

Meeting:	East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (H.O.S.C)
Date:	16 June 2008
Title of report:	Services Provided to Young Carers
Purpose of report:	To update HOSC on the progress and developments relating to Services to Young Carers in East Sussex
Report by:	Richard Baldwin

1. Update on Services

1.1 The Young Carers Strategy Group continues to meet on a 6 weekly basis. It currently has representation across Children’s Services, Adult Services, the PCT and the Voluntary Sector. Attendance at meetings is positive and this has assisted in a gradual but palpable growth in awareness of the importance of young carers. We have recently begun preparation to involve young carer’s representation onto the group from September 2008.

1.2 In April 2008 Children’s Services confirmed an additional £25k funding for the Young Carers Project. This money will be used to fund an additional support worker post, working directly with young people known to the project.

1.3 The Joint Protocol has now been completed and approved by both Senior Management groups within Adult Services and Children’s Services. The policy was written and overseen by the Strategy Group and so contains contributions and consultation from Care for the Carers and Health colleagues. Mark Braddock and I recently launched the protocol via a countywide workshop event, attended by both Adult and Children’s Services Practitioners. In addition I have presented the new Joint Protocol to a number of senior management groups to ensure awareness of the protocol and the profile of the issues facing young carers are highlighted and disseminated.

1.4 As detailed in Mark’s report (appendix 2), the numbers of young people accessing services from the Young Carers Service has increased by 50% in the last 12 months. Of particular note is the popularity of the regular Support Groups held in 3 locations across the County. The young people we met from the Participation Group were very clear about the value that these groups have to offer to them. The support group in Hastings is regularly attracting between 30-40 young people on a Tuesday evening.

1.5 The move, by the County Council to an Integrated Children’s Trust is also beginning to show tangible, positive developments in being able to offer earlier identification of issues and practical support. Schools have an increased awareness of the needs of young carers and the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) approach to agreeing services has assisted in sign-posting young people to the Support Groups or providing other, more specialised support if appropriate. The CAF approach is central to the way services are to be delivered in the future and these are clearly incorporated within the new Joint Protocol.

2. Future Developments/Challenges

2.1 Both the Young Carers Project and Children's Services Locality teams have noted a steady increase in the numbers of young people who have been identified as needing to care for parents or family members who have substance misuse issues.

Both the Project and the Strategy Group will need to ensure the delivery of support is able to respond to this developing need. We will begin to address these challenges by strengthening the links with both the Under 19's Substance Misuse Team and the Youth Development Service who have expertise in working in this area.

2.2 As noted earlier, the Strategy Group is keen to develop a stronger representation from Young People onto the group. We recently met with a number of young people to explore how best to do this and obtain their views on how to deliver services effectively. This will begin in September 2008.

Whilst the closer liaison and working with schools has been positive, this still needs attention to ensure a universal and consistent approach across the County.

Richard Baldwin
Operations Manager
Integrated Services (West)
Children's Services Department
East Sussex County Council

Telephone: 01323 747390

Richard.baldwin@eastsussex.gov.uk