

Guidance Note

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) has adopted Signs of Safety (SoS) as the basis of work with children across all partner agencies engaged in providing services for Children in Norfolk. Signs of Safety has also been adopted by Norfolk County Council Children's Services and the Norfolk Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board as the core philosophy for working with children and families across Norfolk.

Central to this approach is the use of specific practice tools and processes where professionals and family members can engage with each other in partnership to address and work together on solutions to meet the needs of children. The multi-agency report to Child Protection Conference is now structured to reflect the framework of SoS, supporting workers from all agencies to share information using the following -

What is going well? Strengths and Safety

- *Positive attributes and resources within the family that, over time, could be built on to provide a safer environment, e.g. a family member looking after children or a parent ceasing a certain behaviour.*
- *Things that are currently in place and that have been shown, over time and more recently, to directly address areas of the risk and reduce danger for the child.*

What are we worried about? Present and historical concerns and complicating factors

- *What are the past and current dangers and risks for the child?*
- *What behaviours/events/actions are placing the child at risk of immediate and significant harm?*
- *What is, or has been, the impact on the child?*
- *What evidence is there that means the child is being ill-treated or their health and development is being impaired?*
- *Factors that contribute to difficulty, or indirectly cause difficulty to a child. This could be a parent's mental health being exacerbated by alcohol*
- *Events/circumstances that require additional exploration in order to be able to reliably assess risk.*

The report format also supports workers to identify the safety goals for children, i.e. children are no longer exposed to domestic violence or alcohol misuse, experience consistent daily routines or have access to a healthy diet.

What would reduce our concerns, what are the Safety Goals for the child?

What do you believe would make this child safe?

- *Family input*
- *Workers input*

And further gives opportunity for agencies to indicate how their services may be able to support parents to achieve those safety goals.

SoS encourages workers to identify potential future danger for children, Within the report workers are asked to indicate their analysis of outcomes for the child if the issues of harm or danger are not resolved - what are the likely consequences and impact for the child in the future?

Future Danger – what do you believe will be the likely outcome for the child/ren if their current situation continues?

Workers must ensure that they seek the views of children, young people and family adults about the strengths and dangers in their lives, what do they think are the key issues for themselves and what is their view of how you the worker understand their circumstances?

Child/young person’s views on their situation and on the report. Please ensure you have the child’s permission to share their views with parent/carers and with conference members.

Parents’/carers’ views on the situation and on the report

The final section of the report provides space for additional information not previously covered in the report -

Is there any other information about the child/young person, their views, circumstances or special needs, or that of family members, that you feel Conference should be aware of that is not detailed above? Please use this box to detail the chronology of agency contact and significant events

Where an agency chronology is included workers are required to ensure that the chronology is accurate and meets the information management requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. A chronology should not be only a copy of agency contact notes, it is a chronological summary of significant events for the child and their family.

Translation

Where family members first language is not English, please ensure that reports are translated into the family’s first or preferred written language.

3rd Party Information

3rd party information will now be shared with workers during the pre-conference reading time, prior to the start of the actual meeting. If your agency has information which should be managed as 3rd party please ensure that you inform the Chairperson or conference administrator immediately on arrival at the venue.

Arrival for Conference

As noted above 3rd party information will be shared prior to the start of the actual meeting; please ensure you arrive on time for conference –

9.30 am for morning conferences

1.30 pm for afternoon conferences Monday to Thursday

1.00 pm for afternoon conferences on a Friday