

# Signs of Safety

Working together to protect your child and support your family

In Stoke-on-Trent we are working in a new way called Signs of Safety. This leaflet will help you to understand what this means for you and your child/children and your family.

## What is Signs of Safety?

Signs of Safety is a way of working that supports families who need help in bringing up their children. Children and their parents are at the heart of how we work. Professionals will work with them and other family members so that everyone understands what is happening in the child's life and what risks exist.

Professionals will help parents find solutions to the risks and provide support to help them ensure their child is safe. These professionals include social workers, health visitors, teachers, police, doctors and family support workers.

## How will we support you?

Your family is central to all of the work. Professionals will work with you so that you all understand who is worried about your child and **what they are worried about**. They will want to know how your child feels and talk with you to identify **what is working well** in your child's life. We call these 'strengths'.

Together you will talk about and agree **what needs to happen** to build on the strengths and reduce worries. We call these goals. Professionals will want to know if there are people in your wider family or among your friends who can support your child and you to reach the 'goals'.

## The views of your child

Talking to children is at the heart of Signs of Safety. It is important that children, as well as adults, have an opportunity to talk about what they are worried about, what makes them happy and what they would like to see happen in their family and community to keep them safe.

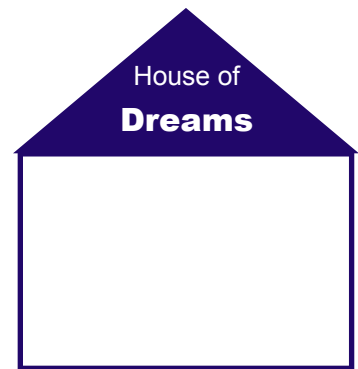
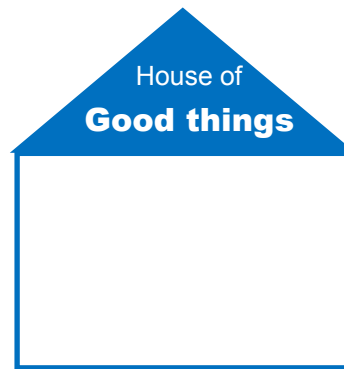
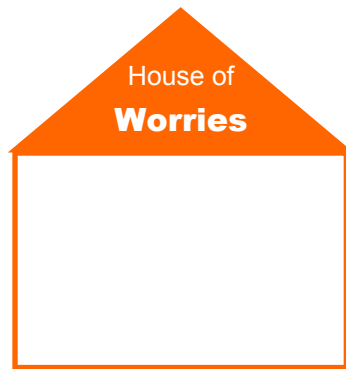
In Signs of Safety we use different methods, depending on their age, to help children share their thoughts. For example, a professional may ask your child to write or draw their thoughts in a diagram such as **the three houses**, the fairy or the wizard. Older children may be asked to talk through these thoughts. You can see the three houses over the page.



City of  
Stoke-on-Trent



To get their views, we may ask your child to draw or write in the three houses



## Assessments

Professionals working with your child will put together a Signs of Safety assessment. During the assessment four key questions will be asked of you, your child and your wider family and anyone else who helps to care for your child.

1. What are we worried about for your child?
2. What is working well in your family?
3. What needs to change?
4. How safe or well is your child on a scale of 0 – 10?  
(0 means there is no safety for the child and 10 means the child is safe)

**The assessment becomes a plan which looks like this:**

What are we worried about?	What's working well?	What needs to happen?
What has happened to make us worried? What is the impact on the child, including things that may be happening in the family's life that make the problem/s harder to deal with?	Things that are already happening to meet the child's needs and keep the child safe and protected from harm and abuse?	What your family and professionals need to see to be satisfied your child is safe enough. These are turned into goals and a plan.

0 ←  
Child is not safe

→ 10  
Child is safe

## What happens with the plan?

The plan will be used by everyone involved – family members, any friends and wider family supporting you, and professionals. Everyone will work to improve the safety and well-being of your child. You and your child will each be given a copy and it will be used in future meetings with the child's social worker or family support worker to look at progress. After every meeting, you, your child and everyone working with you, will be given a summary of what was discussed and any decisions that were made, so everyone knows what is going to happen.

**If you have any questions about Signs of Safety please contact your child's social worker or family support worker.**

**Contact details:**