

It's Young Carers Awareness Day on Thursday

The day is led by Carers Trust and is intended to highlight the fabulous work some carers do for their family, or sometimes their friends.

As many as one in five secondary school children may be a young carer, and often that role will have started while they were much younger.

Jason is a Young Carer aged 13 living in Edinburgh. His name, the names of family members and some details have been changed to protect his identity.

Jason was referred to the Edinburgh Young Carers in summer 2018. At the time, he cared for his brother Angus (8) who had autism and his Mum who suffered from mental health issues after the birth of her third child, then 3 years-old.

Jason was taking on a significant caring role in his household and was struggling to adjust with his dad coming back into his life after a number of years.

At the point of his referral, Jason appeared to be a withdrawn young man and his teachers noticed that he was quick to temper and was frequently late coming to school.

When teachers had spoken to Jason about this, he communicated

that he was worried about his mum and how she was coping at home.

At first, Jason's mum was reluctant for him to have support as she was concerned about what intervention would mean for the family. After further discussion about Edinburgh Young Carers and how the service could support Jason, a referral was made with the support of his mum. Through assessment, Jason shared that he would often listen to his mum's worries, support her to attend appointments, and help to keep his brother Angus calm.

Jason was initially referred to the EYC counselling service to help him to work through his feelings relating to his responsibilities at home.

At first, he felt too nervous to attend the respite groups, but after six weeks he attended his first group at the EYC office where he got to put forward ideas for respite groups. Jason voted for rock climbing, as this was something he used to enjoy, but had been unable to do whilst caring for his family. Jason made a couple of friends at the group which helped to feel included by peers who understood his situation.

Jason's key worker shared how positive it was to see Jason flourish at the rockclimbing session a few weeks later. Since then, Jason has become a regular attender of the EYC fortnightly respite group, and has also been supported to access a climbing group out-with Edinburgh Young Carers. Jason's key worker also shared that in being able to build a relationship with Jason's mum, EYC have been able to look into support that could benefit the whole family and reduce the impact of Jason's caring role.

Jason's school teachers have also remarked that Jason has been less reactive in the classroom, and his lateness has decreased.

We asked Jason how he felt about the support he had received

at Edinburgh Young Carers. He said: “It’s nice to know that I am not alone and that other people are in the same situation as me.”



Edinburgh Young Carers (EYC) is a service supporting young people aged 5-25 looking after a family member due to illness, disability, poor mental health or drug or alcohol misuse.

They aim to improve the lives and wellbeing of young carers by raising awareness, offering emotional and practical support and by giving each young person the opportunity to take a break from their caring role and have fun in a friendly, supportive environment where they can be themselves and leave worries behind.

If you would like more information, or would like to make a referral, click here

<https://www.youngcarers.org.uk/make-a-referral/>

