

PLEASE NOTE

THE INCORRECT ABSTRACT WAS PRINTED IN THE HARD COPY OF THIS PROGRAMME.

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*Who cares? Equity in education for young carers*

This paper reports on an initial literature review of the barriers faced by young carers in education, and the role of teachers in mitigating these problems, with a view to conducting empirical research in due course. The term 'young carers' is used in the UK to refer to someone who provides informal care for someone and is under the age of 18 (The National Archives 2014), which can exacerbate educational inequalities (Brennan et al., 2013). This is a global issue of our time (Leu et al., 2022) and one which requires, and would benefit from, empirical research to achieve educational equity for young carers. It is intended that this research will explore innovative proposals for raising awareness of young carers in teacher education, to better prepare teachers for identifying young carers in their classes, and aiding their success in education.

My own experience testifies to the difficulty in the identification, or even self-identification, of young carers (Smyth et al., 2011); and even when they are visible to, for example, charities such as Barnardo's, 50% report that their education is affected by their responsibilities at home (Barnardo's, 2017). Since the Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020-1, the boundary between school and home has become blurred, in many ways bringing young carers into prominence, but without any guidance as to how teachers can support these learners. It is hoped that this session will provide a platform for delegates to discuss the possibilities for empirical research into this important area in equitable education.