

## Workshop 1 – Tackling loneliness: children and young people

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Loneliness is not just something which affects older people. There is a frequent peak in adolescence (*Qualter et al. 2015*) and some studies have shown loneliness to be a greater concern among young people than the elderly (*Mental Health Foundation 2010*). A survey by Action for Children found that 43% of 17 – 25 year olds who used their service had experienced problems with loneliness.

Sustained loneliness can have a significant and often life-long impact on mental and physical health. As well as contributing to stress, anxiety, paranoia, depression and heart disease in young people, there is also a link with lower academic achievement.

This workshop will look at some of the reasons why these issues arise and discuss what is being done, and what can be done, to make life more connected and supportive for our young people.

**Young Carers** are a community of disadvantaged and vulnerable young people who often suffer from the impact of long-term loneliness. Their story is not unique; however, their story is 'everyone's' business.



- 89% of young carers feel lonely or isolated
- 72% of young carers feel lonely in the holidays – 57% worry about talking about it
- Better engagement of young people in service development; increase their voice
- Need to work more with schools; can be dismissive
- Early identification;
  - where is the voice of small children and those who fall outside of other criteria
  - prevention very much lacking universal services
  - schools are key
- Holistic care question, professionals need to be trained to think about wider networks and impacts (for example GPS)
- Now included on GP questionnaire in Scarborough
- Connection and relationships are key to gaining trust with young person and family