

Lost childhoods

Looking After Mum

(BBC1, 10.35pm)

This Children in Need documentary tries to convey the experiences of some of the 700,000 young people in Britain who spend much of every day worrying about or caring for a parent. It is the sort of television territory that can all too easily be exploitatively heavy on the heart strings, but this is a respectful and genuinely affecting film. Ten-year-old Tom already understands that he lives a double life, having to sort his mum's medicine after his own hard day at school — she is critically ill with a failing liver. "My friends always know me as happy, jolly Tom," he says. "They don't know me as sad, worried Tom."