



We help family carers of all ages across Suffolk get the support they need to live fuller lives.

Suffolk Family Carers provide support, information and advice to carers and their families across Suffolk. We campaign on issues that affect family carers to ensure their voice is heard. We will keep driving change in communities to enable family carers to have a life of their own alongside their caring role.

Vision

We are known for using our expertise, influence and innovation to empower and improve the lives of family carers and their families.



Suffolk ●●●
Family Carers
Living Fuller Lives

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Improving the lives of family carers across Suffolk

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Currently there are over **78,000** identified carers living in Suffolk. For thousands more, looking after an ill, older or disabled loved one doesn't have a name, it is 'just something you do.'

3 in every 5 people in Suffolk will become a carer at some point in their lives.

Young carers are children or young people aged between 5-24 years who look after or help to care for a family member who has a disability, physical or mental illness or misuses drugs and or alcohol.

Suffolk Family Carers supported over 2,700 young carers during 2016/17 seeing a 26% increase in referrals.* Young carers do an amazing job and often feel very proud of what they do. Their caring role helps them develop some valuable life skills, many are very resilient, caring and mature beyond their years.

However, burdening the stress and pressure of caring can affect a young person's health, social life, self-confidence and educational outcomes.

80% of young carers aged between 16-24 years provide over 20 hours of care per week,* often juggling full time education or employment. Our young people's service provides information, advocacy and fun activities that provide the opportunity to build friendships with other young carers.

More than 90 schools and colleges across Suffolk are now recognised for their commitment to providing support to young carers through the Suffolk Family Carers Schools Award programme.

Our Advisers provide young carers with one-to-one support sessions, tailored to their specific needs. We offer a wide variety of activities, including art sessions, sailing and monthly get-togethers, to appeal to a broad cross section of young carers.



Every day another **6,000** children and adults across the UK take on a caring responsibility – that equals over 2 million people each year.

Whilst we offer activities that provide a break from home and an opportunity to socialise, such as a trip to a theme park, the majority of our events have a strong focus on personal development, building a sense of self and encouraging young carers to have aspirations and goals. Workshops such as 'Be Your Own Best Friend' and our one-to-one work with young carers is solution focussed, enabling and goal orientated.

"The support I get from the Young People's Adviser at my school is brilliant. I can easily talk to him about what is going on at home and he really cares about how I am feeling." Young Carer aged 12, who has an autistic brother and physically disabled sister.

"Since being on the 'Be Your Own Best Friend' course I have had a driving lesson, I had been putting this off for ages. I also make myself talk to people now, in McDonalds I always went to the machine so I didn't have to speak to people but now I make myself go to a person to order so I have to talk to them and it feels ok."

*Source: Suffolk Family Carers SCIL statistics 2016/17.



1 in 9 of the Suffolk workforce juggle caring with paid work, however the significant demands of caring mean that 1 in 6 carers are forced to give up work altogether.

We provide information, advice, guidance and advocacy to adult family carers throughout Suffolk.

Our information line handles over 7,000 calls from family carers every year and provides support in a solution focussed way. We signpost to support services, such as our 'Caring with Confidence' course and provide smooth transition to our internal teams. In 2016/17 the information line completed nearly 1,000 carers assessments in partnership with Suffolk County Council.

Following the 'Caring with Confidence' course a family carer wrote:

"I would urge others to attend these courses because it offers time out to listen and learn what help is available out there. It has reinforced my positivity. Thank you ever so much."

We work with GP surgeries across West Suffolk to identify and support family carers. In 2016/17 our team of 2 workers supported 437 family carers through one-to-one support services such as 'Respite on Prescription' which ensures the family carers own health problems are treated.

Full-time carers are more than twice as likely to be in bad health as non-carers. Despite our contribution, carers can struggle for recognition and support from health professionals. We work with all the hospitals across Suffolk and introduced the 'Carer Friendly Hospital' award for hospitals to recognise the needs of the family carer, alongside the patient.



Carers Allowance, the main carer's benefit is the lowest of its kind, at just £62.10 for a minimum 35 hour week, equivalent to

£1.77 per hour!

99% of family carers felt that Suffolk Family Carers listened and gave them information and advice to empower them to make informed decisions about their caring role.

Our partnership working enables us to support carers in their homes when the person they care for is in crisis.

42% of family carers reported that they have physically injured themselves through caring. We can organise practical 'moving and handling' training in the family carers home to prevent falls and injury which often result in hospital admissions.

Through the 'Employers for Carers' scheme we provide training for organisations and professionals to identify with carers issues and provide policies and procedures that improve the balance of work and care.

"My employer is very supportive. I can now work flexibly and from home if I need to."



Care provided by family carers saves the UK economy in excess of **£132 billion** in care costs every year – The cost of a second NHS!

3 in 4 carers do not feel their caring role is understood or valued by their community.

Wellbeing Services

We provide a range of support programmes focussed on family carer well-being. Our information and education sessions are designed to prioritise the needs of family carers in order to enable sustainability in their caring role.

Courses include:

- Caring with Confidence
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Wellbeing for Me
- Who's in Charge – Programme for parents affected by child-parent violence
- Autism & ADHD course to support both adults and young people living with the diagnosis
- Mental Health

"Thank goodness for organisations like yours giving help and advice."

Mental Health

Working in partnership with Suffolk Libraries and Suffolk Mind, we provide an information, advice, guidance and emotional support service for family carers supporting a person living with mental well-being needs.

Our team proactively work with health professionals; a Psychiatric Liaison Nurse at West Suffolk Hospital said: "Suffolk Family Carers really are a lifeline to the NHS as the courses and support they provide is incredible."

Our substance misuse team facilitate 'Navigating the Road to Recovery' programmes and information sessions across the county for family carers who are supporting people with substance misuse difficulties.

Information Line

For many people, looking after an ill, older or disabled person is "just something you do," however, by not recognising you are carrying out a caring role can be a real barrier to accessing vital support. Call the Suffolk Family Carers Information line **01473 835477** and we can help.

"It is great to know someone is on your side and they realise you have needs too."

Our Volunteers

Our dedicated team of volunteers provides a 'Talk and Support' service to adult family carers so that those in a difficult caring role or are isolated are contacted on a regular basis to provide support and company.

"I found the listening support very helpful at a time when we had reached a crisis point, and was immensely grateful for the practical advice and guidance I received over the phone which enabled us to get to the next stage of dealing with the situation. I think the service is excellent. Thank you."

Our volunteers help run events, organise support groups, provide office assistance and a listening ear to family carers.

Interested in joining us?
Call our information line on **01473 835477**