

Guide to Critical Worry Statements

What is a Critical Worry Statement?

The Critical Worry Statement(s) give the reasons why we are working with the family in clear language. Explaining who is worried, what they are worried about, what might happen if things do not get better and the impact this could have on the child or young person.

Critical Worry Statements should be developed from the 'past wellbeing concerns' and acknowledge the 'complicating factors'.

You might need multiple Critical Worry Statements for each issue, but try not to have more than three.

How to write a Critical Worry Statement

Who is worried?	Explain who is worried e.g. 'Rachel from Early Help' – don't make this a cast list of thousands and always identify a named person rather than an organisation.
What are they worried about?	Explain what has happened in the past to make us worried (the past wellbeing concerns) or the behaviours that pose a risk that could harm a child in the future. Be specific and factual – give examples.
What is the impact?	Describe the potential impact on the child or young person. Explain what this means in the short and long term if nothing changes.

Do

- ✓ Write your Critical Worry Statement using clear, everyday language that the family will understand.
- ✓ Consider the 'existing wellbeing' and 'existing strengths' you have identified and mention this in the Critical Worry Statement.

Don't

- ✗ Use professional terminology or jargon, like 'neglect' or 'domestic violence' be specific and explain what this looks like.

What is a Wellbeing Goal?

There should be a Wellbeing Goal for each Critical Worry Statement.

The Wellbeing Goal shows the family, their support network and the involved professionals, what we need to see to be confident that things are good enough to end our involvement with the family.

It explains to all the involved people what we are working towards and what it will look like.

How to write a Wellbeing Goal

<p>What we need to see to know the child is safe and well</p>	<p>What will professionals see that tells them that things are good enough?</p> <p>What will be happening in the family's day to day life? How will we know the child/ young person will be safe and well in their parents' care?</p>
<p>Who is involved?</p>	<p>Say who will be involved in what the wellbeing looks like (e.g. include relatives or members of the support network where applicable).</p>

Do

- ✓ Use the same language as the family where possible e.g. Nanna, Mam, Gran.
- ✓ Be specific, try to explain what goods things will be happening rather than stating the bad things that won't be happening e.g. 'Mum and Dad will have ways to resolve problems in calm way' rather than 'Mum and Dad will not argue and shout.'
- ✓ Where possible, say how long you will need to see the plan working, or the changes maintained, in order to be satisfied that this will continue in the long term.

Don't

- ✗ Include engagement with services within your Wellbeing Goal, this doesn't mean that things have changed.
- ✗ Wellbeing Goals needs to be updated as the situation changes (e.g. if the Critical Worry Statement changes due to more worries becoming evident) but don't make unnecessary changes that move the goalposts for families.

Critical Worry Statement Example

Who is worried?	Rachel from Early Help Services is worried that...
What are they worried about?	if Sylvia does not take her tablets, her low mood and anxiety will not get better and Max will not get the everyday care that he needs. Like when he has been left in his cot for long periods of time and his nappy has not been changed, or when he doesn't get the attention he needs like playing with him, smiling at him and responding to him when he is babbling.
What is the impact?	Rachel is really impressed with how focused and resourceful Sylvia can be when she is in a low mood, but she is worried that if nothing changes, Max will become withdrawn from making noises and will not cry when he wants to be picked up. She is concerned that if his nappy is left on too long his bottom will get sore and burnt and he may not move or sit up like other children his age.

Wellbeing Goal Example

Who is involved?	<p>Rachel from Early Help can see how hard Sylvia is working to be the best Mum that she can be.</p> <p>For Rachel to feel confident that things are much better, and that Max will get the care and attention that he needs in the long term,</p>
What we need to see to know things are safe?	<p>she needs to see that Sylvia is taking her tablets every day and that she is accepting support from her Mum Joan and sister Debbie. Rachel needs to know that that Sylvia is responding to Max's cries and noises, picking him up, playing with him and changing his nappy when needed.</p> <p>Rachel needs to see this plan working for 3 months in order to be sure that Max is safe and well and to be confident that this will continue.</p>