



ME – Young Carer

The Young Carers assessment identified:

- C was referred to the project by school following his school absence levels raising concerns. C's Mum had been diagnosed with ME and had spent weeks on end immobile and unable to move far from the sofa. C had developed anxiety around leaving his Mum but had not told anyone in school about her illness or how he was feeling. He began to suffer from headaches and stomach aches regularly and felt uncomfortable and uneasy going into school and leaving his Mum alone. He did not voice any of this concern to her
- An otherwise punctual and academic child, C's attendance had dropped to 77%
- Mum was beginning to recover and just about to return to work in a new job. C identified that he really wished to pull his attendance back up and for school to be aware and supportive. He also identified that his own physical health was of concern to him as he didn't understand why he always felt so unwell and anxious. This had had a direct effect on his feelings, bringing him down and In 1-1 sessions C cited his increased anxiety that Mum would have another relapse and push herself too far when she started her new job
- He was easily upset and disheartened that he felt that his relationship with Mum had been sorely affected by her condition and his not being able to speak to her about his worries for her for fear of adding more stress
- C's outcome Star on assessment showed clear needs identified in 5 areas, with the number 3 signifying problems which were not yet addressed.

Education and learning	3
Physical Health	3
Where you live	4.5
Being Safe	5
Relationships	3
Feelings and Behaviour	3
Friends	4.5
Confidence and Self-Esteem	3.5

Co-ordinated support offered:

- In response we set goals of improving his feelings, confidence and self-esteem through regular 1-1s with a practitioner, understanding of ME and coping with worries. Meetings were set up in school to ensure that C's Head of Year was on board and supportive; to advocate on behalf of C and speak to his family about his worries/ communication breakdown etc; to ensure that Mum was supported by Occupational health in her new job and is aware of her own limits; the effects on C and to implement regular family activities asap.

Outcomes for carer:

- Improved relationships and communication
- Respite and activities at group nights
- Decreased stress and worry levels through talking and 1-1s
- Adjusted timetable and support in school
- Improved physical health, less migraine and stomach-ache
- School attendance improving, now 87% from 77%
- Every aspect of C's Outcome Star review is reported as no problems, or problems nearly resolved for each arm

Education and learning	4
Physical Health	4.5
Where you live	5
Being Safe	5
Relationships	5
Feelings and Behaviour	5
Friends	5
Confidence and Self-Esteem	4.5

What could the long term savings be because of this support:

- Support has resulted in, for example, reduced visits to doctors; carers remaining in employment so not claiming benefits; reduced number of cared for being admitted into hospital/care; gains in value arising from C maintaining better physical and mental health by reducing stress and depression; support from family and friends instead of social services etc.
- Support has enabled C to know that if he attends school he will be supported, therefore decreasing his anxiety and avoiding a further drop in his attendance levels. Further deterioration in family relationships has been avoided by intervention and advocacy on C's behalf
- Further deterioration in physical and emotional health has been avoided by ensuring that relevant GP appointments are attended and that Carer is given the tools to manage his worries and stress.