

## Who are Military Young Carers?

A military young carer is a military or veteran dependent child or young person between the ages of 5 -18 years of age, who helps look after a relative who has a condition, such as a disability, illness, mental health condition, or a drug or alcohol problem.

Young carers in military families may be caring for parents who have returned from service injured or have post-traumatic stress disorder, or they may be caring for a parent – often a mother – with health problems while their partners are away or they may be caring for a sibling. They also could be part of a wider caring dynamic caring for extended family such as grandparents and other members of the extended family.

### The responsibilities of carers:

- Physical Care – Supporting moving another person
- Practical Care – Household chores, above that of their age
- Personal Care – Washing and dressing
- Financial Support – Working to fund the household
- Emotional Support – Providing listening and advice support

As many military families live far away from their extended family and support networks, these young carers can face extra caring responsibilities than their non-military family peers. For a variety of reasons, including the propensity for frequent relocation and the tendency to try to look after themselves they do not reach out for external support and young carers in military families can be particularly hard to identify.

### Issues affecting Military Young Carers:

#### Social –

- Constant relocation, which at times can be at short notice
- Unable to attend community groups, social and leisure activities or feeling alone
- Lack support to care for family member to access social groups
- Difficulties with transport

#### Education –

- Moving school regularly
- Inconsistent approaches to the curriculum due to moves
- Missing school due to caring responsibilities
- Missing school due to own illness
- Poor academic attainment, limiting further self-development

#### Emotional –

- Worrying about those who you care for, if you're not there
- Worrying about a family member who is away on exercise or in combat, whilst caring for those at home
- Not having a sufficient support network
- Secondary presentation of symptoms from parent with mental health issues

How we can help –

At Surrey Military and Veterans Young Carers service we offer a bespoke wrap around support network to fit your individual needs.

Additionally, we offer the following service provision:

- Assessment of a young carers needs with ongoing reviews
- A health and well-being assessment and signposting
- Support military young carers to maintain good academic and emotional health and well-being outcomes
- An individualised emotional health pathway
- Supportive individual and group work
- Social and fun activities – which link in to the Royal British Legion and SSAFA’s short breaks service

### **Surrey Young Carers Service**

Surrey Young Carers has been supporting young carers across the county since 1996.

We are here to support you in your caring role, help you to achieve your best at school, have fun, discover new interests and make new friends.

Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham, Guildford, Surrey GU4 7HL

### **Key contacts**

#### **Surrey:**

Surrey Military Young Carers

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Surrey’s Carers Prescription –

SSAFA Surrey –

Royal British Legion Surrey Branch –

Army Families Foundation –

Navy Families Foundation –

Royal Air Force Families Foundation –

Surrey County Council Children’s Social Care –