

## GCP2 CASE STUDY 14

### Using GCP2 with adolescents

#### Why use GCP2 with young people?

Neglect can happen to children of all ages. Teenagers are just as likely to be neglected as younger children, and the impact can be just as damaging (e.g. poor engagement with education, violence and aggression, increased risk-taking, increased risk of going missing and being bullied, poor physical health, difficulties with relationships (with peers and adults), emotional difficulties and it can lead to a higher likelihood of becoming a perpetrator of maltreatment.). Yet we know we are less likely to identify neglect during adolescence (Rees et al, 2010). The main reasons for this are that older young people are:

- less likely to be seen as at risk of long-term negative outcomes
- more likely to be blamed for their behaviour rather than understanding this as a symptom of neglect
- more likely to be seen as responsible for their own care
- sometimes perceived as resilient to the impact of neglect due to their age.

The GCP2 can be used in various creative ways to help to better understand a young person's lived experience of care, to gather their views about their care and to ensure that practitioners have looked at their behaviour through a neglect lens. As per the examples to the right, it can also be used in other restorative and strength based ways.

#### What does parenting look like for young people?

It has been suggested that the GCP2 is not appropriate for adolescents, however young people still have care requirements similar to younger children, which should be understood and evaluated by practitioners:

- **Basic care giving** – food, shelter, clothing, hygiene resources
- **Ensuring safety** – who is the young person exposed to? Inappropriate adults in household or around them? Appropriate supervision on and offline?

- **Emotional warmth** – do they have someone to turn to, do they feel cared for and do parents show warmth to their children?
- **Stimulation** – access to peers or activities. Forced to stay in bedroom or is this learned behaviour? Supported appropriately to access education?
- **Guidance and boundaries** – coming in on time, getting up on time, parents condoning risky behaviours, knowing what is acceptable.
- **Stability** – for example, stable home life, accommodation & parenting.

#### Examples

I used GCP2 with a young person who was not attending education. There were no obvious concerns of neglect, however the tool was used to explore what might be impacting on his school refusal. This resulted in a really rounded view of this young man's life, and helped to capture his voice.

GCP2 was used with some young people who had been placed into care, to help explore their own childhoods and what they experienced. This was a useful exercise allowing the young people to better understand why they were in care and what care they were entitled to from care givers.

I have used the tool with a young person preparing to be a parent who had little positive parenting support around her, having been in and out of the care system through her life; GCP2 helped her to learn what good parenting looks like, as she had never experienced this herself. This was really positive and a supportive process that helped to achieve good outcomes for both mum and baby.

I was working with a young person whose risky and criminal behaviour came to our attention. The young person claimed their parents didn't care about them so we asked them to look at GCP2 with us. They graded their parent as red all the way through, but when we asked for examples and offered some challenge from our own observations of their parents (e.g. collecting them from the youth centre etc.), this didn't match up. From this, what we uncovered was extra familial harm and the young person being groomed to disassociate from their parents.