



# ‘This Much!’ & ‘Backdrop’

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# Why did Cafcass introduce direct work apps?

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- ▶ 'This Much!' and 'Backdrop' are two applications available to Cafcass practitioners for direct work with children. These two simple tools aim to help children and young people communicate effectively.
- ▶ They were developed by Child & Family Training (C&FT) and have been adjusted to suit Cafcass' specific needs.
- ▶ They are designed for use with children in a wide range of circumstances, where difficulties may render communication a particular challenge. They can also be used with young people who have mental health problems or learning disabilities.
- ▶ They can help ascertain the young person's wishes and feelings in circumstances that may be complicated or distressing, or if he or she finds it difficult to respond to other methods of direct work.
- ▶ So what's the difference between the two?



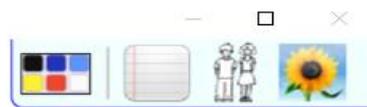
# Backdrop

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**BACKDROP**

- ▶ ‘Backdrop’ features scenes such as ‘my house’ or ‘my islands’ and allows a child or young person to write, draw, type or place figures on these customisable backdrops. In doing so, it prompts discussion about their life – feelings of safety, security, relationships or hopes, for example.
- ▶ If the child is feeling particularly creative they can opt to use a plain white backdrop, allowing them to draw whatever scene they like using the stylus on Cafcass laptops and tablets or their finger



# My Islands



# This Much!

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**THIS MUCH!**

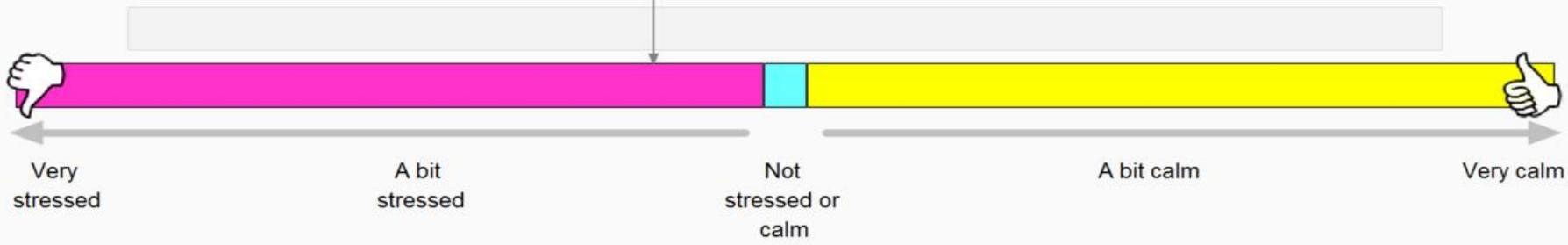
- ▶ 'This Much!' is ideal for bringing clarity to a specific issue in direct work with a child or young person, by helping them to quantify almost any experience, feeling, or relationship.
- ▶ It uses an analogue scale – that is fully customisable to suit the individual circumstances – so that the child can rate their perception of a single experience or relationship.
- ▶ This tool lends itself well to solution focused thinking

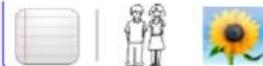


### Seeing Mum without another adult there?

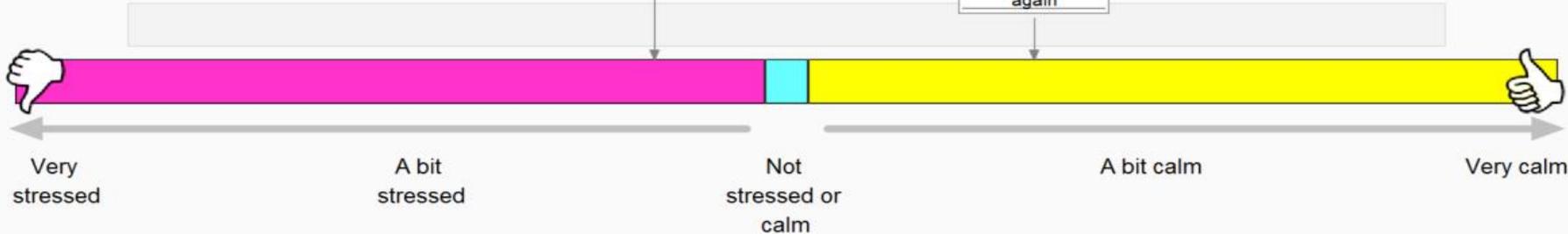


I feel safer with my social worker there





### Seeing Mum without another adult there?

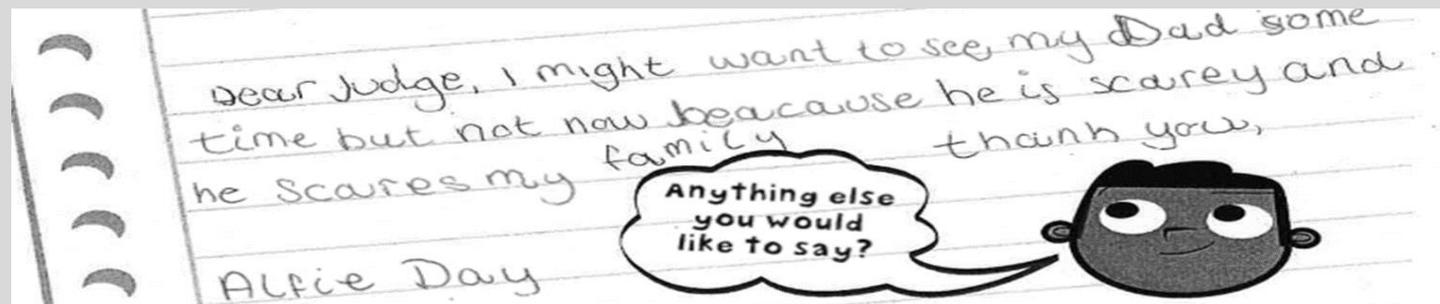


# Embedding tools in reports..

When I asked Alfie what memories he had from when he and his parents all lived together in Devon he initially said none. His demeanour changed from upbeat and engaging to fidgety and looking away.

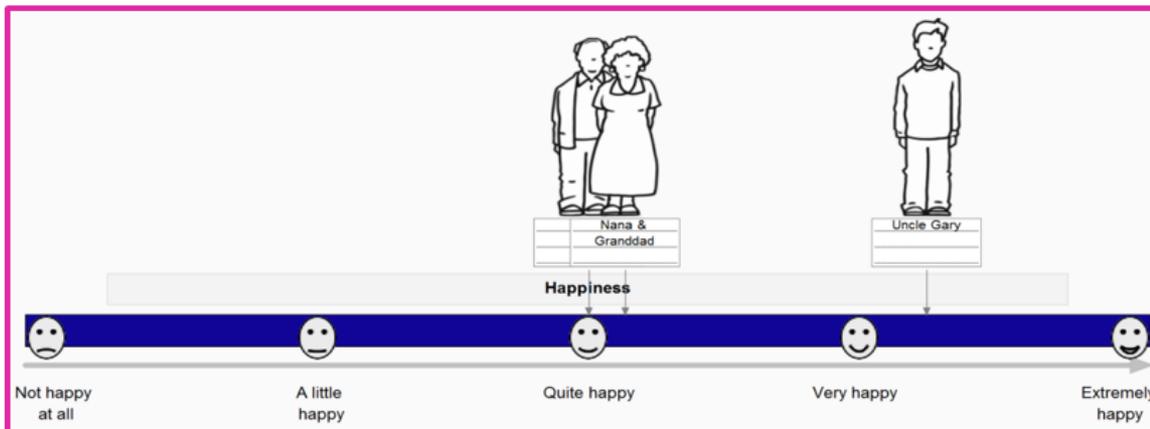
I paused for a moment to let Alfie gather his thoughts when he added “well, one time they argued in the garden and Dad kicked the BBQ over”. Alfie said his grandfather ushered him inside (suggesting this was some kind of family event) but that he could still hear shouting from where he was sat in the living room. Alfie recalled his mother crying and said she went and “hid in her bedroom”.

Alfie was clearly frightened during this incident and although well intended, being taken into the living room out of the way was not enough to protect him from the harmful effects of this altercation. Alfie’s description of this episode goes some way in supporting his ‘letter to the judge’ copied below:



Demonstrating a maturity beyond her years, Leonie understands and accepts that her mother continues to be unwell and that it is unlikely she will return home at the end of these proceedings.

Whilst Leonie is settled with her foster carers for the time being, she was delighted to hear that her social workers are assessing several family members as potential long term carers for her.



I asked Leonie to help me share her wishes and feelings with the Judge by completing a scaling tool together.

Leonie was clear that she loved her grandparents very much and said she would feel safe and happy living with them. Her only reservation was the

neighbourhood they live in. Leonie explained that she can't really play out there as they live on a main road, and that there tend to be big gangs hanging around by the corner shop which she finds scary.

Leonie presented as much more enthusiastic when talking about her Uncle Gary and his wife Sandra. She said Gary was "dead good at football" and had promised to take her to the girl's training session at the sports club where he plays, she also noted that Sandra is really "cuddly and kind" and that she reminds her a bit of her Mum.



The FJYPB are really excited to see that such great methods of direct work with children are being directly embedded into reports rather than as an appendix. Including our direct quotes, pictures and images of the work we undertake with you makes us feel valued, respected and most importantly, understood and listened to. It will also make us feel like our voices are truly at the centre of our case, rather than being part of an appendix at the end of a report.

It makes the reports more child friendly, after all they are a report about us and our lives. We may decide later in life to read them, so it is very important that we can see and hear our voices clearly throughout the report.

