

## **Recognising, supporting, and valuing young carers: caring together as part of our collective futures**

The YOUNGCARER project (2022-2023), funded through the Irish Research Council's New Foundation programme, involved a partnership between Family Carers' Ireland, Irish Secondary Schools Union, and University College Cork. The project's overall aim was to recognise, better support and improve the lives of young carers in Ireland. This aim was supported by the following three action-specific objectives:

- Explore young carer experiences, needs and challenges using deliberative participatory approaches.
- Co-design proposals for supports with young carers to be implemented by FCI using deliberative participatory approaches.
- Co-develop, communicate, translate, and present workshop outputs through a Young Carers' parliament.

The project comprised a national survey of young carers, three participatory workshops and Young Carers parliament, where the following recommendations were discussed and presented. These included:

- Establish a cross-departmental working group on young carers and identify the department with lead responsibility for young carers.
- Increase awareness and visibility of young carers and young adult carers.
- Support young carers to make the transition to further and higher education and apprenticeships.
- Ensure young carers have access to appropriate mental health supports.
- Provide financial support to young carers & their families.
- Ensure young carers are accurately enumerated.
- Support young carers to engage in paid employment.
- Ensure young carers have access to regular breaks and respite.
- Include young carers in the refreshed National Carers Strategy.