

Carers Lewisham: Services for Young Carers and Their Families

Welfare rights

We provide benefits checks for Young Carers and their families covering most carer and disability allowances, and can access advice about young peoples benefits on request. We are also able to offer advice about Direct Payments, Assessments and other services available from the Lewisham Council Social Care and Health department.

Respite activities

We provide a wide range of respite activities for Young Carers who are aged 8 and over depending on their level of caring responsibilities.

Saturday clubs at Lewisham Carers Centre open to regular members with some transport available. Involving arts, drama, use of computer suite, games, trips to local venues.

Day trips are usually to theme parks, London venues and to do outdoor pursuits in and around the London area, which are provided free including transport.

Weekends away are usually 2/3 times a year, provided free with transport to and from home.

***NB** Day trips and weekends away are covered by Carers Lewisham s Health and Safety policy which includes risk assessment, insurance, uses accredited centres and require parental consent.*

Young Carers Drop ins (Tues & Thurs 4-6pm)

These provide the use of the computer suite and the opportunity to chill out and chat after school. There is no transport but, refreshments are available.

Occasional Respite Scheme and Fix Yourself a Break

These schemes are managed by the Carers Lewisham Respite Care Manager and are open to Young Carers who meet the criteria. **The Occasional Respite Scheme** allows the young carer to have a sitter for their cared for person for approx 12 hours per month if they wish to take a break to attend a respite trip or activity.

Fix Yourself a Break allows a young carer and up to 3 other family members including the cared for person to get **up to £400 towards** a holiday or break away, providing they have not been on holiday for at least 2 years.

Other Funding

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers has several funds which offer the opportunity for Young Carers to apply (once a year) for up to £300 in the areas of education, leisure pursuits, mentoring, purchasing essential items that will help a Young Carers situation. We can also use our knowledge and the internet to do funding searches for other needs.

Advice and information

Advice and information are available from the Carers Lewisham Helpline and Young Carers Workers in support of the family to indirectly benefit the young carer. We can also provide information about the cared for person's condition in age relevant form for the young carer to understand as this is sometimes a major cause for concern about whether their cared for person will die, or whether they will get the same illness in later life which can cause a lot of stress.

School support

We offer support in a range of schools around the borough, through lunch clubs and awareness raising with staff and pupils. We can advocate with schools on a Young Carers behalf should they find themselves getting in to trouble with issues such as attendance, acting out their anxieties in school, being bullied or are at risk of becoming excluded.

Counselling

Our counselling service is available to all carers free of charge. Young Carers aged 12 upwards may access this service. We are able to refer those in need to other relevant agencies for help if necessary.

Employment / Training

The Carers Lewisham Training & Employment Project offers access to various courses directing carers towards work or study. This is available to anyone caring who is 16+ and includes courses in Personal Development, IT, Writing and Use of the Internet. We can also refer on to relevant services like Careers, Colleges and Connexions.

Mentoring

We offer a one to one programme provided by a team of volunteers who will work with the Mentoring Manager to help those young carers aged 11+ that will benefit from more focused support. Each mentee will receive a minimum of 20 weeks support to counter any problems caused by their family situation and/or caring role.

Young Carers Lewisham, The Princess Royal Trust,
Lewisham Carers Centre,

Waldram Place, Forest Hill, London SE23 2LB

Tel: 020 8699 8686 Fax: 020 8699 0634

Email: info@carerslewisham.org.uk www.carerslewisham.org.uk

