

# 4. Personal, Family and Social Factors

## 4.1 Purpose

This section aims to capture information about a wide range of factors in the young person's life, including their strengths, needs and problems regardless of their links to offending or anti-social behaviour.

In addition, this section supports the practitioner to identify the need for additional assessment and/or referral to specialist services.

## 4.2 Overview

The questions in the Personal, Family and Social Factors section do not need to be completed in the order listed and can be started at any point and completed in whatever order seems most appropriate for each particular case.

There are four main sub-sections to complete in the Personal, Family and Social Factors section:

- **Living arrangements and environmental factors**
  - Living arrangements, housing and financial considerations
  - Social and community/neighbourhood factors
- **Parenting, family and relationships**
  - Parenting, care and supervision
  - Care history and children's services involvement
  - Family and wider networks
  - How the young person relates to others
- **Young person's development**
  - Health
    - Physical health and development
    - Speech, language, communication and neuro-disability
    - Emotional development and mental health
  - Lifestyle, identity and behaviour
    - Features of lifestyle
    - Substance misuse
    - Young person as a parent
    - Young person's self-identity
    - Thinking and behaviour

- **Learning, education, training and employment**

Throughout all of the Information Gathering sections of AssetPlus there are a number of tools to aid the identification of key pieces of information:

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Flag for further action	This should be used when the practitioner identifies an action they want to flag for consideration in the planning stage, e.g. where a referral may be required. The area for further action is recorded in the Pathways and Planning (reviews of areas possibly requiring further action) section. Teams and local areas will need to consider when further action on an identified need or concern is required, depending on local services and resources. When referring on to another worker, ensure that they are provided with all the relevant information from that section (not just the information relating to the triggering question).
Add significant life event	This should be used when the practitioner identifies a life event that is likely to have had a significant influence on the young person's behaviour. These identified events are recorded in the Explanations and Conclusions (significant life events) section.
Add desistance factor	This should be used when the practitioner identifies a factor either for or against desistance. Factors are recorded in the Foundations for Change (factors affecting desistance) section.

## Definition - Desistance

Desistance research focuses on the routes out of offending. In the AssetPlus Rationale document<sup>9</sup>, Dr Kerry Baker describes desistance in the following terms:

- Firstly, desistance is best viewed as a process rather than a one-off event.
- Secondly, understanding desistance involves taking account of both individual factors (such as goals and attitudes) and social context (such as the opportunities available to a young person in their community).
- Thirdly, it is useful to distinguish between 'primary desistance' i.e. 'any lull or crime-free gap in the course of a criminal career' and 'secondary desistance' which relates to adopting a new 'non-offender' identity.

Factors for desistance (those which will be influential in the young person desisting from offending) and against desistance (those which will be influential in the young person persisting in offending) are identified throughout the Information Gathering sections of AssetPlus.

When completing the Personal, Family and Social Factors section practitioners should also refer to relevant questions in the self-assessment section including the questions within family, home and relationships (young person self-assessment) and about your child (parent/carer self-assessment) sub-sections.

Throughout this section it will be important to identify if any further information is required, using the 'yet to clarify' option, and to obtain this information before the stage is completed. This will be particularly relevant if a young person has moved between areas and there are

<sup>9</sup> [AssetPlus Rationale document – GOV.UK](#)

gaps in the information available regarding previous offending or involvement in other interventions they have received. Gaps in information could relate to discrepancies between accounts where more details are needed to form a full picture of what happened. Where gaps in information are identified, practitioners should explain what steps are being taken to obtain the necessary details, e.g. who is being contacted and when.

## 4.3 Section guidance

### 4.3.1 Living arrangements and environmental factors

This sub-section assesses the social context in which young people ordinarily live and the practical realities of their day-to-day life and provides the backdrop against which to assess their offending or anti-social behaviour.

#### 4.3.1.1 Living arrangements, housing and financial considerations

This covers the young person's accommodation, income and financial situation of their family.

#### Definition - Suitable accommodation

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010<sup>10</sup>, define suitable accommodation as that:

- (a) which so far as reasonably practicable is suitable for the child in the light of his needs, including his health needs and any needs arising from any disability;
- (b) in respect of which the responsible authority has satisfied itself as to the character and suitability of the landlord or other provider; and
- (c) in respect of which the responsible authority has so far as reasonably practicable taken into account the child's –
  - (i) wishes and feelings; and,
  - (ii) education, training or employment needs.
- (d) which complies with health and safety requirements related to rented accommodation.

This legislation does not prescribe rules for deciding whether a particular type of accommodation is suitable or unsuitable, but allows you to make a professional judgement based on the individual needs and circumstances of each young person.

Bed and breakfast accommodation would not be considered suitable.



#### **Please state the young person's current accommodation**

This should be the current accommodation status of the young person in the community.

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<sup>10</sup> [The Care Leavers \(England\) Regulations 2010](#)

**Q. Please state who the young person is currently living with and outline any positives or strengths relating to the young person's current living arrangements**

Provide details of who the young person usually lives with including any family members or friends and consider whether the young person lives with other minors. Describe any strengths about the current arrangements, e.g. stability of accommodation, location, able to be with siblings. Where the young person has entered custody consider whether the young person is likely to return to the same accommodation on release.

**Trigger question for further exploration**

**Q. Do you have any concerns about the young person's current accommodation situation?**

Consider:

- the amenities nearby and the condition of the accommodation,
- its location and any safety issues: and,
- whether the young person has any personal space, and who they are living with. Concerns could relate to the young person living independently, in hostels or shared houses. The young person being unable to cope with the practical aspects of living alone can lead to an increased risk of offending.

If the answer is 'Yes', you should complete the further exploration questions to capture the details around the concerns identified:

### Further exploration

**Please indicate if any of these apply, more than one option can be selected:**

**Instability:**

Select this if there is any particular instability or volatility such as the young person regularly moving with (or without) family or issues with the tenancy or the property.

**Absconding/staying away:**

Select this if the young person regularly goes missing from home.

#### Definition - Absconding

These criteria outlined by Barnardo's<sup>11</sup> can provide a useful basis for assessing the seriousness of this problem:

- Occasionally goes missing, short episodes: Missing for 24 hours or under, but less than 3 times a month.
- Occasionally goes missing, prolonged episodes: Goes missing for over 24 hours, but less than 3 times a month.
- Frequent and short missing episodes: Missing for 24 hours or less, goes missing most weeks i.e. 3 times a month or more.

<sup>11</sup> [An assessment of the potential savings from Barnardo's interventions for young people who have been sexually exploited' \(September 2011\)](#)

- Frequent and prolonged missing episodes: Goes missing for over 24 hours, goes missing most weeks i.e. 3 times a month or more.

#### **Short-term/temporary:**

Select this if the current accommodation is an interim or a provisional place to stay. This would include if the young person is homeless, sofa surfing, accommodated by the local authority or if the young person and their parents/carers are in temporary accommodation for another specific reason.

#### **Definition - Sofa surfing**

The Collins Dictionary<sup>12</sup> defines sofa surfing as the practice of staying temporarily with various friends and relatives while attempting to find permanent accommodation.

#### **Over-crowded:**

Select this if the current accommodation is over-crowded (as defined by the number of people who stay in a room and the amount of space they have there rather than in living conditions that are very cramped).

#### **Definition – Over-crowding**

Shelter<sup>13</sup> state that as a general rule, there should be no more than two people per room (include living rooms, bedrooms and large kitchens) and should provide a separate bedroom for each couple, single adult (aged 21 or older), two young people of the same sex (aged 10-20) or two children under 10.

#### **Unhealthy or unsafe:**

Select this if the young person is living with other substance misusers' or if domestic violence is a feature of a young person's address, even if they are not living with their parents/carers. Issues of neglect, poverty, disrepair or community factors may also be relevant. The circumstances will depend on the young person and their personal characteristics.

#### **Offending in family/residential home:**

Select this if the young person has offences that have occurred in, or are related to their accommodation. For children and young people who have offended in residential care settings it may be important to consider whether they would have been reported to the police if they had occurred within a family home.

#### **Living with known offenders:**

Select this if there are people living within the same home or household as the young person (**not** neighbours) that are known offenders. Consider the level of influence that those known offenders have over the young person's own behaviour and/or attitudes.

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<sup>12</sup> [Definition of "sofa surfing" | Collins English Dictionary](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Overcrowding – Shelter.org.uk](#)

**Other:**

Select this if none of the given options apply, but there are other problematic issues related to the young person's accommodation.

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

If any issues are identified, provide details including:

- problematic issues such as isolation or availability of drugs within the home,
- information about past problems as well as current, e.g. history of frequent changes of accommodation: and,
- specific factual information, e.g. how long can they stay at this address, how many other people are living there, why it is unsafe.

**Q. Give details of the young person's financial circumstances**

The young person's financial circumstances will depend on the age of the young person and the context in which they are living. Consider:

- identification of sources of the young person's income and the regularity or amount of income,
- issues or concerns about either a lack of income or the legitimacy of the income,
- if the young person is in receipt of benefits there may be a link worker, e.g. Connexions, which should be recorded in the Core Record (contact with other services) section. Consider the positive aspects of the young person obtaining benefits as an achievement such as self-efficacy or a sense of achievement which should be captured in the Foundations for Change section,
- for a young person in a family setting, consider issues around pocket money or allowance, e.g. are adults in the family able and/or willing to provide some allowance? Is the allowance appropriate for their age? Is the young person treated the same as their other siblings? Does the young person have to complete certain activities or behave in a particular way in order to earn their allowance or pocket money?
- if the young person is accommodated by the local authority, what provision is made for them in this regard? For an older young person living independently, do they need advice about obtaining benefits or budgeting?
- whether money or debt in custody is potentially an issue for the young person, e.g. acquiring the debts accrued by former cell occupants or unexplained expenditure; and,
- for young people who misuse substances, consider how they are obtaining funds.

**Q. Provide an outline/overview of the financial situation for the young person's family (where relevant)**

Consider whether the family income is sufficient to provide for their basic needs. Are the family in debt or rent arrears? You may identify households which have an adult in receipt of state benefits and should consider whether this, alongside other factors, should trigger a referral to the local family intervention team or children's services.

### 4.3.1.2 Social and community/neighbourhood factors

**Q. What are the main features (positive and negative) of the community/neighbourhood that affect the young person's daily life?**

Give a brief description of the neighbourhood including the name of the area or estate. Outline the features which have a positive impact on the young person, e.g. good local resources, transport links or community cohesion as well as those which may be more problematic for them, e.g. isolated location, lack of amenities, poor transport links, poverty or deprivation.

Young people may vary in the way they react to or cope with the same environment so try to be specific here in describing the effect of the community or neighbourhood on the particular young person being assessed.

It may be necessary to liaise with police, anti-social behaviour teams or community safety partnerships to assist with the identification of such local problems and identify further action that might be required either as part of the assessment or as a result of it, e.g. referral to other services or using different methods of intervention delivery.

#### Trigger question for further exploration

**Q. Is the young person being adversely affected by specific local tensions, pressures or issues?**

If the answer is 'Yes', you should complete the further exploration questions to capture the details around the concerns identified. These concerns could relate to a range of factors.

#### Further exploration

**Please indicate if any of these apply, more than one option can be selected:**

##### **Ethnic/racial tensions:**

Select this if there is any evidence of commonly held feelings or demonstrable acts of prejudice or hostility locally towards ethnic groups which is adversely affecting the young person.

##### **Radicalisation pressures/influences:**

Select this if there is any evidence of radicalising influences on local young people, e.g. the presence of, or local recruitment to, extremist groups.

##### **Local offending patterns:**

Select this if there are particular types of offences prevalent amongst young people in the area, e.g. gang related problems in the area. Consider any current local trends in relation to specific offences or types of anti-social behaviour.

##### **Locally-specific substance use trends/culture:**

Select this if there are any current locally identifiable trends in relation to particular substances being used or available, or if specific methods of drug taking are identifiable.

##### **Other:**

Select this if none of the given options apply, but there are other problematic issues related to local tensions or pressures.

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

If any issues are identified, provide details.

### Sub-section flags:

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Living arrangements and environmental factors	
Flag for further action	e.g. tenancy is at risk, current accommodation is temporary – referral is required to housing services.
Add significant life event	e.g. period of homelessness, went missing for a period.
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. has stable accommodation in the family home, has a regular income.  Factors against desistance e.g. accommodation is unstable, offending linked to accommodation situation.

## 4.3.2 Parenting, family and relationships

This sub-section assesses the parenting, care and supervision provided to the young person, including any care history and children's services involvement. Positive and negative factors relating to family history and wider family networks are identified here as well as how the young person relates to others.

### 4.3.2.1 Parenting, care and supervision



**State who is involved in providing primary care and supervision for the young person and outline the key dynamics of these relationships.**

Provide details of who is providing care for the young person and outline the positive and negative aspects of the young person's relationship with their parents or carers taking account of factors such as:

- attachment and stability,
- communication,
- negatives, e.g. parents do not set appropriate times when the young person is expected to return home, if at all; and,
- positives, e.g. being able to confide in their parents or their parents are positive role models.

If the young person is in custody, note the situation as it was in the community prior to the young person entering custody. Consider whether the dynamics of the young person's relationships have changed either positively or negatively as a result of the young person being in custody. Is the young person maintaining contact with those that they lived with prior to entering custody? Is this likely to change on release?

### Trigger question for further exploration



#### **Do you have any concerns about the ability of the parents/carers to care for and supervise the young person appropriately?**

Record here any concerns that relate to behaviours or circumstances that impact on the parenting ability of the young person's parents/carers:

- to work and/or provide for the financial needs of the family,
- amount of time available to spend with the young person; and,
- capacity to provide emotional warmth.

If the answer is 'Yes', you should complete the further exploration questions to capture the details around the concerns identified:

### Further exploration

**Please indicate if any of these apply, more than one option can be selected:**

#### **Parent/carer alcohol use:**

Select this if there is any evidence of inappropriate levels of alcohol use that affects their ability to care for the young person. How long have they been using alcohol? Are they accessing treatment? Is their alcohol use impacting on the family finances and/or relationships?

#### **Other parent/carer substance use:**

Select this if there is any evidence of substance use that is affecting their ability to care for the young person. What substances are being used? How long have they been using substances? Are they accessing treatment? Is their substance use impacting on the family finances and/or relationships?

#### **Specific circumstantial stresses:**

Select this if there are any circumstances that are causing specific stress for the family. Specific stresses could include loss of a job or working long hours, birth of a new baby, a sibling with a serious health condition who needs additional care, disputes with neighbours, financial hardship, a family member already involved in the criminal or youth justice system or bereavement.

#### **Parent/carer health or mental health:**

Select this if the parent/carer is suffering from a physical or mental health condition that raises concerns about their ability to appropriately care for the young person. Are they accessing medication, treatment or services in relation to their condition? Is the young person acting as a carer for their parent/carer as a result of their condition? Some parents with a physical or mental health problem can manage the condition and continue to provide appropriate parenting whilst others may not be able to do so. Factors that may affect this are the nature or severity of the condition, access to medication and/or treatment.

#### **Caring for other family members:**

Select this if parents/carers have significant caring responsibilities for other people that is impacting their ability to care for the young person.

### Other:

Select this if there are any other issues concerning the impact on a parent's ability to care for the young person.

### Please give as much detail as possible here (evidence box):

If any issues are identified, provide full details.

## Practice Point

Where there are concerns about the ability of parents/carers to care for the young person, alongside concerns regarding the young person's safety and well-being, you should consider initiating a referral to children's services and ensure that your concerns are recorded in the Explanations and Conclusions (safety and well-being) section.

### Trigger question for further exploration

**Q. Do you have any concerns about behaviours/situations within the family which may impact on the young person's safety and well-being?**

Record here any behaviours or omissions by parents/carers that might have negative consequences or cause adverse outcomes for the young person in the near to medium term future. Any concerns leading to potential adverse outcomes identified here should be recorded in the Explanations and Conclusions (safety and well-being) section.

If the answer is 'Yes', you should complete the further exploration questions to capture the details around the concerns identified:

## Further exploration

Please indicate if any of these apply, more than one option can be selected:

### The young person's basic care needs not being met:

Select this if basic care needs including warmth, shelter, adequate food and rest, grooming, hygiene are not being provided.

### Parent/carer violence or abuse towards the young person:

Select this if there is any evidence of any violence or abuse towards the young person. This will trigger the 'known to have been a victim of parental/carer abuse' flag in the Core Record section.

## Definition – Categories of abuse

The Department of Education<sup>14</sup> defines the categories of abuse as:

### Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be

<sup>14</sup> [Working together to safeguard children - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. It is important to consider that some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child.

### **Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment),
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger,
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or,
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Other serious concerns regarding care or supervision:**

Select this if there are any concerns regarding any aspect of parenting that is having a negative impact on the young person, e.g. allowing the young person to view inappropriate content which is overly violent or sexual in nature, through films or the internet.

### **Witnessing domestic violence or abuse:**

Select this if there any evidence of domestic violence or abuse in the family that may have been witnessed by the young person. This will trigger the 'known to have witnessed domestic abuse' flag in the Core Record section.

**Other concerns:**

Select this if none of the given options apply, but there are other problematic issues related to behaviours or situations within the family.

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

If any issues are identified, provide details. Consideration should be given to whether additional services, multi-agency resources or additional assessments are required. If you have concerns about the child's immediate safety, local child protection procedures must be followed.

**Sub-section flags:**

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Parenting, care and supervision	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral for parenting assessment, referral for child in need assessment.
Add significant life event	e.g. instances of abuse or violence.
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. appropriately supervised by parents, physical and emotional needs are being fully met.  Factors against desistance e.g. experiencing abuse at home leads the young person to spend more time out of the home with friends, the young person is witnessing substance misuse at home and has begun to experiment with substances.

#### 4.3.2.2 Care history and children's services involvement

This captures information about the young person's history of care and any involvement with children's services.

**Q.** **Trigger question for further exploration**

**Please indicate whether any of the following apply to the young person:**

- Accommodated by voluntary agreement with parents (section 20 Children Act 1989)
- Identified Child in Need (section 17 Children Act 1989)
- Subject to a Care Order (section 31 Children Act 1989)
- Remand to Local Authority Accommodation (section 23(1) Children and Young person's Act 1969)
- Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) (Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012)

## Definition - Care status

The Department for Education<sup>15</sup> explains the changes to care status as a result of criminal justice decisions as follows:

If the child receives a custodial sentence, the responsibility of the local authority will depend on the child's care status:

- If the child is subject to a care order under section 31 of the 1989 Act, they remain looked-after and there is no change to their legal status and the local authority continues to be responsible for planning and reviewing the care plan.
- If the child was an accommodated child, they will lose their looked-after status whilst serving the custodial sentence as they are not being accommodated in a placement provided by the local authority. Children in these circumstances, will however, be entitled to consideration as a former looked-after child in custody. There is a duty on local authorities to visit such children who have ceased to be looked-after.
- If the child, had not been previously looked-after but became looked-after as a result of being remanded to local authority accommodation or to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) they cease to be looked-after on being sentenced to custody. Where, however, the child is aged 16+ and has been looked-after for thirteen weeks or more from the age of fourteen, including any period as a looked-after child as a result of the child being remanded, then the child will be a 'relevant child' and should be supported by local authority children's services as a 'care leaver'.
- If the young person is a 'relevant child' and is entitled to support and services as a care leaver, this status remains unchanged while in custody and the local authority that looked-after the young person retains responsibility for providing support during their time in custody and on release. Some young people, including young people who become looked-after as a result of being remanded, will acquire this status while they are in custody on attaining the age of 16: that is, those who have spent at least 13 weeks looked-after since the age of 14 and were subject to a care order or who were accommodated or remanded to local authority accommodation immediately prior to entering custody on sentence.

If the young person is 16 or 17 and either 'currently' or 'previously' a looked after child (for any period of time, including as a result of remand into custody), you should complete the following additional questions in the further exploration section:

### Further exploration

- **Is s/he an 'eligible child' (still in care and looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14)?**
- **If 'No', is s/he a 'relevant child' (has left care but was looked after for at least 13 weeks from the age of 14, and for some time while 16 or 17)?**

These questions clarify whether a young person is entitled to leaving care services provided by the local authority under the provisions of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. If so, the entitlement continues when he or she is remanded or sentenced to custody, therefore it is important to obtain accurate information from children's services about a young person's status.

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<sup>15</sup> [The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations: Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review \[Supplement\] – Looked after children and youth justice – GOV.UK](#)

#### Trigger question for further exploration

**Q. Has the young person ever had a child protection plan?**

#### Further exploration

Record here if the young person has either currently or previously had a child protection plan, the categories of abuse for which they were subject to in the plan (emotional, physical, sexual or neglect) and the start and end dates of the plan should be recorded.

**Q. Any children's services involvement with siblings?**

**Q. Details of care history and previous children's services involvement:**

Any relevant information regarding a young person's care history and the reason for their contact with these services should be recorded here. Include details of any children's services involvement with siblings and the reason for this, actions taken and the status of the young person's siblings. Record details of corporate parent, age first taken into care, periods of being in care and details of their contact with parents.

#### Sub-section flags:

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Care history and children's services involvement	
Flag for further action	e.g. submit request for further information from social worker.
Add significant life event	e.g. the young person taken into care for the first time.
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. foster placement provides safe and secure environment for the young person.  Factors against desistance e.g. the young person tends to offend more frequently when looked after in a residential unit, due to the influence of other residents.

#### 4.3.2.3 Family and wider networks

This section expands on the details given in the parenting, care and supervision sub-section regarding the relationships between parents/carers and the young person and considers all of the young person's other significant relationships. The significant positive relationships captured in this sub-section will be particularly important for young people in custody as maintaining and building on these relationships will be crucial to the young person's successful resettlement following release.

**Q. Outline the young person's significant relationships (both current and previous). Describe the positive and negative influence of these on the young person**

Give details of the range of significant relationships the young person has and the positive and negative aspects of these relationships. The relationships recorded should include friendships, associations, involvement with specific groups and any other relationships that are significant to the young person.

- **Individual**

Describe the relationship between the individual and the young person.

- **Relationship significance and influence on the young person**

State whether the relationship is positive or negative, e.g. are there issues with the contact? What is the impact of this relationship on the young person? Include reasons for relationship significance, rather than simply stating significant or not significant.

**Q. Trigger question for further exploration**

**Do you have any concerns about the young person's significant relationships?**

Concerns could relate to a range of factors:

- history or previous events,
- behaviour by an individual towards the young person,
- problematic behaviour by the young person towards an individual,
- an individual that has a key influence over the young person in terms of offending; and,
- an individual that will only be in the young person's life for a short time.

There might also be concerns about positive relationships ending which can be common in custody.

If the answer is 'Yes', you should complete the further exploration questions to capture the details around the concerns identified:

**Further exploration**

**Please indicate if any of these apply, more than one option can be selected:**

**Offending by family members:**

Select this if the young person has siblings, parents or wider family members that have previously offended and/or are currently involved in the criminal justice system.

**Violence/abusive behaviour in the wider family:**

Select this if violence or abusive behaviour is common within the young person's wider family setting. It could either be directly impacting on the young person's safety and well-being or reinforcing their own violent or abusive behaviour. Consider where there has been parental or wider family involvement in a domestic violence programme which would be an indicator of this behaviour.

**Experiences of loss/bereavement:**

Select this if there has been a death of a significant other or sudden loss of contact. Where loss of contact has occurred, is there a specific reason?

**Aggressive/violent behaviour by the young person towards family members:**

Select this if there is any evidence of aggression or violence towards any family members. Does this impact on a parent/carer's ability to care appropriately for the young person? Is a referral required to children's services in respect of the siblings?

**Abusive behaviour within intimate relationships:**

Select this if there is any evidence of emotional, physical or sexual abuse which may be occurring in a young person's intimate relationships. Intimate relationships could range from a serious long-term boyfriend or girlfriend, to a more casual partner or a one-off encounter.

**Frequent break-up of relationships:**

Select this if there are concerns about relationships frequently ending - is there a pattern in the reasons for these relationships coming to an end?

**Loss of contact with people significant to the young person:**

Select this if there are extended periods where the young person has little or no contact with significant people in their life. Consider what impact this has on the young person? This is particularly relevant for a young person entering custody and on release.

**Any significant caring responsibilities for siblings, parents or others:**

Select this if the young person has caring responsibilities for others that have an impact on their everyday life or are more than might typically be expected of someone of the young person's age. This does not include occasional babysitting for younger siblings but would include daily care of siblings that interfered with the young person's education. Consider whether the young person is caring for their partner's children. Details of the young person as a parent can be recorded here and will be covered in more detail in the young person as a parent sub-section.

**Violence/abuse towards the young person from others:**

Select this if there is any evidence of violence or abuse towards the young person including as a result of gang affiliation or child sexual exploitation. Consider if the young person is a victim of bullying including cyber bullying from others. Are there any issues of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect?

**Other:**

Select this if none of the given options apply, but there are other problematic issues related to the young person's significant relationships.

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

If any issues are identified, provide details.

**Trigger question for further exploration**

**Outline the key networks/groups in the young person's life (both current and previous). Describe the positive and negative influence of these on the young person.**

Identify any networks or groups the young person is or has been associating with and their significance and influence on the young person. It is important to consider groups that have a positive influence on the young person as well as any that are having a negative impact.

Consider the differences in the influence of particular groups or individuals at specific times or in specific circumstances:

- Is there a significant difference between who the young person associates with during the week and at the weekends?
- What impact do these associates or activities have on their behaviour?
- Does the young person have a group of friends or role models who are not involved in offending? Having some law-abiding friends can be a significant factor in reducing offending, even where a young person may continue to associate with pro-criminal peers. Are there times when pro-social friends or groups seem to have more influence on the young person than pro-criminal friends? An absence of non-criminal friends should be a significant cause for concern.
- Are there clubs or team activities that the young person is involved in that are positively influencing them?
- Is the young person influenced by radical groups?

## Definition – Radicalisation Indicators

**The Home Office<sup>16</sup> supplies the following indicators that a young person could become radicalised:**

**Example indicators that an individual is engaged with an extremist group, cause or ideology include:**

- spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists,
- changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group,
- their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause,
- loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause,
- possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause, e.g. the swastika for far right groups; and,
- attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology; or communications with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology.

**Example indicators that an individual has an intention to use violence or other illegal means include:**

- clearly identifying another group as threatening what they stand for and blaming that group for all social or political ills,

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<sup>16</sup> [Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism – GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protecting-vulnerable-people-from-being-drawn-into-terrorism)

- using insulting or derogatory names or labels for another group,
- speaking about the imminence of harm from the other group and the importance of action now,
- expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology; and,
- condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others; or plotting or conspiring with others.

**Example indicators that an individual is capable of contributing directly or indirectly to an act of terrorism include:**

- having a history of violence,
- being criminally versatile and using criminal networks to support extremist goals,
- having occupational skills that can enable acts of terrorism such as civil engineering, pharmacology or construction; and,
- having technical expertise that can be deployed, e.g. IT skills, knowledge of chemicals, military training or survival skills.

Some young people may display many of these characteristics but this does not mean they definitely at risk of radicalisation.



### **Gang associations**

For each network or group that is identified, determine whether or not it is suspected of having a gang association. A gang can be defined in a number of different ways and local teams may have a locally agreed definition.

### **Definition - Gang**

#### **Legal definition used for gang injunctions (Policing and Crime Act 2009<sup>17</sup>):**

“Violence or a threat of violence which occurs in the course of, or is otherwise related to, the activities of a group that:

- a) consists of at least 3 people;
- b) uses a name, emblem or colour or has any other characteristic that enables its members to be identified by others as a group; and
- c) is associated with a particular area.”

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<sup>17</sup> [Statutory Guidance: Injunctions to Prevent Gang-Related Violence – GOV.UK](#)

### **Metropolitan Police definition<sup>18</sup>:**

A gang is usually considered to be a group of people who spend time in public places that:

- see themselves (and are seen by others) as a noticeable group, and
- engage in a range of criminal activity and violence.
- They may also have any or all of the following features:
  - identify with or lay a claim over territory; and,
  - are in conflict with other, similar gangs.

However, if the majority of offending is of a lower non-violent level then they would be considered a peer group not a gang.

If any networks or groups have been identified as 'Yes' for gang associations you will need to complete the further exploration questions:

### **Further exploration**

Where the network or group has current or previous gang associations, give as much detail as possible:

- name of gang,
- types of activities,
- extent of the young person's involvement,
- when and where the gang operates,
- key features of the gang's behaviours,
- specific influences on the young person: and,
- whether or not the young person's family are involved in gang activity.

It is important to consider not only drug-related, violent or acquisitive behaviours in relation to gang association but also any sexual elements to the gang. Is there evidence of links to sexual exploitation, perhaps as the perpetrators of exploitation? Is there sexual activity within the gang? Is the gang involved in child sexual exploitation? Is there any evidence of sexual violence? Consider any known gang initiation rituals and whether the young person could be considered a victim of the gang as a result of the activities and/or coercion within the gang. Any affiliation to extreme groups should be recorded, with details, if known.

If you suspect that a young person is involved with a gang but don't have clear evidence, note the reasons for any concern and be clear about the basis for the opinion and the strength of the information available. Other agencies may be able to help inform knowledge around gang involvement, such as community safety teams or local voluntary community support projects. Secure estate practitioners who receive gang data from security teams should use this information to inform the assessment.

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<sup>18</sup> [http://safe.met.police.uk/gangs\\_and\\_violence/get\\_the\\_facts.html](http://safe.met.police.uk/gangs_and_violence/get_the_facts.html)

Gang-involved young people – Custody and Beyond, a practitioners guide may be a useful reference point for practitioners<sup>19</sup>.

## Practice Point

Completion of this information by YOT practitioners is particularly important for staff working in the YJB Placement Service and secure establishments, as they rely on information about community-based gang associations and gang-related behaviours to effectively place, safeguard and work with young people in custody.

### Sub-section flags:

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Family and wider networks	
Flag for further action	e.g. consider need for additional gang assessment.
Add significant life event	e.g. death of parent, breakdown of significant relationship, start or end of involvement with group or gang.
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. has some important, positive age-appropriate friendships. Factors against desistance e.g. young person has some gang affiliations.

#### 4.3.2.4 How the young person relates to others?



#### **Outline the range of the young person's relationships and key features of the way s/he relates to others**

Provide a general overview of how the young person relates to others, considering both strengths and difficulties.

- **Strengths**

Has a good range of age-appropriate friendships, age-appropriate level of independence from family, able to relate to adults.

- **Difficulties**

Isolated, lack of friendships, lack of age-appropriate relationships, over-dependence, volatility.

#### Trigger question for further exploration



#### **Is there any evidence of significant problems in the way the young person relates to others?**

If the answer is 'Yes', you should complete the further exploration questions to capture the details around the concerns identified:

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/Gang-involved-young-people-custody-and-beyond-a-practitioners-guide.pdf>

## Further exploration

Please indicate if any of these apply, more than one option can be selected:

### Susceptible to manipulation/exploitation:

Select this if there is evidence of manipulation/exploitation from others. This can take a variety of forms, including a young person being manipulated into involvement with offending. Consider whether the young person is being manipulated and/or exploited to act as a perpetrator of sexual exploitation or to recruit other young people for exploitation. Issues of the young person being a victim of sexual exploitation and trafficking are dealt with by the following question on sexual exploitation.

### Gives in easily to pressure from others:

Select this if there is a lack of assertiveness or resilience in the young person, e.g. fear of particular people, previous experiences of intimidation, not thinking or not capable of thinking about other ways of dealing with such situations, gang association. The young person could be unable to justify refusal to others and/or does not understand the motives or intentions of others. It is critical to consider whether this is an indicator of communication, language or social interaction difficulties which can be explored further in the young person's development section.

### Fear/mistrust of others:

Select this if the young person has a general mistrust of a range of different people including peers, adults, family and professionals that is not just limited to those who they have a problem with. The young person may tend to be suspicious of people's motives and inclined to believe the worst about others.

### Inappropriate social presentation:

Select this if the young person's presentation is socially inappropriate in the context of their age, cultural background and situation.

### Definition - Inappropriate self-presentation

Examples of inappropriate self-presentation could include:

- being excessively friendly with someone they have never met before,
- relating to staff or teachers in the same way as to friends,
- sexually provocative behaviour in a public place,
- presenting as much older or younger than their age in conversation, manner and body language; and,
- being too forthcoming with confidential or personal information when it would cause a problem or it has not been asked for.

### Over-assertive/controlling:

Select this if the young person is particularly aggressive or overly confident when dealing with others. Do they try and exercise authority, direct or dominate influence over others? Is there any evidence to suggest the young person may be a perpetrator of exploitation or engaged in exploitative activity?

**Victim of bullying:**

Select this if the young person is a victim of bullying in any setting including cyber bullying. Is the bullying from other young people where the young person lives? Is it bullying specific to school, where the young person maybe working or in custody?

**Other:**

Select this if none of the given options apply, but there are other concerns linked to how the young person relates to others.

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

If any issues are identified, provide details.

**Q Trigger question for further exploration****Is the young person at risk of sexual exploitation?**

This question is referring to the young person as a **victim** of sexual exploitation, not as the perpetrator which is covered by earlier questions.

**Definition - Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

The Office of the Children's Commissioner<sup>20</sup> defines the sexual exploitation of children and young people under-18 as that which:

'involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability'

The following are typical vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse:

- living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality),
- history of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'- based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect),
- recent bereavement or loss,
- gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang associated CSE only),

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<sup>20</sup> [If it's not better, it's not the end: appendices - The Children's Commissioner for England](#)

- attending school with young people who are sexually exploited,
- learning disabilities,
- unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families,
- friends with young people who are sexually exploited,
- homeless,
- lacking friends from the same age group,
- living in a gang neighbourhood,
- living in residential care,
- living in a hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or foyer,
- low self-esteem or self-confidence: and,
- young carer.

The following signs and behaviour are generally seen in children who are already being sexually exploited:

- missing from home or care,
- physical injuries,
- drug or alcohol misuse,
- involvement in offending,
- repeat sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations,
- absent from school,
- change in physical appearance,
- evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites,
- estranged from their family,
- receipt of gifts from unknown sources,
- recruiting others into exploitative situations,
- poor mental health,
- self-harm; and,
- thoughts of or attempts at suicide.

Whilst young people will display many of these indicators, it does not necessarily mean that they are being exploited.

If there is an identified risk that the young person is at risk of sexual exploitation you should complete the further exploration questions. Sexual exploitation concerns should be recorded in the Explanations and Conclusions (safety and well-being) section.

### Further exploration

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

Consider:

- the identified risk factors,
- who is the young person at risk from,
- whether the young person has been illegally 'trafficked' into the country or is at risk of 'trafficking': and
- what actions are needed to support the young person (these will need to be included in the Our Intervention Plan and/or additional external actions and controls in the Pathways and Planning section).

#### Sub-section flags:

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
How the young person relates to others	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral to local authority children's social care and the police (in the case of suspected sexual exploitation), as per local safeguarding procedures.
Add significant life event	e.g. incidents of bullying started at school
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. can assert themselves appropriately to peers and has resisted offending previously.  Factors against desistance e.g. susceptible to pressure from pro-criminal peers.

### 4.3.3 Young person's development

This sub-section covers an assessment of a wide range of issues affecting a young person's development which have been grouped here into two main areas:

1. health
2. lifestyle, identity and behaviour.

### 4.3.3.1 Health

The health sub-section covers three main health screening areas that are aligned with the Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool (CHAT)<sup>21</sup> and should be completed with all young people:

1. physical health and development
2. speech, language, communication and neuro-disability
3. emotional development and mental health.

CHAT: YOS is a set of specialist assessments which assess the health and health-related needs of children and young people in contact with any part of the youth justice system. The screening questions in AssetPlus are a subset of the full CHAT: YOS and are intended to be used as a set of screening questions by YOT staff. A positive answer to any of the screening questions should be followed up with additional information in the 'further exploration' evidence box at the end of the sub-section and a referral to a specialist health worker for completion of CHAT: YOS should also be made. Where CHAT: YOS is unavailable an alternative comparable specialist assessment should be used. It is recommended by the Offender Health Research Network that a full CHAT: YOS assessment should always be completed in all cases within specified timelines as there are high levels of two or more health disorders or illnesses occurring in the same person in this group of children and young people.

## Research

Research by the Office of the Children's Commissioner<sup>22</sup> suggests that young people in contact with the youth justice system have high levels of health needs that are often unmet due to lack of early screening and identification.

The health screening questions should not be used with the young person as presented in the screening tool, however responses should be based on observations of the young person in interviews, what they disclose during interview and on any information provided by parents/carers or professionals involved in the care of the young person. You should be aware that health needs will vary according to age and gender.

#### 4.3.3.1.1 Physical health and development

Physical health problems may have an adverse impact on many other aspects of a young person's life, including educational and school experiences, peer group interactions, self-presentation and self-esteem. Physical health issues are key for placement decisions if the young person is entering custody.



#### Trigger questions for further exploration

**Please indicate whether the following apply to the young person:**

- Has a diagnosed physical health condition? E.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy

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<sup>21</sup> [Offender Health Research Network](#)

<sup>22</sup> [If it's not better, it's not the end: appendices - The Children's Commissioner for England](#)

- Experiencing current physical health symptoms? E.g. breathing problems, chest pains, seizures
- Currently taking prescribed medication for a physical illness?
- Has any current contact with GP or hospitals in relation to a major physical illness?
- Is pregnant or could be pregnant?

This question is only displayed if the young person is female. If 'Yes' is selected this will default the young person's parental status to 'parent to be'. If you or the young person are unsure whether the young person may be pregnant, it may be appropriate to make a referral to the YOT health worker who can advise them.

- Health is being put at risk through their own behaviour?

If 'Yes' is the answer to any of the questions, the further exploration questions must be completed. A 'Yes' answer to any of the questions will trigger the 'Identified physical health concerns or disability' flag in the Core Record (Alerts and flags) section.

## Further exploration

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

For example:

- type of health condition and length of diagnosis,
- medication prescribed and whether the young person is taking their medication,
- treatment received or services involved including contact details,
- how the condition affects the young person on a day to day basis and any impact that this may have on the young person's ability to engage; and,
- young person putting their own health at risk, e.g. unsafe sexual activity.



**Note any positives, and/or any other concerns that require further investigation, referral or action**

Record any other issues relating to the young person's general health and/or physical development which could include:

- positives, e.g. young person is trying to keep fit, wants to give up smoking, is registered with health services,
- problems with lack of access to or lack of registration with health services,
- a concern expressed by the parent/carer or the young person seems to be worried about health issues,
- a concern expressed by professional, e.g. teachers; and,
- concerns over physical maturity or development.

Teams, local areas and establishments will need to set their own thresholds for deciding on what additional further action is required. The further action required could be another assessment or referral to a specialist such as paediatric health services.

**Sub-section flags:**

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Physical health and development	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral to paediatric health specialist for assessment.
Add significant life event	e.g. the onset of epilepsy.
Add desistance factors	<p>Factors for desistance e.g. is physically healthy and takes regular exercise through membership of a sports club or team.</p> <p>Factors against desistance e.g. young person refuses to take medication and self-medicates using cannabis.</p>

**4.3.3.1.2 Speech, language, communication and neuro-disability**

The speech, language, communication and neuro-disability sub-section in AssetPlus is based on the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists’ (RCSLT) screening tool but has been expanded to include other elements of neuro-disability in line with the CHAT (Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool) neuro-disability section.

The screening questions in this sub-section should be completed with all young people. The screening questions should not be used with the young person as presented in the screening tool but responses should be based on observations of the young person in interviews, what they disclose during interview and on any information provided by parents/carers or professionals involved in the care of the young person.

**Research**

Research by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists<sup>23</sup> shows that a significant proportion of young people who offend have difficulties with speech, language and communication. “Speech, language and communication needs have a profound impact on many areas of a child’s developments and affect a child’s future life chances if left unsupported and untreated. Areas of impact include:

- educational attainment and employability,
- behavioural issues, social skills and esteem,
- poor mental health and access to healthcare services; and,

<sup>23</sup> [House of Commons - Justice Committee: Written evidence from the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists](#)

- offending.”

The Offender Health Research Network<sup>24</sup> has also found that young people who offend have higher rates of learning disability, traumatic brain injury and autistic spectrum disorders than their peers.

A review by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner<sup>25</sup> raised concerns about the number of young people with missed neuro-disability and mental health needs within the secure estate. Identification of needs is essential to ensure interventions including offence reduction work are tailored to the young person’s ability, for example adapting language or emphasis on behavioural interventions and visual cues or reminders.



**Please indicate whether the following apply to the young person:**

**Trigger questions for further exploration**

**Speaking:**

- Have difficulty thinking of the words they want to say? E.g. often answers with ‘don’t know’, ‘can’t remember’ or ‘it’s on the tip of my tongue’.
- Only use very simple vocabulary? E.g. uses simple short sentences or uses non-specific or empty words, for example ‘some’, ‘things’ or words such as ‘thingy’ that are typical of a much younger child.
- Have difficulties explaining things? E.g. do they leave out important details or give information out of sequence?
- Is their speech difficult to understand? E.g. do they stammer or stutter or find it hard to say long words? Do they mispronounce words frequently or mumble?

**Understanding spoken language:**

- Have difficulty remembering things people say? E.g. people’s names or words you have explained to them.
- Have difficulty following spoken instructions or only follow part of them?
- Have difficulty understanding the meaning of words?

**Non-verbal:**

- Have difficulty using non-verbal communication? E.g. unusual levels of eye contact, body language or facial expressions
- Have difficulties showing emotions? E.g. do they smile or laugh at the right times?

**Social skills difficulties, including Autistic Spectrum Disorders:**

- Have difficulties initiating and/or maintaining friendships?

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<sup>24</sup> [CHAT:YOS manual – Offender Health Research Network](#)

<sup>25</sup> [Nobody made the connection: The prevalence of neurodisability in young people who offend - The Children’s Commissioner for England](#)

- Is socially awkward and/or inappropriate? E.g. difficulty using the appropriate personal space, initiating and maintaining conversation on a topic or obsessive about a particular topic
- Appear frustrated or anxious when there is no obvious cause?
- Have difficulty thinking about the thoughts or feelings of others?
- Has been diagnosed with social communication difficulties? E.g. Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Pervasive Development Disorder, Semantic Pragmatic Disorder
- Has a professional or family member expressed concerns about social communication skills?

## Practice Point

Young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder may present with problems in the following areas:

### Communication

- speaks in a monotonous or unusual voice,
- shows little interest in their listener's experiences,
- difficulties with maintaining conversation,
- takes things literally and fails to understand implied meanings, jokes or sarcasm; and,
- talks about the same thing, over and over.

### Social interaction

- intense or absent eye contact,
- limited range of facial expressions or expressions do not match what they are saying,
- has a limited understanding of the different types of relationships,
- socially awkward or inappropriate; and,
- invades the personal space of others.

### Restricted interests or routines and sensory sensitivity

- more difficulty than other young people with changes to their routine,
- unaware or uninterested in peer appropriate hobbies and interests,
- has interests that are either obsessive, time consuming, unusual or very narrow in range; and,
- has an unusual or excessive reaction to sensory stimuli, e.g. unable to tolerate loud noises or is sensitive to certain fabrics touching them.

### Education needs and Learning Disability:

- Have problems with reading or writing?
- Have difficulties with time concepts? E.g. telling the time, using a calendar, understanding date and time concepts such as 'day after tomorrow'?
- Needs support in daily living skills? E.g. washing, getting ready for school or college, cooking?
- Have any Special Educational Needs (SEN) been identified?

### Definition – Special Education Needs (SEN)

The Department for Education<sup>26</sup> defines special educational needs (SEN) that affect a child's ability to learn as including their:

- behaviour or ability to socialise, e.g. not being able to make friends,
- reading and writing, e.g. they have dyslexia,
- ability to understand things,
- concentration levels, e.g. they have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: and,
- physical needs or impairments.

When parents, the early education setting, or the school ask the local authority to carry out a statutory assessment for SEN, the local authority will have 6 weeks to decide whether to do so.

They will consider very carefully the child's progress at school and the guidance in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice<sup>27</sup>. They will also listen to parent's views and the views of the school about the child's special educational needs, including any special help they have already given to a child.

A statement of educational need will describe all the child's special educational needs and the special help the child should receive. The local authority will usually make a statement if they decide that all the special help the child needs cannot be provided from within the school's resources. These resources could include money, staff time and special equipment, the application of which is detailed in parts 3 to 6 of the statement.

Under the SEND code of practice YOTs in England have stopped using the Statement of SEN and Learning Difficulty Assessment options because the Education, Health and Care Plan has been introduced. YOTs in Wales should continue to use the Statement of SEN, Learning Difficulty Assessment or Other options as appropriate.

If 'Yes' is answered to this question, the further exploration question specific to Special Educational Needs must be completed:

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<sup>26</sup> [Children with special educational needs \(SEN\) - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>27</sup> [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

## Further exploration

### Identified SEN

Provide details of any special educational needs.

### Responses to identified SEN

Record the response that is in place in relation to the identified SEN. The response could include an informal local response which could be a number of actions agreed locally but which don't meet the formal definition of other statutory responses, e.g. Speech and Language Therapist Report or on School Action Plus register.

- Has a professional or family member expressed concerns about learning needs? E.g. do they believe that learning needs are not being appropriately addressed or that there could be undiagnosed issues?

Many young people who offend will have educational needs secondary to learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties. They may have a learning disability or a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia, which can be easily misidentified. It is important to identify these difficulties as they can act as barriers to achievement and engagement. Early identification can ensure that the appropriate support can be accessed and any interventions are appropriately adapted.

### Traumatic Brain Injury

Head injury that caused them to be knocked out, dazed or confused?

## Definition – Traumatic Brain Injury

An acquired brain injury is an injury to the brain that has happened AFTER a period of normal post birth development. The biggest group of acquired brain injuries are Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) - the trauma being an assault, fall or incidents such as road accidents.

Following a traumatic brain injury, children will commonly experience difficulties in the following areas:

### Thinking

- taking longer to process information,
- difficulties concentrating,
- difficulties focussing attention - being easily distracted,
- forgetfulness - particularly in relation to new information and recent events,
- following verbal instructions; and,
- organising and planning.

### Emotions

- depression,

- anxiety,
- fearful; and,
- obsessive.

### **Behaviours**

- acting on impulse - without thinking through the consequences,
- immaturity,
- aggression; and,
- lack of empathy.

Young people identified with mild to moderate brain injury will need support from everyone working in the youth justice system.

If 'Yes' is the answer to any of the questions, the further exploration question must be completed. A 'Yes' answer to any of the questions will trigger the Speech, Language, Communication and Neuro-disability concerns flag in the Core Record (alerts and flags) section.

### **Further exploration**

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

Consider:

- how any difficulties have been identified,
- when any diagnosis was made: and,
- any measures that are in place to address any issues identified.

If the young person has a SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan this could be summarised here and should be attached to the sub-section.

A 'Yes' or 'Sometimes' answer to any of the screening questions should result in a referral being made to a specialist health worker to complete CHAT: YOS or another comparable assessment. Further action such as a referral to a speech and language therapist may be required.

### **Practice Point**

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists<sup>28</sup> has produced a training package called 'The Box' specifically to help professionals working in the justice system to identify and confidently address communication difficulties.

Additional resources for youth justice have been published by The Communication Trust<sup>29</sup> and information published by the British Dyslexia Association<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> [The Box Training for the Criminal Justice Sector – Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists](#)

### Sub-section flags:

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Speech, language, communication and neuro-disability	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral to speech and language therapist.
Add significant life event	e.g. serious accident resulting in brain trauma or injury.
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. young person is able to articulate well and fully understand others  Factors against desistance e.g. the young person does not understand appropriate social boundaries and often stares at people leading to increased physical conflict with peers.

#### 4.3.3.1.3 Emotional development and mental health

The following three factors can provide a useful framework for understanding the young person's emotional development and mental health needs within the context of their particular situation:

##### 1. Events/circumstances

All young people experience stressful events at some time, e.g. peer pressure, puberty, changing from primary to secondary education. However, some events or circumstances only affect particular individuals, e.g. family breakdown, illness, bereavement, abuse, victim of an offence. A young person facing a cluster of stressful events is more likely to have difficulties in managing the resulting emotions. Events which are unpredictable and that the young person may feel they have no control over are likely to be particularly stressful.

##### 2. Coping abilities

The young person's age, gender and maturity will all affect the range and type of coping strategies used. Some common approaches include trying to remove or reduce the cause of stress, trying to change the emotions associated with a problem and denying the existence of a problem. Young people will vary in the way that they perceive stressful situations and those who have a realistic understanding of a difficult situation will be better placed to cope with any ongoing stress. Having some sense of control will help the young person to feel that they can cope.

##### 3. Support networks

Identify the help and support that is available to the young person.

Focusing on the connections and interactions between these three factors will help to ensure that the assessment of the young person's emotional and mental health is rooted in the context of their ongoing life experiences.

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/favicon.ico>

<sup>30</sup> [British Dyslexia Association](#)

### Trigger questions for further exploration



**Please indicate whether the following apply to the young person:**

- Any formal diagnosed mental health condition?
- Any contact with mental health services?
- Any prescribed medication for mental health problems?

If the answer to any of these three questions is 'Yes', provide as much detail as possible in the further exploration evidence box. If there has been a formal diagnosis, please specify the nature of the illness, the particular symptoms that the young person experiences and details about any medication or treatment. If there has been any other current or previous referrals to mental health services, please indicate when these occurred and the reasons for them. Where mental health services are currently involved, provide details of the organisation, worker and contact details. The Core Record (contact with services) sub-section should also be updated. If the information is unavailable, indicate this in the evidence box.

- Has current feelings of sadness, anxiety, stress or irritability?

Consider if the young person has psychological difficulties such as obsessions, a fear or phobia, difficulties with sleeping or eating or low self-esteem. Where the young person has a persistent and pervasive problem in this area rather than the more typical adolescent experience where self-esteem may vary at different times and in different contexts. Indicators of low self-esteem in young people may include: social isolation, lack of social acceptance by peers, a belief that nobody understands or respects them, dissatisfaction with physical appearance or a sense of failure about relationships or academic achievement.

- Feels constantly in a low mood?

These can include circumstances affecting the young person directly and/or problems faced by family members, carers, or friends which have an impact on the young person.

- Feels hopeless about the future?

This question looks at the impact of the young person's concerns about the future on their emotional well-being. Select 'Yes' if the young person has thoughts and feelings that have a persistent and powerful impact on their everyday life.

- Has flashbacks of past traumatic events?

Traumatic events could include events affecting the young person directly and/or problems faced by family members, carers, or friends that have an impact on them. Some of the events will have been identified in earlier sections, e.g. abuse or loss. The focus here is not on the events themselves but on whether they continue to have a persistent and powerful impact on the young person's everyday thoughts and emotions. Flashbacks may indicate undiagnosed emotional or mental health issues.

- Experiencing unusual thoughts?
- Sees or hears things that other people cannot?
- Has longstanding symptoms of over-activity, inattention and impulsivity in multiple settings?
- Has history of deliberate self-harm?
- Has previously attempted suicide?

- Has current thoughts to self-harm or a wish to commit suicide?

There should be tangible information or evidence that indicates any current thoughts of self-harm or a wish to commit suicide such as a comment made by the young person or their parent/carer, information from a GP or information from a case record. Try to verify information given by young people in self-reporting about self-harm and suicide with other sources, wherever possible. Where current thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide are identified, ensure that these are reflected in the Explanations and Conclusions (safety and well-being) section.

- Looks depressed or is behaving unusually?
- Risks or concerns raised by others (family or professionals) about the young person's mental health.

There could be issues raised by others that denote potential emotional and/or mental health difficulties for the young person.

If 'Yes' is the answer to any of the above questions, the further exploration question must be completed. A 'Yes' answer to any of the questions will trigger the 'Mental health concerns' flag in the Core Record (Alerts and flags) section.

## Further exploration

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

Consider:

- the events or circumstances,
- nature of emotions arising, e.g. anger, grief, fear; and,
- impact on the young person's life.

Mental health can be influenced by issues such as personal relationships and social environment as well as medical factors.

A 'Yes' answer to any of the screening questions should result in a referral being made to a specialist health worker to complete CHAT: YOS or another comparable assessment.

## Practice Point

If, on further analysis, it is considered that the young person has a mental health issue consider the extent to which this is masking any drug or alcohol addiction issues and possibly any dual diagnosis that has not yet been recognised or diagnosed.

The MindEd online portal provides free information and e-learning on identifying and responding to young people's mental health needs. The portal has been developed by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> [MindEd e-portal | RCPCH](#)

### Sub-section flags:

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Emotional development and mental health	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral to CAMHS for assessment.
Add significant life event	e.g. attempted to take own life.
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. young person is engaging with a formal mental health service.  Factors against desistance e.g. the young person is not currently taking their prescribed medication.

### 4.3.3.2 Lifestyle, identity and behaviour

This sub-section looks at how a young person spends their time, what activities they are involved in, who they associate with and key characteristics of their thinking and behaviour.

This sub-section covers:

- features of lifestyle,
- substance misuse,
- young person as a parent,
- young person's self-identity; and,
- thinking and behaviour.

#### 4.3.3.2.1 Features of lifestyle



##### **Outline any positive aspects of how the young person spends their time**

Provide details on how the young person spends their time positively, e.g. participation in sports, clubs, helping with family business, faith groups.

##### **Trigger question for further exploration**



##### **Do you have any concerns about how the young person spends their time and/or other addictive behaviours?**

If there are concerns about how the young person is spending their time the further exploration questions must be completed. The further exploration questions cover other aspects of the young person's lifestyle and behaviour that may be of concern.

## Further exploration

**Please indicate if any of these apply, more than one option can be selected:**

### **Gambling:**

Select this if the young person is involved with any form of gambling, e.g. internet based, fruit machines, cards. If there is evidence of gambling, further questions specific to gambling will need to be completed, consider:

- Any negative impact on the young person's finances, relationships, own safety
- Does the thought of not doing it make them worried, angry or depressed?
- Evidence of the young person chasing losses or needing to bet more and more money?
- Evidence of situations where the young person has lied to people important to them about how much they gamble?

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

Consider:

- the main form of gambling,
- where they gamble,
- who they gamble with or alongside,
- how they fund their gambling,
- amounts of money involved,
- whether young person sees it as a problem; and,
- the availability and convenience of gambling opportunities.

### **Other Behaviours:**

#### **Inappropriate use of technology:**

Select this if there is any evidence of technology being used inappropriately. This could include cyber-bullying, internet addiction, accessing pornographic or excessively violent material, 'sexting', being immersed in electronic media or excessive use of technology such that the young person loses track of time or neglects to eat or sleep

#### **Risk-based games:**

Select this if there is evidence that the young person takes risks during games or play. Risks could include playing 'chicken' on main roads or railways lines, 'tombstoning' or 'planking' where the young person is putting themselves at the risk of significant harm in payoff for the excitement.

#### **Non-constructive use of time:**

Select this if the young person pursuing activities that have no benefit to them or are detrimental.

#### **Other:**

Select this if there are any other concerns relating to how the young person spends their time.

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

Describe what the young person does, who with, where, when, any injuries or adverse outcomes experienced by the young person, their friends or others.

**Sub-section flags:**

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Features of lifestyle	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral for debt management advice.
Add significant life event	e.g. hospitalised after being hit by car whilst playing 'chicken'.
Add desistance factors	<p>Factors for desistance e.g. young person is engaged with sporting activities and has a positive role model in their coach.</p> <p>Factors against desistance e.g. young person is regularly spending all of their money on gambling in local takeaways.</p>

#### 4.3.3.2.2 Substance misuse

The use of substances may have an adverse impact on many aspects of a young person's life including their offending/behaviour, health, family relationships, and educational and work experiences. This sub-section covers the use and misuse of alcohol, illicit drugs, solvents, novel psychoactive substances (legal highs) and the misuse of prescribed medications.

[Trigger question for further exploration](#)



**Is there any evidence of substance misuse?**

If there is any evidence of substance misuse, currently or previously, the further exploration questions must be completed. You should also refer to the parent/carer's self-assessment for views on their concerns of their child's alcohol or substance use.

### Further exploration

If there is evidence of substance use, complete the table to indicate which substance(s) the young person has used, currently or previously, or is suspected of using and what was their age at first use, if known.

**Please select from the following list substances which the young person is known/suspected to have used:**

**Substance Type:**

Tobacco	Ketamine	Cocaine
Alcohol	Aerosols/Solvents	Crack

Solvents	Mephedrone	Heroin
Cannabis	Legal Highs	Methadone
Ecstasy	Magic Mushrooms	Tranquilisers
Amphetamines	LSD	Steroids
MDMA/Ecstasy	Poppers	Other (please specify)

If alcohol has been identified as a substance being used then this will trigger some further exploration questions specifically regarding alcohol usage. If any other substance is identified this will trigger some further exploration questions regarding drug usage.

**Please provide details including when used, who with, cost and how funded:**

Consider whether there are links between substance misuse and offending, e.g. offending under the influence, offending to obtain money for substances and/or whether the young person is involved in possession or supply. Is there a link to the young person's income and does this raise any exploitation issues related to obtaining substances?

Record contextual information on the substances identified to describe the young person's patterns of substance use. For any substance used in the last month, record the amount and frequency used here.

**What needs/goals is the young person trying to achieve through using substances?**

Consider the needs or goals of the young person in relation to their substance misuse, e.g. to block out memories, to get a buzz, to fit in with peers or to achieve a sense of belonging. Refer to and note any contradictions with information from the young person's self-assessment. Are there particular times when usage decreases or increases?

**Definition – Good Lives Model**

The Good Lives Model<sup>32</sup> works on the premise that people try to obtain **Primary Human Goods** such as a sense of belonging or gaining knowledge or skills through their actions. They also pursue **Secondary Goals**, such as friendships or work, as means to achieve these primary goods. However, if they find it difficult to do so they may try to obtain them through offending or anti-social behaviour.

Look at patterns of use over time and consider whether there are any particular times when the pattern of substance use changes (either changes in type of substances used or increases or decreases in amounts and frequencies). Has the young person previously experienced withdrawal symptoms?

**Practice Point**

If they are currently experiencing withdrawal symptoms you must refer to an appropriate health specialist or substance misuse worker immediately.

Are they using illegal substances or legal highs every day or currently intoxicated?

<sup>32</sup> [The Good Lives Model of Offender Rehabilitation - Information](#)

## Practice Point

If on further analysis it is considered that the young person has a drug or alcohol addiction consider the extent to which this is masking any mental health issues and possibly any dual diagnosis that has yet to be recognised or diagnosed.

### Alcohol (where usage identified above):

These screening questions should be completed in relation to all young people identified or suspected of using alcohol based on your observations of them, information provided by them, their parents/carers or other professionals.

### Definition - AUDIT

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) was developed by the World Health Organization<sup>33</sup> (WHO) as a “simple method of screening for excessive drinking and to assist in brief assessment”. The set of questions ask about the frequency and amount of drinking, feelings about it, and impact on others.

To complete AUDIT each question has a set of responses to choose from, and each response has a score ranging from 0 to 4. You enter the score corresponding to the young person’s response into the box beside each question. All the response scores should then be added. A high score in AUDIT indicates a greater likelihood of hazardous and harmful drinking.

The ‘standard drink’ in AUDIT can be defined as follows: half pint of ordinary strength beer/lager/cider; 1 small glass of wine; 1 single measure of spirits; 1 small glass of sherry; 1 single measure of aperitifs.

Question	Answer and related score
1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Score as follows: Never = 0 Monthly or less = 1 2-4 times a month = 2 2-3 times a week = 3 4 or more times a week = 4  If the answer is Never: skip to questions 9 and 10
2. How many standard drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?	Score as follows: 1 - 2 = 0 3 - 4 = 1 5 - 6 = 2 7 - 9 = 3 10 or more = 4
3. How often do you have 6 or more standard drinks on one occasion?	Score as follows: Never = 0 Less than monthly = 1 Monthly = 2 Weekly = 3 Daily or almost daily = 4

<sup>33</sup> [Alcohol – World Health Organization](#)

4. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you have started?	Score as follows: Never = 0 Less than monthly = 1 Monthly = 2 Weekly = 3 Daily or almost daily = 4
5. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was expected of you because of your drinking?	Score as follows: Never = 0 Less than monthly = 1 Monthly = 2 Weekly = 3 Daily or almost daily = 4
6. How often during the last year have you needed an alcoholic drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?	Score as follows: Never = 0 Less than monthly = 1 Monthly = 2 Weekly = 3 Daily or almost daily = 4
7. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?	Score as follows: Never = 0 Less than monthly = 1 Monthly = 2 Weekly = 3 Daily or almost daily = 4
8. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because you had been drinking?	Score as follows: Never = 0 Less than monthly = 1 Monthly = 2 Weekly = 3 Daily or almost daily = 4
9. Have you or somebody else been injured as a result of your drinking?	Score as follows: No = 0 Yes, but not in the past year = 2 Yes, during the last year = 4
10. Has a relative, friend, doctor or health worker been concerned about your drinking or suggest you cut down?	Score as follows: No = 0 Yes, but not in the past year = 2 Yes, during the last year = 4

**Drugs (where usage identified above):**

**Regular drug use:**

Regular is defined as at least once a month.

**Currently/recently injecting:**

Currently/recently is defined as injected drugs within the last month.

**Poly-drug use:**

Select this if the young person is using multiple drugs at the same time or within the same period.

**Sharing equipment:**

Select this if the young person is using the equipment of other drug users (particularly prevalent in injecting). This will have other implications on the health of the young person aside from the drug they are using.

**Drug use leading to loss of consciousness or increase in aggression:**

If there is any loss of consciousness this will be of particular concern.

**Excessive use whilst alone:**

This could be indicative of entrenched drug misuse

**Experienced withdrawal symptoms or at risk of withdrawal:**

This could indicate usage has become dependent on the drugs to the extent that they need to maintain use to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

**Currently taking prescribed medication for substance misuse issues**

Provide details of any medication in the evidence box.

**Other:**

Select this option to capture any concern relating to the young person's use of substances not previously covered.

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

Consider:

- elicit practices which put the young person at particular risk,
- methods of substance use that place them at particular risk including injecting, sharing equipment and poly drug or alcohol use,
- any occurrence of blackouts, overdosing or experiencing withdrawal symptoms,
- does the young person see drugs as positive and/or essential to life,
- the young person believes the 'benefits' of drugs use outweigh the risks and problems associated with it,
- is there a noticeably detrimental effect on education (such as attendance, concentration, interest in school, goals or aims for the future), relationships (with family, friends, teachers, staff or other professionals) and/or daily functioning (lifestyle, use of free time, health or finances); and,
- details of any prescribed medication.

## Practice Point

Organisations will need to set their own thresholds for deciding on when further action is required, depending on local services and resources. The further action required could be another assessment (such as DUST or any custody specific assessments) or referral to a specialist. When referring on to another worker, ensure that they are provided with all the information from substance misuse section (not just the further exploration part).

A positive answer to any substance misuse questions should result in a referral being made to a specialist health worker to complete CHAT: YOS or another comparable specialist assessment.

Any concerns relating to the young person's safety and well-being or risk of harm to others as a result of substance misuse should be recorded in the Explanations and Conclusions section.

### Sub-section flags:

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Substance misuse	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral required for substance misuse interventions.
Add significant life event	e.g. young person has been diagnosed with drug induced psychosis and begun a course of treatment and medication.
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. positive lifestyle activities keep the young person fit and healthy, they do not wish to use alcohol or drugs.  Factors against desistance e.g. the young person's friends supply them with drugs and alcohol, the young person spends their allowance on drugs and alcohol.

### 4.3.3.2.3 Young person as a parent

#### Young person's parental status

Record the current parental status of the young person.

## Practice Point

If the young person is not a biological parent but has a parenting role for another child, e.g. living with a partner and their child, then the 'Parent' status needs to be selected. A number of child deaths and serious injury incidents have been caused by partners who have a caring role but may not be the biological parent and this role needs to be identified in order to consider the positives and potential concerns in these circumstances.

If the young person has parental responsibility further exploration questions will need to be completed.



**How does the young person’s parental status affect his/her daily life, relationships and aspirations?**

Consider the following impacts on the young person’s parental responsibilities:

- the amount of contact between the young person and their child,
- how they cope with the responsibility and stress of parenting,
- for young people who are parents but whose children have been taken into the care of the local authority, think about the impact of this on the young person,
- how parenting has affected their education, employment, accommodation situation, e.g. has parenthood given the young person a sense of focus and need to provide stability,
- whether the parenting role has changed due to any time in custody and what the impact has been,
- the impact on other family relationships,
- any factors that make it difficult to provide appropriate care, e.g. limited financial resources, their own emotional immaturity, lack of support networks; and,
- what help is the young person already receiving and/or what help do they need?

**Trigger question for further exploration**



**Are there any concerns about the young person’s ability to care for the child?**

If there are concerns about the young person’s ability, the further exploration question must be completed.

**Further exploration**

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

Describe what your concerns are or any concerns raised by other individuals, family members or other professionals.

**Practice Point**

You have concerns that the child is at risk of significant harm, then you should follow local child protection procedures. These concerns should be identified in the Explanations and Conclusions (future behaviour) section.

**Sub-section flags:**

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Young person as a parent	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral required to teenage pregnancy worker.
Add significant life event	e.g. young person has become a parent.

Add desistance factors	<p>Factors for desistance e.g. young person has taken the responsibilities of parenthood very seriously and is demonstrating good skills.</p> <p>Factors against desistance e.g. young person does not take their responsibilities seriously.</p>
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#### 4.3.3.2.4 Young person's self-identity

This sub-section focuses on how young people perceive themselves. It builds on developing an understanding about who the young person is and how they relate to others. Information about self-identity is also relevant to the Foundations for Change section.

#### **Q What are the key influences on the young person's sense of self-identity and what impact do they have?**

Consider:

- **How would the young person describe themselves?**
  - Where or with whom does the young person feel they belong?
  - How do they feel they fit into society?
  - Is there evidence of any problematic attitudes and/or difficulties relating to others arising from the young person's self-identity? What is the impact on the young person of factors such as:
    - race or ethnicity,
    - faith,
    - experience of discrimination or victimisation,
    - sexual orientation,
    - group membership: and,
    - offending lifestyle.

- **Particular difficulties with self-identity:**

Are there any particular difficulties that are more severe than what most adolescents would usually experience as part of transitioning to adulthood? These difficulties could be due to factors such as:

- a lack of knowledge of personal and family history, e.g. a young person subject to a care order who has little knowledge about their birth family,
  - experience of discrimination; and,
  - a feeling of cultural or social isolation (a risk factor for extremism and radicalisation).
- **Whether the young person sees him/herself as an offender:**

This is more than just admitting to having committed some offences and is about seeing offending as an essential part of life. A young person with this perspective may see crime as their future 'career' and accept the risk of arrest, sentencing or time in custody as a necessary part of this.

- **Discriminatory attitudes towards others:**

This may be triggered by a sense of insecurity or because the young person's sense of self-identity is heavily influenced by groups who define themselves through feeling different from or in conflict with others. Consider if there are any previous convictions that are targeted towards certain groups, e.g. racially aggravated offences.

**Sub-section flags:**

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Young person's self-identity	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral for life story work to be completed.
Add significant life event	e.g. young person has met their father for the first time.
Add desistance factors	<p>Factors for desistance e.g. the young person sees their offence as a one off incident.</p> <p>Factors against desistance e.g. the young person sees themselves as an offender and is strongly gang affiliated.</p>

#### 4.3.3.2.5 Thinking and behaviour

This sub-section focuses on the typical or recurring characteristics of a young person's thinking and behaviour rather than occasional one-off instances.

**Q Give details of the key characteristics (both positive and negative) which impact on the young person's thinking and/or behaviour**

Consider the following in describing the young person's thinking and/or behaviour:

- **Impulsiveness:**

All young people are likely to be impulsive to some extent, consider whether impulsiveness is a pervasive trait of their behaviour. Does the young person always rush into things without stopping to think? Does the young person often do things which they regret soon afterwards?

- **Lack of/unrealistic understanding of consequences:**

The extent of the young person's insight into the consequences of their own and/or others behaviour will depend on the young person's age and maturity. The assessment of their understanding of consequences should include:

- consequences both for themselves and for other people; and,
- immediate and longer term consequences.

Those of a younger age may be expected to have some understanding of immediate and direct consequences whilst older young people should be developing additional awareness of longer term, indirect consequences and the impact on others as well as themselves, e.g. getting in a car being driven by someone known not to hold a licence and insurance.

- **Need for excitement:**

Consider whether the young person deliberately seeks excitement and actively pursues, initiates or participates in ‘thrill seeking’ activities. This can involve behaviour that may be legal or illegal, planned or impulsive. It includes activities which are done to ‘get a buzz’ or to impress friends and may place the young person and/or others at risk of injury.

- **Anger/temper control:**

Consider whether the young person has the ability to control their emotions and walk away from provocative situations. Does the young person have particular difficulties in controlling their temper? Consider any specific triggers that can result in the young person becoming angry or struggling to control their temper. How does the young person express themselves?

**Sub-section flags:**

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Lifestyle and Behaviour	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral to youth worker for positive activities.
Add significant life event	e.g. committed their first offence as a result of impulsivity.
Add desistance factors	Factors for desistance e.g. has a strong positive sense of self-identity.  Factors against desistance e.g. finds offending exciting and cannot see the potential dangers of their reckless behaviour.

#### 4.3.4 Learning, education, training and employment

This sub-section provides some consideration of the young person’s learning, education, training and employment. Information for this section should come from a range of sources including:

- educational records,
- test or exam results,
- educational plans in particular Statements of Special Educational Need, Personal Education Plans and Education, Health and Care Plans,
- school or college reports,
- records of achievement or progress files,
- discussion with professionals such as teachers or tutors,
- health and social care reports, information from parents/carers; and,
- your observation of the way in which a young person speaks, listens, reads, writes and approaches concepts related to numbers, time and directions.



If the young person is currently in custody, then a flag stating 'YOUNG PERSON CURRENTLY IN CUSTODY' will be displayed in this sub-section.

### **Community provision**

The community provision section should record details of learning and education in the community. If the young person is in custody, updates about the young person's progress or behaviour in a custodial educational setting should be provided in details and in the Pathways and Planning section.

### **Type of ETE provision**

The type of provision, if any, that is currently offered to the young person.

### **ETE status**

#### **Definition – Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)**

NEET is defined by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Education<sup>34</sup> as those who are not in any form of full or part-time education, training or employment (acknowledging the official Department of Education definition only applies to 16/17 year olds).

If the young person is identified as NEET or having significant learning, education, training or employment issues then consider whether they meet the local thresholds for referral to family intervention teams, youth contract providers or Jobcentre Plus.

#### **Name of school/ETE provider**

Record the name of their current school, college, employer or training provider.

#### **Total Hours engaged in ETE per week**

Record the total number of hours that the young person is attending.

#### **Attendance/participation issues**

Record whether there are any issues with the young person's attendance or participation.

#### **Definition – Persistent absence**

Persistent absence is defined by the Department of Education<sup>35</sup> as absence for more than 15% of the available sessions.

Where attendance issues have been identified, information should be included about any action which has been taken by the school or local authority to secure attendance, e.g. have the parents been prosecuted or are Education Welfare Officers involved?

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<sup>34</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/266788/Working\\_together\\_to\\_support\\_Young\\_People\\_NEET\\_.rtf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/266788/Working_together_to_support_Young_People_NEET_.rtf)

<sup>35</sup> [Persistent absence: government changes definition to deal with reality of pupil absenteeism in schools - Press releases - GOV.UK](#)

### **Level of basic skills: literacy (if known) and numeracy (if known)**

**Q.** The young person's school, college or training provider should be able to provide this information. The ETE levels in AssetPlus cover all levels of learning in secondary education, further education, vocational, and higher education based on the DfE National Qualifications Framework. This is not however appropriate for primary age children and for these "Pre- Entry Level" should be selected. The details evidence box further down in the ETE section can be used to record further details for this age group if needed.

The National Qualifications Framework<sup>36</sup> provides the following information:

<b>Level</b>	<b>Examples of NQF qualifications</b>
<b>Entry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Entry level certificates</li><li>- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)</li><li>- Skills for Life</li><li>- Functional Skills at entry level (English, maths and ICT)</li></ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- GCSEs grades D-G</li><li>- BTEC Introductory Diplomas and Certificates</li><li>- OCR Nationals</li><li>- Key Skills at level 1</li><li>- Skills for Life</li><li>- Functional Skills at level 1</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- GCSEs grades A*-C</li><li>- Key Skills level 2</li><li>- Skills for Life</li><li>- Functional Skills at level 2</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A levels</li><li>- GCE in applied subjects</li><li>- International Baccalaureate</li><li>- Key Skills level 3</li></ul>

### **Q. What qualifications has the young person achieved or are they working towards?**

Consider information from the young person, parents/carers and education and training providers on subjects or skills that the young person has qualifications in or is working towards. If the young person is in custody this will include any qualifications they are working towards or have achieved within the secure establishment.

[Trigger question for further exploration](#)

### **Q. Have any Special Educational Needs (SEN) been identified?**

This question relates to both previously and newly identified SEN and is the same question that appears in the speech, language, communication and neuro-disability sub-section, please refer to the guidance given in young person's development for further information.

If Special Educational Needs (SEN) are identified the further exploration questions need to be completed.

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<sup>36</sup> [\[ARCHIVED CONTENT\] Qualifications: what the different levels mean : Directgov - Education and learning](#)

## Further exploration

### Identified SEN:

Specify the nature of the young person's needs.

### Responses to identified SEN:

Record the actions being taken or the response being given to the young person's specific identified needs.

### Details:

Include:

- recent patterns of attendance,
- behaviour at school, college, establishment or work,
- any services and support provided in response to identified special educational needs; and,
- attitudes to ETE including;
  - what they like or dislike about ETE,
  - what they perceive to be their strengths or best subjects; and,
  - how these attitudes affect their engagement with ETE.
- parent/carer attitudes to ETE.

### Trigger question for further exploration



**Do you have any other concerns related to the young person's education, training or employment?**

If there are any concerns about the young person's learning or ETE progress complete the further exploration questions.

## Further exploration

**Please indicate if any of these apply, more than one option can be selected:**

### Concerns about unidentified/undiagnosed need or difficulties:

Select this if the young person is working below age-related expectations. This could be an indicator of unidentified needs. Do they seem to have problems with learning or concentration?

### Complex history e.g. moves, disruptions, previous exclusions:

Select this if the young person has a complex educational history. This may be particularly

relevant to young people who have been placed in care by the local authority.

**Deliberate intent to disrupt or jeopardise placement:**

Select this if the young person is behaving badly or causing disruptions at school in a possible attempt to prompt exclusion or a move to a different educational placement, e.g. to be with their peers.

**Victim of bullying in ETE settings:**

Select this if the young person is a victim of bullying. Include the details in the evidence box below.

**Definition - Bullying**

There is no legal definition of bullying but is defined by the Department of Education<sup>37</sup> as behaviour that is:

- repeated,
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally; and,
- often aimed at certain groups, e.g. because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault,
- teasing,
- making threats,
- name calling; and,
- cyber-bullying via mobile phone or online, e.g. email, social networks and instant messenger.

**Offending on or near school/ETE premises:**

Select this if there any evidence that the young person is offending at school or ETE premises or nearby, e.g. stealing from a nearby shop or committing criminal damage on school grounds.

**Other:**

Select this if there are any other concerns related to the young person's education, training or employment not previously covered.

**Please provide as much detail as possible here (evidence box):**

Describe any concerns you have or any concerns raised by other individuals, whether family members or other professionals.

Consider:

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<sup>37</sup> [Bullying at school - GOV.UK](http://www.gov.uk/government/topics/bullying-at-school)

- is there evidence of poor relationships with education staff?
- Have they previously been excluded, either on a fixed-term or permanent basis, from ETE?
- Are there any financial constraints which impact on the young person's ability to attend school such as not being able to afford their bus fare?

Make use of any information from the self-assessment section in answering these questions.

Further action should be considered if the young person does not regularly attend school and has not had any interaction with the local Education Welfare Officers (EWO) or Children Missing Education (CME) team. Some of these concerns may be possible triggers for wider family intervention teams and referral should be considered as appropriate.

**Sub-section flags:**

<b>ACTION FLAGS, SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS AND DESISTANCE FACTORS</b>	
Learning, education, training and employment	
Flag for further action	e.g. referral for assessment of possible learning difficulties.
Add significant life event	e.g. getting a job, school exclusion.
Add desistance factors	<p>Factors for desistance e.g. young person has good attendance at school, enjoys subjects and has aspirations for the future.</p> <p>Factors against desistance e.g. sees offending as an easy way to get money and cannot see the benefit of working.</p>