

10 YEARS

MYTIME

YOUNG CARERS

IMPACT REPORT
2022-2023

INTRODUCTION

Ending this year marks the end of my third full year as CEO at **MYTIME**. It was both a brilliant, yet thoroughly challenging year. I am very proud of the work that the **MYTIME** team has delivered to increase the support and opportunities available for young carers. **MYTIME** has worked exceptionally hard to listen to the challenges faced by young carers and to respond accordingly. They have further developed our three major programmes, which give young carers the support they need to thrive. These include the Making Memories Programme, the Employability Programme and the Level Up Programme.

At the end of 2021/2022, we recognised we still had a lot to learn about the impact of these programmes, so in 2022/2023 we invested heavily in developing our social impact measurement strategy. In partnership with young carers, we have developed a comprehensive theory of change, enabling us to develop and test effective tools for measuring our impact. Our findings are extremely positive, demonstrating that when the right support is offered at the right time, it can have a very positive impact on young carers and those around them.

We have been very fortunate to partner with many supporters and organisations. The contributions we have received from organisations such as Paul Hamlyn, Talbot Village Trust, Garfield Weston, The Pointers Family Trust and so many others has allowed us to scale our services significantly. The generosity of these donors and allies has enabled us to increase the awareness of young carers exponentially, particularly within schools. The recent school census data revealed that Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP), identified the highest percentage of young carers of any local authority in England. Through this consistent outreach with the schools and the local authority for the past 3 years, we have effected measurable change, with data that demonstrates just how effective our Level Up Programme really is.

We are excited to enter 2023/2024 with plans to expand our work across the UK. There are still thousands of young carers in Dorset, on the Isle of Wight and across the UK, who don't know that the vital care they provide for a loved one within their family means they are a young carer. We see it as our responsibility to continue to increase awareness that these incredible young people exist and to provide the support they need to truly thrive.



Krista Sharp
MYTIME CEO

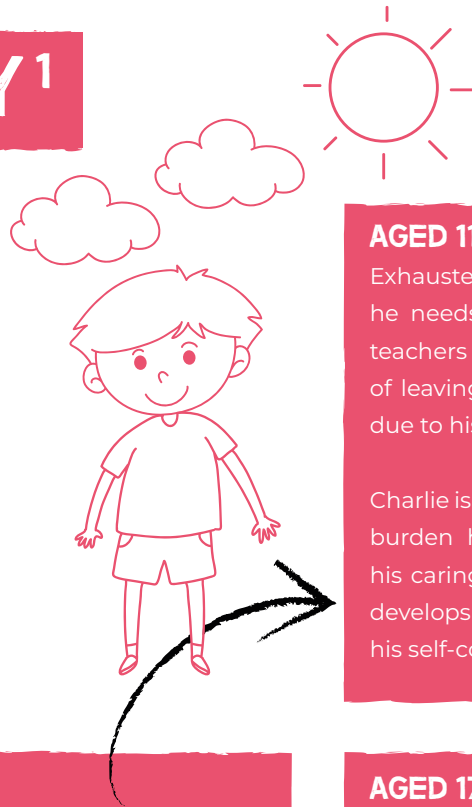
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CHARLIE'S STORY¹

At **MYTIME**, we believe that no child's destiny should be defined by their beginning. Young carers are incredibly hard-working, compassionate and resilient: they have so much to offer the world, yet their caring responsibilities can take a real toll on their childhoods and their futures. Just take a look at Charlie's story.



AGED 5-10

Charlie's mother is wheelchair-bound and lives with depression, and Charlie is his mother's primary carer. From a young age, Charlie spends most of his time caring for his mother. He gets her bathed and dressed for the day, he moves her from place to place and helps her to use the toilet, he does what he can to keep her spirits high and he keeps on top of the housework.

Because his mum is so dependent on him, Charlie doesn't have time to develop his own hobbies or social life as a child, and he tends to feel out of place with peers at school. When classmates start to tease him about his mum's condition, Charlie quickly learns to feel ashamed of his identity as carer, and tries to fade into the background.

AGED 11-16

Exhausted by his increasing caring role, Charlie does the bare minimum that he needs to in secondary school to successfully fly below the radar of his teachers and peers. He doesn't like school; he's always worried by the thought of leaving his mum at home on her own, and often too tired to concentrate due to his busy caring schedule.

Charlie is stressed and overwhelmed, but has nobody to turn to. He would never burden his mother with his own problems, and feels too embarrassed by his caring role to tell anyone else about it. With no-one to confide in, Charlie develops mental health concerns of his own. He turns to food for comfort, but his self-confidence only suffers as he starts to put on weight.

AGED 17-25

Charlie just manages to achieve the grades at GCSE that he needs to go to college. Here, he is held back by low self-worth, and though he forms some friendships, he still doesn't manage to identify anyone who he feels he can open up to. He studies health and social care, not because he loves looking after people, but because this is the only environment where he feels he belongs.

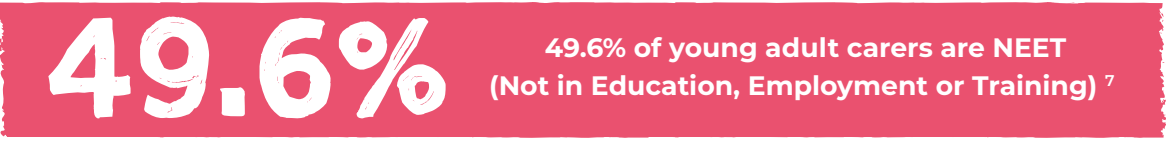
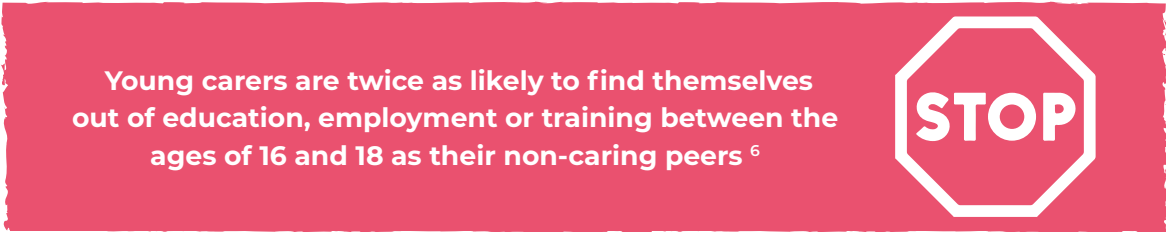
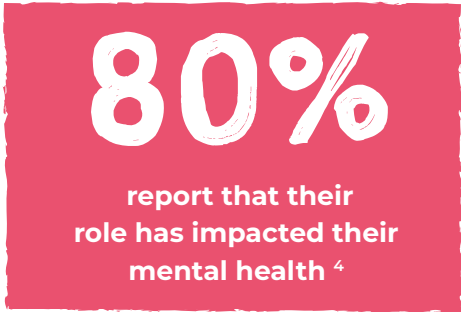
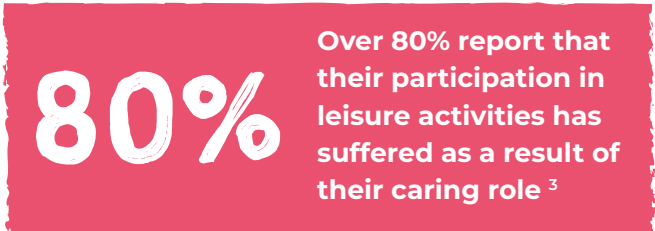
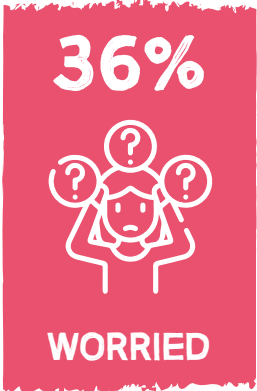
After college, Charlie's low self-esteem prevents him from moving into employment, and leaves him exposed to poor relationship choices in his personal life. He never leaves home – his mum can't do without him – and his own health concerns begin to spiral. By the time he's 25, Charlie has been diagnosed with depression himself.

¹This is a composite case study, including elements drawn from different young carer case studies

OUR REASON FOR BEING

Every young carer operates within a unique context and they're all impacted differently by their responsibilities. Young carers across the country do, however, report some shared experiences:

At least a third of young carers say that their caring role results in them either 'always' or 'usually' feeling: ²



²Carers Trust, 2022

⁵The Me-We Young Carers Project, 2022

³Rethink Mental Illness, 2010

⁶The Carers Trust, 2019.

⁴Rethink Mental Illness, 2010

⁷Young Adult Carers and Employment; Dr Joe Sempik and Professor Saul Becker; 2014.

Research carried out by **MYTIME** this year has also exposed the extent to which a young carer's education can be impacted by their caring role.

14%

The persistent absence from school among young carers (14%) is twice as high as the persistent absence among non-caring students (8%)

8%



Young carers miss, on average, 26.5 days of the academic year. Over the 5 years that typically make up a secondary school career, this equates to 70% of an academic year.



Young carers are twice as **LIKELY** to be working below age-related expectations than their non-caring peers by the end of Year 6.



Young carers are twice as **UNLIKELY** to be working above age-related expectations by the end of Year 6.



IN SPITE OF ALL THIS:

20%

Only an estimated 20% of young carers receive support from their local authority.⁸

52%

said they were never or not often supported by their school, college or university in balancing the role with studies.⁹



Of the estimated 700,000 young carers living in the UK today, only 127,175 identified as such in 2021's census. This suggests that over 80% of young carers are hidden within our society, and may be operating without any support at all.¹⁰

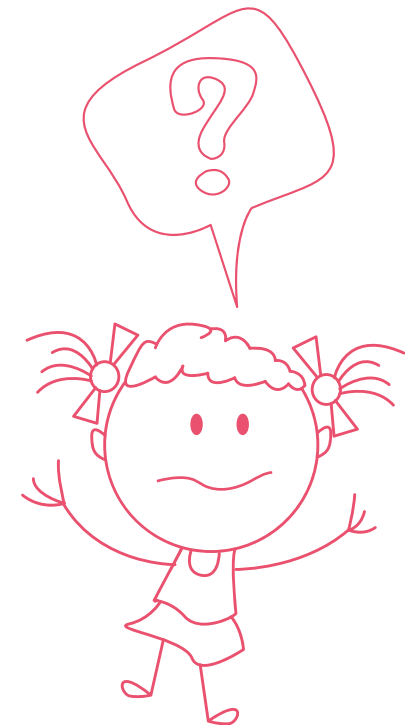
⁸Children's Commissioner for England

⁹Carers Trust 2022

¹⁰BBC and Nottingham University, 2010

But statistics can only tell us so much. At **MYTIME**, we are committed to truly understanding the varied experiences and needs of the young people with whom we work, and we strive relentlessly to create space for their voices. Below, young carers tell us in their own words about the most significant challenges they face:

- ▷ The words most commonly used when describing emotions associated with caring include: **“STRESSED”, “TIRED”, “ANXIOUS”, “LONELY”, “WORRIED”** and **“ANGRY”**.
- ▷ Most young carers agree that children without caring responsibilities **“JUST DON’T GET IT”**, and that this generally leads to a lack of sensitivity or an unhelpful response. Many choose not to tell their friends about their caring responsibilities, and this creates feelings of isolation.
- ▷ Young carers report that opportunities to get out and about away from their caring responsibilities feel like a **“RELIEF”**, and that chances to try new things help **“TO TAKE OUR MIND OFF OF THINGS.”** For most, however, these opportunities present themselves rarely.
- ▷ School is often described as a young carer’s **“BIGGEST TIME OF WORRY”**, due to having to leave relatives unsupervised at home. Most young carers report that their schools are unaware of their caring responsibilities; however, nearly all young carers agree that it would be helpful if school staff understood their responsibilities within the home. Young carers typically feel that it would make a significant difference simply to know that there was at least one reliable person to turn to for help and to talk to at school.
- ▷ Young carers describe their role as **“TIRING”** and complain of feeling **“DRAINED”** a lot of the time, due to the amount of responsibilities they have. They explain that juggling their caring responsibilities with their schoolwork can be very stressful, and that sometimes their only choice is to sleep less to get everything done.
- ▷ Many young carers experience bounded agency, and feel that their freedom of choice is limited by their caring role. Often, young carers believe that they were **‘BORN TO CARE’**, so put the needs of their relatives before their own dreams, desires and aspirations.
- ▷ Due to the amount of responsibilities that young carers carry day-to-day, major points of transition in life can feel extremely stressful. When asked about plans post-school, young carers state that they are **“TRYING NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT, BECAUSE IT’S JUST TOO OVERWHELMING.”**



From the data we have gathered, we have deduced the following:

- ▽ Young carers need opportunities to connect with other young carers and build support networks for themselves.
- ▽ Young carers need chances to take time for themselves, to rest and recuperate and to take part in leisure activities.
- ▽ Young carers need support in school, more than anywhere.
- ▽ Young adult carers need encouragement and support in planning for the future.

MYTIME exists to provide young carers with all of these things. By ensuring that they receive the support they need, and the same opportunities and friendship that every child deserves, we are levelling the playing field for young carers.



THE JOURNEY



YOUNG CARERS

2013

MYTIME Young Carers is founded, providing activity days and funding breaks away for other young carer groups. **The charity supports less than 100 young carers.**

2019

Krista Sharp joins **MYTIME** as Executive Director. At the time, the charity comprises a team of 3 and supports **160 young carers.**

2020

Krista takes on the role of CEO at **MYTIME** and launches 3 new programmes: our Making Memories Programme, our Employability Programme and our Level Up Programme, all in the face of a global pandemic!

MYTIME delivers an emergency food provision programme to support young carer families during 2020's Covid-19 outbreak.

MYTIME launches Operation Christmas, aiming to deliver a Christmas goody bag to every young carer across Dorset.

By December 2020, **MYTIME supports approximately 600 young carers.**

2021

MYTIME works hard to improve and scale its provision, and **is supporting approximately 1,360 young carers by December 2021.**

2022

MYTIME launches a Youth Advisory Board comprised of 9 young carers, ensuring that all work is directly led and shaped by the young people the charity serves.

By the end of 2022, **MYTIME is supporting approximately 2,140 young carers.**

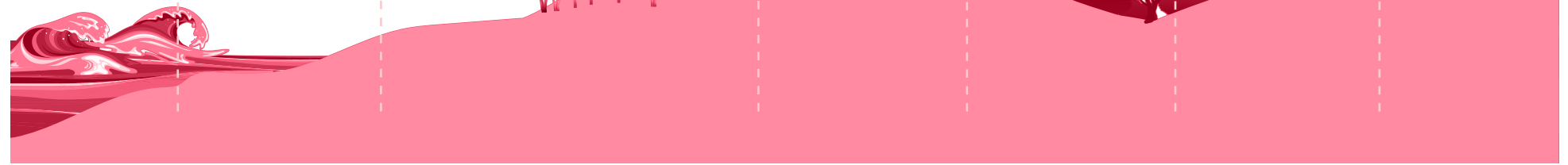
2023

By March 2023, at the time of writing, **MYTIME** is comprised of a team of 18 and **is supporting 3,180 young carers.**

MYTIME seeks to raise further awareness of young carers by developing a training programme for school and community Young Carer Champions.

AND BEYOND...

MYTIME is looking to partner with world's leading young carer expert, Professor Saul Becker, and former young carer Oritsé Williams, to create a national young carers' club, designed to encourage self-expression and creativity.



OUR LIFE CYCLE

At **MYTIME**, we do a great deal of work to support young carers, but alongside the work, we do some serious thinking too. These fuel one another, and so we operate a continual process of learning, action and reflection, illustrated in the diagram below.

STEP 01

Identify the need – Nobody knows what young carers need better than young carers themselves, so we provide frequent opportunities for our service-users to share with us the challenges they're facing.

STEP 05

Reflect on the work – We evaluate the efficacy of our work, measuring impact against desired outcomes.

STEP 04

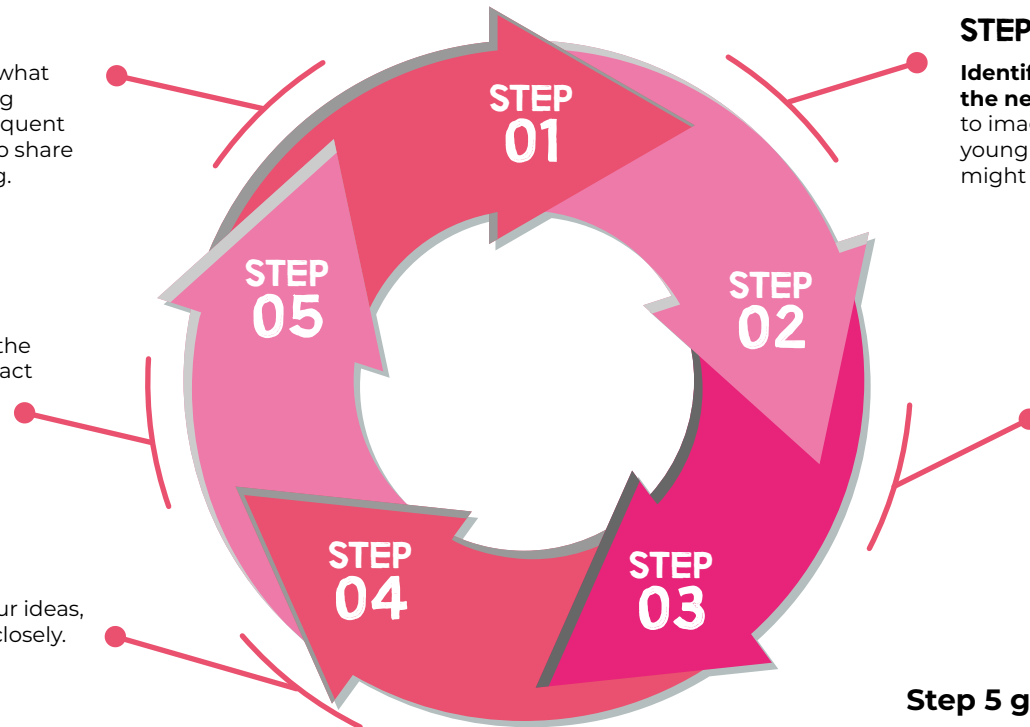
Do the work – We pilot our ideas, monitoring their impact closely.

STEP 02

Identify the changes necessary to meet the needs – We work with young carers to imagine a world that does better by its young carers, and to understand what that might look like.

STEP 03

Identify the work that needs to be done to make the necessary changes – Step by step, we plan the course of action through which tangible change can be made.



Step 5 goes back to Step 1 and repeats.

MYTIME acknowledges that there will always be elements of our work that can be improved upon, and that there will always be questions we don't yet have answers to, but strives to provide the highest quality of provision possible for the young carers we serve. We accept that our learning will never be done, and are committed to continual growth and development.

ZAINAB'S STORY

At the start of this impact report, we met Charlie. Now, let's take a look at Zainab's story, whose life takes a very different direction.



AGED 5-10

Zainab lives with her mum, dad, and brothers. Her father has severe epilepsy and a heart condition. As a young child, Zainab finds herself looking after the house and her three younger siblings while her mother cares for her father.

Zainab derives real self-worth from the role she plays – in her culture, it is considered admirable to look after your relatives. She is also fortunate to have a good relationship with her neighbours, who she knows she can always call on for help if she needs them.

In Zainab's downtime, she loves to read; books provide her with an escape from her caring responsibilities. In school, it has been noticed that Zainab's reading age is very advanced, and this impacts her progress in all subjects. Teachers are very encouraging of Zainab and reward her for her academic achievements. Other children admire her, and Zainab takes pride in her scholarship. She sees herself as a carer but, first and foremost, as a dedicated and competent student, and so develops a strong sense of identity outside of the home.

AGED 11-16

Zainab continues to excel in secondary school, though pressures on her time seem only ever to increase. Her father's health has taken a turn for the worse, and she must often deliver her younger siblings to school nowadays. Zainab does everything in her power to get to her own school gates on time, but is given a detention when she arrives late one morning. Zainab is devastated, but her positive experiences of school mean that she is not afraid to confide in her teachers about the pressures she's facing. Her form tutor is extremely supportive of Zainab, champions her and does everything she can to accommodate her caring role.

Zainab continues to embrace school life. She has a group of good friends who share her passion for learning, and feels secure in her identity and relationships. With her tutor's encouragement, Zainab completes her silver Duke of Edinburgh award, which allows her to develop a new skillset. At first, she worries about leaving home for an extended period to take part in the expedition, but because her own experiences as a carer have not been terribly traumatic, she is ultimately convinced that, with the help of neighbours, her younger sibling will be able to manage. Zainab finds the expedition liberating; it gives her a sense of independence and achievement and broadens her horizons.

AGED 17-25

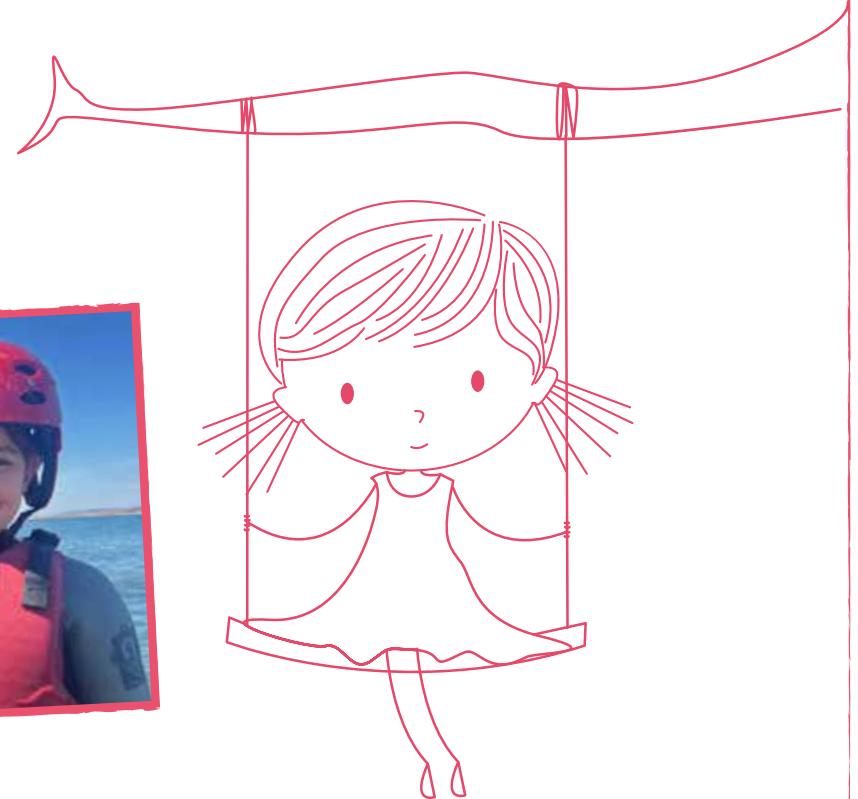
In sixth form, Zainab exceeds all expectations. With the support of her tutor, she applies to Oxford University and is invited for interview. There, she talks about the Duke of Edinburgh award, and the many skills she has learned through her caring role. Ultimately, Zainab is accepted and granted a scholarship. She knows that her neighbours and community will step up to support her family in her absence, and that she is making her family proud.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Our Theory of Change defines the overall impact towards which we strive as 'Improved Childhood Experiences and Adult Outcomes for Young Carers'. It also lays out the short and long-term outcomes that we will need to achieve if we are to be able to accomplish this overarching goal.

Like all of our thinking, the thinking behind our Theory of Change started with the young carers themselves. Just like Charlie, Zainab is a young carer, and just like Charlie, she comes up against challenges as a result. *Unlike* Charlie, Zainab is able to overcome these challenges and to enjoy a full and rewarding childhood, education and adult life. At **MYTIME**, we aspire to see all young carers enjoying the enriching childhood and prosperous future that Zainab experiences.

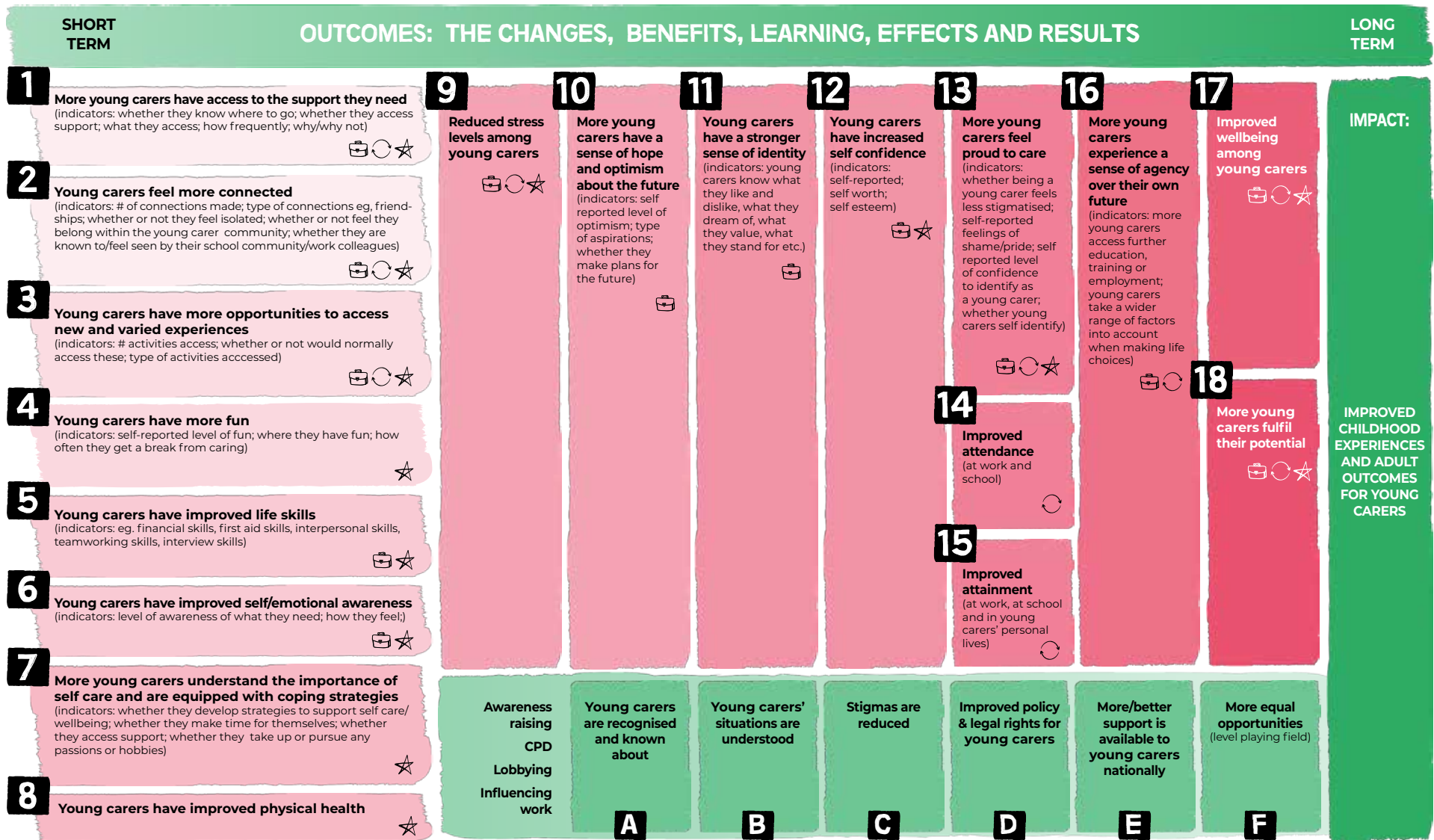
In building our Theory of Change, we had to consider the differences between Charlie and Zainab. What did Zainab have that Charlie didn't? What enabled Zainab to thrive in the face of adversity, while Charlie struggled to cope with it? The answers to these questions dictated the steps of our Theory of Change.



MYTIME THEORY OF CHANGE

YOUNG CARERS

WE COMMIT TO COLLECTING AND ANALYSING DATA, TO UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES YOUNG CARERS FACE, AND THE MOST EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ENABLE YOUNG CARERS TO THRIVE



KEY: 🔄 = Level Up Programme 📁 = Employability programme ★ = Making Memories Programme

OUR PROGRAMMES

OVERVIEW

MYTIME offers the following programmes:



Our **MAKING MEMORIES PROGRAMME**, which provides carers with much needed breaks from their caring responsibilities.



Our **EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME**, which supports young adult carers into further education, training or employment.



Our **LEVEL UP PROGRAMME**, which aims to foster more supportive and inclusive educational environments for young carers.

In the pages that follow, we detail:

- ▷ The evolution of each programme.
- ▷ The impact of each programme, based on data that we have collected against the outcomes laid out in our Theory of Change.
- ▷ A case study from each programme.
- ▷ Our reflections on each programme.
- ▷ Our intended next steps for each programme.

Below is a summary of the outcomes that we hope to achieve through our programmes.

	MAKING MEMORIES	EMPLOYABILITY	LEVEL UP
#1 More young carers have access to the support they need	■	■	■
#2 Young carers feel more connected	■	■	■
#3 Young carers have more opportunities to access new and varied experiences	■	■	■
#4 Young carers have more fun	■		
#5 Young carers have increased life skills	■	■	
#6 Young carers have improved self/emotional awareness	■	■	
#7 More young carers understand the importance of self-care and are equipped with coping strategies	■		
#8 Young carers have improved physical health	■		
#9 Reduced stress levels among young carers	■	■	■
#10 More young carers have a sense of hope and optimism about the future		■	■
#11 Young carers have a stronger sense of identity	■	■	
#12 Young carers have increased self-confidence	■	■	■
#13 More young carers feel proud to care	■	■	■
#14 Improved attendance			■
#15 Improved attainment			■
#16 More young carers experience a sense of agency over their own futures		■	■
#17 Improved wellbeing among young carers	■	■	■
#18 More young carers fulfil their potential	■	■	■

MAKING MEMORIES

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Through our Making Memories Programme, we aim to:

- Provide young carers with much-needed breaks from their caring responsibilities, and reduce their stress levels
- Build a sense of community around young carers, and reduce feelings of loneliness
- Offer young carers new experiences and enable them to develop a sense of self beyond their identity as carer
- Improve physical and mental wellbeing by encouraging movement and time in nature

In order to achieve these goals, we:

- Provide fun and enriching activity days, each catering for an average of 40 young carers aged 5-18
- Provide residential retreats at our accommodation centre on the Purbecks, each catering for around 10 young carers of ages 5-18
- Provide 4 weekly online youth group sessions for young carers of ages 5-18, reaching approximately 90 young carers each week
- Provide funding for schools to run activities, parties or trips out for their young carer communities
- Provide young carers and their families with opportunities to attend one-off events in the local area and beyond, through our wonderful community partners

The Making Memories Programme is supported by funders including The National Lottery, Global's Make Some Noise and the Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund.



When Making Memories Programme Manager, Elaine, isn't hard at work supporting young carers, she helps out on her parents' farm and with her local Girlguiding group, and has done for 15 years. She is passionate about nature, the great outdoors and – of course – young people, so she's a perfect fit for the programme. She's warm, welcoming and great fun and we count ourselves ever so lucky to have her!



THE EVOLUTION

YEAR	WHAT WE DID	WHY WE DID IT
2013	<p>MYTIME Young Carers is founded, providing a small number of activity days, and funding breaks away for other young carer groups. These support fewer than 100 young carers each year.</p>	<p>Conversations with young carer staff from Poole Council expose the need for improved young carer provision.</p>
2020	<p>MYTIME's Making Memories Programme launches. Initially, the programme includes a combination of activity days and residential retreats. Later in the year, online youth group sessions are launched too. The programme supports approximately 330 young carers over the course of 2020.</p>	<p>Consultation with young carers highlights the crippling loneliness, stress and anxiety that many young carers feel, and MYTIME recognises that more must be done to support and build a sense of community around these young people. Our online youth group is launched in response to the lockdowns of 2020, and aims to provide space for connection and relaxation in an isolating and frightening time.</p>
2021	<p>MYTIME introduces skills-based activity days to the Making Memories Programme.</p> <p>Our online youth group offering increases from one session per week, to three sessions per week in response to growing demand.</p> <p>The programme supports approximately 400 young carers over the course of 2021.</p>	<p>In a forum event, young carers talk about low self-confidence and state that both first aid training and self-defence tuition might help.</p> <p>Consultation with service-users reveal that it can be difficult for young carers to access face-to-face events, with relatives often too poorly to take them or to be left unsupervised at home. Online activities provide a uniquely accessible way for young carers to socialise and unwind even if they're not able to leave the house, so continue to meet an urgent need even with lockdowns now behind us.</p>
2022	<p>MYTIME continues to expand its Making Memories offering and supports approximately 500 young carers through this programme alone over the course of 2022.</p> <p>MYTIME launches a fourth weekly online youth group session, this one capped at just 10 participants.</p>	<p>Through our work with schools, we continue to identify more and more young carers, and so the demand for our Making Memories provision grows.</p> <p>Young carers with SEND or social anxiety report feeling overwhelmed in larger groups, so we launch a smaller session just for them.</p>

MEASURING THE IMPACT

Through the Making Memories Programme, we seek to achieve a range of outcomes laid out in our Theory of Change and on page 10 of this report. To measure our progress towards the desired outcomes of our Making Memories Programme, we:

- **Play games to generate 'live' feedback.** Activity leaders call out questions about participants' experiences, and service users may, for example, move from one marker to another to illustrate their answer, drop a pebble into the bucket that relates best to how they're feeling, or hold up a certain number of fingers to show how much they agree with a given statement.
- Ask staff to **engage young carers in open and honest conversation** about their experiences over the course of individual events, and to take note of any feedback obtained, as well as their own observations and perceptions.
- **Distribute regular surveys to attendees.** These ask a combination of 'yes' or 'no' questions, sliding scale questions and questions which require written answers and so allow us to establish a mixture of quantitative and qualitative feedback.
- **Carry out one-to-one interviews and focus groups** with those young carers who have attended a variety of Making Memories events over an extended period of time, to better understand the long-term difference that the programme makes.

These data collation methods not only provide young carers with opportunities to evaluate their previous experiences with **MYTIME**, but also with chances to tell us exactly how the programme could be improved in future. They create platforms through which young carers are able to make their voices heard and directly shape our provision.



THE IMPACT

In the last year, we have provided:

30
Activity Days

5 Activity days for schools

2 Residential retreats

121 Online youth group sessions

25 Activity days for other young carers (who are either registered with the local councils, or who self-refer to MYTIME)

1 Amazing online Christmas party

Across these, we have offered the following activities (and many more):



MARTIAL ARTS



ARCHERY



ICE SKATING



CLIMBING



AXE-THROWING



DANCE



KAYAKING



MOUNTAIN-BIKING



SAILING



FIRST AID



PADDLEBOARDING



ZORBING

THE IMPACT

Thanks to some amazing community heroes, we have also been able to offer additional opportunities through our Making Memories Programme including:

- Monthly scuba diving courses for young carers
- Theatre tickets for young carers and their families
- A trip to see dance troupe Diversity perform live in London's West End

In the last year and across all of these events, we have:

- Created over **3000** spaces for young carers
- Supported over **500** individual young carers. Most of these have become 'regulars' of the programme, attending multiple events over the course of the year

"I HAVE THE BEST TIME AT MYTIME'S ACTIVITY DAYS. THEY HELP TO TAKE MY MIND OFF THINGS AND MAKE ME FEEL LESS ALONE AS A YOUNG CARER." – Jack, aged 11



THE IMPACT

Our **short-term outcomes data** reveals the various immediate benefits that young carers perceived they had experienced as a result of taking part in the Making Memories Programme, 2022-2023:



THE IMPACT

When asked about the **longer-term impact** of the programme, a focus group comprised of regular attendees also explained that:

Over time, they build connections with the other young carers who attend and with MYTIME staff. This creates an ever-increasing sense of **“COMMUNITY AND BELONGING”**. Though new participants of the programme generally report feeling a strong sense of belonging from the outset, young carers who continue to attend events over an extended period report that this grows in a way that they hadn’t originally expected or imagined it might. Many swap contact details and go on to spend time together outside of MYTIME-organised events.

Repeated attendance over a period of months or years has a lasting positive impact on wellbeing. Because participants know that the other attendees are **“ALL IN THE SAME BOAT”**, they feel that they can fully relax and be themselves, something that most rarely feel anywhere else. In addition to this, they know that they can trust the adults present to listen to them if they choose to share their experiences. The knowledge that they belong to a community that accepts and supports them has a positive effect on their mental health day-to-day, even when they’re not among that community.

Similarly, because the Making Memories Programme not only provides breaks from caring duties, but also from the worry and mental strain that caring responsibilities can create, it helps young carers to stay calmer in the long-term. Young carers state that they are able to maintain a **“FRESHER MINDSET”** as a result of the frequent opportunities created by this programme to truly decompress and relax in a supportive environment.

“MYTIME’S ACTIVITY DAYS AND ONLINE YOUTH GROUP SESSIONS MAKE ME FEEL HAPPY, RELAXED AND CALM. THEY GIVE ME TIME FOR MYSELF, TAKE A WEIGHT OFF MY SHOULDERS AND HELP MY WELLBEING.”

– Owen, aged 16



MAKING MEMORIES CASE STUDY ¹¹

At 16 years of age, Hannah cares for her younger brother who has Cerebral Palsy. Hannah has been involved with **MYTIME** since she was 13, and says, **“THEY’VE DONE SO MUCH FOR ME... I ACTUALLY DON’T KNOW WHERE I WOULD BE WITHOUT THEM.”** Hannah is an active member of our Youth Advisory Board and a graduate of our Employability Programme. She is also a regular face at our Making Memories activities, both on and offline.

Over the last three years, the Making Memories Programme has provided Hannah with chances to take time for herself, to hit the reset button and to mentally unwind. In her own words, **“GOING AWAY WITH MYTIME JUST GIVES ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET AWAY FROM THE STRESS AT HOME.”** She goes on to state that, **“MYTIME IS ALMOST LIKE A DOCTOR. I CAN’T EXPLAIN IT... THEY JUST MAKE YOU BETTER. THEY LOOK AFTER YOU AND THEY MAKE ME A LOT HAPPIER.”**

In addition to this, the Making Memories programme has enabled Hannah to meet and befriend other young carers and to create for herself a support network unlike any she’s had before. Hannah explains that friends who don’t hold a caring responsibility simply cannot relate to her experiences. By contrast, the young carers that Hannah has met through **MYTIME’s** Making Memories Programme have much in common and know exactly how best to support one another. As Hannah puts it, **“I’VE MADE FRIENDS WITH SOME OF THE YOUNG CARERS THAT I’VE MET AT MYTIME... IT’S NICE TO KNOW YOU’RE NOT ALONE, AND TO TALK TO PEOPLE THAT ARE GOING THROUGH THE SAME THING AS YOU BECAUSE YOU UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER... IT’S LIKE BEING PART OF ANOTHER FAMILY.”**

Hannah also reflects that the relationships she has built through **MYTIME’s** Making Memories Programme have helped to build her confidence, particularly when speaking about her caring role. This year, Hannah made the incredibly courageous decision to give a presentation in an assembly at school about what it means to be a young carer – something that she does not think she would have felt comfortable or able to do before becoming involved with **MYTIME**.

Hannah’s story is particularly close to the heart of **MYTIME’s** Director of Fundraising and Communications, Penelope Day, who prior to working with **MYTIME**, worked as a secondary school English teacher and taught Hannah. Penelope reflects that, “The change in Hannah since she started engaging with **MYTIME’s** services has been remarkable. She used to visibly lack confidence and would often retreat into her own little world. Today, Hannah is almost unrecognisable. Thanks to **MYTIME**, she has an incredible community of friends around her now, and her social skills and confidence have come on leaps and bounds. She stands taller, holds her head higher. I used to worry about how Hannah was going to find her way in the world, but I don’t worry about that anymore. She has so much to offer, and the best part is, she realises it now!”



¹¹ MYTIME has obtained permission to share this case study

REFLECTIONS

In the last year, we've learned some valuable lessons about our Making Memories Programme:

A minority of young carers told us in 2022 that they were finding the larger Online Youth Group sessions overwhelming. In response, we **launched a small group session capped at 10 participants**, primarily for young carers with SEND or social anxiety. This has proven very popular with its participants, many of whom have since come out of their shell and found their voice.

On our activity days, we have observed that older young carers of ages 15+ often choose to remove themselves from the larger group to spend time alone together. When asked about this, they have highlighted the fact that only with young carers of their own age can they talk openly and really be themselves. We are mindful, however, that in segregating themselves from the wider group, they often exclude themselves from the activities too. Moving forwards, we are keen to find a way to ensure that older young carers are able to get what they need from the activity days socially while still being able to participate in the activities, rather than having to choose between the two. More generally, we've reflected that **variety is key** to the success of this programme. Through our activity days, online youth groups and residential retreats, it's important that we offer a wide range of activities to groups of different sizes and ages, to suit all personality types.

The need for variety is to be balanced with **a desire for familiarity**. In focus groups, young carers often tell us that they prefer to attend venues that they've already been to once before with at least a handful of people that they've already met, explaining that this can ease feelings of worry and anxiety. For this reason, we have worked hard this year to build partnerships with a range of trusted providers including nearby Adventure Pirate, Seals Cove and The Watersports Academy. Because all of these wonderful venues can host a range of activities, they allow us to offer variety through the programme without constantly needing to take participants to new and unfamiliar settings. Attendees get to know staff at these venues, and are able to fully relax in the company of trusted adults.

This year, we have **opened up our Making Memories Programme to all young carers**. Having historically only taken referrals to the programme through local councils or partner schools, we realised that this was leaving many unregistered young carers without support. By opening up the programme to any young carer that approaches us in need of help, we have been able to offer a more inclusive service. Often, young carers will initially sign up to the Online Youth Group, and this will act as the gateway to our other programmes.

This programme has also surprised us with **unexpected benefits, not only to the young carers themselves but to their families and cared-for relatives** too. Consultation with young carer parents has revealed the feelings of guilt that they often experience, and many parents tell us that it is a relief to see their children engaging with our Making Memories Programme, making friends and enjoying time for themselves. Feelings of isolation and shame are also common, but many young carer parents tell us that they have met other parents in a similar situation since their child has been accessing our Making Memories Programme, and that they have managed consequently to build a support network of their own.

NEXT STEPS

In the year 2023-2024, we aim to:

Run a **series of small group activity days**. Having seen the difference that our smaller youth group has made to those young carers with confidence issues, anxiety or SEND, we are inspired to try to recreate the same experience in a face-to-face setting for these young people.

Provide an **activity day offering specifically for young carers of ages 15+**. Whether by running separate activity days for this age bracket alone, or by running dual activities for different age groups on our days out, we aim to be able to create space for older young carers to participate in activities while retaining the degree of independence from the wider group that they seem to enjoy.

Push our impact measurement further. There's still so much we'd like to understand better about this programme, particularly the 'dosage' of the programme required to make significant impact. This year, we'll be striving to evaluate the impact of attending one activity day, as opposed to attending multiple activity days over an extended period of time. By gaining clarity around this, we'll be forming a clearer picture of how we can most meaningfully support young carers through this programme moving forwards.

Expand the geographical spread of our activities. At present, many of our trusted activity providers sit within Bournemouth, Christchurch or Poole, yet many of the young carers we serve come from the outskirts of the wider Dorset area. In order to improve the accessibility of our activities and to be able to support a greater number of young carers through this programme, we seek now to establish relationships with activity providers further afield, for example in Portland, Weymouth or Bridport.



EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Our Employability Programme takes the format of an 8-week course and caters for young carers of ages 15-25. Through this programme, we aim to:

- Equip young carers with the tools, strategies and skills they need to access employment.
- Raise aspirations, self-worth and self-confidence among young carers.
- Raise awareness among employers of the challenges that young carers face, of the incredible skillsets that they may bring to a team and of how best to create supportive workplaces for young adult carers.

To achieve these goals, we include in each course:

- A CV-writing workshop.
- An interview skills workshop.
- Mock interviews.
- 1:1 mentoring with a professional relevant to each young carer's career aspirations.
- Personality profiling with the Colour Works Foundation.
- Presentations from motivational speakers, successful entrepreneurs and former young carers.

After completing the course, alumni participants receive:

- An invitation to an annual Celebration Event, which formally recognises their achievements over the course of the programme and further increases self-worth and self-confidence.
- Access to a regular online youth group reserved specifically for young adult carers, which enables participants to keep in touch.
- Continued support in finding or applying to courses, work experience placements or jobs until their 26th birthday.

Courses are led by award-winning Careers and Employability Advisor, Emma Fry. In her previous role as Head of Year at a local secondary school, Emma became aware of several young carers within her year group, and launched a support group specifically for these remarkable young people. Since then, Emma has been determined to dismantle the barriers that young carers often face. Emma later qualified as a Careers Leader and Adviser, and now uses her skills to run our Employability Programme. Emma holds the title of Careers Coach of the Year 2022 (as awarded by the Career Development Institute), and is an incredible asset to MYTIME's team.



The Employability Programme is supported by funders such as the CABWI Lifelong Learning Fund.



We would like to say a huge thank you to Jan and David Pointer for their generous support of the Employability Programme

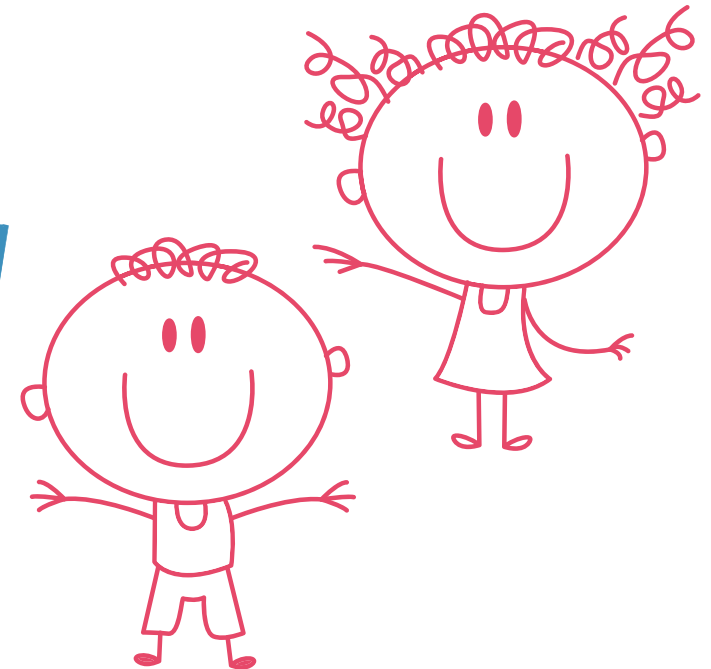
THE EVOLUTION

YEAR	WHAT WE DID	WHY WE DID IT
2020	<p>The Employability Programme is piloted online with 4 young adult carers.</p>	<p>With almost half of all young adult carers in the UK currently out of employment, education or training, MYTIME recognises that young carers require improved support as they transition into the working world.</p>
2021	<p>MYTIME's online Employability Programme formally launches and expands to include an end-of-course celebration dinner.</p> <p>MYTIME hosts its first ever annual Employability Programme Celebration Event.</p> <p>MYTIME hosts its inaugural young carers careers convention.</p> <p>The programme supports 33 young carers in its first year.</p>	<p>MYTIME observes that Employability Programme participants are forming strong connections and that the programme is having the unintended benefit of reducing feelings of isolation. End-of-course dinners allow participants to meet face-to-face, swap contact details if they choose to and lay the foundations for lifelong friendships.</p> <p>Our Employability Programme alumni work hard to graduate the programme. By inviting family members to join us in celebrating all that they have achieved over the course of the year, we are able to boost feelings of self-confidence, self-worth and self-esteem.</p> <p>It can be difficult for young carers to identify their next steps and conceptualise how their chosen career will fit in around their caring role. Our careers convention gives them a chance to explore their options, and also raises awareness among local employers of this exceptional community of young people and the challenges they face.</p>
2022	<p>MYTIME collaborates with partner schools to run their first ever face-to-face Employability Programme courses. Through a combination of face-to-face programmes and programmes delivered online, we are able to support 55 young carers across 2022.</p>	<p>MYTIME acknowledges the fact that sessions delivered online and in the evenings will not be accessible for all young carers, many of whom have hectic home lives and demanding time commitments outside of school. By offering face-to-face courses in schools, we increase the accessibility of the programme and are able to reach a greater number of young carers.</p>

MEASURING THE IMPACT

The Employability Programme aims to achieve the outcomes laid out on page 10 of this report. To capture the impact of the Employability programme, we:

- Distribute identical surveys to participants** for completion both before and after their course, which enable us to assess the difference the programme has made to them individually.
- Hold small focus groups or 1:1 interviews** with participants to obtain more detailed feedback, and to identify how we might be able to develop the programme to better meet the needs of beneficiaries moving forwards.
- Keep a formal record of the training, education or employment that alumni participants access following the programme**, so that we are able to monitor the long-term impact of our support.



THE IMPACT

In the year 2022-2023, we ran 9 Employability Programme courses in total:

3 Online Employability Programme courses

6 Face-to-face Employability Programme courses, which took place in various partner schools across Dorset.



Across these courses, we have supported 55 young carers:

23 Young carers through our online Employability Programme courses.

32 Young carers through our face-to-face Employability Programme courses.

We have also:

- Hosted our annual Employability Programme Celebration Event.
- Delivered a careers convention specifically for young carers, which was attended by over 150 young carers.
- Partnered with local beauty salon, HNB, who have offered haircuts/makeovers to all Employability Programme alumni to boost their confidence and prepare them for the working world.
- Facilitated an online youth group specifically for Employability Programme alumni, enabling them to stay in touch.



THE IMPACT

The table and bullet points below illustrate the impact that the programme has had on its participants this year.

BEFORE COMPLETING THE EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME	AFTER COMPLETING THE EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME
28% had a clear plan for the future	100% have a clear plan for the future
14% had a CV	100% have a CV
61% felt confident in answering interview questions	97% feel confident in answering interview questions
31% felt confident that they could present themselves effectively in interview	75% feel confident that they could present themselves effectively in interview
56% understood and could articulate how the skills they have developed as a carer could be useful in the workplace	94% understood and could articulate how the skills they have developed as a carer could be useful in the workplace

In addition to this:

- 94% of participants have reported feeling more confident in applying for sixth form/college, university, or employment after completing our programme
- 100% of participants state that they would recommend the course to another young adult carer
- 100% of participants are now in education, training or employment

EMPLOYABILITY CASE STUDY¹²



Meet 19-year-old Aral. Aral has cared for his mum, who has Cauda Equina Syndrome and is paralysed from the neck down, since he was 12 years old. His role is to help his mum with general mobility, getting her up and into her wheelchair in the morning and helping her move from place to place, while taking care of the day-to-day chores around the house.

During his school career, Aral struggled with his mental health, and specifically with feelings of guilt and stress that Aral attributes directly to his role as carer. Although his school was supportive, there was no specific support offered in response to his caring role and at one point, Aral was barely attending. Ultimately, his mum managed to persuade him to return to school to complete his GCSEs and Aral was then able to go to college.

Aral completed the Employability Programme during his second year of college in 2020. He recalls feeling anxious at first about meeting new people, but soon getting into the swing of things. Looking back, Aral states that he learnt a lot about the variety of career paths available and enjoyed building relationships with the **MYTIME** team.

Having experienced first-hand the support of paramedics in his time as a carer, Aral aspires to become a paramedic himself. Through our Employability Programme, Aral received 1:1 mentoring from a paramedic, and Aral cites this as his favourite part of the programme. After completing the programme, Aral was accepted into the University of Hertfordshire where he has since been studying science and medicine.

In Aral's first year at university, he struggled to adapt and settle in. Having been placed in a studio flat, Aral found it difficult to build a support network for himself. He suffered with anxiety caused by the unpredictability of his mum's condition, and worried that she might deteriorate significantly in his absence. Two hours away from home, Aral constantly stressed about what might happen in the case of an emergency and spent most weekends travelling home to see his family. This made it difficult for Aral to integrate socially and exacerbated feelings of loneliness.

Before long, Aral started to consider dropping out of university. However, aware that the Employability Programme was created to support young carers through further education, he reached out to us for support and advice before making any final decisions.

Member of **MYTIME** staff and former young carer Laura Cole was able to provide the listening ear and practical support that Aral needed. By checking up on Aral with weekly phone calls, and getting in touch with his university and tutors to help them understand the difficulties Aral was facing, Laura was able to keep Aral motivated and to ensure that he felt supported from afar. Laura also helped Aral to access new accommodation, which proved hugely positive for Aral's mental health and social life.

Aral says, **"LAURA KEPT ME THERE. IF I HADN'T DONE THE EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME, AND HAD THE AMAZING ONGOING SUPPORT FROM MYTIME, I WOULD NOT BE WHERE I AM TODAY."**

Aral is now in his second year at university, and was given his paramedic's uniform before starting placement in January this year. We are so proud of Aral, and excited to see what the future holds for this extraordinary young man.

¹² MYTIME has obtained permission to share this case study

REFLECTIONS

Having launched during the lockdowns of 2020, our Employability Programme has historically only ever taken place online on weekday evenings. Aware, however, that this has excluded some young carers from being able to participate in the past, we sought this year to pilot an in-person version of the programme. When designing our face-to-face offering, we held in mind the various barriers to online access that exist for young carers. These include:

- Time constraints: Many young carers report that they are unable to take part in the evening courses available online, explaining that their evenings are largely dominated with caring responsibilities.
- Distractions: Some young carers do not have a quiet space available at home that they can focus in, and are often interrupted by family members in need of support.
- Confidence: For some, the idea of attending a course online with other young people who they have never met before is off-putting.



Mindful of these obstacles, we decided to run our face-to-face courses in collaboration with partner schools. By hosting sessions on site during the school day, we hoped to make the programme more accessible to those young carers with limited time or with chaotic home environments. Equally, by delivering sessions in schools to groups of young carers who all belonged to the same school community, we hoped to help young carers feel more comfortable participating and overcome obstacles created by confidence.

Having started to promote this opportunity to partner schools, we quickly found ourselves inundated with greater demand than we were able to meet. Places on each of the three in-school programmes we ran this year filled quickly, confirming for us that the face-to-face course meets a need. Participants of the face-to-face courses left glowing feedback in their end-of-programme surveys, and Employability Programme Manager, Emma, was left convinced that the courses had met their objectives. Having observed the success of this pilot, we intend to offer a combination of online and face-to-face courses moving forwards, thus ensuring maximum accessibility to the programme.

One challenge that we encountered in the delivery of the face-to-face courses presented itself in some of the 'hard-to-reach' attendees enrolled in the programme by their schools. Some of these young carers presented with behavioural issues, while others presented with low school attendance, both of which represented barriers to their engagement with the programme. While we believe strongly that these young carers need our support – arguably more than most – we have also reflected that they will require a slightly different offering in future.

One final reflection that we have made on the Employability Programme this year is around the value for money it offers and impact that it has on the wider society. The cost of being NEET between the ages of 16 to 18 is estimated to be around £56,000 in public finance costs and £104,000 in resource costs (lost labour market potential), over the working lifetime of each person who has been NEET at this age.¹³ This programme is therefore of enormous benefit to the national economy.

¹³Radical scheme to rescue NEETs - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

NEXT STEPS

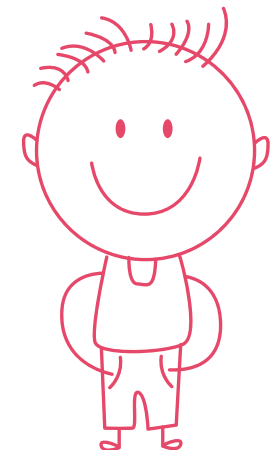
Over the year ahead, we will...

Pilot an Employability Programme course specifically for **'hard-to-reach' young carers**, which will run face-to-face over a shorter and more intensive period of time. Beneficiaries may include young carers with social, emotional or behavioural issues or with poor school attendance. By requiring less of a long-term commitment from these young carers, and by carving out a block of time that will allow for deeper relationship-building, we hope that we might be able to better meet the needs of these young people.

Look to extend the Employability Programme to a **younger age range**, by designing a primary/middle school offering. Actively **target more young carers who are already NEET** (Not in Education, Employment or Training). The young carers we work with currently are all at risk of becoming NEET by virtue of their familial and domestic situations and of the resulting, unique barriers to employment that they face. However, we intend to do more moving forwards to access those young carers who have already left school and are already NEET, by **launching a Community Young Carer Champion training programme**, and recruiting as many youth workers, healthcare professionals, and members of the police force to this programme as we possibly can. This multi-agency approach will enable us to identify and reach more of those young carers who are already in urgent need of our support, and who are otherwise difficult to find.

Develop a **MYTIME Young Carer Friendly Award for Employers**, to encourage employers to create more flexible, supportive and inclusive workplaces for young adult carers.

Seek to secure **endorsement or accreditation** for the Employability Programme, to ensure reputability and support future growth.



LEVEL UP

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Through our Level Up Programme, we work closely with primary schools, secondary schools and colleges to create the supportive and inclusive educational environments where young carers can thrive. The aims of the programme are to:

- Identify the many thousands of young carers who currently remain unknown to their schools and communities.
- Equip schools with the understanding, tools and strategies necessary in order to be able to effectively support young carers, both academically and emotionally.
- Ensure that young carers have everything they need to be happy and successful in education, and beyond.

We work towards these aims by offering:

- High quality staff training, designed to enable staff to identify and more effectively support young carers.
- Educational student assemblies and PSHE lessons, designed to enable young carers to self-identify, and to reduce the stigmas surrounding caring.
- Individualised young carer policies, tailored to the unique contexts of each school.
- Assistance launching and running a young carer support group.
- Continuous support for designated Young Carer Champions.
- Access to 1:1 tutoring for young carers where necessary.¹⁴
- Access to 1:1 counselling for young carers where necessary.¹⁵
- Access to coaching for young carers.¹⁶
- Access to extra-curricular opportunities for young carers, including MYTIME's activity days, residential retreats and online youth group sessions.
- Access to our Employability Programme for young adult carers.



The Level Up Programme is supported by funders including the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Triangle Trust 1949.



Put simply, we support schools to support their young carers.

A former young carer, teacher and member of school Senior Leadership Teams, Level Up Manager Dan Morris is ideally positioned to lead this programme. His own experiences equip him with the empathy, understanding and insight needed to be able to challenge the status quo and drive the systemic change in the educational sphere that young carers need and deserve. He's dedicated, daring and tenacious, and we're proud to call him our own.



¹⁴ Tutoring services are offered in partnership with the Connie Rothman Learning Trust

¹⁵ Counselling services are offered in partnership with the Leonardo Trust

¹⁶ Coaching services are offered in partnership with Worth-It Positive Education

THE EVOLUTION

YEAR	WHAT WE DID	WHY WE DID IT
2020	<p>The Level Up Programme is piloted in a local primary and secondary school.</p>	<p>MYTIME is conscious of huge numbers of young carers that are unregistered with local councils, and therefore receiving no support at all. By working with schools, we aim to identify those hidden young carers, and to ensure that all young carers receive the support they deserve.</p>
2021	<p>MYTIME's Level Up Programme formally launches and by the end of the year, MYTIME is partnered with 68 schools.</p>	<p>Consultation with young carers reveals the enormous stress and anxiety that school can create for them. Young carers describe the pressures of juggling schoolwork and social life with caring responsibilities, and explain that most teachers and students don't know about or understand their caring role, so fail to make allowances or provide support. MYTIME recognises that we must improve their educational experiences, if we are to improve their mental wellbeing and future prospects too.</p>
2022	<p>MYTIME expands the Level Up Programme beyond Dorset, partnering with schools on the Isle of Wight.</p> <p>MYTIME hosts its first ever Education Summit, and welcomes over 100 educational professionals.</p> <p>MYTIME expands its Level Up offering to include PSHE lessons.</p> <p>MYTIME runs its first ever transition activity days with partner secondary schools and their local feeder schools, providing young carers with opportunities to meet other young carers who already attend the school that they'll be moving to.</p> <p>MYTIME is partnered with 107 schools by the end of 2022.</p>	<p>MYTIME responds to ever-increasing demand for the Level Up Programme and to vast numbers of unregistered young carers on the Isle of Wight.</p> <p>With some schools still failing to recognise their young carer communities, MYTIME's Education Summit aims to raise awareness of these remarkable young people and of the pivotal role that schools have to play in supporting them.</p> <p>Our PSHE lessons are designed to deepen a student's understanding of how they might best support a young carer in their class, and thus to tackle the issue of bullying that young carers often tell us they face.</p> <p>Because young carers' lives can be stressful at the best of times, points of transition or major life changes can feel particularly overwhelming. Our transition days help young carers to feel less alone as they enter a new school, which can ease feelings of anxiety.</p>

MEASURING THE IMPACT

With more effective provision in place for young carers throughout their education, the Level Up outcomes in our Theory of Change are possible (see page 10). Our Level Up offering is designed to support schools to make the small but powerful adjustments to their culture and infrastructure that will achieve these results. One way in which we measure the impact of this programme is by **measuring the engagement of our partner schools** with this offering, as this serves as a strong indicator of our progress towards achieving the desired outcomes.

We also measure the impact of the various services offered through the Level Up Programme, primarily through staff surveys and observations. **Staff receive a survey** to complete immediately after attending our training for example, through which they indicate the value of the session. Staff are also asked to keep **a young carer register**, and share with us the number of young carers identified within their school at regular intervals over the course of the academic year.

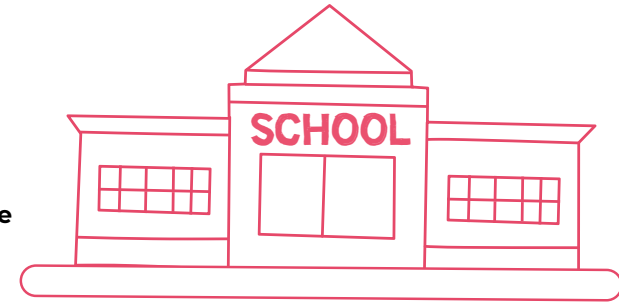
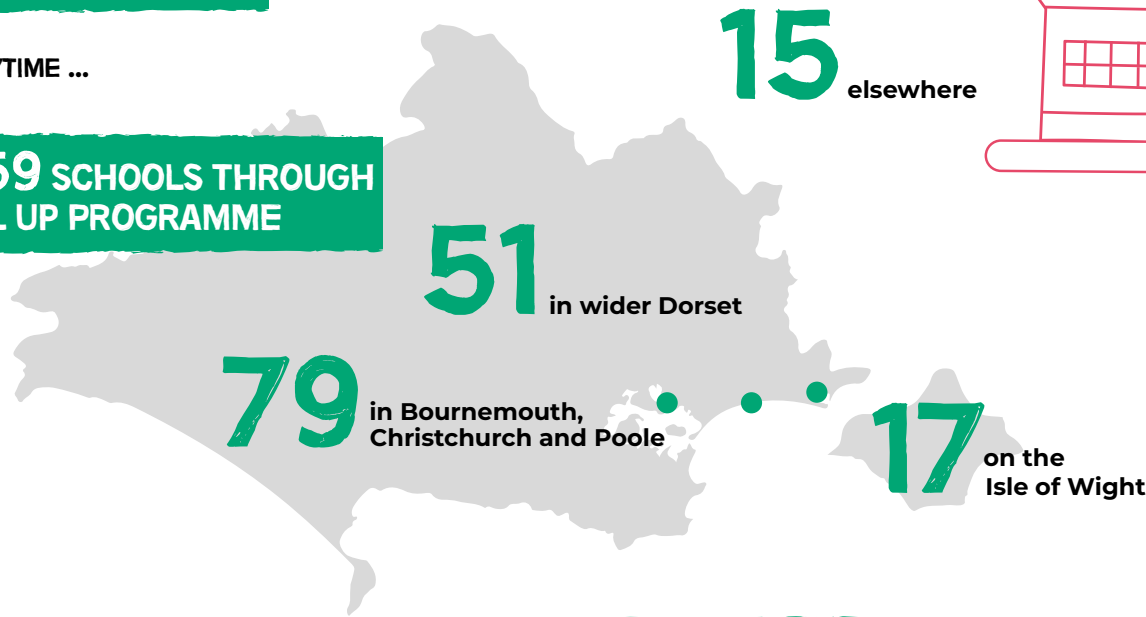
As of this year, staff have also been asked to share with us the **attendance and attainment** data of the young carers attending their school. Data collected from schools that had not yet begun working with **MYTIME** has enabled us to form a baseline picture of the shocking extent to which a young carer's education is typically impacted by their caring role (see p3). Moving forwards, we will be asking active partner schools to share this data with us at regular intervals over the course of our partnership, and would hope to see an ongoing improvement in young carer attendance and attainment.



THE IMPACT

In the last year, MYTIME ...

SUPPORTED **159** SCHOOLS THROUGH ITS LEVEL UP PROGRAMME



TRAINED **696** SCHOOL STAFF ACROSS **46** SCHOOLS

Before receiving MYTIME's training...

- Only **40%** reported feeling confident in their abilities to identify and effectively support young carers

After receiving MYTIME's training...

- **96%** report feeling confident in their abilities to identify and effectively support young carers
- **100%** report that their understanding of the challenges faced by young carers at home and in school has developed

"What a wonderful session... it's helped me to recognise the duty of care that we have towards the young carers we teach."

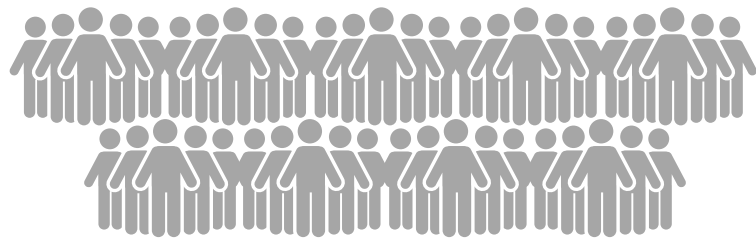
"MYTIME's CPD was absolutely outstanding. It has increased awareness of young carers, their needs and the actions that we as staff can take to ensure everyday success for these young people."

"This session was the most powerful CPD I've ever experienced - I feel totally moved, inspired and determined to be part of the solution."



THE IMPACT

**DELIVERED STUDENT ASSEMBLIES TO
24,823 STUDENTS ACROSS 42 SCHOOLS**



**DELIVERED PSHE LESSONS TO 3,939
STUDENTS ACROSS 14 SCHOOLS**



“
All students, in every year group, have attended a **MYTIME** PSHE lesson or assembly. These have been brilliant across the board. We are so very thankful to **MYTIME** and are starting to see a real shift in understanding and attitudes towards young carers, both among children and staff.”

DELIVERED OUR INAUGURAL EDUCATION SUMMIT

In June 2022, **MYTIME** hosted its first Education Summit to raise awareness of the pivotal role that schools have to play in meeting young carers' needs. Delegates heard from the world's leading young carer expert, Professor Saul Becker FacSS, and from **20** young carers from current partner schools, who took to the stage to present the 10 things they wish their teachers knew.

- The event was attended by over **100** educators, who all made pledges at the end of the day to take action to improve provision for young carers within their own establishments.

64
partner schools now run a regular young carers support group

47
partner schools now have a young carer policy

98
partner schools now have a staff young carer champion

55
partner schools have referred young carers to **MYTIME**'s extra-curricular services, including our Making Memories or Employability Programmes

THE IMPACT

375% We have seen a **375%** increase in the number of young carers identified by partner schools



THE SCHOOL CENSUS REPORT 2023 shows that schools across the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) district – where our Level Up Programme began – have now identified **1.9%** of their students as young carers. This represents the highest percentage of identified young carers compared to any other local authority area in the country.

BCP primary schools identified that **1.4%** of their students were young carers, by comparison to a primary school national average of just **0.3%**, while BCP secondary schools identified **2.5%** of students as young carers, compared to a secondary national average of just **0.6%**.

85% of young carers in our partner schools now say that they have at least one person they trust in school, and could talk to if they needed support

“ YOUNG CARERS SAY... MY FRIENDS ARE IMPRESSED THAT I’M A YOUNG CARER NOW. ”

“ I GET TO ACT MY AGE IN MY SCHOOL YOUNG CARERS CLUB. I CAN BE SILLY AND FORGET WHAT’S GOING ON AT HOME. ”



“ STAFF SAY... SINCE BEGINNING OUR WORK WITH MYTIME, THE QUALITY OF THE PROVISION THE YOUNG CARERS RECEIVE AT THIS SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY ”

“ YOUR TRAINING IS REALLY DRAWING BACK THE CURTAIN ON YOUNG CARERS. AS A RESULT OF YOUR CPD, MANY TEACHERS HAVE IDENTIFIED THAT THEIR OWN CHILDREN ARE YOUNG CARERS OR THAT THEY THEMSELVES WERE A YOUNG CARER AS A CHILD. ”

One young carer was admitted into sixth form despite failing her English GCSE. Both the sixth form in question and the young carer’s previous school were Level Up Partner schools and had received young carer training from **MYTIME**. The two corresponded about the student in question and, recognising the extenuating circumstances under which she had been operating, the sixth form made an exception to their usual policy to accept her. By doing so, they demonstrated the flexibility and supportive approach that **MYTIME** advocates so strongly for, and have given this young carer the best possible chance to get her education back on track. Staff there are now supporting her to retake her English GCSE.

LEVEL UP CASE STUDY 17

Since enrolling in **MYTIME**'s Level Up Programme in 2021, The Blandford School have made enormous strides in identifying and supporting their young carer community. Their first step was to appoint Student Achievement Coordinator, Dan Johnson, to oversee the school's young carer provision. Dan has worked closely with **MYTIME** ever since to achieve some truly inspirational results.

A high-engaging partner school, The Blandford School have now accessed all of the key Level Up services, including staff CPD and student assemblies for every year group. They have also appointed multiple Young Carer Champions to run weekly young carer support groups for both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 young carers, and have accessed much of the more specialist support offered through **MYTIME**, including young carer coaching, activity days and employability support too.

But The Blandford School haven't stopped there! Instead, staff have been so inspired by **MYTIME**'s training that they have come up with some creative ways of their own to really go the extra mile for their young carer community:

- They've appointed a sixth form young carer ambassador, who runs every other young carer support group.
- They've consulted young carers through their Student Voice initiative to find out exactly what they want from the school. Young carers have asked for first aid training and a pamper day, and The Blandford School are committed to arranging these.
- In 2022, staff teamed up to complete the Three Peaks Challenge to raise money for **MYTIME** Young Carers, and to demonstrate to their young carer community just how much they truly respect and care about them. They raised an incredible £2985 to support the charity's work!

By taking these steps, the school have created an environment where staff and students are aware and supportive of young carers, and where young carers feel safe and included. As a result, they have identified many more young carers within their care in the last 2 years than they were ever previously aware of. In fact, when The Blandford School started working with **MYTIME**, they thought that they only had 3 young carers among their student body. Today, they have identified 34 and this number continues to rise.

Intrigued to better understand the difference that their work had made, the school recently carried out a survey of its young carers.

- 100% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they 'have noticed a positive difference in support'.
- 100% strongly agreed or agreed that they 'enjoy the support groups that take place each week with key staff'.
- 96% strongly agreed or agreed that 'they have staff in school that I can speak to if I need support'.

The parent of one of the young carers attending The Blandford School describes their provision for young carers as "Absolutely fabulous!" We couldn't agree more.

REFLECTIONS

Some of the reflections to come out of this year's Level Up delivery include the following:

- New to the Level Up offering this year were our **PSHE lessons**. These were designed to build on the foundations of raising young carer awareness laid out in our student assemblies, and to create deeper understanding of how students can support their caring peers. Though these were warmly received by partner schools, our Level Up Team felt after the first few months of delivery that the lessons were not fully fulfilling their objectives, so have recently paused delivery to redesign the resources used. New and updated versions are to be trialled in September 2023, when our PSHE lessons will resume.
- This year, we have faced numerous challenges surrounding our **data collation**. Keen to understand the impact that the programme is having directly on young carers themselves, we have started to design the impact measurement tools that will enable us to monitor their attendance, attainment and attitudes towards school. We recognised early on, however, that in order for this data to provide any meaningful insight into the impact of the programme, we would need a body of baseline data to compare to. This posed a challenge as most of our partner schools enrol on the programme without any prior awareness of their young carer community. As a result, it has in many cases been impossible to collect any data from young carers without first carrying out the work required in schools to identify them, by which point our intervention has already begun.
- In collecting data from young carers around their **attitudes towards school**, we have faced several other challenges too. This year we have attempted to do this by administering a survey for young carers to complete both before their school has begun its work with **MYTIME** and several months afterwards. However, due to errors made in the delivery of these surveys, the results have been invalidated. Some slight but important differences in the wording on the baseline survey and on the follow-up survey, for example, have resulted in incomparable data. We also experienced some comprehension issues among the young carers completing the surveys, particularly those in the younger age bracket.



REFLECTIONS

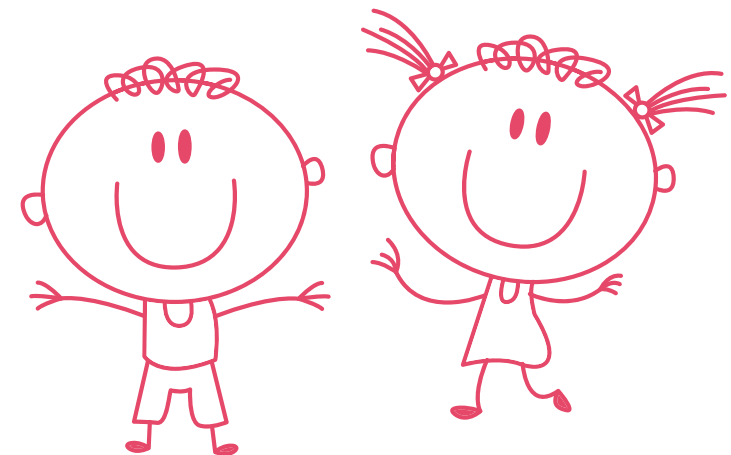
A number of school Young Carer Champions have pointed out that they currently receive the same training as all other school staff through our programme, and would benefit from more detailed, **specialist training** moving forwards.

We maintain a system through which we measure **the engagement of our partner schools**. At the end of the year 2022-2023:

- ▷ 34% of schools were classified as high-engaging
- ▷ 33% were mid-engaging
- ▷ 32% were low-engaging.

Admittedly, a small proportion of low-engaging schools is inevitable: these may be new to the programme, experiencing disruptive staff movement or experiencing turbulent times, due to transitioning from one Educational Trust to another, for example, or due to Ofsted inspections. This said, we strive to see fewer low-engaging schools and more high-engaging schools moving forwards, and realise that action needs to be taken to encourage greater buy-in from some partners.

Finally, we have been inundated with **interest from potential new partner schools** this year, and have reflected that our current delivery model places a limitation on the number of schools that we are able to work with. Our ambition is to expand this programme across the UK, and we realise now that in order to do so, we will need to revise our delivery model.



NEXT STEPS

Our Level Up Programme priorities for the year 2023-2024 are laid out below:

- In September 2023, we will **launch our new and improved PSHE lessons**. Moving forwards, we will be offering unique lessons for each year group from Year 1 to Year 11. Our vision is that students will attend a different lesson each year, and that their understanding and empathy towards young carers will grow as they do.
- Having managed this year to secure some powerful baseline young carer attendance and attainment data from schools which had not yet begun working with **MYTIME**, but which were aware of at least some of their young carers, we must now endeavour to make this routine procedure wherever possible. We must also work with active partner schools to **collect this data at regular intervals**, and to monitor trends. This will give us an insight into the impact that our programme has on young carer attendance and attainment.
- We must **revise the wording of surveys** aimed at young carers, perhaps even considering different data collection methods for primary school young carers, to ensure absolute consistency between data collection points and to ensure that the questions are accessible for all participants. By doing so, we hope to be able to better evaluate the difference that our programme makes to a young carers' perspective on school.
- In response to requests from school Young Carer Champions for more specialist training, we will be **hosting sessions at this year's Education Summit** specifically designed for them. These will empower school Young Carer Champions to lead a successful young carer support group, to assess the extent and impact of a young carer's role and to refer young carers to local councils.
- One final key priority for the year ahead is to **launch a Young Carer Champion Training Programme**, which we hope will build confidence among school Young Carer Champions, increase school engagement with the programme and enable the future expansion of the programme. At present, our Level Up Programme is delivered by a team of Programme Coordinators, each of whom can support a maximum of 40 schools. The intention of the Young Carer Champion Training Programme will be to empower school Young Carer Champions to take ownership of the Level Up Programme within their own educational environment instead. This will result in schools having their own in-house expert and will enable **MYTIME's** Level Up Coordinators to take on more of a support role, to invest more time measuring the impact and efficacy of the programme, and to support a greater number of schools each. This model will, therefore, allow us to expand the Level Up Programme and meet ever-increasing demand, without needing to continually recruit more Level Up Coordinators. Not only will the Young Carer Champion Training Programme foster greater accountability within our partner schools for their young carer provision, but it will also render the future of the Level Up Programme more sustainable. We will be designing and delivering this training programme in collaboration with the young carers who sit on our Youth Advisory Board, and piloting the programme in September 2023.



BEHIND THE SCENES

We are so proud of everything we've achieved over the last year. Through our 3 main programmes, we know that we have changed lives, but that's not all we've done. Take a look at just some of the amazing extra projects we've run this year to complement our core work:



Through this year's **Operation Christmas Campaign**, we delivered Christmas goody bags to over 1000 young carers. Bags included a christmas jumper, selection box, craft activity, book and a handwritten card!



stormbreak

This year, **MYTIME** collaborated with children's charity, **stormbreak**, to produce a series of online video resources designed specifically for young carers aged 4-11. The videos aim to support mental wellbeing through physical movement, and the best part is, they were all planned and produced by 6 young carers of ages 15+. Check out the **MYTIME** 2 stormbreak series here:
MYTIME TO STORMBREAK



The young carers we serve often tell us that with so many responsibilities to juggle, it can be difficult to find the time to cook healthy meals. That's why, this year, **MYTIME** set about producing a **calendar filled with recipes** that are all quick and easy to prepare, packed full of goodness and tried and tested by young carers themselves. Calendars were gifted to every single one of our service-users, and sold to the wider community to raise funds!



2022-2023 saw the launch of **MYTIME's Youth Advisory Board**. 9 young carers meet monthly to discuss the challenges facing young carers, and feed their conclusions back to us. We then make strategic decisions and design or adapt our services in collaboration with these young people, and in response to their recommendations.

The fact of the matter is that none of this exceptional work would be possible without the wonderful staff who lead our programmes, or the incredible team that work with dedication and drive behind the scenes to make our ambitions a reality.

The **MYTIME** team are a force to be reckoned with, and they don't all receive the public recognition they deserve. From our fabulous fundraising team, who work tenaciously and passionately to foster the financial support we need, to our Impact and Insights Officer, who monitors the impact of our programmes with diligence and an insatiable curiosity - every single staff member contributes something invaluable to our work and progress, and it's for this reason that core cost funding is so essential to our charity. **MYTIME** is thankful to our existing core cost funders, such as The Talbot Village Trust whose support keeps us in operation.

SPONSORSHIP AND SUPPORT

As a charity, we receive no government funding at all, so we rely on the support of our community. We are so grateful to the wonderful corporate organisations and community heroes that go the extra mile to raise funds and awareness for our important cause.



Corporate supporters,

Frettens Solicitors,

have done so much to support **MYTIME** over the last two years.

From sponsoring materials for the charity, to organising their own fundraising events, to volunteering at activity days, they have really gone above and beyond for us, and we're so grateful for their support.

Jimmy's Iced Coffee

have been an amazing support to us this year. Not only have they organised cinema nights and warehouse sales to raise funds for **MYTIME**, but they're also busy planning a workshop for Employability Programme Alumni. They're passionate, incredibly generous and they're always coming up with creative new ways to support **MYTIME**.

A whole host of community heroes

take part in physical challenges every year to support **MYTIME**, and last year was no exception. Take James, for example, who ran the London Landmarks Half Marathon and says, "I got such a buzz from raising so much money for such a deserving local charity." Thank you James, and thanks to all our fantastic community fundraisers!

At just 7 years old, the awesome Emberly became **MYTIME's youngest ever ambassador**.

As a young carer herself, Emberly knows the true worth of our work. She has completed multiple fundraisers for **MYTIME**, including an incredible dance-a-thon and a sponsored cycle, and has raised over £2000! What an absolute superstar!

In June, **Lord Margadale of Fonthill Estate** kindly opened his stunning gardens to the public to raise funds for **MYTIME**.

Soprano, Poppy Neame, volunteered to perform live on the day and certainly helped to draw the crowds. We struck lucky with a beautiful sunny day, and raised over £8000 for the charity all in all! To all those who came, and to those who put in so much work to make the event possible... thank you!

If you or your company would like to find out how you could support **MYTIME**, we'd love to hear from you.

For ideas, or for more information about anything you've read in this report, please contact us at enquiries@mytimeyoungcarers.org or on 01202 710701.

10 YEARS

MYTIME

YOUNG CARERS

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