

# Fathers and fatherhood in young carers' families

## Recommendations

### For the Government and Commissioning authorities

*MPs promise, but what do they actually do? MPs need to recognise us. We are out there. Think of us as people. - Sami, 15, Peterborough*

Based on the findings of the '[Fathers and fatherhood in young carers' families](#)' literature review, and insights drawn from the Fatherhood Institute's long experience of working with services to maximise father-engagement in a variety of settings over more than a decade, we have identified a range of ways in which services for young carers could be more father inclusive

1. The government and other service commissioners should require services to measure, monitor and improve services' engagement with fathers (as well as mothers). For example, early years services and schools could collect data on 'parental' engagement by gender and publish the findings, along with plans to make year-on-year improvements. By being required to do so, services would be in a stronger position to identify hitherto 'hidden caring' by children and young people looking after fathers (including lone and separated fathers), and to be in a position to support young carers to develop and maintain positive relationships with their fathers.
2. The government should give greater priority to separated fathers in social housing to enable their children to stay overnight - including rescinding the bedroom tax for these families. This would remove a significant obstacle (lack of space) to continued contact between fathers and their children. This change is likely to be particularly helpful for fathers in young carer families, who are more likely to be economically disadvantaged – and could bring disproportionate benefits, given that positive father-child relationships can be especially beneficial and transformative for children from such backgrounds.
3. To support all the [recommendations for service providers/practitioners](#), the Government, local and voluntary authorities should invest in father-inclusiveness training to ensure all managers and practitioners in adult and children's services understand fathers' importance and act on this by reaching out to and engaging with fathers effectively.

*My dad has Huntington's disease. It damages some of the nerve cells in the brain, and affects his memory, decision-making and personality. There is no cure. I have learnt a lot from my life and I think I have some understanding, even if it is only small, how sometimes things don't go the way that we would see as practical and easy. - Robert, 14, Surrey*