

Cheshire East LSCB E-Business Newsflash

Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Update
for Member Action and Information



28th September 2017

Signs of Safety is coming to Cheshire East!

Cheshire East will be adopting Signs of Safety as our way of working with families from November 2017 in Children's Social Care and in Early Help and Prevention at CAF.

Many of you will already be familiar with using Signs of Safety, as our successful Making Children Safer model used in Child Protection Conferences is based on the approach.

Why are we adopting it?

We are adopting Signs of Safety because we believe this will support us to deliver the very best outcomes for our children, young people and families. Best practice is child-focused, solution-orientated, and respectful and inclusive of families, and this is what we want to achieve through adopting Signs of Safety.

Where Signs of Safety has been adopted by other local authorities it has been welcomed by families. Families have reported that (often for the first time) they are clear about what services expect from them. Families particularly like that their views and strengths are acknowledged as well as their weaknesses understood.

For an example of the impact of Signs of Safety in practice, check out [this video](#) of a practitioner talking about her experience of using the approach.



What is Signs of Safety?

Signs of Safety is now widely recognised internationally as the leading approach to child protection casework. It is an innovative, solution-focused, strengths-based approach to working with children, young people and families.

It provides a clear framework for **how** to work with families; how to build relationships and work effectively with them to achieve better outcomes for children and young people.

It includes:

- **principles for practice** which underpin the work
- **ways of working** – what to do, how and when
- **a range of tools** to support engagement with families, strong assessments and plans, and for capturing the voice of the child or young person
- **ways to support learning, reflection and development**, such

as supervision and audit of practice that is aligned with the approach

Research has shown that the best outcomes for children and young people are achieved when there are **constructive working relationships** between professionals and family members, and between professionals themselves. This has been shown to be the case, both nationally and internationally, at all levels of need and intervention.

In order to build effective relationships and work inclusively and respectfully with families, Signs of Safety focuses on **both** the family's strengths **and** the safety of the child or young person. This recognises that, despite current concerns and difficulties, all families have strengths, and this gives the basis for understanding how we can increase safety and address the areas of concern.

Support for Partners

Using Signs of Safety will bring changes to how we work with families at CAF and within Children's Social Care.

Children's Social Care staff and managers will receive training in Signs of Safety from November 2017 – so you will start to see and hear this in practice from November onwards. We will keep you posted on the latest developments and changes to practice and processes through regular newsletters.

We will also have **Partner Signs of Safety Practice Leads**; key leads within partner agencies will also be trained from November. These people will disseminate information and learning from the training, and will provide advice and support for practitioners within their organisations and sectors. Key strategic leads within the LSCB will also receive the training.

Our LSCB Trainer and CAF Trainers will be trained to deliver Signs of Safety training across the partnership, and Signs of Safety practice will be incorporated into our current LSCB and CAF training.

Briefings and workshops on Signs of Safety for partner agencies will be available from November 2017 onwards from our Lead Practitioner for Signs of Safety, Louise Wright.



An e-learning module on Signs of Safety will be available through the LSCB as an introduction to Signs of Safety by November.

Practice guidance on Signs of Safety tools will be available on the LSCB website.

What will it mean for my practice?

Using Signs of Safety will mean that:

- You will be asked about the **impact** on the child or young person
- You will be asked to talk or write about families' **strengths** as well as the concerns – from contact at the front door onwards
- **Planning and meetings will work differently** (e.g. CAF and Core Groups) – these will have a similar format to Child Protection Conferences and will focus on the three columns – concerns, strengths and next steps.
- You will be asked to **scale** how worried you are about the impact of the current situation on the child/ young person on a scale of 0-10. This will happen at the front door and in meetings and is used to help everyone understand and discuss their level of concern and assessment of risk.
- You will be part of developing **danger/ worry statements** and **safety/ wellbeing goals** – which set out very clear for the family what the concerns are and what we want to achieve
- You will see a **change in language** away from professional language to clear and simple language which is easier for families to understand
- Professionals will have a more **coaching and questioning role** – supporting families to develop their own solutions
- You will have access to tools and ways of working that make it easier to **involve** children and young people and their families.

More information will follow in further newsletters on what changes you will see and when.

Want to know more?

For more information on why we are adopting Signs of Safety, what we want to achieve, and our plan for how we will do this please see our [Signs of Safety Strategy](#) on the new Signs of Safety page on the [LSCB Website](#).

Also the official Signs of Safety website at www.SignsofSafety.net

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