Dynamic Dunescapes Dune Engagement Case Study

Young Carers: holiday activity series

Sand dune system	Sandscale Haws, Cumbria
Case Study Subject	Engagement activities for Furness Carers: Young Carers
The Engagement Intervention	

Background information

Furness Carers offers free support for unpaid carers in the Furness region of Cumbria. Their 'Young Carers' branch provides a huge range of support and respite activities for carers aged 5-18 years old who care for someone at home. Dynamic Dunescapes, in collaboration with our partner Cumbria Wildlife Trust and The Bay project set up a series of weekly coastal activities during the school holidays as part of Young Carers activity plan.

What was the issue/change you hoped to make?

The aim of the sessions was to offer a free, accessible way for young carers to engage with nature around the local community, as well as engaging with each other as a support network. We aimed to provide activities based on the coastal ecosystems to increase a sense of wellbeing, learn about sand dunes and coastal wildlife, and (most importantly) have fun.

Who did you work with?

We worked with Furness Carers: Young Carers who are a charity offering free support to unpaid carers in the Furness peninsula. They do a fantastic job offering advice, support plans, and a place for young carers to access activities and spend time with other young carers.

What did you do and how?

We got in touch with Furness Young Carers to discuss a program of weekly activities for young carers aged 5-18 to book on to over the summer holidays (2022). Using funds provided by Dynamic Dunescapes we were able to offer free minibus shuttles for young carers to our sand dune site – Sandscale Haws. This was crucial, as public transport is non-existent and so reaching this reserve can be an issue.
We offered 6 activities including pond dipping and a watercolour session, beach art, shark eggcase hunts, rockpooling, minibeast hunt & dune games, and finally a bushcraft session at the end of summer.

Highlight any issues/obstacles & how you overcame them?

Transport to activity sites was an issue, so we booked minibuses for 3 of the sessions, and placed the other 3 sessions at sites close to public transport routes, and areas with free parking.

How much did the intervention cost?

£270 for transport costs.

Did the intervention work?

What were the outcomes?

On average, 12 young carers attended each session, with 25 different children attending throughout the summer.

Any highlights?

Seeing the enthusiasm when looking for wildlife, such as finding the elusive pink grasshopping whilst mini-beast hunting at Sandscale Haws, or finding a starfish whilst rockpooling at Earnse Bay.
We also played parachute games such as cat and mouse on the sand dunes– although just as much fun was had by the kids from just running up and down the dunes and having some free time to explore!

External feedback

Thank you so much for your sessions this summer. The Young Carers really enjoyed the activity [they were] so excited to tell their parents all about it when they were being picked up. – Laura Porter, Young Carers Support Worker

What could be done differently next time?

We found that attendees ranged between 5-14 years old. We'd have liked to also reach the older age bracket, and so in future would also run additional events specifically aimed at 15-18 year olds.

Media & Reports

Images of the intervention

Furness Carers - Young carers Summer activities

Every Wednesday during the summer holidays
10.00am-12.00pm

To book a place email admin@furnesscarers.co.uk

27th July - Sandscale Hawes

Beneath the water's surface there's a whole world of minibeasts to explore - try pond dipping and see what animals you can find!

17th August - Round House, Biggar Bank

Let your imagination run wild on our sand sculpture session. Followed by a beach scavenger hunt to explore the incredible things that get washed up on our shores...!

3rd August - Earnse Bay

Discover the amazing rockpool creatures of Earnse bay including hermit crabs, starfish, and anemones! Then search for shark eggs on our local beach!

24th August - Sandscale Hawes

Explore the wildlife of the dunes, including identifying animal tracks, and trying to spot the rare natterjack toad! Then help protect wildlife with some conservation craft activities!

10th August - Round House, Biggar Bank

Explore Biggar Bank beach, including nature based games and activities, followed by beach arts & crafts, such as shell windchimes!

31st August - Bushcraft Skills, Grange-over-sands

Join us for a trip to Grange-over-sands for an adventure in the woods. Learn bushcraft skills like firelighting and crafts, then cook up some campfire snacks!