

Strengths based approach.

‘A strengths-based approach to care, support and inclusion says let’s look first at what people can do with their skills and their resources and what can the people around the, do in their relationships and their communities. People need to be seen as more than just their care needs – they need to be experts and in charge of their own lives’

(Alex Fox, Chief Executive of the charity Shared Lives)

Strengths-based (or asset-based) approaches focus on individuals’ strengths (including personal strengths and social and community networks) and not on their deficits. Strengths-based practice is holistic and multidisciplinary and works with the individual to promote their wellbeing.

‘Focusing on what is strong – not what is wrong’ (SCIE)



Watch this video on strengths-based approach: [Videos on strengths-based approaches - SCIE](#)

Wherever possible, every conversation with the person (or their representative) should be from a strength’s perspective. This means that before offering external solutions to help achieve an outcome or manage a risk, the adult should be supported to explore whether there is:

- a. Anything within their own power that they can do to help themselves; or
- b. Anything within the power of their family, friends, or community that they can rely upon to assist.

A strengths-based approach is empowering for the person and gives them more control over their situation and how best to resolve any issues in the best way that suits them.

By focusing on people's strengths – this is more likely to help people maintain their independence for longer.

Adopting a strengths-based approach involves:

- a. Taking a holistic view of the person's needs, risks and situation in the context of their wider personal support network;
- b. Helping the person to understand their strengths and capabilities within the context of their situation;
- c. Helping the person to understand and explore the support available to them in their community;
- d. Helping the person to understand and explore the support available to them through other networks or services (e.g. non statutory, voluntary, or commissioned care services).
- e. Exploring of the least intrusive, and most empowering ways that statutory services or other organisations may be able to help (such as through prevention services, therapeutic services, or with the help of advocacy).

The strengths-based approach can be used in all dealings with adults, not solely safeguarding. However, any intervention (including safeguarding) should promote the person's: wellbeing, independence, resilience, and ability to make their own decisions.

Safeguarding interventions should have a positive impact in the person, should be least restrictive of rights and freedoms, and enhance the person's ability to safeguard themselves in the future.

This chapter serves as a brief introduction to strengths-based working – all staff are encouraged to conduct further reading on this topic.

Further Reading

[ripfa_strategic_briefing_developing_strengths-based_working_mar_19.pdf](#)
[\(researchinpractice.org.uk\)](#)

[resources-to-support-strengths-based-approaches-ripfa-mapping-v02.pdf](#)
[\(proceduresonline.com\)](#)