

YC NEWSLETTER

BETTER
the feel good place

YOUNG CARERS LEISURE CARD



UP TO
50%
DISCOUNT

There is exciting news for young carers registered with our charity. Be Free Young Carers has partnered with Better Leisure to provide you with a special Young Carers Leisure Card so that you can have discounted use of their leisure facilities across the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire.

As a young carer, you will obtain a FREE Pay and Play Leisure Card which enables you to use facilities such as the swimming pool, badminton courts, and the gym with up to 50% reduction on the normal cost. It will also give young carers aged over 12 years of age a FREE gym induction. You'll only pay for the activities, as you use them.

To obtain a card, it's really easy. All you need to do is contact Be Free YC and we will provide you with a qualifying letter. Just take it with you when you next pop in to one of the listed venues and a member of staff will register you. You can find out more about Better Leisure at www.better.org.uk

Better Leisure facilities that accept the Young Carers Leisure Card

Vale of White Horse:

White Horse Leisure & Tennis Centre, Abingdon
Faringdon Leisure Centre
Wantage Leisure Centre

South Oxfordshire:

Abbey Sports Centre, Berinsfield
Didcot Leisure Centre & Wave Leisure Pool
Henley Leisure Centre
Thame Leisure Centre
Park Sports Centre, Wheatley

Fundraising and Donations - Thank you!

Be Free YC don't charge for the support we provide to young carers and their families so we are always very grateful for any donations we receive. We would like to say a massive THANK YOU to the following people who have so generously and kindly supported our charity recently: The Furry Mic have raised £342.53 this year (£112.88, £98.50 & £131.15) at different open mic nights; young carer Lewis and his Abingdon NCS friends raised £281.90 doing a sponsored walk; Waitrose Wantage raised £333.00 for us through their token scheme; Abingdon Lions Club gave us £1,900; the Didcot Choral Society gave us £300; and the Didcot Lottery donated £320. Wow! Thank you to everyone!

Welcome to our new look newsletter - we hope you like it!! Make sure you show it to your parents / guardians as it contains information that they need to see too!

Find us on social media for up-to-date information about everything happening at Be Free Young Carers!



Young Carers' Achievements

At Be Free Young Carers, we love to hear about all of the wonderful things achieved by the young carers that we support. If you have anything that you are proud of and would like to share it with other young carers, email us at yc@befreeyc.org.uk!

To the left you will see John & Charlotte with all of their medals and trophies – there are lots! John and Charlotte are keen footballers and play for Abingdon Youth - John as a goalkeeper for the under 13s, and Charlotte as a striker for the under 9s. Last season, John was named the Manager's Player of the Year and Charlotte was named Sports Person of the Year! Wow! We are so proud of them and so pleased that they wanted to share this with everyone.

At our recent trip to the Oxford Ice-rink, Zoe very proudly showed us her skating badges. As you can see, Zoe has 3 and is now working towards her Level 4. That is really great, Zoe, well done! Zoe is a very good skater and very kindly helped the more nervous skaters in the group which was very thoughtful.

We hear that Madison, left, has been enjoying gymnastics for 2 years and is constantly practicing at home. She is at Wantage Gymnastics Club and has won bronze, silver and gold medals for her achievements in local competitions. That's incredible, we are so impressed. Well done, Madison!

Get Involved—Volunteer

We continue to have very high demand for the support that we provide and now have over 450 young carers registered with our charity! We work hard to ensure that you all have as much support as possible and are actively recruiting volunteers so that we can take more young carers on trips, activities & workshops to give you a break, and so that you can have someone to talk to about how you are feeling and any problems you may have. There really are lots of ways that people can volunteer with Be Free YC and it is really rewarding. Do you know someone who might be interested in helping young carers in their community? It could be a family member or friend, someone that works at school, as long as they are aged over 18, we would love to hear from them! Please call or email Donna, our Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator, on 01235 838554 or email yc@befreeyc.org.uk.

As always, we are extremely grateful to our volunteers Hannah, Angela (both pictured), Josh and Batool and thank them for all of their amazing support on our trips! We also welcome our new volunteers to the team. We couldn't do it without these wonderful people and really appreciate all they do!

Claiming Carer's Allowance

Some of our young carers aged over 16 could be entitled to £62.70 a week through claiming a benefit called Carer's Allowance. For more information and to see the eligibility criteria please visit www.gov.uk/carers-allowance or call the Carer's Allowance Unit on 0345 608 4321.

Support for Young Carers in Schools

Is your school 'young carer friendly'? Do you have someone you can talk to at school if you have any concerns about your caring role or if you are struggling to do your school work whilst also helping out at home? Are you able to attend a regular group at school specifically for young carers so that you can receive help and advice? We'd really like to hear from you, please get in touch!

Abingdon and Witney College

If you are thinking about attending Abingdon and Witney College in the future, please get in touch with us on 01235 838554. We are able to arrange a special opportunity for you to visit the college to discuss what it would be like to study there, but also the support that they can provide to you as a young carer which is really important!

Important Information about our Trips, Activities & Workshops

The trips we provide are an opportunity for you to relax and have fun away from your caring role and the young carers that attend really enjoy them. It is important that everyone follows the information below so that trips are successful and a great day for everyone.

Paying for Trips, Activities & Workshops

The support that Be Free YC provides to young carers is **COMPLETELY FREE**, however, we are always very grateful for any contributions made as we have to fundraise to cover the cost of the activities that we offer you. If any families are able to make a small donation to the cost of a trip, we would be very grateful. Better still, perhaps you could help to raise some money for us! For ideas and support with this, please contact Donna, our Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator on 01235 838554.

Catching the Bus

Our Didcot pick up location is at the Civic Hall car park in Britwell Road (OX11 7JN). As Carly and Christina will meet you at the Civic Hall car park, if you need to call them on the day of a trip, please call them on their mobiles as they won't be able to pick up messages left at the office. These numbers can be found on the back page of this newsletter. The pick up in Abingdon is at the Tesco Supermarket bus-stop (Marcham Road —Tesco side, opposite Pets at Home).

Where possible, we will also do a pick up in Faringdon for people who struggle to get to Didcot or Abingdon. This pick up will be in the car park of The Faringdon Medical Centre on Volunteer Way (SN7 7YU). On the trip posters, we will let you know which trips will be picking up in Faringdon as it won't be possible every time due to trip location.

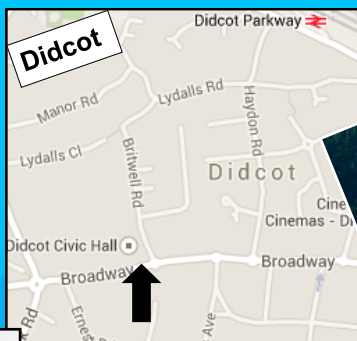
1. Always confirm your place - If you have a place on a trip, we will write to you to let you know. If not, you will be on the reserve list and you may be contacted at the last minute if there is a cancellation. If you are invited on a trip **YOU MUST CONFIRM** if you are attending. If you do not, we will assume you do not want to come and we will give your place to somebody else.

2. Always let us know if you can't attend a trip that you have been invited on - trips are very popular and book up quickly so we always have a reserve list of young carers wanting to come. If you don't let us know you can no longer come, other young carers will miss out on coming which is a real shame! If you are unable to come on the day of a trip, please let us know as soon as possible.

3. Always be punctual - we can only wait a maximum of 5 minutes after the planned departure time of a trip. Any delay will shorten the trip for everybody, make us late for other pick ups and disrupt planned activities. It is really, really important to be on time please.

4. Always be respectful of staff, other young carers and members of the public - this makes the trip enjoyable for everyone involved. The Trips & Activities Code of Conduct is in place to keep you safe and must be followed at all times please.

5. Most importantly, we want every young carer to have a fun & enjoyable time. We are here to support you so remember that you can talk to us if you are concerned about anything or would like some advice.



Useful Information for Young Carers

Useful websites and organisations that may be able to help you:

CARING ALONE SUPPORT SERVICE - Free online support for young adult carers aged 16-30 years.
www.caringalone.org.uk

YOUNG CARERS DIRECT - The Online Community for young carers. www.nhs.uk/carersdirect/young

YOUNG ADDACTION - Support and advice for young people affected by other people's drug and alcohol use.
www.oxfordshiredaat.org/youngpeople

OXME.INFO - This is Oxfordshire County Council's website for young people and includes information about opportunities, activities and services for children and young people in Oxfordshire. oxme.info

HONEYPOT CHILDREN'S CHARITY - working to enhance the lives of young carers and vulnerable children aged 5-12 years old. www.honeypot.org.uk

CHICKS - a national children's charity providing free respite breaks to disadvantaged children from all over the UK. www.chicks.org.uk

THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY - their work aims to support young carers to their full potential and overcome negative impacts upon their wellbeing, education and future life chances. www.youngcarer.com

THE MIX - a leading support service for young people. www.themix.org.uk

YOUNG MINDS - A UK charity helping to improve the wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.
www.youngminds.org.uk

RELAX KIDS - Mindfulness classes and products for children. www.relaxkids.com



Oxfordshire Young Carers Service

The Oxfordshire Young Carers Service works with schools, professionals and services to support young carers and their families across Oxfordshire.

Support and care for young carers and their families changed under new legislation called the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014. These changes mean that:

- * Young carers under 18 have the right to a Young Carers Needs Assessment, no matter who they care for, what type of care they provide, or how often they provide it. The Oxfordshire Young Carers Service carries out these assessments for you.
- * The assessment looks at the young carer's need for support, their other needs and wishes, their education or work, health, hobbies or activities and also look at a whole family approach.
- * Young carers aged between 14 & 19 are entitled to a young carers transition assessment that will consider how to prepare for adulthood and fulfil their aspirations.

If you would like more information about this, please contact us!

GET IN TOUCH Be Free Young Carers

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