

'HOW TO' GUIDE

Danger Statements, Safety Goals and Scaling Questions

DANGER STATEMENTS

1. Start with who is worried:

State who is worried (e.g. the worker's name, the parent's name, grandparent, child etc)

2. Give an example of what they are worried about:

Give an example stating what the behaviour is that has made people worried and how this affected the child. Use the child's words wherever possible

Give a date that the worrying behaviour happened

3. State what you and anyone else worry will happen to the child if things don't change

Involve parents and children in writing danger / worry statements. What do they worry will happen if things don't change?

If there is a difference of opinion, acknowledge this, for example where a parent may not agree

Write the danger / worry statement in language that a 6 year old could understand

Example Danger Statement – Domestic Abuse.

Sarah from Families First is worried that on 10.01.22 Joel (6) saw his mum being grabbed around the neck and punched in the face by his dad until her mouth bled. Joel's dad was drunk when this happened. This is the second time that we are aware of that Joel's dad has hit his mum in the last 3 years and the first time that Joel has been there when this has happened. Joel ran to get help from a neighbour and was so frightened by what had happened that he wet the bed for the next 5 nights and hasn't wanted to leave his mum's side since. Sarah is worried that if Joel continues to see his dad hurting his mum then he'll be living in fear of something else happening to his mum, he will find it hard to be away from his mum because he is worried about her and if his dad attacks his mum again we are worried that as Joel gets older he might try to stop his mum from getting hurt and end up getting hurt himself, even if this is the last thing his parents mean to happen.

Example Worry Statement – Child Parent Violence

Sarah from Seaham One Point is worried that on 10.01.22 Joanne (mum) and John (15) were shouting and screaming at each other to the point where John pushed and kicked his mum and Joanne told him that he couldn't live with her anymore. These arguments have been going on since John was 11 and are getting worse. Although John is still at home everyone is worried that if Joanne and John continue to shout and scream at each other then it is likely that this will lead to more pushing and kicking from John and Joanne is now worried that she will hit John back, which could mean that both John and Joanne get hurt. If this carries on then we are worried that the relationship between Joanne and John will break down completely, they will both feel bitter towards each other and that John could end up living away from his family and the home he grew up in, believing that no one loves or cares about him.

SAFETY GOALS

Open a safety / wellbeing goal with an acknowledgment of what the worker is impressed by in the family

Involve parents and children in writing the safety goal (however where there are disagreements about this then we need to use our authority skilfully so that everyone is clear about what needs to happen to keep children safe whether parents agree or not)

State what life would *look like* for the child if the child was safe / well and we had no more worries (don't include actions in the goal)

Make reference to the family network where possible

Example Safety Goal – Domestic Abuse

Joel's mum and dad are saying that they want to be together, and Sarah from Children's Services can see how much Joel's parents love him when they are with him. In order for Children's Services to be reassured that Joel can be safe in his parents care we need to see his dad, mum and some friends or family come up with a plan that makes sure that Joel's mum and dad can find a way to work through problems without Joel's mum being hurt by his dad or Joel ever being scared by his dad's behaviour. This plan will need to be tried and tested over the next 6 months so that children's social care can feel confident enough to get out of the family's life.

Example Wellbeing Goal – Child Parent Violence

Sarah from Seaham One Point has been impressed that Joanne (mum) and John agree that they both want the same thing: for things to be better between them, so this gives Sarah hope that things can change. In order for this to happen Sarah needs to see Joanne, John and some people that they trust come up with a tried and tested plan that means they can find a way to live together without screaming at or getting physical with each other so that nobody gets hurt in future and John can continue to live at home with his family, where he belongs.

SCALING QUESTIONS

Always scale from 0 – 10, and start with what 10 looks like so this is from a strengths base

Use information from the Danger / Worry Statement to help define 0 and information from the Safety / Wellbeing Goal to help define 10

10 should reflect what is realistic and achievable and be about managing rather than eliminating risk

Example Safety Scale – domestic abuse

If 10 is there is a plan with Joel's mum, dad and their important people that means that even if things get difficult, Joel doesn't see or hear any scary arguments and fights between his dad and his mum

and 0 is that no one has a clue what to do to help and Joel is still being scared by his parent's behaviour, where would you rate it?

Example Wellbeing Scale – Child Parent Violence

If 10 is that Joanne and John are getting on much better and they have people who will step in to help so that they can both have a break from each other if they need it

and 0 is that things are awful between John and Joanne, and it isn't safe for John or Joanne for John to live at home anymore, where would you rate it?