach that builds solutions with and around children and families; it enables children to get the help they need when they need it.

The strategy will promote ways of working with parents, children and young people which will

- address the needs of all young carers and their families
- ameliorate the negative impact that caring can create
- improve the self esteem and confidence of Highland's young carers and help them to be recognised and feel valued in their communities
- improve the educational and employment outcomes for young carers
- improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for young carers

### Who is the strategy for?

Identifying and supporting young carers in Highland is everyone's job and not the province of any one agency or sector. All agencies and professionals who work with parents, children and/or young people have a responsibility to identify and support young carers. Therefore this strategy should be read by staff working in the voluntary sector, social work, health, education, police, leisure and transport services in conjunction with

- Getting It Right For Every Child [www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright)
- Care 21: The future of unpaid care in Scotland
- Highland Carers Strategy

- Carers Information Strategy
- HMIE How good are our services for young carers and their families? How good can we be [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)

### Defining young carers

***Young carers are children and young persons under 18 who provide care, assistance or support to a parent, sibling, grandparent or other person who is affected by a physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, physical or mental illness, drug or alcohol problem or other condition connected with a need for care, support or supervision.***

Some children and young people who have a parent or other relative with an illness or disability do not assume any caring responsibility. Factors such as the degree of disability or illness, personal networks of support or financial resources available to the family will influence the level of care provided by a child or young person.

### What type of care do they provide?

Young carers might do one or more of these (*in order of most usual caring role first*)

- Emotional support – feeling responsible, keeping someone safe, listening to their problems
- Domestic chores – cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry
- General care - medication, moving and handling
- Intimate care - help with bathing, getting dressed or going to the toilet
- Looking after siblings
- Other – translating, filling in forms, collecting benefits<sup>2</sup>

### What impact does caring have on children and young people?

One young carer told us that what makes her caring role difficult is “That people think that life is always hard” and there is a need here to celebrate the contribution that young carers make to their families and to acknowledge that many children and young people who have a caring role feel valued and supported and are glad that they can do something to help someone they love. One sibling said to us “I love being a young carer and I wouldn’t change how my brother is.” Many young carers have become resilient as a consequence of caring which has enabled them to develop “skills, opportunities for independence and mastery of tasks” and “manageable contributions to the household promote competencies, self esteem and problem solving” p 57.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Young Carers in the UK: the 2004 report (Dearden and Becker)

<sup>3</sup> What works in Building Resilience? Tony Newman. Barnardo's 2004

However, young carers' situations are as diverse as children and young people themselves and there is also a group of vulnerable young carers whose life chances are significantly reduced by their caring roles. Research shows that social and emotional experiences can be seriously jeopardized by caring.

- As many as half of all young carers miss some schooling and a quarter leave school with no qualifications
- 4 out of 5 young carers will be bullied because of their circumstances
- A third of young carers self-harm due to stress and over half experience sleep problems<sup>4</sup>
- Caring can cause: "adverse effects on a child's development physically, emotionally, educationally and socially"<sup>5</sup>.

Assessing the impact of someone's care needs on a child or young person should include a consideration of the effect caring may have on this child's development; parental capacity to provide care for the child and interventions which might be available in the wider community to help that child or young person achieve all of the wellbeing indicators known by the acronym of SHANARI.

### Towards earlier identification and support of young carers

Whilst this strategy intends to reduce inappropriate caring amongst children and young people it also realizes that caring can be a positive experience for children and young people with the right level of support for the whole family. As well as family and friends, other resilience factors which help young carers to cope include educational achievement, the existence of a trusted adult<sup>6</sup> and adequate financial resources.

However, from 2004 – 2007 the number of looked after children in Highland rose by up to 10% each year which may have resulted from an increase in parental substance misuse. Young carers who are at risk of becoming looked after need to be given support as individuals and as part of a family in an effort to prevent family breakdown. This is backed up by parents with mental illness that we spoke to at HUG (Highland Users Group) which represents the interests of users of mental health services across the Highlands. Parents whose children had been taken into care felt that extra support for them and their children may have enabled the family to stay together. Family support workers within the Youth Action Service are funded to identify and support children and young people who live with parental substance misuse. There are particularly vulnerable groups of young carers who need to be supported from a younger age to prevent the potentially negative impact of caring affecting their development.

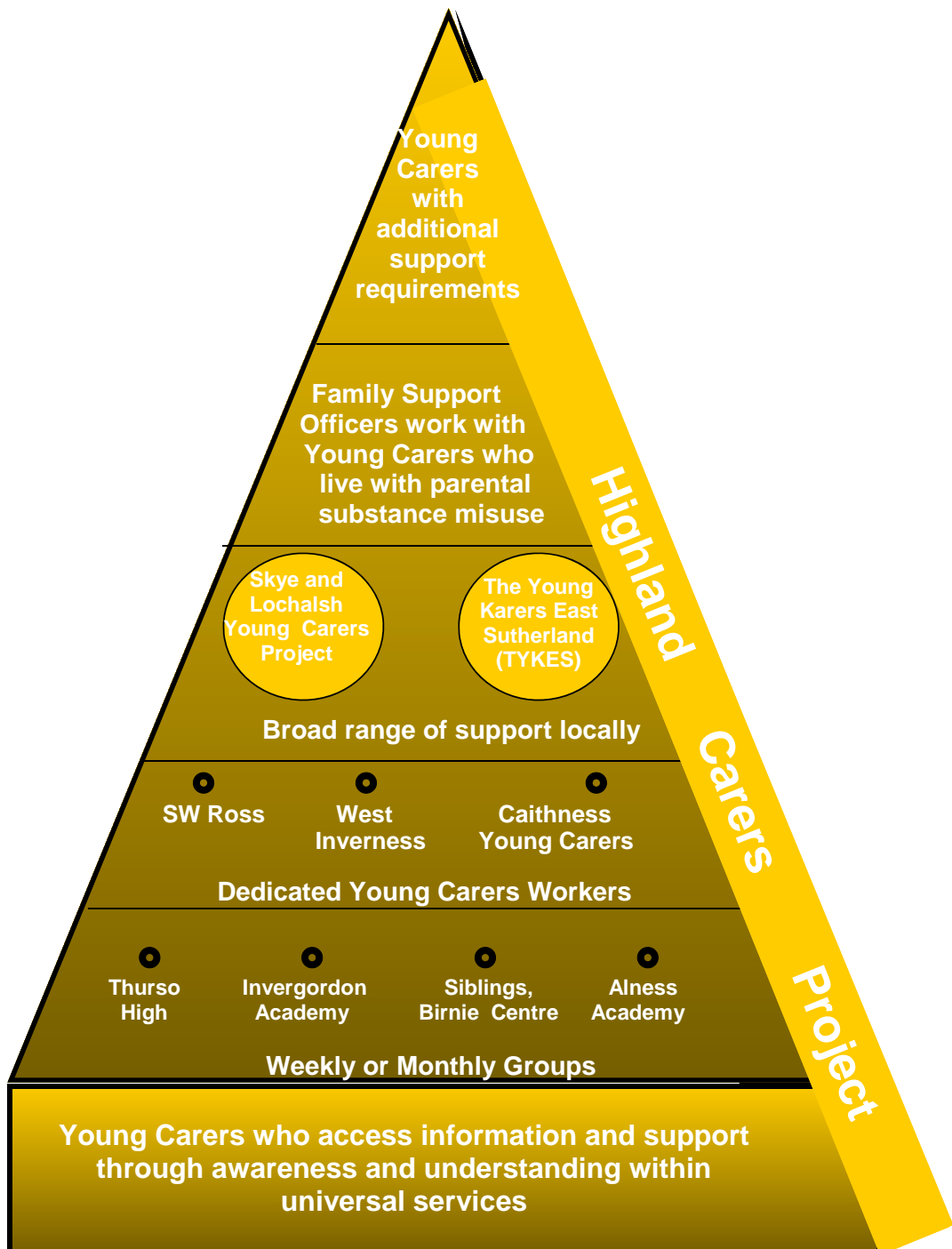
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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.carerscotland.org/Policyandpractice/Carersmanifesto/Manifesto-pdf.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Meredith H. Supporting the Young Carer 1992

<sup>6</sup> P 37 The Impact of Ordinal Position on the Self Esteem, Locus of Control and Resilience of College Age Siblings of Individuals with Disabilities. K Murray 2008

# Support for young carers in Highland December 2008



### **How Young Carers' needs are currently met in Highland**

There is an uneven distribution of service throughout Highland and there is a need to further develop equitable and sustainable services for young carers across Highland. Whilst some young carers choose not to be identified and/or supported, there are also a small number of young carers who receive a high level of support from staff working within universal services. Individual young carers report being supported in a variety of ways by professionals such as school nurses, children's service workers, social workers, teachers, learning support auxiliaries, youth action team staff and youth workers.

As part of For Highland's Children 3, the Youth Action Service is committed to increase support to some Young Carers across Highland. Secondary age young carers may be referred to the team because of concerns arising from parental offending behaviour or substance misuse or concerns that the young carer themselves may at risk of offending or misusing substances.

Within the statutory sector there is only one dedicated part time Young Carers Worker who is based in Inverness High School and funded on a permanent basis by Social Work Services to support young carers in primary and secondary schools in West Inverness. Mainstream Children's Service Workers, sometimes along with learning support auxiliaries, in AIness Academy, Invergordon Academy and Thurso High run regular groups for young carers.

Currently in Highland the following voluntary organisations are identifying and supporting young carers in a variety of ways.

- Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers
- The Young Karers East Sutherland (TYKES)
- Highland Carers Project
- Sibs at Birnie Centre
- Wick Family Centre
- South West Ross Community Care Forum
- Crossroads

### **How many are being supported?**

The number of young carers who receive support from universal services is not recorded but our consultation indicates that this support has grown since 2004 – something which is reflected nationally as awareness increases. The total number of young carers being supported by projects or groups is 300 which is only about 7% of the estimated 4,700 young carers in Highland.

This is a significant improvement since the first young carers' strategy was launched in June 2005 when 100 young carers were receiving specialist support. However much work has still to be done to create a coherent framework which enables young carers and their families to have an expectation of recognition and support which can be realised wherever they live in Highland.

### **Support for young carers in school**

All schools in Highland are Health Promoting Schools and the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 places health promotion at the heart of schools' activities.<sup>1</sup> The link between educational achievement and improved adult health and well being is well documented<sup>2</sup> and providing support for young carers at an early stage may help to reduce the health and education inequalities which the most vulnerable still experience.

In every secondary school in Highland there is now a young carer contact who receives information about young carers to pass on to staff and pupils and is a point of contact for outside agencies if they wish to contact the school about a child's caring role. Three secondary schools are running regular groups for young carers and some schools provide a high level of support for individual young carers.

Support in primary schools is less well defined and perhaps a young carer contact in the larger primary schools could provide a focal point for disseminating information. Although the age at which young carers are most likely to be identified is age 12, the Census in 2001 highlighted examples of 5 year old young carers caring for over 50 hours a week. Whilst this is a minority of cases, it does demonstrate the need to develop protocols for young carers to be identified and supported, if necessary, from age 5.

For children moving into primary school from nursery, there should be opportunities to share information about physical or mental illness, disability or substance misuse in the family. For young carers who are also self parenting or where there are high levels of care needs within the family, there may be a need to provide additional support around issues such as transport, parental consent forms, school meals, homework, clothing such as PE kits, and access to extracurricular activities.

The school nursing team has a key role in identification and responding to the needs of vulnerable children and young people including young carers. In small rural schools they may be the only professionals, other than school staff, who are available to speak to a young carer about their caring role or the condition of the person they care for.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/foodnutrition>

<sup>2</sup> The Cost of Exclusion. Counting the cost of youth disadvantage in the UK. The Prince's Trust 2007

### **Support for young carers at home and in the community**

Health professionals who first come into contact with a family where there are care needs are well placed to flag up the potential of a caring role developing. Health and social work professionals also have an important role to play in helping the family to identify and accept the additional responsibilities which the child or young person may be taking on, the impact that caring may have on them and their need to be included in discussions which affect them. Young carers have a statutory entitlement to an assessment of their needs in their own right but currently there are very few young carers in Highland who have been able to access this.

Youth workers and community organisations for children and young people should be aware of the additional support needs of some young carers that need to be addressed to enable them to access extracurricular activities.

Some young carers aged 16 to 18 years have specific needs around transition and might need additional support to enable them to move on or to stay. They may require help with budgeting, finding alternative housing or getting additional services for the person with care needs. They may also need support to find and sustain places in further education, employment or training opportunities.

### **Policy development based on listening to young carers**

The role of Highland Carers Project is to maintain a broad strategic overview of young carers in Highland. They have established a network of young carers and provide advice and support to young carers, families and professionals throughout Highland. Regular consultation events take place which include the provision of respite and activities. By regularly involving, informing and consulting with young carers; their voices can be heard and their experiences used to inform service planning, policy development and information and training packages for professionals in all agencies across Highland who work with children and families.

Listening to young carers in Highland, and the people who work with them, we have drawn up eight actions to help them to get the support they require, when they need it.

## Integrated Childrens Services Action Plan for Young Carers

### 1. Information

to enable young carers to be **included**. We will provide information to professionals who work with children, young people or parents and provide accessible specialist information to young carers

### 2. Training

for young carers to be **respected and responsible**. We will train professionals who work with children, young people or parents about young carers' issues and needs.

### 3. Identification

for young carers to be **safe**. We will work with appropriate services to ensure mechanisms are in place to identify young carers and also children in vulnerable families who are likely to take on an inappropriate caring role in future. We will provide opportunities for young carers to identify themselves and to be aware of their rights.

### 4. Assessment

for young carers **achieving**. We will ensure that young carers have opportunities to be assessed to establish any additional support needs and supported through periods of transition and vulnerability.

### 5. Respite

for young carers to be **nurtured**. We will continue to develop the availability of effective and structured respite opportunities for young carers in Highland.

### 6. Family Support

for young carers to be **safe**. We will work with appropriate services to ensure mechanisms are in place to support family members who otherwise would rely on children and young people taking on inappropriate caring roles

### 7. One to one support

for young carers to be **healthy**. We will further develop existing opportunities for mentoring/counselling or one to one support for young carers when required.

### 8. Peer support

for young carers to be **included**. We will facilitate opportunities for young carers to support each other.

Every child and young person with caring responsibilities deserves the right to be a child first<sup>3</sup>

<p><b>Objective 1. Information</b> to enable young carers to be <b>included</b>. We will provide information to professionals who work with children, young people or parent and provide accessible, specialist information to young carers.</p> <p>Most young carers worried about the person they care for and said it helped, <b>“getting information and letters”</b> and <b>“getting the info so I know what’s going on”</b>. Professionals want information for themselves about young carers and also information that they can pass onto young carers.</p>		<p>Timescale</p> <p>Annual Review</p> <p>Annual Review</p> <p>December 2008</p> <p>January 2009</p> <p>September 2010</p> <p>November 2009</p> <p>February 2010</p> <p>October 2010</p>
<p>Where are we now?</p> <p>The term young carer continues to be interpreted in different ways.</p> <p>Awareness of young carers’ issues and needs varies greatly between services and areas.</p> <p>National research indicates “the overall incidence of educational difficulties among young carers has decreased”<sup>1</sup> as a result of increased awareness and support in schools.</p> <p>Carers Information Strategies place new responsibilities on NHS Boards and their partners to inform young carers of their statutory rights.●</p> <p>300 young carers in Highland are accessing regular information directly with more receiving it from other professionals.</p>	<p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sourcing, production and distribution of information packs, newsletters, leaflets and posters to be available for professionals and young carers and their families.●</li> <li>• Highland Carers Project to act as central information and advice point to staff and input into other agencies’ workshops, seminars, information and publications</li> <li>• Develop <i>For Highlands Young Carers</i> website as strategic implementation tool</li> <li>• Young Carers Education Officer employed to visit schools to talk to children and young people about young carers.</li> <li>• Information for young carers included on NHS Highland and Highland Council websites.●</li> <li>• Information to be available in key public locations e.g. GP surgeries, schools, youth cafes, community centres, libraries, hospital wards, social care settings.●</li> <li>• Inclusion of young carers’ information in schools and community settings which can be used when discussing issues such as inequality, diversity, disability, mental illness, drugs or alcohol.●</li> <li>• Young carer contacts to be established in larger Primary Schools</li> </ul>	
<p>Who will be involved? Highland Council, NHS Highland, Northern Constabulary, Scottish Training on Drugs and Alcohol (<b>STRADA</b>), Highland Carers Project, Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers, The Young Carers East Sutherland (TYKES)</p>		

<p><b>Objective 2. Training</b> for young carers to be <b>respected and responsible</b>. We will train professionals who work with children, young people or parents about young carers' issues and needs. We will offer training to young carers who would like more information to help them to care with confidence.</p> <p>It's <b>"important that the people we talk to understand about our lives"</b>. Young carers tell us that people's attitudes can make it difficult for them and so we need to increase understanding of the diversity of caring and the various impacts caring can have. <b>"I feel badly different"</b>; <b>"Teacher to no that I had a bad day and I get upset"</b> and <b>"That we might be tired... because we were helping the person we care for"</b>. It's <b>"Easier in class - in class teachers more understanding"</b>. Young carers sometimes want training, it helped <b>"doing a course with my brother's teachers and learning more about his condition"</b></p>		<p>Timescale</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>May 2010</p> <p>August 2009</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>November 2009</p>
<p>Where are we now?</p> <p>Other issues often take priority and take up of training across agencies is low.</p> <p>Currently NHS and Highland Council staff training in Highland does not include young carers' issues and awareness varies between individuals, services and areas.</p> <p>Some young carers may need to be trained in how to deal with an emergency or in ways of keeping themselves safe.</p> <p>Red Cross have worked with and trained young carers in Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers and TYKES.</p> <p>Who will be involved? Highland Council, NHS Highland, Northern Constabulary, , Scottish Training on Drugs and Alcohol (<b>STRADA</b>), Highland Carers Project, Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers, The Young Karers East Sutherland (TYKES), Red Cross</p>	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote training in young carer issues to all agencies who work with children and families.</li> <li>• Develop the role of community, school and GP practice nurses in identifying and supporting young carers. •</li> <li>• Raise young carers awareness via Health Centres and Primary Care Staff. Include young carers' issues in training for all staff including receptionists. •</li> <li>• Revise NHS and Council Joint Training Plan to include training for staff on carer awareness, carer's legislation, assessment and information/support needs. •</li> <li>• Training packs for professionals to go online. •</li> <li>• Red Cross to develop work with young carers in Lochaber and Ross-shire</li> <li>• Young carers are given the opportunity to receive specialist information and advice from staff such as epilepsy nurses or diabetic nurses. •</li> </ul>	

**Objective 3. Identification** for young carers to be **safe**. We will work with appropriate services to ensure mechanisms are in place to identify young carers and also children in vulnerable families who are likely to take on an inappropriate caring role in future. We will provide opportunities for young carers to identify themselves and to be aware of their rights.

**“Remember I have a right to my childhood”**. Young carers are most likely to be identified around age 12 and say it helps to **“to get someone older to help you”** and **“I am worried about the danger in my house”** – we need to identify these children and young people to help them to feel safe. Saul Becker has said that it is crucial we start to identify and support young carers from age 5<sup>2</sup>. Young carers need to have the choice and control over being identified because their feelings vary - **“I don’t tell anyone I’m a young carer because it’s embarrassing”** and a different view **“I love being a young carer”**.

Where are we now?	Actions	Timescale
<p>Professionals often identify young carers once they have developed high support needs.</p> <p>Most GP practices have undertaken to identify young carers as part of Enhanced Services.</p> <p>Young carers caring for family members who have mental illness or substance misuse problems often remain hidden. This group continue to report educational difficulties.</p> <p>Some young carers’ families do not want their children to be seen as young carers. Some young carers do not want to be identified.</p> <p>Who will be involved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise Admission and Discharge Protocols to include explicit reference to the identification of young carers and their right to an assessment of need.</li> <li>• Caring role recorded on child concern forms being used as GIRFEC implemented.</li> <li>• Promote identification of young carers when assessing the needs of other family members.</li> <li>• Develop systems to identify young carers at times of school transitions; on identification of problems with lateness/absence from school; on referral to youth action teams or referral to children’s reporter.</li> <li>• Inclusion of identification of young carers in the Highland Lifestyle Survey for P7, S2 and S4</li> </ul>	<p>January 2011</p> <p>February 2009</p> <p>April 2010</p> <p>August 2010</p> <p>Annual Review</p>
<p>Who will be involved?</p> <p>Highland Council, NHS Highland, Northern Constabulary, Highland Carers Project, Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers, The Young Carers East Sutherland (TYKES), South West Ross Community Care Forum</p>		

<p><b>Objective 4. Assessment</b> for young carers <b>achieving</b>. We will ensure that young carers have opportunities to be assessed to establish any additional support needs and supported through periods of transition and vulnerability.</p>		Timescale
<p>Young carers tell us they have “<b>problems at school</b>”, “<b>I don’t get to do my homework</b>”, or “<b>The things that upset me is that I get bullied and people in my family are dying</b>”. “<b>I want to be listened to</b>”, “<b>Bad people don’t listen to me and good people listen to me</b>”, “<b>people listen to me because they think I’m responsible</b>”.</p>	<p>Where are we now?</p> <p>Community Care Packages sometimes rely on the person being supported by a child or young person in the family who have not had their needs assessed.</p> <p>The majority of young carers have not had a young carers assessment</p> <p>Care Pathways in place and Care Plans and Childrens Plans regularly reviewed for those with ongoing care needs</p> <p>Some schools redeploy support staff to help young carers at times of additional need.</p> <p>Some work is being developed in other areas with young carers aged 16 and over to address their specific needs.</p>	<p>April 2009</p> <p>July 2009</p> <p>November 2010</p> <p>December 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>February 2011</p> <p>March 2010</p>
<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop process that triggers assessment of young carers’s needs if a social care plan includes support from a child or young person.</li> <li>• Develop guidance with the GIRFEC team for assessing young carers using generic and specialist assessment tools.</li> <li>• Insertion of trigger questions in adult health assessment tools such as pre-operative screening, post-admission screening and hospital discharge procedures.</li> <li>• Encourage children and young people to express their wishes and needs when designing care plans or having discussions about issues which affect them.</li> <li>• Ensure that young carers to receive information from professionals who work with them about their statutory right to an assessment of their needs.</li> <li>• Review and assess the particular needs of young adult carers (16+) in Highland.</li> <li>• Establish system to record young carer assessments within SE and Mid Highland CHPs.</li> </ul>		
<p>Who will be involved? Highland Council, NHS Highland, Highland Carers Project, Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers, The Young Karers East Sutherland (TYKES)</p>		

<p><b>Objective 5 Respite</b> for young carers to be <b>nurtured</b>. We will continue to develop the availability of effective and structured respite opportunities for young carers in Highland.</p> <p>Respite opportunities are extremely important to young carers and can help them to become more resilient. <b>“I made new friends and met other people who like doing the same things”, “It gave me a break from my sister”, “bit more freedom”, “I am still keeping in touch with some of the people I met”, “Helped me make friends my own age”</b>. Some comments on respite were that it helped <b>“getting out of my house and not worrying about my dad”</b>, and <b>“It helped my confidence a lot and encouraged me to step up and meet new people”</b>. Ideas on how to make things better included <b>“getting help for the person they care for”</b>.</p>		
<p>Where are we now?</p> <p>Some young carers cannot get services to support the person they care for.</p> <p>Respite services have been reduced in statutory services.</p> <p>Approximately 200 young carers accessed respite in 2007.</p> <p>Rural isolation and lack of transport continue to prevent some young carers from accessing leisure, social and cultural activities outside of school.</p> <p>Commitment from Scottish Government to make young carers a policy priority and increase number accessing respite.</p> <p>Who will be involved? Highland Council, NHS Highland, Highland Crossroads Care Attendant Schemes, Highland Carers Project, Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers, The Young Carers East Sutherland (TYKES), Sibs at Birnie Centre, South West Ross Community Care Forum, Wick Family Centre, Community Childminding projects</p>	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of young carers accessing respite such as a regular activity, a holiday or school trip, by 30 each year.</li> <li>• Community learning and leisure staff running transitional summer programmes to identify young carers in primary 7 and support them to take part.</li> <li>• Specialist services continue to provide respite for young carers.</li> <li>• Protocols developed that support young carers to take part in extracurricular activities, such as school trips.</li> <li>• Additional support is provided for the cared for person if necessary to enable the child or young person to have a break.</li> <li>• Organisations running activities for children and young people consider additional support to enable young carers to access them.</li> <li>• Consult and report on possibility of free or subsidised transport for young carers to promote their participation and inclusion, ideally as part of a wider provision.</li> </ul>	<p>Timescale</p> <p>Annual Review</p> <p>Annual Review</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>July 2010</p> <p>December 2010</p> <p>March 2011</p> <p>January 2011</p>

<p><b>Objective 6 Family Support</b> for young carers to be <b>safe</b>. We will work with appropriate services to ensure mechanisms are in place to support family members who otherwise would rely on children and young people taking on inappropriate caring roles.</p>	
<p>Young carers say “<b>getting help for the person they care for</b>” is important and that it’s hard “<b>having to do all the housework all on my own without any help</b>”, “<b>I have learned how tiring it is to be a young carer</b>” and “<b>I’m worried about looking after my little brother all through the holidays</b>”. They want professionals “<b>To find out how hard it is to look after someone</b>” and to “<b>involve all the family who want to be involved and support them as much as the person they are treating</b>”. “<b>You have to be responsible and you need to look after others but you just want to be alone</b>”</p>	
<p>Where are we now?</p> <p>Greater awareness of impact of care prevents some inappropriate caring.</p> <p>New government targets of increased care in the community.</p> <p>An increase in parental substance misuse, Home Detox and other care packages which rely on care at home.</p> <p>Young Carers’ rights to have their views taken into account are not always respected.</p> <p>Some Community Care Packages continue to rely on the support of a child or young person.</p>	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop information for parents about the possibility of children taking on a caring role in the family.*</li> <li>• A revision of admission and discharge protocols to include explicit reference to the identification of young carers and their right to an assessment of need.*</li> <li>• Identify and promote the use of resources such as family support worker, home help, alternative child care for younger siblings, or after school clubs for families where there is a risk of inappropriate caring by children and young people.*</li> <li>• Children and young people to be involved in the making of adult care plans that affect them; children’s plans for siblings; children’s plans of their own.</li> <li>• Promote young carers access to breakfast clubs and after school clubs</li> </ul>
	<p>Timescale</p> <p>January 2009</p> <p>May 2010</p> <p>September 2010</p> <p>March 2011</p> <p>August 2010</p>
<p>Who will be involved?                  Highland Council, NHS Highland, Highland Carers Project, Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers, The Young Carers East Sutherland (TYKES), Highland Crossroads Care Attendant Schemes, Action for Children (Scotland)</p>	

<p><b>Objective 7 One to one support</b> for young carers to be <b>healthy</b>. We will further develop existing opportunities for mentoring/counselling or one to one support for young carers when required.</p>		<p>Timescale</p> <p>July 2009</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>September 2010</p> <p>January 2011</p> <p>Annual Review March 2009</p>
<p><b>“Young carers help me because I feel better when someone talks to me”, “I can’t help self harming myself”, “I had a bad day and I get upset”</b>. One parent recently told us that their disabled son had <b>“lots of support but there was nothing for his sister. She needed to speak to someone outwith the family because she didn’t want to bother us or hurt us”</b>. Young carers say it would help if <b>“they have someone to talk to and don’t feel alone.” “I sometimes get bullied at school and I can’t speak to my parents because they are too busy looking after my dad”</b>.</p>		
<p>Where are we now?</p> <p>Some young carers are being mentored by young carer workers, youth workers, guidance teachers, NCH staff, Children’s Service Workers, School Nurses and Youth Action Team staff but this is not standard for any one service or area.</p> <p>Young carers in Highland are more like to be referred to mental health services than their peers. This is reflected nationally.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>Many young carers feel they need to be in crisis before they have someone to talk to.</p>	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protocols to ensure every young carer, on being identified and regularly thereafter, is given the opportunity to meet with a professional either in or out of school such as a school nurse, teacher, Childrens Service Worker or youth worker to talk about their caring role.</li> <li>• Provide information for counsellors who work in schools. •</li> <li>• Ensure that young carer issues are recognized and included in child protection training and Children in Distress Training (Self harm and suicide prevention). •</li> <li>• Specialist services to continue to provide one to one and bereavement support as well as advice and support, whole family work, constructive groupwork, creative work through the arts, health promotion and counselling to help young carers develop the skills they need to access mainstream services.</li> </ul>	
<p>Who will be involved?                  Highland Council, NHS Highland, Highland Carers Project, Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers, The Young Carers East Sutherland (TYKES), South West Ross Community Care Forum, Wick Family Centre, Action for Children (Scotland), Children 1st</p>		

<p><b>Objective 8. Peer support</b> for young carers to be <b>included</b>. We will facilitate opportunities for young carers to support each other.</p>		Timescale
<p>One of the things which young carers have said is helpful is the opportunity to meet with other young carers. <b>“Looking after my mum most of the day means not seeing my friends as much as I used to”, “The young carers group gives me time to play with my friends”, “They make me feel so included”, “When my friends leave me on my own I find things harder”, “Meeting other young carers who understand what I’m going through”</b> helps.</p>		Annual Review
Where are we now?	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued inclusion of young carers in mainstream activities and help from specialist projects if required to enable participation.</li> <li>Services to identify existing service users who are young carers and consider possible benefits of working with them as a group.</li> <li>Specialist services continue to provide opportunities for peer support.</li> <li>Information, advice and support from young carer projects to professionals who wish to bring together young carers in a group.</li> <li>Support young carers in Highland to attend the national young carers festival, set up by the Scottish Government as a national forum representing views of young carers.</li> <li>Promote the national young carers website run by Princess Royal Trust for Carers.</li> </ul>	December 2010 Annual Review Annual Review
<p>Skye and Lochalsh YC and TYKES provide this regularly in their areas.</p> <p>Highland Carers Project and Siblings Group provide this intermittently pan Highland.</p> <p>Groups of young carers meet regularly in secondary schools in Thurso, Invergordon, Golspie, Dornoch and Alness</p> <p>New groups planned in Wick and SW Ross.</p> <p>Youth Action Team in Inverness have run one group and plan another in Ross-shire.</p> <p>The majority of young carers in Highland do not have the opportunity to meet others with a shared experience.</p> <p>Who will be involved?</p> <p>Highland Council, NHS Highland, Highland Carers Project, Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers, The Young Carers East Sutherland (TYKES), Sibs at Birnie Centre, South West Ross Community Care Forum, Wick Family Centre</p>		June 2010 Annual Review

<p>How will we know that we are succeeding?</p> <p>Young carers across Highland will play a key role in monitoring and evaluating the strategy implementation by being regularly consulted.</p>	
<p><b>1. Information</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of professionals accessing information from young carer projects and website</li> <li>• Number of young carers receiving information</li> <li>• Number of young carer contacts in schools</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Training</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No.s of awareness raising presentations/training sessions given</li> <li>• No.s of professionals accessing training packs</li> <li>• No. of young carers accessing training</li> <li>• Record of input of material into other relevant training</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Identification</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of young carers being identified in school transition; nursery to primary school to secondary school.</li> <li>• Trigger questions included in Adult Single Shared Assessment process</li> <li>• Number of young carers self identifying in the Highland Lifestyle Survey</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Assessment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of young carer assessments carried out</li> <li>• Evidence that Single Shared Assessment takes account of young carer's caring role.</li> <li>• Evidence that assessment of young carer's support needs takes account of ability to access after school activities</li> <li>• Consultation and report completed on needs of young adult carers</li> </ul>

<p><b>5. Respite</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of young carers accessing respite, residential trips and activity breaks with young carers' services and schools.</li> <li>• Evidence of participation in mainstream groups i.e. sports, activities, youth clubs etc</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Family Support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GPs and other NHS services have protocols for identifying and signposting young carers</li> <li>• No of families where service provided for cared for person to support young carer</li> <li>• Evidence of young carers attending after school clubs and breakfast clubs</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. One to one support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of young carers receiving 1-1 support</li> <li>• Numbers who attend dedicated young carers services</li> <li>• Numbers of dedicated members of staff with responsibility for young carers</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Peer support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. of young carers being helped to access the national young carers website</li> <li>• Numbers who attend dedicated young carers services</li> <li>• Number of groups being run within other services and numbers of young carers attending.</li> </ul>

Notes

[1] P.11 Young Carers in the UK The 2004 Report Chris Dearden and Saul Becker. Published by Carers UK 2004

[2] Princess Royal Trust for Carers National Policy Conference 2005

[3] G Armstrong: Edinburgh University and NHS Lothian 2004.

- Highland Carers Information Strategy

**If you would like to obtain further copies of this strategy or for advice about working with young carers please contact:**

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