

# Genogram Practice and System Guidance



## Getting started....

Start with a basic family tree diagram and talk about each person as they are added- this additional information is what makes it a genogram. The initial aim is to identify all of the important people involved with the family, This means it can include members for instance, who do not live locally but are in regular contact with the family, or the may not be related at all but provide some support like a family friend or neighbour.

Asking about where connected people live, about their experiences and how they are involved with the family helps you to get a better understanding of the family and how the child is supported within their family and community.

## Don't be too worried about the symbols!

It is usual that a square shape represents a male and a circle for a female however with everything else be creative!

Chose easy shapes and symbols that represent individual characteristics such as a triangle by someone's name to show they use alcohol, a dotted line between the person and child or young person may show limited contact- the important thing is to be consistent and to use a key to show everyone else what the symbols mean so that others can read the genogram when it is finished.

## What to do with it?

The genogram should always be attached to the assessment as a document and uploaded to the file. You should also use it to update the systems so that a genogram can be created. **Genograms are open tools that can change, be added to over time and developed.** As you get to know the family you can identify more members who can support with planning and so it is important to always add a date to the genogram so you know how old the information is and ask parents to sign to show that you created the genogram together and they agree to the contents.

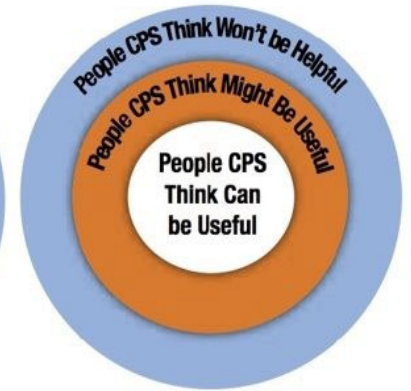
## Tools to help...

## Safety Circles

Family Safety Circles  
By Susie Essex



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Susie Essex created the family safety circles as a visual tool to think through in detail with the family, people parents can involve in a naturally occurring safety network; who can be most useful and who should know what. Adapt to your case and context.

Safety circles is a tool that we can use to start a conversation and understand who else could be included in a genogram and in the family's network. We want to support the family to develop their own network by giving them the ideas and tools to think through the issues. Don't forget all of your best questions for the family!



## Signs of Safety Network Matrix –

Write the objection or difficulty (in the parents words) about why they don't want to involve others to support them:

Write down all the most useful questions you can think of to explore the objection or difficulty.

Use questions that focus on the individual's perspective as well as relationship questions, particularly asking the individual to think of what the child or significant other might say. The questions are created to explore both positive and negative perspectives and possibilities and to consider the past, present and future. The two following examples are provided to help the practitioner create questions for the situation they are working with

### Negative

#### Past

What's the worst reaction you have had from someone you think is a good person when they've found out about problems you have had?  
What's the worst thing that's happened for you when you have told someone/or they have found out about problems you were having?

#### Present

Who is the worst person for you in your life right now?  
What's the worst thing they have done to you or do that makes you think that?  
Who would (child) say shouldn't know about the problems?  
Who would be the absolute worst person (you know/in your family/in your community) to tell/or find out about your problems? What makes them the worst person to know about your problems?

#### Future

What would be the worst possible way to ask the positive people in your life to help you?  
Suppose the most positive person you know reacted in the worst possible way what would they do?  
Suppose the worst possible person came into your life and heard about your problems what would they do?

### Positive

In your whole life who are the people who have helped you most? How did you get to know them and how did they help you?  
When have you told others about problems you were having and its helped? Who did you tell? How did that help?  
When have you helped someone else with their problems? How did you find out about their problems? What would they say you did that helped them most?

Who are ALL the positive people you and child know?  
Who would child say helps you in your life? Who is the most positive person you know?  
Even though they know you hate other people knowing about your problems who would (child) say would be someone that could help with the problems?  
If you absolutely had to do it who would be the best person among the people you know/in your family/community/work to talk to??  
The most positive person/the person you are closest to, what would they say is important about being able to tell people about your problems?

*Suppose you had exactly the people around you that you would want what sort of people would they be? How would they be involved in your and child's life? Suppose these people found out about your problems or you told them about the problems and they responded in the best possible way, what would they do that would show you they were fine about your problems? What would they do to help? How would you be different if this happened?*

## Now you've done the work- update the systems so everyone knows!

You need to start with the relationships tab before trying to create your genogram- you need to make sure that everyone that you need is on the system and linked to the child. Admin or ICS can also help with this task.

Child: Sally Enfield 11 years (Ref: C33) Basic Demographics

**Family & Other Relationships**

Flags	Relationship	Case No	Name	Age	Gender	Alerts	Start Date	End Date
1 Enfield Avenue, Enfield, EN3 1LD								
	Self	C33	Sally Enfield	11 years	Female			
	Brother	C32	James Enfield	14 years	Male		06-Mar-2013	
	Mother	C27	Amy Enfield	38 years	Female		06-Mar-2013	
	Father	C26	Harry Enfield	43 years	Male		06-Mar-2013	
19 Widget Way, Leeds, LS1								
	Grandmother	C31	Julie Smith	60 years	Female		06-Mar-2013	
	Grandfather	C30	John Smith	63 years	Male		06-Mar-2013	
33 Slumber Street, Leeds, LS1								
	Grandmother	C28	Enid Enfield	65 years	Female		06-Mar-2013	
	Grandfather	C29	Arthur Enfield	66 years	Male		06-Mar-2013	

▶ Edit Relationships

Additionally Carers and Adoptive Parents will display for children linked directly to them.

***\*\* Please note that relationships must be linked on each family members relationship tab, they may not automatically link and therefore may not pull through into the Genogram\*\****

## Creating a Genogram

To start a Genogram on a person's record click on the Genogram link in the person header as shown below;

Unborn Child: Kia Charger 06-Mar-2019 (Ref: 285289) Genogram

New Genogram - Go to My Genograms

**Genograms**

- 07-Feb-2019 11:37 - Genogram for Kia Charger - System Admin User
- 31-Jan-2019 14:20 - Genogram for Kia Charger - Cassie Murray
- 31-Jan-2019 11:43 - Genogram for Kia Charger - Cassie Murray

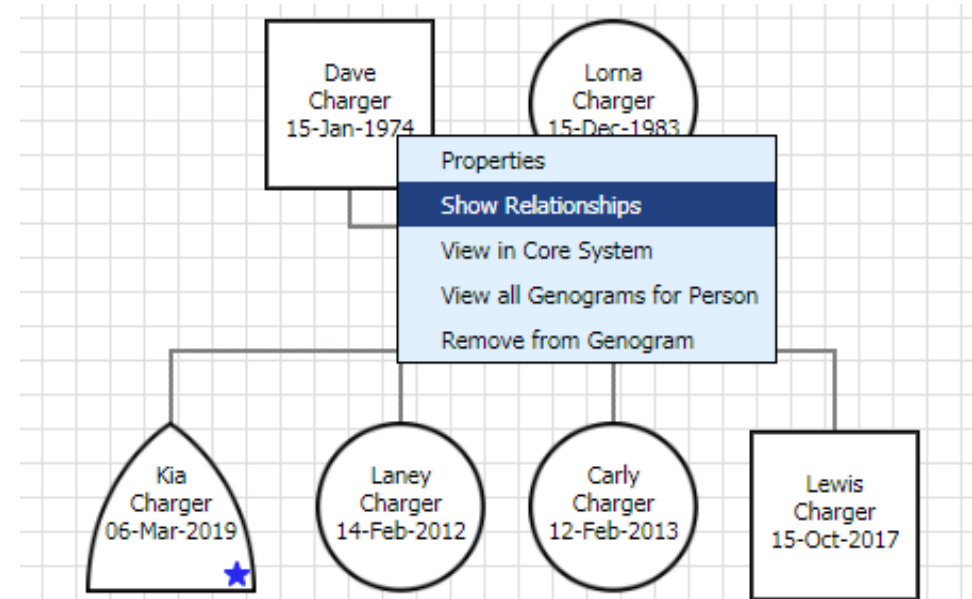
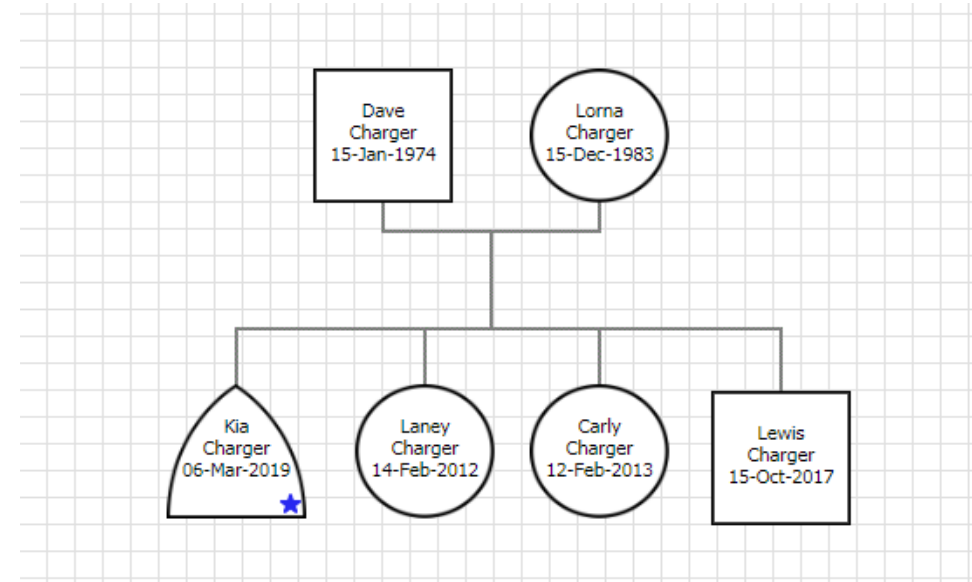
If you wish to view an already created Genogram they will be listed in date order which you can view. To start a new Genogram select 'New Genogram'

When selected the Genogram will be created pulling through relationships from the relationship tab.

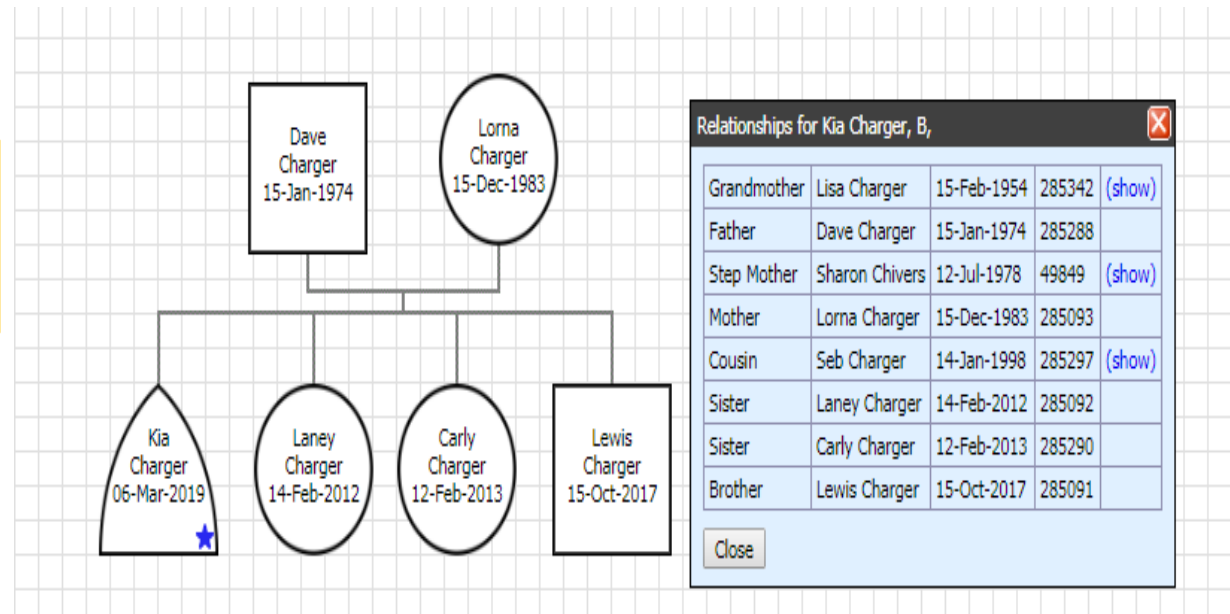
The diagram that the system will initially produce is unlikely to be a suitable as a finished Genogram, it should be viewed as a starting-point that can be edited to suit the desired purpose:

### Editing a genogram

Right click on a person and a list will be shown to enable extra relations to be added among other option.



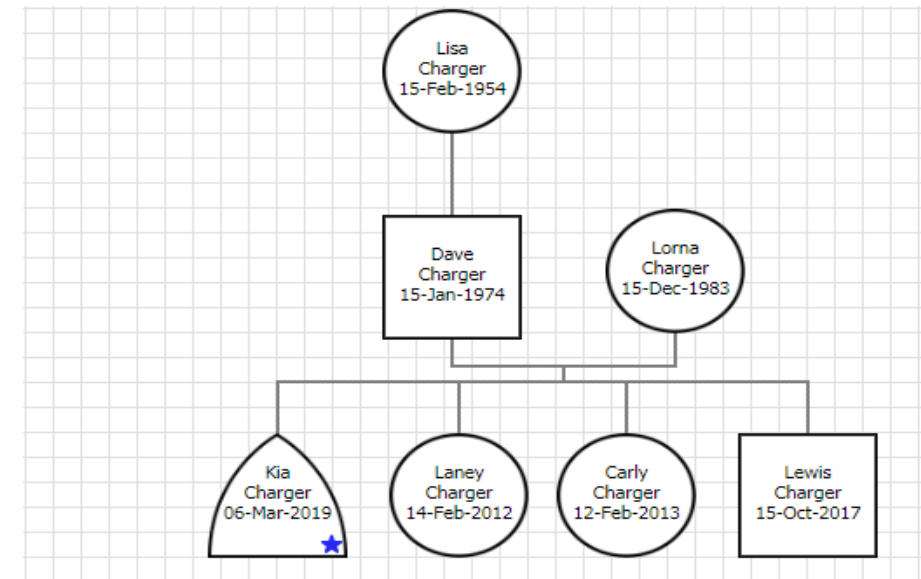
Click on Show Relationships in the list and this will bring up a pop up of all the relationships recorded for that particular person.



Initially the system will pull through the child's main relationships, like the mother, father, siblings etc. To add other relationships click on the *(show)* next to the person and that person will then be displayed within the Genogram, this may include foster carers, cousins, grandparents etc.

Lisa Charger is the grandmother to Kia Charger, and has been linked as a parent to Dave as shown here

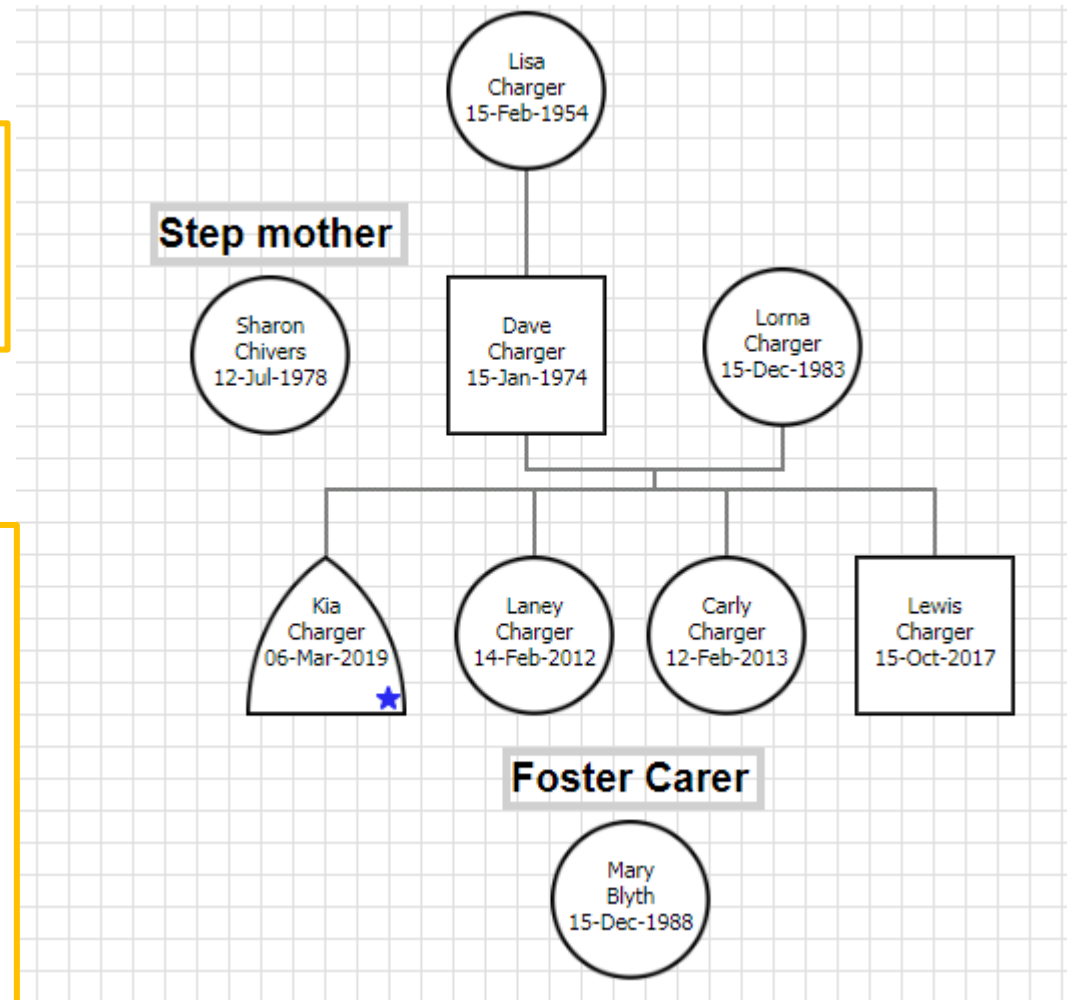
**\*\*However please note that some relationships will not be linked with a line to the child\*\***



As shown below the step mother and foster carer have not been joined to any of the children. Likewise the fathers new partner has not been joined to him, he is still displayed as married to Lorna

There is no where to suggest what their relationship is to the child, unless you manually add a heading yourself. To do this you right click anywhere in the Genogram and click 'add a comment' or 'add a heading' - now you can enter their relationship or any important information that is needed and drag it next to the individual.

Additionally, unrelated persons can be added if desired by right-clicking on the grid area and selecting *Add a Person (Search)*. This will bring up a search wizard to find the additional person in the system:



- Add Heading
- Add a Comment
- Add a Person (Search)



## Symbols

Each gender has a different box style

Male

Female

unborn

Unknown  
gender

Sometimes these do not pull through correctly. To amend this you can left click on the Genogram and click 'Properties'

This will bring up an option to change the gender. Select the correct one then click 'update person' - this should automatically update the persons symbol.

Update Person Details 285091

Forename:

Surname:

Gender:  ▼

Date of Birth:

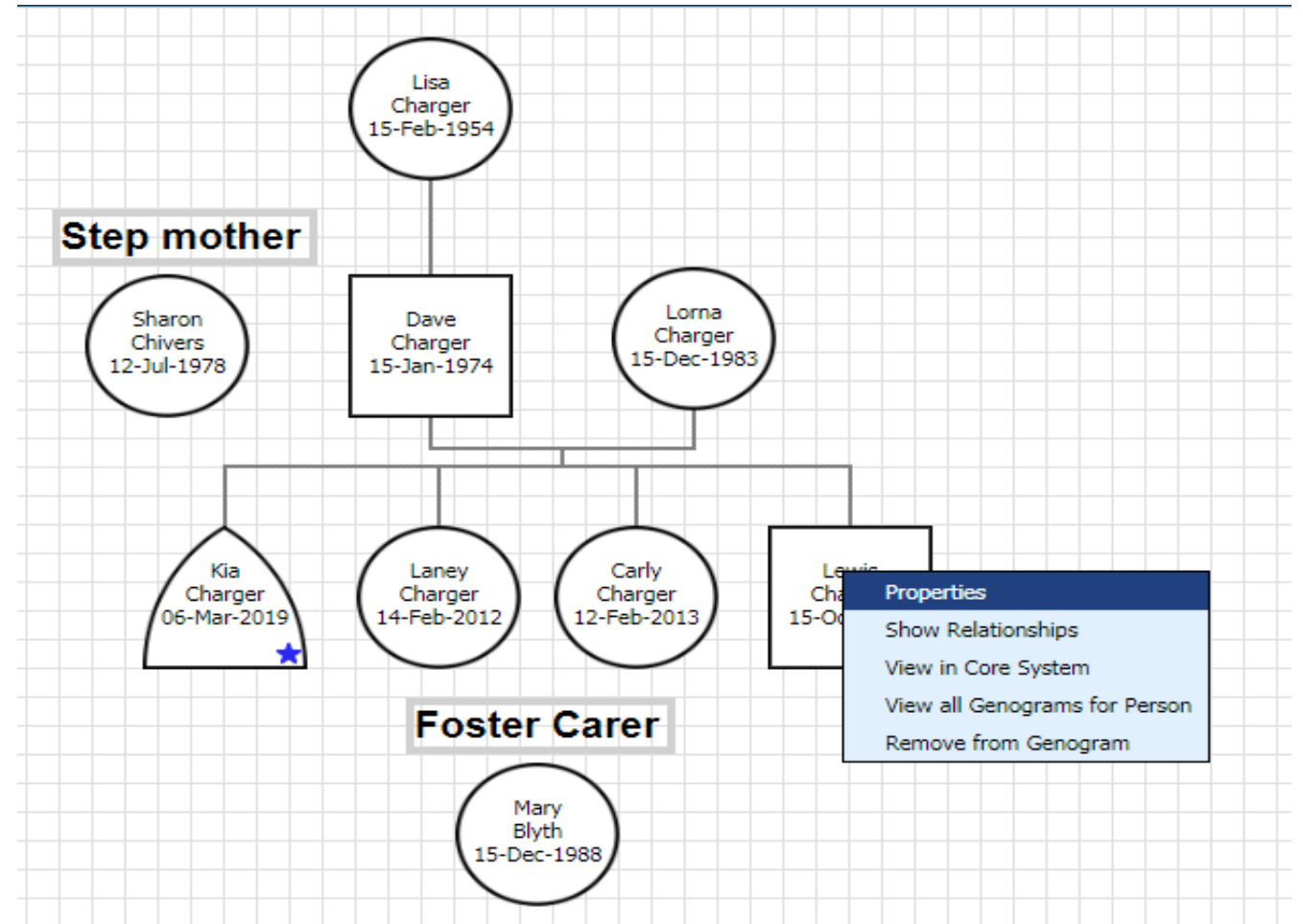
Date of Death:

ram?

ram?

ram?

ram?



At the top right hand of the screen there are options to save, save as, reset, delete and complete the Genogram etc. It is important to remember to save your work as you go along or when exiting the Genogram. Saving the Genogram allows you to make any amendments in the future.

Once finished you click on 'Complete', tick the box to confirm you are sure your ready to complete it, and select 'Complete Genogram' again.

**DO NOT COMPLETE UNLESS FINISHED AS IT CANNOT BE EDITED!**

