

A young girl with long hair is swinging happily on a swing set. She is wearing a light-colored hoodie and a cap with the words 'MY TIME' on it. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with trees and a fence. The entire image has a red overlay.

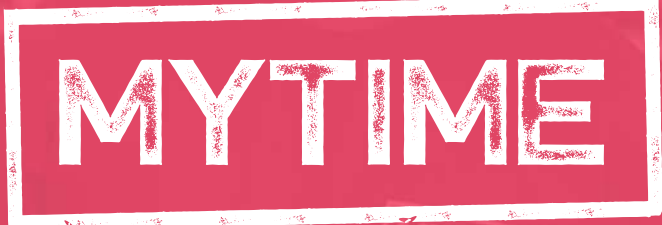
# MY TIME

YOUNG CARERS

LEVEL UP  
PROGRAMME

IMPACT REPORT  
2021-2022

July 2022



**YOUNG CARERS**

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## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Meet Daniel. Daniel's mum has multiple sclerosis and depression, and Daniel has been caring for her since he was just five years old. For as long as he can remember, Daniel has wanted to study medicine. More than anything in the world, he wants to know how to fix his mum.

But Daniel's falling behind in school. He worries about leaving his mum on her own, so his attendance is poor, his concentration too and his teachers don't know how to help him, because they have no idea what Daniel has to contend with at home. His caring responsibilities take up so much of his time that he has no hobbies, no social life and it's taking its toll on his mental health. His confidence and aspirations are low, he's almost always tired and stressed and he lacks any real sense of identity outside of his identity as carer. His peers see that there's something different about Daniel, and when they're not giving him a wide berth, they're giving him a hard time. Daniel also recognises that he's different. In fact, he feels totally alone.

Daniel is a remarkable young man but when he grows up, he's not likely to study medicine. In fact, he's twice as likely as his peers to find himself out of employment altogether.

A young carer is a child, just like any other. The only difference is that young carers are responsible for the care of at least one member of their family, though they may be as young as 5 years old themselves. These children work incredibly hard to take care of their loved ones, yet they represent a largely forgotten community, and often face enormous disadvantage as a result.

Founded when former Trustee Matthew Barker was gifted an accommodation centre in the Purbecks, **MYTIME** Young Carers was established with the goal of providing young carers with much-needed breaks from their caring responsibilities, and with opportunities to build an all-important support network. Now, our mission and aims have broadened and developed to meet a wider range of the needs young carers present, and today, their futures are very much at the forefront of our thinking.

## MYTIME'S LEVEL UP PROGRAMME

### THE NEED

Due to a combination of barriers, young carers achieve, on average, 9 grades lower overall at GCSE than their peers<sup>1</sup>, and are twice as likely to find themselves out of education, employment or training between the ages of 16 and 18<sup>2</sup>. **MYTIME's** Level Up Programme exists to address these issues, and to ensure that these remarkable young people receive the pastoral support they need in school to fulfil their potential in education and beyond.

Outlined below are some of the underlying issues that a young carer may face in school:

- 39% of young carers state that their school is unaware of their caring responsibility<sup>3</sup>. If schools don't know their young carers, then they cannot adequately support them.
- Only 19% of school teachers report ever having received training on how to recognise and support young carers<sup>4</sup>. This means, firstly, that the vast majority will not be able to identify young carers for themselves and, secondly, that even if teachers were to be made aware of young carers, they would be unlikely to understand their needs. Education for a young carer can, therefore, represent an isolating and bewildering experience.
- Caring responsibilities often result in lateness to school, incomplete homework or lack of concentration in class due to stress or exhaustion, all of which represent significant obstacles to attainment. Furthermore, staff members who are unaware of a young carer's circumstance may well respond to these offences with punishment, which can discourage young carers.
- Young carers often miss school. Much of this absence may be attributed to caring responsibilities, but it may also be that young carers are actively seeking to avoid school. If they are falling behind in school due to their caring responsibilities, or if they feel misunderstood or unfairly penalised by staff, they may become despondent. In addition, 2 in every 3 young carers report experiencing bullying in school<sup>5</sup>. It's easy to see why young carers may become disheartened, and may choose not to attend school if possible.
- At least a third of young carers say that their caring role results in them either 'always' or 'usually' feeling 'worried' (36%) or 'lonely' (33%)<sup>6</sup> and over 80% report that their participation in leisure activities has suffered as a result of their caring role<sup>7</sup>. It follows that 80% of young carers report that their role has impacted their mental health. Poor mental health, self-esteem and social skills can all impact a young carer's school experience and educational outcomes, yet young carers are often left to tackle these issues alone.

<sup>1</sup>The Children's Society, 2013 <sup>2</sup>The Carers Trust, 2019 <sup>3</sup>The Children's Society

<sup>4</sup>Barnardo's, 2017 <sup>5</sup>The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, 2009 <sup>6</sup>Carers Trust, 2022 <sup>7</sup>Rethink Mental Illness, 2020



## MYTIME'S LEVEL UP PROGRAMME CONT.

When we at **MYTIME** came across and considered this data, we knew that we needed to address these issues, and the idea of some kind of school support programme was born. Our next step was to consult the young carers of Dorset who we serve, and to find out directly from them about their school experiences and needs. Over the course of three separate forum events, we heard from 20 young carers ranging from 8 to 18. In these conversations, we noted the following:

- Most reported that their schools are unaware of their caring responsibilities. Some had, at some point in the past, attempted to share their situation to some extent with a member of school staff, but had received a discouraging response.
- The general sentiment appeared to be that school staff don't care about their students as people. One young carer said, "I feel like my results matter more than I do as a person".
- Those whose schools were aware of their caring responsibilities, reported that teachers often forgot or didn't understand, and, in practice, failed to make any reasonable adjustments, for example to expectations around homework deadlines.
- School was described as a young carer's "biggest time of worry", due to having to leave relatives unsupervised at home.
- The majority didn't feel comfortable using their mobile phone within sight of staff, or asking to use the reception phone, either because they didn't think they would be allowed or because they thought they would then feel pressured to explain their situation. Many confessed to spending most of their break and lunch times at school in the toilet, either phoning or texting home to check on the person they care for, and complained that this isolates them further from their peers.
- Young carers across all age groups spoke about the pressure of trying to keep up with schoolwork and homework whilst caring for the person in their family.
- Although most young carers stated that their teachers do not know about their caring roles, they nearly all agreed that it would be helpful if schools did know about their responsibilities within the home. They emphasised the fact that, in order for this to be helpful, school staff would need a thorough understanding of the caring role and of its implications for young people. All young carers felt 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.

These findings informed the design and development of our Level Up Programme, and we continue to consult young carers regularly about their school experiences, so as to be able to assess, evaluate and continually improve the programme.

## PROGRAMME AIMS

The Level Up Programme is targeted at school staff and teachers across primary, middle and secondary schools, as well as colleges. The aims of the programme are to:

- Raise awareness of young carers within their school communities and make this community of children visible.
- Equip schools with the knowledge, tools and strategies to more effectively support young carers, both academically and emotionally.
- Ensure that young carers have everything they need to achieve their full potential, in education and beyond.

Ultimately, it's about levelling the playing field for this remarkable and deserving group of young people.

## OUR WORK

Through our Level Up Programme, we work closely with schools to enable them to identify and improve their provision for young carers. We do this 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 AS SUCH, AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO MAKE THEMSELVES KNOWN TO SCHOOL STAFF

INDIVIDUALISED YOUNG CARER POLICIES, TAILORED TO THE UNIQUE CONTEXTS OF EACH SCHOOL

ASSISTANCE LAUNCHING AND RUNNING A YOUNG CARER SUPPORT GROUP

HALF-TERMLY SUPPORT MEETINGS FOR DESIGNATED YOUNG CARER CHAMPIONS

ACCESS TO 1:1 TUTORING FOR YOUNG CARERS WHERE NECESSARY<sup>8</sup>

ACCESS TO 1:1 COUNSELLING FOR YOUNG CARERS WHERE NECESSARY<sup>9</sup>

ACCESS TO COACHING FOR YOUNG CARERS<sup>10</sup>

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

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

<sup>8</sup>Tutoring services are offered in partnership with the Connie Rothman Learning Trust <sup>9</sup>Counselling services are offered in partnership with the Leonardo Trust

<sup>10</sup>Coaching services are offered in partnership with Worth-It Positive Education

## OUTPUTS

As of July 2022, MYTIME:

93

Is partnered with and working to support a total of 93 schools through our Level Up Programme.

1,860

Is currently supporting approximately 1,740 young carers through the programme.

1,335

Has delivered staff training to approximately 1,335 staff across 58 partner schools.

55

Has delivered student assemblies in 55 of our partner schools.

6

Has piloted our new PSHE lessons in 6 of our partner schools.

21

Has produced 21 individualised young carer policies for partner schools that did not previously have one.

Has hosted its first Education Summit to raise awareness of the pivotal role that schools have to play in meeting young carers' needs and of the support that MYTIME can offer. 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.

## OUTCOMES

- After completing **MYTIME**'s training, 97% of school staff state that their understanding of the challenges faced by young carers, at home and in school, has developed; 94% feel more confident in their abilities to identify a young carer and 96% feel more confident that they could effectively support a young carer.
- Over the course of 1 academic year, our average partner school identifies more than 3 times the number of young carers in their care that they were aware of prior to their work with **MYTIME**. One of our partner schools, which had only been aware of 15 young carers within its care prior to its partnership with MYTIME, has now identified 76.
- 58 of our partner schools have now appointed a Young Carer Champion to lead on their young carer provision.
- 13 of our partner schools have now launched a young carer support group.
- 35 of our schools have referred young carers to take part in **MYTIME**'s extra-curricular opportunities, including online youth group sessions, activity days or residential retreats.



## IMPACT

As a result of the steps that partner schools are taking, they are creating the more supportive and inclusive learning environments that allow young carers to thrive. Young carers are building trusting relationships with peers and staff alike, which will help to reduce feelings of social isolation, loneliness, stress and anxiety.

### In a recent survey:

73% of young carers attending a school with a young carer champion listed this staff member as someone who would listen and understand if they needed to talk.

64% of young carers surveyed said that they have a teacher they trust at school who would listen and understand if they needed to talk to someone.

88% stated that they know other young carers in their schools.

66% stated that they had made friends with other young carers at school.

As former teachers ourselves, we know that happy students do best, and in order for students to thrive, it's essential that they feel a sense of belonging and have access to an effective support network at school. With many of our partner schools having taken huge steps in the right direction here, it is little wonder that school staff are now witnessing a dramatic improvement in the self-confidence of young carers, and an increase in their engagement within the school community. It has been noted that young carers are beginning to take pride in their caring roles and to see themselves as agents for change. Just take a look at some of the success stories below:

- Young carers have been writing to their headteachers to ask that their schools participate in national campaigns to protect the futures of young carers.
- Young carers are joining student council boards to make their voices heard.
- One young man took it upon himself to stand up in his school assembly hall, and present to over 700 students about what it means to be a young carer.
- At a local primary school, young carers have been using their weekly lunchtime club to create posters to go up on school notice boards, raising awareness of young carers. This was their own idea, and was entirely initiated by them.
- One young lady met with her headteacher to tell him all about the work that **MYTIME** do, and to encourage him to get involved with our Level Up Programme. This school has recently become a **MYTIME** partner school as a result.



## IMPACT CONT.

- Another young man has started volunteering with Healthwatch Dorset's Young Listeners project, and has been talking to other young carers about their experiences in an effort to identify how local services could be improved.
- Four young carers came with us to London for an interview on Global's LBC radio station and were heard by around 2 million listeners; one shared his story with the Echo on Carers Rights Day and at Christmas, one young lady sat for an interview with BBC South Today.
- At just seven years old, **MYTIME**'s youngest ever ambassador made local news when she completed a four hour dance-a-thon to raise funds and awareness for young carers.
- 20 young carers from our partner schools have agreed to speak on stage at our upcoming Education Summit to an audience of over 100 about the 10 things they wish their teachers knew.

Across all of our partner schools, it seems that young carers are developing the confidence to drive their own agenda forwards, and are finding their voice. This indicates the impact that our work is having on the self-esteem, self-worth and mental wellbeing of the young people we serve.

## STAFF / YOUNG CARER TESTIMONIALS

**SAM VINEY, PRINCIPAL OF GLENMOOR AND WINTON ACADEMIES:**

“YOUNG CARERS ARE NOW FRONT AND CENTRE OF OUR AWARENESS AND PRIORITIES - THEY HAVE BECOME PART OF THE LANGUAGE WHEN WE TALK ABOUT ACHIEVEMENT OF VULNERABLE GROUPS. I HEAR THE TERM A LOT IN THE HEAD OF YEAR OFFICE NOW, AND IT'S GREAT, AS OTHERWISE THESE STUDENTS WOULD FALL THROUGH THE CRACKS. THEY WERE ONCE ON THE PERIPHERY, BUT NOW THEY ARE SO RECOGNISED.”

**ANGELINA PARKER**

“AFTER YOUR CPD, WE STARTED TO RECOGNISE WHO OUR YOUNG CARERS ARE AND TO REALISE THAT THERE ARE QUITE A FEW OF THEM HERE. SINCE THEN, WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO OFFER THEM EXTRA SUPPORT.”

**JANE POPE, BURTON PRIMARY SCHOOL:**

“A HUGE DIFFERENCE THAT YOU HAVE MADE IS GIVING THE YOUNG CARERS A SENSE OF PRIDE ABOUT WHAT THEY DO, INSTEAD OF BEING EMBARRASSED. I AM SURE THEY WOULD NOW ALL BE HAPPY FOR OTHERS TO KNOW THAT THEY ARE YOUNG CARERS. BEING PART OF MYTIME HAS SHONE A DIFFERENT LIGHT ON THEM, AND THEY NOW SEE THEMSELVES DIFFERENTLY FROM HOW THEY DID IN THE PAST.”

**JASON HOWARD, DIRECTOR OF QUALITY ASSURANCE, CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST:**

“[THE EDUCATION SUMMIT WAS] SUCH AN INSPIRING AND USEFUL DAY - ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT FROM START TO FINISH. MY PLEDGE IS TO VISIT EACH OF OUR SCHOOLS OVER THE NEXT YEAR TO DO WHAT WE'D CALL 'DEVELOPMENTAL AUDIT' WORK, SPECIFICALLY ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF, AND PROVISION FOR, YOUNG CARERS. WE CAN SHARE SOME OF THE MESSAGES FROM THE SUMMIT, AND ALSO THE SUCCESSES IN INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS WITH OTHERS. WE'LL ALSO GIVE A NUDGE TO THOSE WHERE PROGRESS IS LESS ADVANCED.”

**YOUNG CARER, TWYNHAM SCHOOL:**

“MY FRIENDS UNDERSTAND WHAT BEING A YOUNG CARER IS NOW. IF I'M UPSET, THEY ARE UNDERSTANDING AND COMFORTING.”

**YOUNG CARER, BLANDFORD SCHOOL:**

“MY SCHOOL YOUNG CARER GROUP ALLOWS ME TO MEET OTHERS AND GIVES ME SOMEONE TO TALK TO ABOUT BEING A YOUNG CARER. IT'S NICE TO SEE OTHER PEOPLE WHO ARE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION AS ME.”

**YOUNG CARER, GLENMOOR AND WINTON ACADEMIES:**

“YOUNG CARERS CLUB IS WHERE I FEEL SUPPORTED. IT'S A LOT OF FUN, I MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND WE ALWAYS FEEL LIKE A LITTLE FAMILY.”

**YOUNG CARER, GLENMOOR AND WINTON ACADEMIES:**

“IF I WAS UPSET AND SAD, I KNOW I COULD GO AND SPEAK TO SOMEONE AT SCHOOL ABOUT IT.”

## CHALLENGES

The delivery of a programme such as **MYTIME**'s Level Up Programme is never without its challenges. Laid out below are some of the obstacles that we have faced over the last year:

- Covid-19 has continued to cause staffing issues in schools and has resulted in the last-minute cancellation of CPD, assemblies and school Making Memories days.
- Impact measurement has proved challenging, as we have been reliant on schools to gather some of the data that we need. Surveys distributed to partner schools have not always seen a strong response rate. In addition, while we have been inundated with positive feedback and stories of meaningful change from young carers and school staff alike, it has been difficult to know how best to measure and quantify the impact that the Level Up Programme is having directly on the young carers themselves.
- Some of our partner schools are not engaging as actively in the Level Up Programme as others. This could be due to a number of barriers including limited time, limited resources or failure to recognise the importance of the programme.

## FUTURE PLANS

At **MYTIME**, we are forever seeking to learn from and continually improve our programmes. In its first complete year, the Level Up Programme has proven to have enormous impact, worth and potential and we are determined to build on this moving forwards. Over the next year, **MYTIME** will be looking to:

- Secure the funding with which to continue to recruit schools to the programme. MYTIME receives no funding from the local authorities and at present, the demand that exists for the Level Up Programme considerably outweighs our capacity. It should also be noted that in June 2022, the Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, released a report in which she recommended that all schools should have a Young Carer Champion and should implement a young carer policy. In addition to this, the DfE have recently decided to add a young carer flag to the School Census from Spring 2023, which will mean that schools will be expected to know who their young carers are. While these are enormously positive steps, there will be no additional funding available to schools to support them to fulfil these recommendations. At MYTIME, we, therefore, anticipate an increased demand for our services and are keen to be able to secure the funding with which to meet this need.
- Expand the programme to the Isle Of Wight. There are an estimated 1672 young carers currently living on the Isle of Wight, yet only 300 registered and an additional 20 awaiting assessment. At **MYTIME**, we hope to pilot the Level Up Programme in a number of schools on the island over the next academic year, which will necessitate the recruitment of a Level Up Programme Co-ordinator based on the island.
- Develop impact measurement systems and processes that allow us to obtain a clearer picture of the impact that the Level Up Programme is having directly on young carers themselves. We have recently secured the funding with which to work with world's leading expert, Professor Saul Becker, towards this goal.
- Develop a package of support aimed specifically at young carers transitioning from school to University.
- Create a young carer-friendly schools award to celebrate the successes of our most engaged partner schools and to motivate less engaged schools to do more for their young carers.

## FUTURE PLANS CONT.

- Create a School Agreement Form, so that schools understand that by partnering with **MYTIME**, they are making a commitment to improve their provision for young carers and are more likely to engage with our services and provision.
- Provide training to school staff on how to use the MACA (a young carer assessment tool) to further boost their confidence in their ability to identify young carers.
- Embed our recently piloted PSHE lessons into the Level Up Programme.

## GOVERNANCE AND STAFFING

Please find below a brief biography of our CEO and Trustees:

### **KRISTA SHARP – CEO**

Having spent thirteen years working as a teacher and on Senior Leadership Teams in a variety of different schools across the country, Krista has developed the unshakeable belief that no young person's destiny should be defined by their beginning. In November 2019, Krista stepped onto the **MYTIME** team as Executive Director, and in 2020 she assumed the role of CEO. Krista has brought bold strategy, raw enthusiasm and endless dedication to the charity.

### **PAUL TANSEY – CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

As Managing Director of established Dorset digital marketing firm, Intergage, and director and former president of Dorset Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Paul brings a wealth of business acumen and a large business network to **MYTIME**'s board of trustees. In his roles as career and enterprise advisor and as governor at Poole High School, Paul demonstrates unwavering passion for educating and inspiring young people.

### **BEN ANTELL – VICE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

In his time as Headteacher, Ben was nominated for Headteacher of the Year Award. Now, he works as regional director of the United Learning Academy Chain. Ben offers a rare and detailed insight into the British educational system. What's more, he understands young people, he knows what they need to thrive and he is deeply invested in their success. Ben's scrupulous and critical questioning and acute attention to detail make **MYTIME** stronger.

### **REBECCA TURNER – TRUSTEE FOR SAFEGUARDING**

As a primary school music teacher, Rebecca works with young people day in and day out and is committed to our shared goal of supporting young people to become the best versions of themselves that they can possibly be.

### **KAREN ECKSTEIN – TRUSTEE FOR RISK MITIGATION**

Having practised as a professional indemnity insurance defence solicitor for 30 years, Karen now runs her own company helping clients with risk and insurance related issues. Karen is a very practical and pragmatic advisor to the **MYTIME** team. She is a former young carer herself, and also brings experience of trusteeship to the board having previously acted as trustee to the educational charity, the ATT.

### **NICKY GOULDER – TRUSTEE FOR CHARITY GOVERNANCE**

As Chief Executive of Create, 2020's Charity of the Year, and as Trustee to various other charities since 2009, Nicky brings a wealth of experience in charity leadership and governance to **MYTIME**'s board of Trustees. Nicky is an entrepreneurial spirit, and advises **MYTIME** on income generation, impact measurement and business management.

It should be noted that **MYTIME** will, this year, also be welcoming former young carer, Katie Exell of Bates Wells charity law firm to our board of trustees as Secretary. In addition to this, the charity are currently looking to recruit a new trustee and Treasurer with experience in accountancy.



## CHARITY PARTNERSHIPS

This year, we have been fortunate to receive funding from Trusts and Foundations including the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Triangle Trust 1949 Fund, the Amateurs Trust, the Postcode Local Trust, the Ashworth Charitable Trust and the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. We have also received funding from one source that chooses to remain anonymous. To these funders, we are incredibly grateful. Without them, none of the work detailed in this report would have been possible.

In addition to this, we are the chosen Charity Partner of the Year for AFC Bournemouth; BH2 Leisure; Frettons Solicitors; Ellis Jones JLD; Greendale Construction; Chicken and Blues and Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School. We are most thankful for the ongoing support of these organisations.

We also work in partnership with both Dorset and BCP councils, and with organisations including Worth-It Positive Education; The Colour Works Foundation; The Leonardo Trust and Create Arts.

Finally, we are part of the Young Carers National Voice, a collective of 18 young carer charities and organisations from all across the UK. Both staff and young carer ambassadors meet online approximately 12 times a year to share best practice and to campaign collaboratively for young carers' rights.



## STATEMENT OF CHARITY ETHICS AND PRINCIPLES

At **MYTIME**, we work carefully to abide by the Charity Ethical Principles laid out by the NCVO. We always put our beneficiaries first; we act with integrity in everything we do; we are open, honest and transparent with all stakeholders and we recognise and prioritise the right to safety of all staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, charity partners, suppliers and supporters.

In addition to this, we take care to operate within the boundaries of the Code of Fundraising Practice as laid out by Fundraising Regulator.

Finally, **MYTIME** is proud to represent a Living Wage Employer.



# MYTIME

## YOUNG CARERS

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