



**Our practice framework
helping us in our work
with children and families
in public and private law
proceedings**

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Together provides us with a set of values that, no matter what our role within Cafcass, should guide and influence how we work. Every single person within the organisation should be able to connect with the values in some way, not just those staff directly involved with social work practice. Central to the framework is the importance of relationships; relationships with one another and with children and families. Where we can all work together as an organisation to demonstrate these values, we have the greatest opportunity to achieve the best outcomes for children.

Sarah Dickinson – NIS - Improvement Manager and Together Champion

Foreword from our Chief Executive

Thank you for taking the time to have a look at this workbook with the practice guidance and thinking presented for your use.

We have been talking for some time now about the importance of relationships with children, their families and carers. They are central to the work we do and they are the fundamental vehicle that enables us to work effectively. Our framework provides the additional energy and focus we need to strengthen our culture to 'excellence everywhere for every single child'.

In their 'Joining the Dots' research of 2015, Ofsted found that 'Senior leaders in successful children's social care organisations, develop a compelling vision to drive improvement, leading from a strong moral base, mirrored throughout middle and front line managers.'

I hope you find the values set out on page 5, with the statements about what they look like in action and the difference we hope they make, part of our compelling vision and plan. We want you to feel valued here at Cafcass in your professional and personal capacity. Learning about the framework will support your learning and development as well as helping you to seek out and listen to the views of children, each other and partners – changing in response to that feedback. Most importantly however, the practice material in this workbook, will help you to help children to understand our thinking and reasoning in respect of the recommendations we make to the family courts. This is so critical in the proceedings that are about them and their hopes and dreams for the future. Have fun using the materials and tell us what you think.



Foreword by the National Director and Principal Social Worker

In introducing **Together** at this time, we are mindful of the pressures on you. We are aware that while some of you are already familiar with the preferred practices, for others, adopting practice that is less familiar feels like an additional pressure.

This is why we are focusing on just three practice elements of **Together** in this first phase of implementation. We believe these three elements:

1. Assessment and child's planning
2. Introductory letters
3. Family storyboards

are the ones that will make the most difference. We say that because this is what comes from the pilots and feedback from children and families.

Children and families want to understand what we are saying about their lives and our recommendations for resolving the issues. They also want to know why we are making those recommendations. This is what the revised assessment and child's planning tool is about. In terms of our commitment to social justice, we want to be able to show that we have shared our thinking with children and families and taken on board their feedback. For that to happen, our child's plans need to be set out in a way that is easy for them to understand – and should they want to, to challenge. That is surely what we would want for ourselves and our own children and families?

The feedback we have had from children and young people who have received introductory letters is universally positive. It is clear that they help to start the relationship between an FCA and a child with respect and empathy. How could we not make these one of the three essential elements of the first phase of implementation?

Using storyboards is the third aspect of practice in **Together** that we consider essential. We appreciate that using storyboards is not for every child in every circumstance and that many of you already use different tools to help explain to children and families your understanding of their circumstances and what has happened. However, again, the feedback we have had about them, in both private and public law, has been universally positive and we urge you to use them and tell us what you think when you have.



Values underpinning the Together framework

Our values



Always looking for the strengths and risks

In practice



Through our relationships, we make balanced decisions

The difference this makes



'Our reports and our records are fair and balanced, showing the strengths and difficulties for families and how these affect the children'

Practice Framework

'With' not 'to'



Reflective and group supervision



Believing in respectful relationships



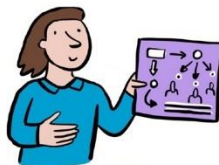
We listen and act with care and understanding



'When we work with children and each other, they and we feel respected and valued'



Appreciative Inquiry



Decision making is clear and reasoned



We work with risk and uncertainty to create better and safer outcomes for children



'Children and families know and understand what has happened at the end of their proceedings'

No surprises when reports are filed



Assessment and Child's Plan



Holding children and families at the heart of our practice



We promote the safety and welfare of children



'Children and families feel they are understood and that their views and experiences have been heard'



Family Storyboards

What's important to you?



Wanting to know more about you and what is important in your life



We respect, value and respond to the uniqueness and diversity of each child, family and colleague



'Children and families feel that their individual circumstances, needs and personal characteristics have been recognised'



Introductory letters and reporting to court

About this workbook

The workbook outlines the five practice mechanisms that support the values of **Together**, our actions in practice towards these, and how we hope to make a positive difference for children and families known to Cafcass. It shares what each aspect of practice material will look like and provides examples from the piloting of **Together** on how these were used. The first step is to understand what the framework is, followed by having a go at using it and practising with colleagues to develop it. It has been developed collaboratively with teams, managers, and leaders to create a framework that connects our practice, our values and our ambition for exceptional work with all children and their families.

Restorative at its core

Together is a relationship-based practice model built around the principles, skills, and approach to working with others, that is found in restorative practice.

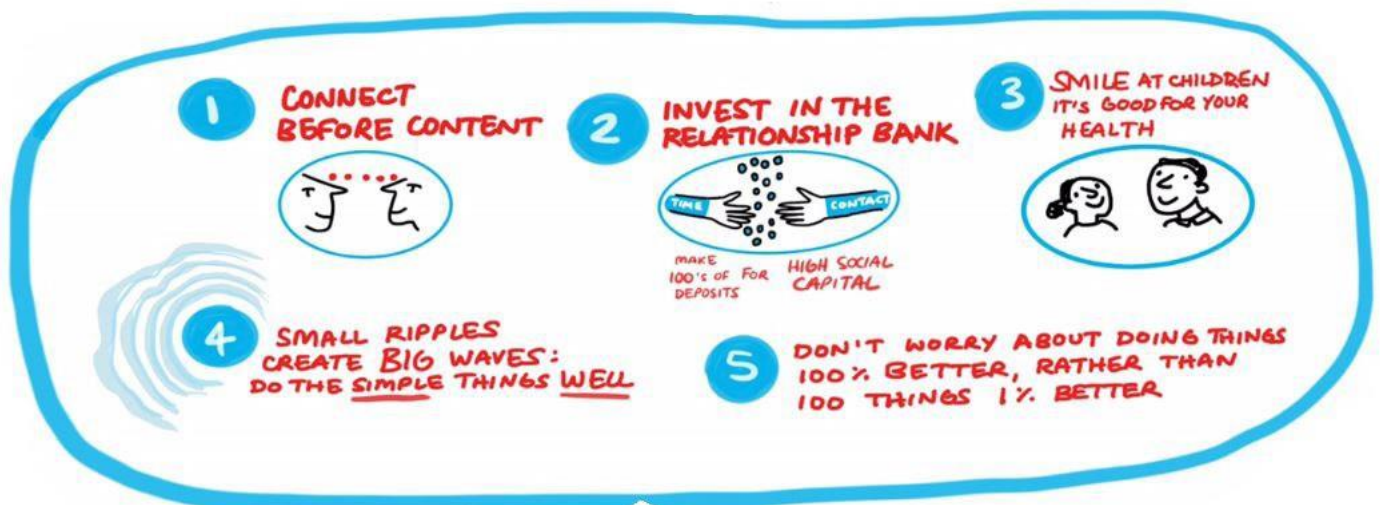


Restorative practice places focus on the impact on families of the difficulties they encounter, from multiple perspectives, such as the child's, each parent, carers, family, friends and professionals (Williams, 2019). It is characterised by doing things 'with' families (Wachtel, 2013) i.e. in collaboration, shifting practice and organisations away from 'doing to' (Mason et al 2017). Restorative practice differs from a restorative justice model, with a focus on the 'problem' rather than the 'offence' (Williams, 2019).

Working 'with' emphasises the need for high support and high challenge. Through our work we offer support, empathy and help to create hope in others in all circumstances, whilst also being clear about what is concerning us. We value the relationship and seek to create this at the same time as setting clear bottom lines. We must understand our own authority and use this appropriately. **We listen with the intent to understand** - *I'm here for you, I value you, I want to hear you.* In working 'with' others language is important as it can create the reality that others experience. **Words can create disconnection, the language we use is to create connection.**



Five things for working restoratively:



I - Reflective and Group Supervision



Always looking for the strengths and risks

Group Supervision sessions have been developed within teams and involve the use of a reflective supervision tool, which uses elements of restorative and strengths-based practice. The Group Supervision session reflects on the elements of **Together**, by asking questions around how your work has made a difference to a child (strengths), and in complex work, how interventions or expert assessments have made (or will make) a difference to a child (impact). This supports us to **Always look for the strengths and risks**, within group and individual reflective sessions.

The aims of group supervision are to increase confidence in using **Together** and to reflect and develop practice. In this respect, group supervision differs from a traditional supervision approach, with a focus on learning and development as opposed to decision making. Group supervision needs all participants to commit to each to be successful.

Group supervision includes using appreciative inquiry, developing solution-focused questioning, reflection and using Solution Circles (Finnis, 2016). Through group supervision you are encouraged to critically reflect and challenge your unconscious and conscious bias.

“...we all need the opportunity to confront our limiting mindsets, our own blind spots.” Garraway (2011).

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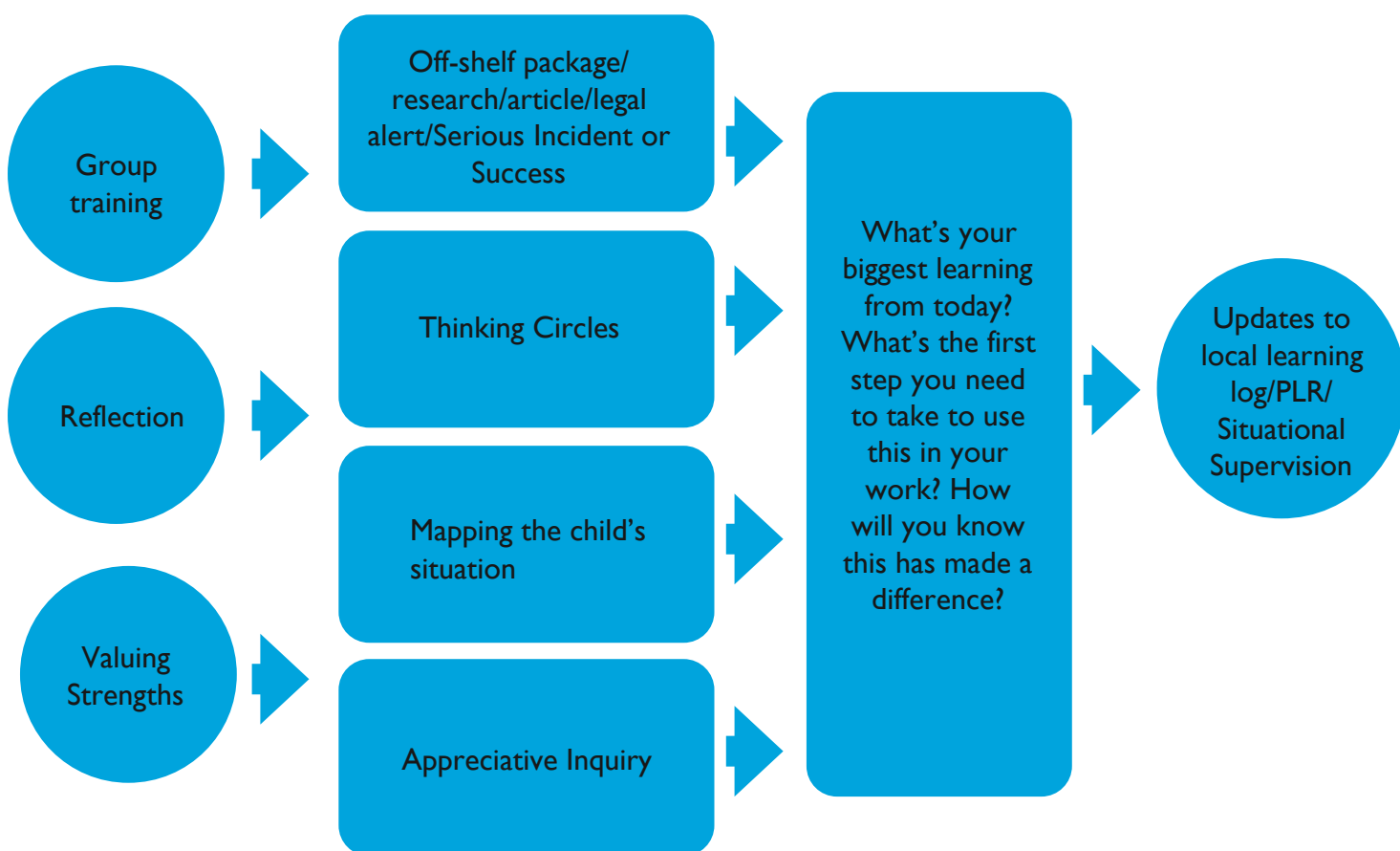
Group supervision has been good for shared experience. There are staff with 18 years of practice experience as well as new staff, all with different areas of expertise. Instead of having to go to management for advice, you know other members of your team who may have specific experience and knowledge on specific issues and therefore we can support each other.

Family Court Adviser

Together model of Group Supervision

The model below outlines what can be achieved when working together as a group. Don't be over ambitious, you should not be expected to do all these things in every group supervision. The model gives you several tools that you can use (if you are not already successfully using something else). We encourage staff to share these with us so we can share them across the organisation.

Whatever you choose to do in group supervision, always try and end with the three impact questions by sharing and recording these together. What's your biggest learning from today? What's the first step you need to take to use this in your work? How will you know this has made a difference?



Group Training

Group supervision remains a space for team training and development using off-the-shelf training materials, research discussions or reviewing practice through legal alerts. It should also be used to create discussions to cement learning from significant incident reviews or serious success reviews. At the end, the impact on practice should be considered with everyone sharing and recording: **What's your biggest learning from today? What's the first step you need to take to use this in your work? How will you know this has made a difference?**

Mapping the child's situation

At the start of the session define some key **roles**. One person will lead the group and one practitioner will present the child's situation. The practitioner is supported to define what they want to get out of the session, by **setting a goal**. The person leading the group should clarify the goal so that it is clear and specific.

Orientate the group to the child's situation. You want others to know who people are and who are the key connections for this child. A brief genogram of the family can help.

The practitioner then gives an **overview for five minutes** of the child's situation, focusing on what is happening and what might be worrying them the most. This should be enough time and avoids the group being inundated with information. Whilst the practitioner is sharing the overview, the group can take notes, or the lead can map the information around the domains of the assessment and child's planning instrument in **Together**, using flipchart paper, white board or the interactive whiteboard in Microsoft Teams. No questions should be asked during the overview. At the end of the overview, the group leader can ask a few clarifying questions if they feel it will aid the group to understand this child's situation.

Everyone in the group then reflects on what they have heard and records their thoughts in '**Thinking & Feeling**'. The group lead can ask questions to the whole group to consider from the thinking and feeling table (below).

Finally, the group shares their thoughts and the practitioner considers three '**What needs to happen now?**' actions to take forward. The lead should set a date for the practitioner to feedback their progress, possibly in the form of a follow-up session.

What are we thinking and feeling?

- How has the child's situation left you thinking and feeling?
- What are your feelings about children living in this situation?
- How might the child be thinking and feeling?
- What does good contact look like for you?
- What are the strengths that you might see in a family or situation like this?
- What similar situation have you come across before? What happened?
- What questions would you use in this situation, how would you phrase them directly for the practitioner to take away?
- What assumptions might you have formed?
- How would you honour what the adults are doing well in this situation?
- What issues arise from race, culture, faith, language, gender, disability or sexual orientation?
- What difference should we make in this situation and how will we know it is successful?
- What behaviours would we expect to see from the adults in this situation to know the child is safe?

Mapping the Child's Situation

Roles	One person acts as the facilitator leading the supervision. Talks directly to the worker and clarifies anything during the process and about the child's situation Worker: Presents a child's situation. The Team: brings their knowledge, experience, hypothesis & learning
Set the goal	Facilitator asks: What do you want to get out of this conversation about what is happening for this child? Set a clear specific goal: What would success in this session look like?
Orientation	Genogram: outlining the family members, note families' ethnicity, faith and culture Ecomap: friends and professional network Systemic: several generations, supporting networks (if known)
Five-minute overview	Worker: overview without interruptions Team & facilitator: make notes using matrix, What is happening? How it looks to me? Strengths in the Family System. No discussion or questioning of worker
What are we thinking and feeling?	Everyone: reflects on what they have heard and records their thoughts, writes questions for the worker as if being asked directly to the family, network, or professionals. Use the reflective questions to help and provoke discussion.
What needs to happen?	Everyone: shares their thoughts and the worker considers three actions to take forward and sets a date to feedback progress.

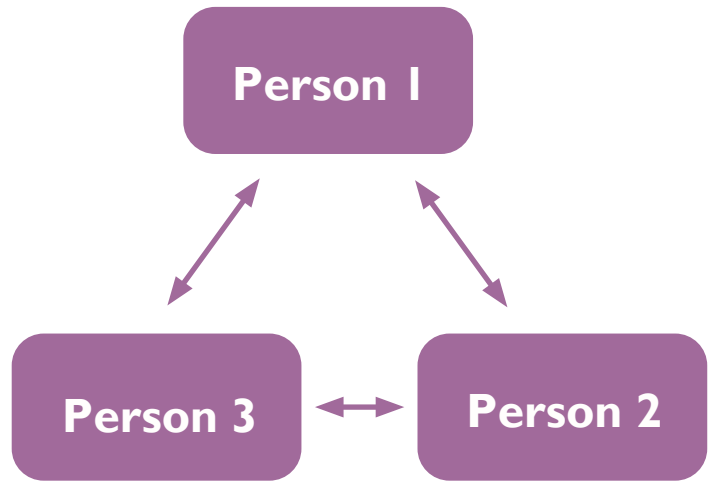
Appreciative Inquiry (15-20mins)

In groups of three, set an Appreciative Inquiry Question, e.g: a piece of practice which the interviewee is proud of?

Person 1 leads Appreciative Inquiry with Person 2 for

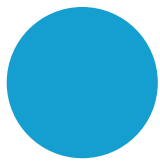
5-7 minutes. Person 1 only asks questions of person

2, person 3 acts as an observer and only listens. After 5-7 mins, person 3 gives feedback (3mins), what worked well?

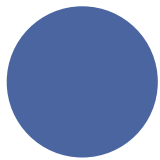


After the first-time, swap round roles. After the second time, swap roles again, so everyone has had a go at each role. Feedback to each other as a pair.

Solution Circles



Group



Practitioner



Facilitator



The solution circle process is about creating connections. We want to help each other to get from a problem to a solution, quickly. It works well with a clearly defined problem but can also be effective in understanding your work with children. As the aim is to find restorative solutions, it offers less reflection

than in the mapping the child's situation process. All four stages need to be used, and it can be delivered either face to face or using Microsoft Teams.

Stage 1 - The issue: The issue to be dealt with is clearly outlined by the person without any interruption from the group. (1-4mins)

Stage 2 – Clarification Questions: This is the only stage where there is dialogue between the group and the person with the issue. The group is allowed to ask clarification questions on the subject, typically, “when does this...?”, “how often will they...?”, “who is involved?” etc. At this stage it is key that no solutions are offered, or any enquiries are made about things/interventions, that may have been tried before. We do not want to establish a dialogue of “I’ve tried that, and it didn’t work!” Only clarification questions may be asked. (1-4mins)

Stage 3 – Ideas/Our best thinking: This phase of the process requires the person with the issue to sit with paper and a pen to list the ideas and suggested ways forward offered by their colleagues. They must take care not to respond to any of the suggestions, even if they have been tried before, they must just listen and note the suggestions. (1-4mins)

Stage 4 – Next Steps: The subject of the process will sit, reflect and select the two (or so) suggestions that they will action and use in the future. They then share these with the group so that the group can check in with them at a future date to ensure they have been actioned.



Learning from experience: A local area Group Supervision session was observed as part of the piloting of **Together**, which saw evidence of reflection and collaborative sharing of “best thinking” amongst the team.

Commenting on the Group Supervisions sessions, the Practice Supervisor said:



Group Supervision allows our team to step into a protected and safe space, to bring our whole team wisdom **Together**. This means sharing vulnerability, sharing knowledge, experience, and ideas. We use mapping to ensure the children's experience, voice and needs are at the forefront. Best questions are role modelled and explored; storyboard ideas and recommendations are drafted; risks and strengths are considered. Furthermore, all participating FCA's retain autonomy and the ability to take the best ideas forward, not only for the children and family who are the subject of the actual supervision but for many children, families and scenarios within our wider work. Our team wisdom is shared **Together**, and it is an invaluable opportunity to support each other too.

Family Court Adviser

Reflective one to one supervision

In our work we deal with ever more complex decisions that require balancing children's safety and welfare in their family circumstances. Whenever we undertake one to one supervision, we must follow

the supervision policy and management standards for conducting supervision. We have provided a reflective supervision tool to aid this process. The tool will also support staff when completing assessment and child's planning in **Together** as it uses the same style of questioning. The reflective tool is to support understanding of the danger and harm to children, so that FCA's can feel confident in the decisions they make. It doesn't, however, provide the practitioner with reflection on themselves and the impact of the work they undertake.

Reflective Supervision Tool



What are the risks for this child?	What is special and unique for this child?	Strengths in the family system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are we involved right now? Tell us the factors that have brought us here today? • What is the worrying adult or young person's behaviour and how long has it been happening? • Describe how bad the harmful adult or young persons' behaviour is? • How long has this been happening. What is the impact on the child(ren)/young person of the adult or the young person's behaviour? • What has been seen/described about this impact, what is the behavioural detail? What do you think the child/young person and/or parent were thinking & feeling? How do you know? What were you thinking? • Voice of the child – what are their worries, what do they understand about why Cafcass is involved? How have they been affected? • What is the parent(s) saying about the concerns? • What affect will there be to the child(ren)'s lived experience of this and all the assessed complications? • What are you worried might happen in the future if things don't change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice of the child/young person – what are they saying in terms of positives about their life? • What is the parent(s) saying in terms of positives about their care of the child(ren)? What do they do well, feel most proud of? • Partner agencies' views on what is working well? • What is the child/young person view of themselves and their abilities, what does their ethnicity, religion, first language (and any other diversity factors) mean for them? • What is the best time that the parent/carers have had together and/or with their child(ren)/young person? Can they tell you/describe a time when they all really clicked together? • Have there been similar concerns in the family before where the child(ren)/young person has been kept safe – exploration of how this happened? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What else do we need to know or do to turn strengths into safety? • Do we need to know more about the child(ren)/young person's voice/experience? • Does the assessment need to consider further observations of the parent/carers with the child(ren)/young person? • What additional support is needed to help build sensitivity/positive change in the parent/carers to enable them to support the child(ren)/young person? • On a scale of 0 to 10 where 10 means the child(ren)/young person is safe enough and Cafcass no longer need to be involved. And 0 means it is too unsafe for the child(ren)/young person to stay at home, where do you rate this situation? Where does the supervisor/manager scale this? • What needs to happen to get nearer to 10 on the scale? • Even just a next step up the scale? This can become part of the plan, include who does what by when?

2 - Appreciative Inquiry



Believing in respectful relationships

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is the practice of asking questions that strengthen a system or persons capacity to apprehend, anticipate and heighten positive potential (Cooperider et al. 2008). Appreciative Inquiry can be used to support our work as it helps to develop skills in asking strengths-based questions, amplifying behavioural detail of what has happened and thinking about what difference our work has made, or could make.

Appreciative Inquiry can be used by us all in our work with children and families, meetings, working with partners and contact with each other.

Those who talk directly to children and families including our family court advisors can use Appreciative Inquiry with families to understand what is working well in their care and what difference this makes for their children.

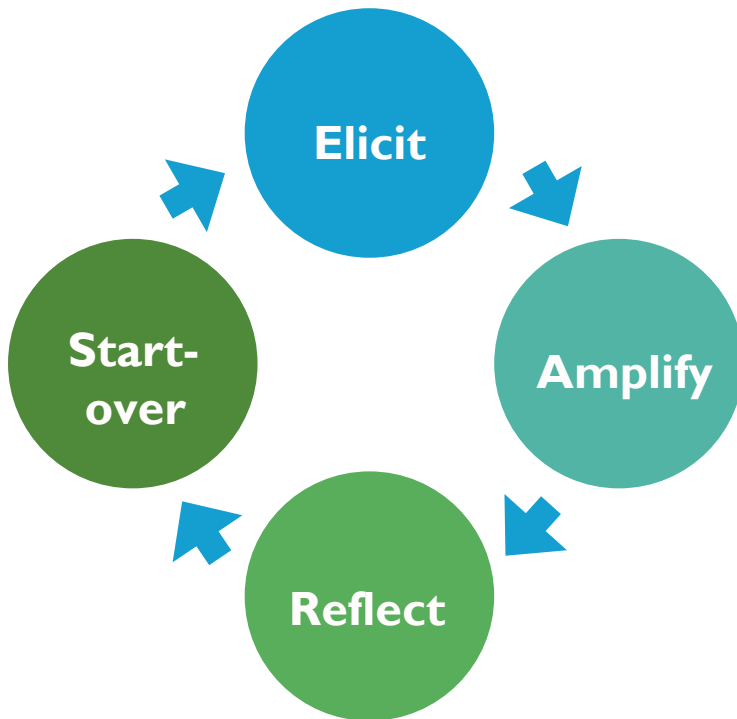
‘Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative, co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organisations, and the work around them... AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to apprehend, anticipate and heighten positive potential.’
(Cooperider et al. 2008)

We should support each other, including leaders and managers, by modelling AI within meetings, conversations, and supervision. AI enables everyone to understand quickly and concisely what is working well and what difference it is making. Organisationally, we can learn from what has gone well, what effect our critical thinking has had on our work and what we could do differently next time. It also promotes active listening, which is an important developmental factor linked to relational, strengths-based practice (Early & Glenmays, 2000; Dunst, Trivet, & Hanby, 2007; Lietz, 2011; Kemp et al., 2014). Creating a culture of using AI within the organisation is pivotal in developing the framework principle of **Believing in respectful relationships**.

How to use appreciative inquiry

Appreciative inquiry can be used in different ways. It provides a framework to have strengths-based conversations with parents and older children. It can also be used in situational supervision and group supervision to develop practice. Meetings at all levels can start with an appreciative inquiry question ‘Where have you seen or heard about a piece of work that has worked well?’. When using Appreciative inquiry, the process of Elicit, Amplify, Reflect and Start-Over (EARS) can be used to help structure the conversation, if required. Appreciative Inquiry should not avoid hard issues, it is about intelligently understanding what has worked well, such as what difference it has made for the child; it is not about simply leading people to self-congratulation.





Using EARS in an Appreciative Inquiry

Elicit - The organising question for the whole conversation. Such as 'What would you say is the most positive thing you or someone else has done in your work recently?' Or 'Tell me about a challenging situation and how you overcame it?'

Amplify (Behavioural Detail – What would you see/hear) - Who did what, where, and when? How did you know what you were doing was working? What difference did you see? How did you make this happen? If I had been there, what would I have seen you do? What would the child/parent/professional/colleague/other person say you did to contribute to achieving a successful outcome?

Reflect – Explore Meaning - When you think about this, what was the most important thing you learnt? What is the thing you feel proudest of? On a scale of 0-10, where would you rate what you brought to this (give description of both ends of scale 0-10)? What needs to happen to move up the scale?

Start-Over - Allow the conversation to flow but try and think about when you have used amplifying and reflecting questions.

Using EARS in an Appreciative Inquiry quick guide

Elicit	Amplify	Reflect	Start-Over
What would you say is the most positive thing you have seen or done in your or others work in the last week?	Who was involved in this?	When you think about this work what's the biggest learning for you?	What else has gone well?
	What are the most important things that happened?	How have you or could you go about bringing this learning into your work?	
	What difference did this make for children?	On a scale of 0-10 where would you rate this practice (give ends of scale)? What needs to happen to move up the scale?	

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Practitioners feel more comfortable with a strengths-based approach when working with colleagues and families... In private law proceedings it has been particularly helpful when coming from a position of doing things 'with' rather than 'to', especially with parents where working has been a bit trickier. Using this technique has meant parents have felt empowered.

Family Court Adviser

Learning from experience: The Appreciative Inquiry below, conducted by Sarah Dickinson, Improvement Manager (National Improvement Service) highlights the approach of Appreciative Inquiry through the experiences of collaborative working. Working collaboratively with parents is aligned with all the values of **Together** and is an essential ingredient to restorative working.

A Family Court Adviser in A12, shared her experiences of working collaboratively with two parents, and the difference this made. She explained that within a lengthy private law matter there had been significant disagreement between the parents as to what should happen, and limited progress was being made in arrangements being directed by the Court based on the recommendations made by Cafcass.



She described how a change in approach with the parents of supporting them to formulate arrangements themselves, whilst also providing empathy to the parents in respect of their individual positions, helped to achieve a significant shift. So successful was her work with the family, arrangements were agreed upon, and the parents are successfully working together to progress these. In the work with the parents, she was able to demonstrate high levels of support, alongside clear challenge when faced with continued disagreement around the arrangements. She was also consistent in her message of wanting to work with the parents to support them to achieve the right outcome for their child.

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I applied the Appreciative Inquiry method with a family whereby the parents could not agree on a best outcome. I focused my questions on ‘what would you like to happen next, what would you like for your child?’ The parents agreed with what was best for their child. This helped with writing the report, which the parents were very happy with. Working with the parents rather than by force had a positive impact.

Family Court Adviser

3 - Assessment and planning



Decision making is clear and reasoned

The assessment and child’s plan is designed using restorative, strengths-based and family focused questions to elicit information around three central assessment questions. This is not to say that only three questions can ever be asked, but that the questions act to structure our understanding and analysis of your assessment. We still need to use all our skills, experience and knowledge to make sense of what is happening for the children with whom work. To support this further; additional questions can be used to bring together the sometimes highly complex information that we have sought, even when we are working at pace. This approach also

emphasises the impact concerns, worries, and harm on a child alongside what family members have done to care, support and keep their children safe.

What are the risks for this child?
(What harm has happened? and what is the harm now?)

What is special and unique for this child?

Strengths in the family system?

Child Impact

Our words for the child and their response

Stage one of the assessment is what is happening for the child: information and analysis. This starts with three central questions:

1. **What are the risks for this child? (What harm has happened? and what is the harm now?)** – to assess and understand what the biggest worries are and what impact this has on the child. What others (parents, family, professionals) think and feel about the situation, and how things might complicate matters. We also scrutinise local authority plans in this space.

2. **What is special and unique for this child?** - is to place the child at the centre of our assessment. When possible, it should include the child’s voice and what they want to happen. We must also explore and understand the impact of the child’s uniqueness and diversity. When capturing children’s views, we should always aim to record this in the child’s own words, and if we have not heard these directly, identify how we will.



3. **Strengths in the family system?** - places focus on what and how family members, as well as their personal and professional networks, make a difference to the child. Each should always be written with a focus on behavioural detail; what has been seen, what has happened to this child, if I were them what would I have seen happen? And if we do not have the information we need at this time, how and from whom we will elicit this.



In stage one it is not just three central questions. All the questions below are designed to help understand worries, past harm, harm now, likelihood of repeat and complicating factors. The assessment framework is not a teaching tool on how you make the assessment, practitioners will still use all the skills they have but the framework can help think through the key information, sort it and analyse it.



The second stage is child impact: impact and evaluation. It supports our expertise and the value the family court places on us to be clear and reasoned in our decision making; we record our professional analysis and recommendations in **Child Impact** (where we explain what we think and why we think it) and include any **Update** as our work progresses. In doing so we focus again on what does this all mean for the child. When understanding the impact on children of what is happening, we must consider how to manage the risk and uncertainty that this can bring. We must consider what happens next, through our recommendations to the family court. When we formulate and articulate plans, we must also do this in words for the child(ren) – **Our words for the child and their response**. This is where we record in words that the child will understand what the plan will be. No jargon! We share this with them and record their response in their own words. This should be shared with the family court within our reports.

Enhanced assessment and analysis

Why: Because our assessment influences the rest of their lives

To a child: Understanding how it feels to be you and how to help you now for the future is our job

What are the risks for this child? (What harm has happened? and what is the harm now?)

- Think about the behavioural detail of what is known and seen, by you and others?
- What has been happening for this child in the past?
- What is happening for this child right now?
- How serious would the risk be if nothing changed?
- How likely is the behaviour to be repeated?
- How do others including the child think and feel about what is happening?
- What other risks and situations things get in the way and create complications?
- What other information do you have or need by engaging with partners, grandparents, wider family members and professionals to understand the risk of what is happening?

What is special and unique about me?

- Think about the behavioural detail of what is known and seen, by you and others?
- What does child say is special and unique about them?
- Who would the child(ren) say are important to them?
- What would child(ren) say are the important places for them?
- What would child(ren) say are the important things for them?
- What would the child(ren) say were the things the important people help with?

- If the child were here, how would they say this situation looks to them?
- What things would the child say they want to be different in this situation?
- What do I understand all this to be doing and meaning for this child in their situation?
- What does(do) the child(ren) want to happen?

Don't forget you can use the Diversity and Inclusion Wheel to help your work

Strengths in the Family System?

- Think about the behavioural detail of what is known and seen, by you and others?
- Have there been times when the care or arrangements for this child have been better or worked well? How did that happen?
- What would the family say things would look like if everything was sorted out?
- When have the parents, family and/or familiar adults kept the child safe?
- What other information do you have or need by engaging with partners, grandparents, wider family members and professionals to understand how they support or provide safety?



Child Impact

- What is happening for the child now?
- What is your analysis of this child's situation balancing **'What are the risks for this child? What is special and unique for the child? and Strengths in the family system?'**
- What harm has happened, could happen if nothing changes?
- What do we think and why?
- What is our assessment and what is that based on?
- What do we recommend?
- Based on what we know right now; how will you make a positive difference for this child? (best interest, safety and welfare)
- How will you say and share this with the child? (in words that they will understand)
- What was their response to this? (in their own words)



Remember you can use the questions of the assessment and child's plan in Group Supervision, to think through a complex situation for a child, or when stuck in decision making.



“

The child has come alive on the file; the child's needs have been reflected.

Family Court Adviser

“

Presented from the child's point of view and what will happen next – gets rid of jargon on child's record.

Family Court Adviser

“

Applying the questions from the framework into the child's plan is helpful when thinking what is best for the child.

Family Court Adviser

Learning from experience: A Family Court Adviser demonstrates the value and effectiveness of using **Together** to inform their planning, through application of the questions. It has helped ensure a focus on the strengths within the family, alongside considering risk, and has also enhanced exploration of diversity factors.

“

The Family Court Adviser shared that:

The assessment and child's plan has helped me to think in more detail regarding the children and their families and the situations that they find themselves in. The different areas seem to feed into each other, 'What is happening' allows me to think about the information that I know about, including risks as well as hypothesis on what may be driving the functions behind the different behaviours and how these actions impact on the child/children, this feeds into 'what is special and unique for this child'. This helps me to focus on the child and the child's voice exploring their known diversity as well as encouraging me to think about more than just 'tick' boxes... 'Strengths in the family system' supports the FCA to explore the strengths that are identified as well as seeking views of parents and children and exploring the strengths that may be found outside of their immediate family... The use of the professionals' analysis and recommendations as part of Child Impact also allows me to regulate my thinking, especially when thinking about risks to the child/ren and how these may be managed.

Family Court Adviser

Feedback during the piloting of **Together** told us:

“

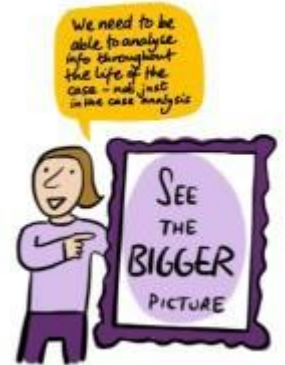
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Presented from the child's point of view and what will happen next – gets rid of jargon on child's record.

Family Court Adviser



“

Applying the questions from the framework into the child's plan is helpful when thinking what is best for the child.

Family Court Adviser

Furthermore, on reviewing the child's plan, their Service Manager commented:

“

...great to see use of the **Together** Framework and how this has lent itself to a child's plan that is compliant but also full of hypotheses and professional curiosity. Also, diversity consideration is outstanding. Importantly the thread of risk is clear and there are clear actions set.

Service Manager

In practice example: Below is an example of using the assessment and child's plan by an FCA from work undertaken in piloting **Together**. The assessment and plan are about Sally aged 6 and her family. It is a long running private law matter where **Together** was applied to help make sense of what had happened for Sally in her life and over 12 months of proceedings. Assessment and planning will look different at different stages of our work and can be built upon as work progresses. Recording can be bullet-pointed if needed but remember that the aim of the assessment and planning tool is to show our workings out using behavioural detail.

What are the risks for this child?

Mr Nunes has a conviction for battery in a previous relationship and undertook the Building Better Relationships Programme through probation. In the Safeguarding Letter he states that this was a one-off incident and denies the domestic abuse against Mrs Nunes. Mrs Nunes has alleged issues relating to coercive control and abusive behaviour. Mr Nunes was arrested for grabbing Mrs Nunes by the arm and pushing her against the wall whilst she was holding Sally. This would have been distressing and confusing for a young child and it is likely that she would have been very scared. It is also a concern that she could have been physically harmed in this incident. It is worrying that Mr Nunes doesn't recognise the seriousness of his behaviour or the impact on Sally.

What is special and unique for this child?

Sally is a little girl who has been exposed to frightening behaviour between her parents. She grew up in a very populated area and now lives in a very remote area. Sally lives with her three half-brothers and sister and they spend time with their father. Sally does not spend any time with her father. Sally's father, Mr Nunes is dual heritage; her paternal grandfather is from India and her paternal grandmother is white British. Sally may feel different from her brothers and sister due to both her ethnicity and her different parentage. It is possible that, given her young age, she does not fully understand why she cannot see her father, particularly as her brothers and sister see theirs. Mrs Nunes reports in the Safeguarding Letter that Sally has talked about "daddy shouting" at her and this will need to be explored during direct work with her. The move to Scotland brought Sally nearer to her maternal family but she may have suffered confusion at the speed of the move and not fully understand why this happened.

Strengths in the family system?

The Safeguarding Letter notes that a Child and Family social work assessment, in relation to Mr Nunes spending time with a connected child (a child from a different relationship), recommended that this did not need to be supervised as there was no evidence to indicate he posed a risk to that child. His care of the connected child had been observed as good and he was noted to be responsive to her needs. Mrs Nunes has taken action to protect herself and Sally from the risk she believes is present due to domestic abuse and which made her frightened by moving away and not allowing Sally to spend time with her father.

Child Impact

The relationship between the parents has broken down and although there is some record of abusive behaviour, in that Mr Nunes pushed Mrs Nunes, the court has determined through a finding of fact hearing there was no coercive control in the relationship. Sally was moved to a new home out of the local area very suddenly at a young age and we do not know what Sally remembers about her dad or if she is frightened of him. The Safeguarding Letter says that she is frightened of him but we do not know if Sally has asked about her dad or wants to see him, and we are not clear what Mrs Nunes has told Sally about her dad, about why they moved and whether Sally knows that her dad is trying to see her. We do not know what Mrs Nunes would view as safe arrangements for Sally to spend time with her father. All of these aspects need to be addressed and considered, along with any additional resources which may support safe arrangements, such as supervised time between Sally and her father. I will need to meet with Mr Nunes and discuss with him his understanding of why Mrs Nunes moved and to understand his own perspective of the relationship and why it broke down. The Finding of Fact hearing did not find that there was coercive control within his relationship however the fact that he has undertaken the BBR must be explored with him to see if he can acknowledge any of the behaviour which led to this and its potential impact on Sally, it is important that he recognises this in order to be confident that he can safely rebuild his interrupted relationship with her. I will need to explore with Mrs Nunes her own perspective of the relationship, what behaviours frightened her and what Sally witnessed, I need to understand what 'safe contact' would feel like for Mrs Nunes. I will need to undertake direct work with Sally to answer the questions above, is she frightened of him? Does she want to see him? What will safe feel like for her?

Child Impact Update

I have undertaken assessment visits to meet with Mr Nunes and Mrs Nunes and utilised the Cafcass domestic abuse tool. I have also completed direct work with Sally which was supported by the use of feelings cards to aid her engagement. Through my work with Mr Nunes I assessed him to have good insight into the concerns raised by Mrs Nunes relating to domestic abuse. Mr Nunes was able to evidence his learning from the BBR, specifically in relation to the impact for Sally of having experienced domestic abuse. Mr Nunes demonstrated authenticity in his reflections of the impact of his actions on Sally. Through my work with Mrs Nunes we explored how she had been fearful of Mr Nunes during their relationship and for some time after, and how this has resulted in her moving away from the local area in an effort to both protect Sally and herself, and to be closer to her parents for support. Mrs Nunes has been very worried by Sally witnessing her father's abusive behaviour however she was also worried about Sally not seeing her father, having recently expressed she wanted to spend time with him and wanting to know why she couldn't see him. Mrs Nunes was reassured by Mr Nunes having attended the BBR and felt this demonstrated both his acknowledgement of his abusive behaviour and motivation to change. Mrs Nunes is also now supported by her maternal family due to her living closer to them and she reports this has greatly assisted her in feeling safer following her experiences of domestic abuse.

Child Impact Update continued

Mrs Nunes would like Sally to have a relationship with her father. She believes this could happen but feels it needs to be gradually rebuilt. Mrs Nunes also needs to develop trust in Mr Nunes in terms of his ability to keep Sally safe.

Through my direct work with Sally she told me she would like to see her daddy, but she doesn't want him to "do shouting". She told me that she missed him and did not indicate any fear around the prospect of spending time with him.

Having completed the assessment visits and completed direct work with Sally, considered the report from the BBR and reviewed the Child and Family Assessment completed in relation to Mr Nunes and his connected child, and applied the Safe Contact Indicator to guide my thinking, it is my assessment steps can be taken to safely re-introduce Sally to her father. At this stage, my recommendation is for Sally to spend time with her father via video-calls which will be supported by the maternal grandmother. If these arrangements are positive, then the parents are in agreement they would work together to progress the arrangements to Sally spending time with her father at a supported centre. The communication between the parents will be facilitated by the maternal grandmother.

Our words for the child and their response

If the court agrees these recommendations, I will explain this to Sally using a storyboard which will be collaboratively prepared with her parents.

Sally's dad has said that he misses her and wants to see her. We know that Sally has felt scared in the past when her dad has shouted, and we want to make sure that she doesn't feel scared again. I will talk to mum and I will talk to dad and I will find out what it is that they think should happen. I will talk to Sally and find out what she wants to happen and if she wants to see her dad. If Sally wants to see him then I will make sure that she can see him and feel happy and safe and enjoy spending time with him.

My words for Sally

'Now that I have talked to you, your mummy and your daddy, I will tell the judge that you want to see your daddy but I think this should happen first by FaceTime. After you have started talking to him by FaceTime mummy and daddy will work together and talk to you about seeing him face to face in the future. You will be able to talk with your mummy and daddy about this. I have also agreed with your mummy and daddy that we will work together to give you some words and pictures that will tell you what has happened, why you met me and what will happen afterwards. We call this a family story board.'

Sally's response

I am happy with this. I want to talk to daddy.

4 - Family storyboards



Holding children and families at the heart of our practice

Together starts with the child and stays with the child; it values direct practice with children and families, and it should be at the heart of everything we do. Our approach seeks to establish what the child knows about the court application and to support the parent, or significant adult, to share their story. Children are often the last to know what is happening, despite being at the centre and the subject of our work. By using Family Storyboards, we want to help the child and family to share their story.

The Cafcass ‘How it looks to me’ app helps a child talk about their family, their own strengths, safety and describe their journey. Family Story Boards are used so that children are supported to understand **why** they are involved in the family courts, whether in public or private law, through words and pictures developed by their parents or significant adults.

The work, which can be undertaken quickly and succinctly, must always keep the child central and involved in the process, supporting the principle of **Holding children and families at the heart of our practice.**

What are Family Storyboards?

Family Storyboards are a story to explain to children what has happened in their family and how adults around them will keep them safe in the future (Essex, Gumbleton and Luger, 1996). Family Storyboards are a story written by adults with pictures to explain to children what has happened in their family and how adults around them will keep them safe and what the plan will be. It is based on a direct work tool developed by Turnell and Essex, 2006. It has similarities to life story work in that it offers a restorative element to a child about what has happened in their life. It differs significantly in that it should be used to talk about an event or moment in recent time and share an agreed understanding about what has happened. It should be conveyed by an adult who the child considers as someone significant. To be successful, it is essential that the adult owns what is shared with the child. A parent or parents are most likely to be the key adult to provide the pictures and narrative and even if they are not able to directly share it, they must be involved in agreeing the words and picture story for their child or children.

OUR FOCUS IS ALWAYS

THE CHILD
I know my PLAN
& I understand!





Family Storyboards are helpful for children because they are visual and gives them the opportunity to see what is happening, using language they understand. Family Storyboards work best when adults who are involved with the children help to prepare it, as they have the best knowledge of the level children will understand. With older children, they can help to draw the pictures, and this can be a good way of building rapport. The Family Storyboard gives children the opportunity to keep coming back to the explanation, to revisit it and to have a way of talking to adults about their experiences.

Service Manager

How we use Family Storyboards in practice

Family Storyboards have a strong application to the work we do but be mindful of the time you have to support a family. It is likely to be more applicable in private law, reflecting the different emphasis the court places on Cafcass. That is not to say that it isn't an important and powerful element in public law, but that it is more likely we would suggest and support the Local Authority to apply this work. In private law, think about children's situations where we are required to be involved and provide assistance, mediation or support. When you use family storyboards, it's important to maintain that a key part of the process is the involvement of a parent or significant adult in the child's life, who assist in providing the narrative, so that the child understands that it is coming from that person. The restorative nature of the approach and involvement of families won't make it work in every child's circumstance, but we should be clear when and why we aren't able to use Family Storyboards.



'The story should be balanced; it should include positives about the child and their family; as well as telling the story of what has happened; what the risk is and; how everyone will keep the children safe in the future.' (Essex et al 2013: p.10)

Steps in creating Family Storyboards

Explain to the family (parents/carers) what a Family Storyboard is and why it might be helpful for their family:

- a. It helps children to understand what the worries are and that it is ok to talk about them.
- b. Children are usually aware that the family court is involved and that someone connected (such as Cafcass) will come and talk with them, yet they may hear different versions or create their own as to 'why', which can make them anxious or frightened.
- c. Children can often cope with very difficult things if they are explained in line with the child's age and understanding.
- d. It will help the child to know that they have adults they can trust to talk to and who will listen.

Creating the words:

2

- a. Some parents will feel comfortable when working on the words themselves, others will find it helpful to talk with Cafcass about this to agree the key events. In some circumstances it may be necessary for Cafcass to draft some of the words.
- b. Start with a positive.
- c. Use short sentences and plain language.
- d. Include any specifics to your family i.e. traditions, cultures, memories.
- e. Introduce concerns or worries gradually.
- f. End the story with a hopeful or neutral picture that the child will recognise.

Add the pictures:

3

- a. Keep them simple, (it doesn't need to be an artistic challenge, the simpler the better) using stick figures, drawings, and speech.
- b. If there has been direct harm by a parent to the child, this should not be explicitly drawn, however it is possible for this process to be successful in all circumstances of harm.
- c. Some adults will be able to share this task with their child(ren) helping.
- d. The pictures should highlight the main ideas and turning points in the story.

An agreed story:

4

- a. If there is disagreement between adults this can be represented by including both versions of the story and should be shared with the Cafcass.
- b. It is helpful for Cafcass to have a record of the completed story board, but this does not need to be shared directly with the court, unless it is required. This should be discussed with the relevant service manager.

The child's story:

5

- a. Present the completed story to the child(ren), this does not need to involve Cafcass and families should be encouraged to do this privately.
- b. The story can be given to the children to read it by themselves.
- c. If you know before meeting with a child that they have been supported by family story boards by the adults around them, check in with them on how it looks to them?

Practice Example: The following is an example of a Family Storyboard prepared for 6-year-old, Sally (see also Assessment and Planning) involved in Private Law Proceedings. The words and pictures were prepared in collaboration with the parents:



Mummy and daddy met when they worked together and they fell in love and they got married



They loved each other and they decided to have a baby and you were born. They called you Sally and loved you very much.



After a while they began arguing and shouting and some scary things happened. Once the police even visited.



Mummy felt scared. The shouting made her feel very sad so she took you and your brothers and sisters and moved to Scotland.



Daddy missed you very much. He went to talk to a Judge who told Cafcass they needed to talk to everyone to see if it was okay for you to see daddy.



I talked to mummy and daddy and even came all the way to Scotland and talked to you. You told me that you were a little bit scared but would like to see your dad. I thought about all of the things I had been told.



I went back to England and told the judge what you said and that I thought you should see your dad. The judge decided that you should start talking to your dad on FaceTime and maybe one day see him face to face.



I hope you enjoy talking to your daddy each week and telling him about your life. One day daddy may be able to come to see you face to face and your mummy and daddy will think about that in the future. For now you can keep talking to your daddy on FaceTime.

5 - Introductory letters and reporting to court



A key aspect of our work with children and their families is practising in a way which places real value on getting to know what is special and unique about those individuals, that we understand the diverse needs of individuals and families, and that we respond to this in the work we undertake and in the reports we send to court.

In practice this is demonstrated by helping the children with whom we work feel respected, valued and that their uniqueness has been considered, which and is evident in the recommendations we submit to the court.

Introductory letters are a mechanism we can use to encourage children to tell us what is important to them. The letters ask several questions for the child to consider relating to their uniqueness, including:

- Who is important to you?
- Where do you call home?
- How does your family celebrate special occasions?
- What types of food do you eat at home?
- What is the best/unique/most special thing about you/your family?
- What big things have changed your life recently?

The letters can be adapted and tailored for each child, for example, if some information about a child is already known from speaking to a parent or carer, this might be included within the letter to demonstrate the practitioner's knowledge and interest in the child.

Further guidance to support our engagement with children, which has been developed in collaboration with the Family Justice Young People's Board, can be found here:

[Communicating with Children Throughout Proceedings](#)

The Diversity Wheel (How much do you know about me?) is a great tool to aid thinking around aspects of uniqueness and diversity and provides examples of questions we may ask children.

The 'diversity wheel' is a graphic representation of the 'Big D, little d' concept. 'Diversity with a capital D' (the 'protected characteristics': describes categories of discrimination or obvious difference, such as race, gender or disability) is important when understanding if the young person and/or their family is experiencing discrimination or disadvantage. 'Diversity with a little d' (diversity/uniqueness in its broadest sense – e.g. such as appearance, hobbies and talents) is also important so we can understand children's lives in a rounded way. Using the diversity wheel helps develop our practice so that the uniqueness of all children is much clearer in our assessments about them and our recommendations.





Remember you can use the diversity wheel inclusively with all children, either as a direct work tool or in conversation or to think about how to approach certain aspects of a child's life.

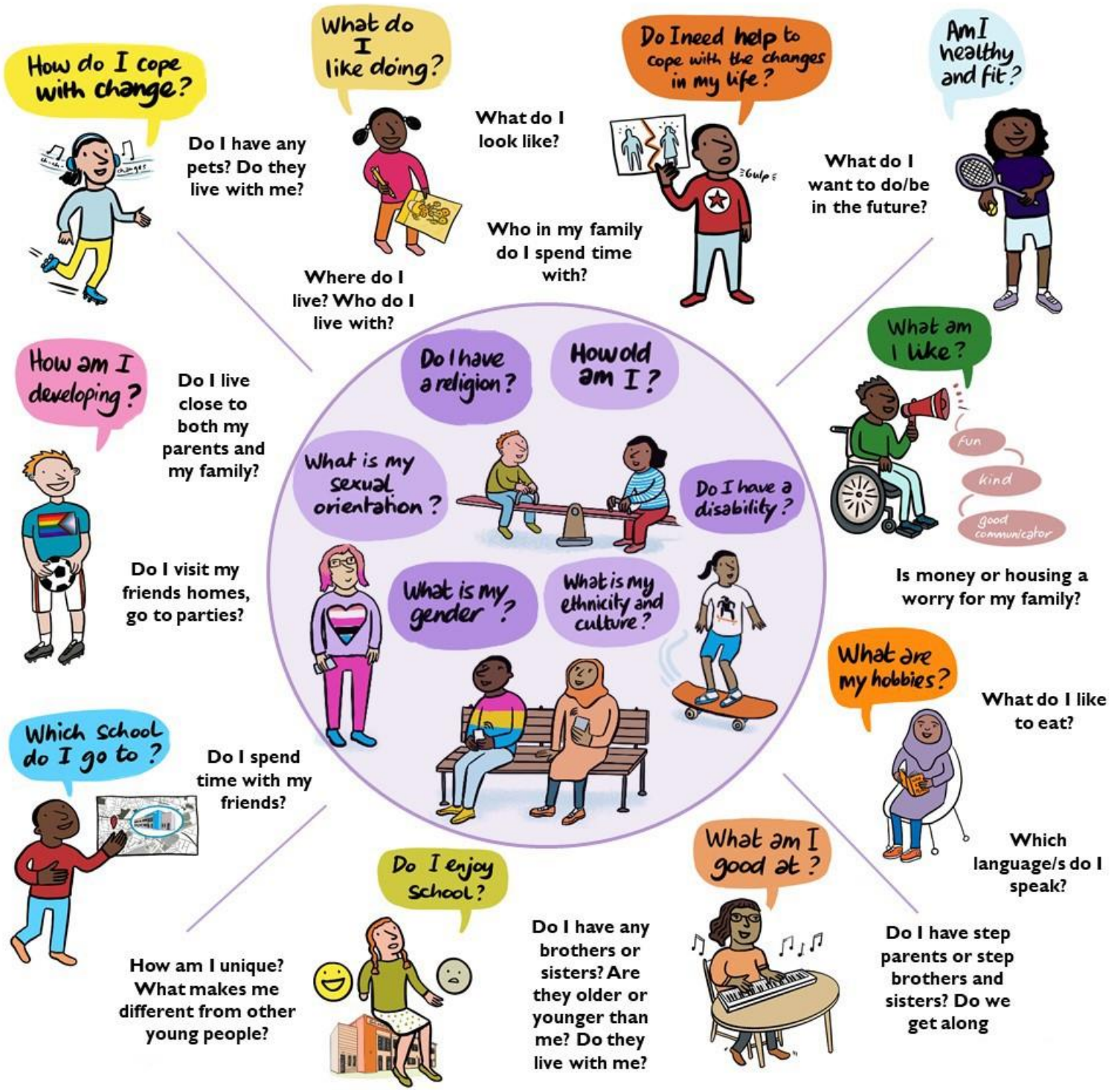
Diversity with a capital 'D' factors:

- What is my ethnicity?
- Do I have a religion?
- How do I describe my sex and gender?
- How old am I?
- Do I have any disabilities?
- What is my sexual orientation?



Diversity with a 'little d' factors:

- Do I spend time with my friends? Do I visit their homes, go to parties etc?
- Do I have step parents or step brothers and sisters? Do we get along?
- Where do I live? Who do I live with?
- Who do I look like?
- What do I like to eat?
- Who in my family do I spend time with?
- Which language/s do I speak?
- What is my personality like?
- What am I good at?
- What do I like doing? What are my hobbies?
- What do I want to do/be in the future?
- Do I have any pets? Do they live with me?
- Do I have any brothers or sisters? Are they older or younger than me? Do they live with me?
- Am I a young carer? Do I have to look after anyone in my family?
- How am I unique? What makes me different from other young people?
- Which school do I go to? Do I enjoy school?
- What are my favourite subjects and am I good at them?
- Do my parents help me at school and with my schoolwork?
- How do I cope with change?
- Do I live close to both my parents and my family?
- Am I healthy and fit? How am I developing?
- Is money or housing a worry for my family?



'Children and families feel that their individual circumstances, needs and personal characteristics have been recognised'

Our plans around how we intend to capture this information should be clearly set out within our child's plans. This will include identifying what we already know about the children and family we are working with and what else we need to know going forward. It will set out how we plan to obtain this information. This information will inform our reports to court and our assessments of the impact this will have on each child as unique individuals.

Welcome letter

For children and young people

1st July 2021



Hello Josiah

My name is Sarah

I am your Family Court Adviser.



I would like to arrange to meet with you. Please use my contact details in this letter to get your dad to let me know where you would like to meet.

We can meet:

- at my office
- at school
- at home
- somewhere else

Please let me know how else you would like to meet and stay in contact from these options.

- Video call
 - Teams
 - FaceTime
- Phone call
- Email
- Text

What does a Family Court Adviser do?

I work for Cafcass to help children and families when the parents or carers can't agree on what's best for children and go to the Family Court to get help.

My job is to try to help families agree on where children live and who they spend time with.

It's important that I meet with you and understand your point of view so that I can help your family and the Judge to make the best decisions for you.

I work hard to make sure that your voice is heard. I may have to talk to other people about what you tell me, to make sure you are safe.

I am interested in how you feel and what you think should happen. It is important that what the court decides helps you.



The reason why we are meeting



I am meeting with you to talk about your family and people that are important to you, what makes you happy and any other feelings you want to tell me about. I also want to know about you and all the things that make you who you are.



What would you like to talk to me about?

Think about things you would like to talk about with me when we meet! They could be:

- your favourite toys
- your favourite food
- hobbies

Or you might have a question for me about what is happening. Just ask!

About you

When we meet it would be great to hear about these things – you might want to ask your parent/carer to write them down to help you remember. Or you could draw a picture.

- Who is important to you?
- Where do you call home?
- How does your family celebrate special occasions?
- What types of food do you eat at home?
- What is the best/unique/most special thing about you/your family?
- What big things have changed your life recently?

Josiah, I heard you had a pet dog called Charlie. These are my pets. Can you guess which one is fastest?! Have a think about and I'll see what you think when we meet.



Please ask your dad to contact me if you want to talk or send me a message.



At the end of our meeting:

I would like to ask you three questions and it would really help me if you are honest. I want to be the best Family Court Adviser for you so I need to hear from you what I have done well and what I could do better. I hope this is ok.

1. Did I help you today?
2. What could I have done differently and better?
3. Looking at these faces, how do you feel after meeting me?



If you want to tell me or someone else at Cafcass about my work with you, please ask your parent or carer to help you make contact with Cafcass on www.cafcass.gov.uk/contact-us. It would be really good to hear what you think about how I am doing.

Signed Sarah



Next steps

Make a pledge for a child

Think about a child you are working with over the coming weeks. What will that child see that is different in your work related to the values and practice in **Together**? Write this down in the form of a pledge. For example, "I will write in the child's plan in Oliver's file, in words that I will share with him, what I'm thinking and planning. This will help him understand what is happening in his proceedings"

When you have completed a pledge discuss the pledge during your next PLR, and share at a dedicated team meeting so colleagues can hear from one another.



“ My records will be free from jargon so that when the child reads what I have written they can clearly understand why I made the decisions I made. ”

“ My audits will be free from jargon and I will use Appreciative Inquiry within collaborative audits. ”



A network of champions

Together offers us high challenge to building the very best relationships with children and their families. High challenge needs high support. Every team in Cafcass should have **Together** champions that others can turn to for support and advice. Champions support others with **Together** and help facilitate and run group supervision.



Champions will also provide training to staff on key elements of what you will have learnt about in this book. These include Restorative Practice, Assessment & Planning, Appreciative Inquiry, and Family Storyboards. We hope that all staff will have completed these sessions with their teams within 12 months of launching **Together**. After this time training for **Together** will form part of induction training for all.

Champions will receive support from the **Together** team based in the National Improvement Service initially with train the trainers sessions so that champions can deliver training in their teams. All champions will then attend quarterly group supervision sessions with the **Together** team, so that they can model and bring together new ideas, innovations and share practice, before taking this back into their teams as part of leading group supervision for others.

If you want to know more about **Together**, provide feedback, share ideas or become a **Together** champion then please contact NIS support: NISsupport@cafcass.gov.uk.

We continue to provide updates, share examples of practice and develop **Together**, to find the very latest information and further resources, please use the **Together** pages on [Connect](#).

Family Justice Young People's Board response to Together

Do you understand what Cafcass are saying?
Does it make sense?

Yes, I understand it and the presentation was clear

The drawings in the presentation helped us to engage as well

NO JARGON & you explained things well

CLEAR + CONCISE

TOGETHER Why + What

Practice Framework

Is anything missing?

any missing pieces?

IT'S ALL THERE

Everything I've thought about that needed to be included is there

I can't think of anything that would make it better

Feedback forms for children & young people

FOLLOW UP

OUTCOME LETTER

From the FCA The FCA could share their recommendations & explain them

ALSO: Tell us how Cafcass works: lay it out clearly

DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

How will they **ACHIEVE** this?

Through feedback? Other reviews?

& **REVIEW** that?

How do you think this will help children & families?

I feel empowered

Making sure children know what's going on

Children's voices & feelings are heard

I feel listened to

I feel reassured

My manager wants to know!

A BETTER EXPERIENCE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Having their voices **HEARD**

Embed a culture of **FEEDBACK**

Our cases + experiences will be a lot smoother

FCA TO ASK:

Where do you want to meet?

When's the best time?

What's best for you?

HAVING MORE SAY!

There shouldn't be an age restriction on choice

None of the Solicitors and people in suits ever asked us what we wanted

Is there anything else we need to think about?

I quite like the name

TOGETHER

Glossary

- **Affective Statements** - A way of communicating to another person how they have affected you by their behaviour, either positively or negatively. For example, I feel hurt when I hear people speak unkindly towards one another. What I would like is for people to speak to one another respectfully.
- **Affective Questions** - Questions that prompt the individual to think about their behaviour and how it has impacted others, and what can be done to repair harm and restore relationships. For example, What happened? What were you thinking at the time? What have you thought about since?
- **Appreciative Inquiry** - A questioning approach that uses a technique to look for strengths and successes. It can be used when facilitating a conversation with colleagues, and with children and their families/ significant adults.
- **Behavioural Detail** - The process of clearly identifying behaviours to aid our understanding and assessment of a child's experience; what was seen, what has actually happened [for this child], and asking the question "if I was them what would I have seen?".
- **Child's Planning** - The process where we consider what is happening for the child through making sense of complex information, considering how further information to enhance our assessment and analysis will be obtained, and considering the impact of the child's situation on them.
- **Collaborative** – A way of working with others. This will apply to our work with our colleagues and partners, and to how we work with children and their families.
- **Empathy** - The ability to emotionally understand and share the feelings of another person; to see things from their point of view and imagine yourself in their place.
- **Group Supervision** - A group setting which allows members to reflect on their work. By sharing skills, experience and knowledge the aim is to build connections with colleagues and improve skills.
- **Practice Framework** - A practice framework is an approach to working with children and families that is values-based. It is not an intervention or a tool. It provides a clear understanding of what underpins our work; why what we do is valued and important, and how we will demonstrate this.
- **Relationship-Based Practice** – Is a way of practising focused on creating relationships with children and their families, with our colleagues and with our partners. These relationships promote collaborative ways of working and increase opportunities to change.
- **Restorative Practice** - Describes a way of being and behaving. It involves building and maintaining healthy relationships, resolving difficulties and repairing harm, and is underpinned by a values-based ethos.
- **Restorative Conversations** - A tool used to explore an incident related to wrong-doing or conflict, and to think about how the actions of a person have affected others. This approach encourages empathy, accountability and repairing harm.



- Scaling question - An approach used to capture how people are feeling at a certain time, and what needs to happen/change to make things better or safer. It can be used to help understand how individuals view the risk.
- Social Discipline Window - It is a concept which describes four basic approaches to determine interactions with others. The four windows represent different combinations of support and challenge, and how when working within these different windows our interactions lead to doing something for, to or with a person.
- Solution Circles - A model used in group supervision to support a person or a team to become “unstuck” where there is a problem. It is an inclusive approach that allows the group to share ideas for solutions.
- Solution-focused Questions - A questioning approach which encourages a person to focus on themselves and identify possible solutions with a view to focusing on the solution rather than the problem. For example, when have things been better? Have you been able to solve this problem before?
- Storyboards - A visual tool to help children understand why they are involved in the family courts through using words and pictures developed by their parents or significant adults.
- Strengths-Based Practice – An approach which focuses on and emphasises individuals’ strengths utilising a collaborative approach. It is an asset-focused approach that focuses on what is strong/what is going well, rather than a deficit approach which focuses on problems/ what is wrong.
- **Together** - With or in close proximity to another person or people.



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Next Update:	October 2023