

# THE ROSCOMMON YOUNG CARERS PROJECT

## 2011/2015

*"Supporting People*



*in our Community"*



IN CONJUNCTION WITH



**Roscommon**

# THE ROSCOMMON YOUNG CARERS PROJECT

ESTABLISHED MARCH 2011

FACILITATED BY

*Maureen Connelly*

*The Roscommon Young Carers Project  
Co-ordinator*

*In Conjunction with*

*Bernie Dowling*

*The Roscommon Adult Carers Association  
Co-ordinator*



# THE YOUNG CARERS PROJECT

## SUPPORTED BY;

- ▶ *The Roscommon Leader Partnership Company*
  - ▶ *The Roscommon Carer's Association*
  - ▶ *The Irish National Lottery Funding*
  - ▶ *The Katherine Howard Foundation Funding*
  - ▶ *Church Gate Collections Twice Yearly*
  - ▶ *Local & National Businesses Sponsorships*
  - ▶ *Local Radio & Media*
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- ▶ *This was initiated by the combined efforts of The Roscommon Leader Partnership Company in conjunction with The Roscommon Carers Association.*
- ▶ The purpose of the Project was to deliver a Young Carers Community Development Programme
- ▶ *A meeting was held in The Roscommon Leader offices, March 2011 where the possibility of establishing a young carers project was discussed.*
- ▶ *It was decided that a site visit to The Newry/Mourne Young Carers Northern Ireland Offices to view their project would be organized*
- ▶ *On the above site visit a great deal of ideas were shared and the now Roscommon Young Carers Project has been established.*

## **THE FORMATION OF THE ROSCOMMON YOUNG CARERS PROJECT**

- ▶ The term 'young carers' refers to children and young people under the age of 18 whose lives are affected in some significant way by the care needs of another family or household member and who provide care, or help to provide care, to that person. Traditionally, the focus of carer orientated policy has been on adult carers. However, in the past 15 years there has been growing awareness of and interest in young carers.
- ▶ A young carer is a child or young person whose life is affected in a significant way by the need to provide care for a family or household member who has an illness, disability, addiction or other care requirement. This may include a child or young person who provides direct personal care or who takes on a supportive role with the main carer.
- ▶ The tasks a young carer may have to complete vary, from household chores, to medical care, helping with toileting, bathing or emotional support, they may need to carry out tasks on a regular basis or occasionally.
- ▶ The effects of being a young carer can be both positive and negative, caring may bring people closer, and the young person may become more understanding, compassionate and more mature.
- ▶ However being a young carer can have negative impacts from missing school, or being distracted at school, to feeling lonely and isolated as they have little time to socialise, play sports or meet friends, they can also suffer physically from back pain, emotionally due to stress, anxiety and worry

## **THE EVIDENCE OF NEED TO SUPPORT YOUNG CARERS**

- ▶ Evidence suggests that the best way to support young carers, and thereby ensure their rights, is to examine ways in which to raise awareness about young carers, while encouraging both formal and informal supports.
- ▶ Formal services, such as home help and respite care, lessen the burden of the carer in the home ,without removing the need for this informal caring role. young carers themselves benefit from informal supports, in particular from friends, family and community groups.
- ▶ The theory of ‘family support’ suggests that informal networks provide not only concrete forms of support, but also emotional support, advice and guidance, the concept of family support must allow a critical perspective to be taken on the ‘concrete awfulness’ that some children and parents face.
- ▶ It is fair to say that some of the young carers could not function properly without the formal services they receive, but also it is clear that they do not receive enough of these.
- ▶ However, it does not follow that such families do not need informal supports as well.

## **SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS**

- ▶ Our mission is to invest in the delivery of high quality practice in children's services and schools that will improve the well-being to the children availing of the service provision
- ▶ The Roscommon Leader Partnership Company, In conjunction with The Roscommon Carers Association established and facilitated, this project is for young carers aged between 7 – 18 years old
- ▶ This project and our Mission is to improve the quality of life for The Roscommon Young Carers through Fun Day Activity Outings, and other services to meet the needs of these young people, working with the young carers to develop and deliver a high quality caregiver support service and interventions in consultation with the families, consumer information, training and capacity building service, and continue to develop a network with other support groups, and policy development
- ▶ We aim to provide a safe pleasant environment for all the young carers attending our group, ensuring all young carers are met in a friendly manner and treated with dignity and respect, providing equal opportunities to everyone irrespective of their circumstances
- ▶ Staff will encourage, and provide Young Carers with the opportunity to communicate any difficulties that they may have and wish to discuss in confidence.
- ▶ This work will take place throughout the County of Roscommon and will include education services and supporting referrals to other agencies for the families in relation to highlighting other issues they maybe experiencing.

## Our Mission Statement

- ▶ The aim for the Roscommon Young Carers Project is to establish a Program of supports with and for The Roscommon Young Carers and their families, by working together to develop a successful and innovative young carers support group.
- ▶ Through the provision of a high quality development and support service while promoting the underlying principles of partnership's which are;
- ▶ **Quality & Excellence**  
To offer all young carers who come in contact with us, a high quality and good value service striving for excellence in all that we do.
- ▶ **Empowerment:**  
Supporting the young carers to become more confident, self-reliant and engaged in decision-making
- ▶ **Assurance**  
An independent, inclusive, and Non-judgmental service.
- ▶ **Partnership**  
To work in close partnership with young people, families, the community, other stakeholders, including statutory and voluntary organizations, the private sector, funders, providers within the caring profession., local businesses and Local / National Government, also cross boarder initiatives.
- ▶ **Financial**  
To manage the project effectively and efficiently, attracting funding to maintain sufficient resources to continued the development of the Roscommon Young Carers Group.

## **THE ROSCOMMON YOUNG CARERS PROJECT AIM'S**



- ▶ The Young Carers group were formed with the aims of providing support, advocacy and respite to the ever growing number of young family carers.
- ▶ We aim to support Young carers to develop a plan of Fun Activities meeting the needs of these young people, ensure greater awareness of the public in relation to issues surrounding young carers. Also to increased confidence on the part of the young carers through their involvement in the initiative.
- ▶ At present 35 Young Carer's are registered on our data base, approx 19–25 attending the monthly outings, there are children registered who do not attend due to bereavement or family issues. We hope to increase the data number through assessment of need in 2015
- ▶ The Group meet on a monthly bases we supports them to establish and develop a plan of Activities based on good practice, identifying funding sources meeting the needs of the group, ,
- ▶ Increasing confidence of young carers, through involvement in the initiative, facilitates them to share experiences with other young carers in the Roscommon catchment area and cross boarder with the Newry Mourne Young Carers whom they have established new friendships.

**OUR**  
**AIM'S**

- ▶ A survey of the young carers was carried out 2014, along with survey of their parents.

The group received positive feedback from the young people on the group activities and outings, finding they enjoy the break away from there caring roles and are extremely interested in participating in the decision making of the monthly meetings and organising the outings.

  - ▶ “Freedom from Mum’s illness”
    - ▶ “Gives me more confidence and we (the group) have common issues”
  - ▶ “Go places for fun without my brother; he can’t go places because he has a disability”
- ▶ The parents are consulted on monthly basis as part of the project, staff place emphasis on interaction through checking in with the parents, to keep them informed of the organised outings and also to encourage them to inform other parents of the young carers project and the procedure of referrals to access the service. Parents also participated in a survey, giving their thoughts on the group and what the group means to their children.

“It means a lot for the kids to be rewarded for their role in the home, and it makes them feel good to be part of something special”

“It means free time for Herself to be a kid and not worry about caring in the home”

“I’m happy to see the kids get a break and get recognition for the help they give “

“It takes away part of the guilt for me not giving her enough attention due to the fact that a family member requires 24 hour care”

“It’s magic.... The young carers group is giving my children something that I cannot give them at the moment due to me being full time carer to a family member”.

“Delighted that someone else is giving support and rewards the kids for their caring role and keeps there mind off their family member for a few hours”

- Children are often afraid to identify themselves as Young Carers. Especially for those who would be caring for parents with perhaps Mental illness or parents who would have an addiction to either Alcohol or Drugs. Children are always scared that they might be taken away from their parents.
- ▶ Children have nobody to take over their role due to the very nature of a caring role (especially a 24/7 caring role)
- ▶ Children don't want to be different from other children they often hide the fact that there is a caring role happening at home
- ▶ Children often are caring and see it as normal to be doing the chores that they are doing and for that reason would not identify themselves as Carers. Yet if they were to communicate the roles and responsibilities to their friends they would soon realize what they have to do in life is far greater than others.
- ▶ Young Carers often find it difficult to balance their lives to be able give time to their studies.
- ▶ Schools not recognizing the family demands on children and making no allowance for their caring roles.

## Challenges Experienced By Young Carers

# KAYAKING ACTIVITY DAY



Young Carers Monthly  
Fun Day Activity  
Outings



# HORSE RIDING ACTIVITY DAY





# DUBLIN ICE – SKATING ACTIVITY DAY



# Various Fun Day Outings





# Leargas Project Partners

## ROSCOMMON & NEWRY PARTNERS TRIP TO SLOVENIA



## ROSCOMMON YOUNG CARERS TRIP TO NEWRY





# The Roscommon Young Carers Participated in Filming Appearing On The National Lottery T.V. Broadcast Game Show Programme





IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH

