



## TEA-BREAK GUIDE



**Adolescents and Neglect** - There is widespread understanding of the impact of neglect on the safety & welfare of younger children but neglect of adolescents has, by contrast, had less recognition.

### Why is it matters

Recent studies have challenged a widely-held assumption that young people may be more resilient to abuse or neglect than younger children – the impact of maltreatment does not decline with the age at which it is experienced.

### What are the risks?

An Ofsted thematic review of SCRs, noted a wide range risk factors for teenagers including:

- alienation from their families;
- school difficulties;
- accommodation problems;
- abuse/exploitation by adults;
- drug and alcohol mis-use;
- emotional and mental health difficulties.

### What increases the risks?

There is a higher risk of neglect where: a family is headed by a lone parent; a new partner/step-parent is introduced; parental alcohol/drug misuse; parental mental ill health such as depression; households where there is domestic abuse; Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES).

### Professionals

It is essential that practitioners understand the impact of neglect. Children who have experienced neglect are more likely to have or insecure attachment styles. High risk behaviours can be interpreted as adult 'lifestyle choices' with the consequence of children being denied appropriate support.

### What should we do?

Be proactive and persistent even in the face of resistance. Positive relationships are key. Focus on self-esteem and helping young people to develop a sense of agency and control. Focus on self-esteem and helping young people to develop a sense of agency and control.

### Assessing impact of neglect

Use other professionals who may have a relationship with the young person.  
Support your assessment using the Graded Care Profile.