

# Guidance for practitioners and managers

## New editions of the Family Star Plus™ and Family Star™: What you need to know

In April 2023, Triangle is publishing new and improved editions of the Family Star Plus and Family Star, following a two-year review process and extensive feedback. This document explains the key changes and what you need to know about moving to the new editions.

### 1 Why did we create new editions of the Family Star Plus™ and Family Star™?

Triangle is committed to ensuring that the Outcomes Stars stay relevant and continue to support best practice. We keep them under review, seeking feedback and developing new editions as needed.

The Family Star was developed in 2010. The Family Star Plus was developed and published in 2013, with added emphasis on parents as well as their children. The original Family Star was slightly updated at the same time, creating edition 2. Since then, much has changed – in the sector, in the level and type of need experienced by clients accessing services, as well as economic pressures and housing challenges. Triangle has also learned a lot about use of language and accessibility, including being more trauma-informed and even more client-centred. The new editions of the Family Star Plus and Family Star were developed in response to these changes and to the feedback received during our consultation with those using these Stars.

For more details about the development and review process for these Stars please see the Development summary that accompanies this guidance document.

### 2 What has changed in the new editions?

The main improvements are:

- The top of the Journey of Change has been renamed
- The language is clearer and more trauma-informed
- There are more client-centred names for the outcome areas
- There are small changes to the content of some scales.

#### a) The top of the Journey of Change has been renamed

Stage 5 is now called 'Managing well' – although the meaning remains the same, this replaces "Effective parenting" as it is clearer and less likely to be misunderstood.

#### b) The language is clearer and more trauma-informed

- More trauma informed and client centred language is used throughout. For example, making it more explicit that things may be 'stuck' at the first stage because people don't have the support they need, or the service isn't delivered in a way that works for them.

- More recognition of external factors that may be beyond the person's control, making it more explicit that they may be doing the best they can but still be struggling.
- The new editions more clearly identify 8 as the point at which the outcomes are achieved – parents are managing well, and children can thrive with ongoing support. For some parents, this may be a more appropriate end point on the scale than 10 as their needs or those of their children mean it is not appropriate for your service to withdraw.

### c) More client-centred names for the outcome areas

In both the Family Star Plus and Family Star, most of the outcome area names have changed, as shown in the tables below.

### d) Small changes to the content of some scales

There are changes in what is referred to in some outcome areas, which are worth being aware of as you begin using the new edition but should not affect the Star readings that are produced, for the reasons explained in the tables below.

## Family Star Plus Edition 1 vs 2

| 1 <sup>st</sup> edition    | 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition         | Key differences  | Why the differences should not affect readings  |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Physical health            | <b>My children's health</b>     | No content differences   |   |
| Your well-being            | <b>How I feel</b>               | Both editions focus on emotional wellbeing, but the 2nd edition also explicitly mentions management of <b>physical health</b> conditions, feeling ill and the physical impact of stressors.                            | It is likely that practitioners would have considered physical health when completing the 'Your well-being' area using the 1st edition, and physical health issues would impact emotional well-being. |
|                            |                                 | The 1st edition specifies that there is no illegal <b>drug use</b> at Effective parenting, while in the 2nd edition, at Managing Well, drugs are no longer being used to cope in a way that risks the person's health. | It is likely that practitioners would have focused on problematic drug use when completing the 'Your well-being' area using the 1st edition.  |
|                            |                                 | Both editions reference the impact of domestic abuse. The 2nd edition also includes the impact of <b>harassment and family conflict</b> on well-being.   | It is likely this won't affect readings as harassment and family conflict would have lowered well-being.  |
| Meeting emotional needs    | <b>My children's emotions</b>   | No content differences   |   |
| Keeping your children safe | <b>Keeping my children safe</b> | No content differences   |   |
| Social networks            | <b>Friends and community</b>    | No content differences   |   |
| Education and learning     | <b>My children's learning</b>   | The 1st edition referred to good school attendance, while the 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition focuses on children <b>engaging with school</b> .  | In practice engaging with school includes good attendance but is a less narrow definition.  |
|                            |                                 | The 1st edition referred to children being 'behind in their development', while the 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition focuses on children <b>meeting their potential</b> .   | In practice, practitioners are likely to have focused on children with learning difficulties developing as well as possible when using the 1 <sup>st</sup> edition.                                   |

| 1 <sup>st</sup> edition  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition        | Key differences   | Why the differences should not affect readings   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Boundaries and behaviour | <b>My children's behaviour</b> | The 1st edition referred to parents not being involved in antisocial behaviour or in trouble with the law, while the 2nd edition is more general in specifying that parents are <b>good role models</b> and do not contribute to problems with the child's behaviour.                                     | It is likely the practitioners will consider antisocial/criminal behaviour if relevant when using the new edition. Such involvement would detract from parents being good role models. |
| Family routine           | <b>Our family routine</b>      | No content differences  |  |
| <b>Home and money</b>    |                                | No content differences  |  |
| Progress to work         | <b>Work</b>                    | In the 1st edition, this is the only outcome area that specifies that someone is motivated at 5 but not taking action until 6. This was changed in the new edition, so that it was consistent across outcome areas that at 5 someone is just starting to act, and at 6 they have been trying for a while. | It is likely practitioners would have applied the Journey of Change consistently across outcome areas in the 1st edition.  |

## Family Star Edition 2 vs 2.2

| Edition 2                   | Edition 2.2                     | Key differences   | Why the differences should not affect readings  |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Physical health             | <b>My children's health</b>     | No content differences  |   |
| <b>Emotional well-being</b> |                                 | Both editions focus on emotional wellbeing, but the new edition also explicitly mentions management of <b>physical health issues</b> .  | It is likely that practitioners would have considered physical health when completing the 'Emotional well-being' area using edition 2, and that physical health issues would impact emotional well-being. |
|                             |                                 | Edition 2 specifies that any drug and alcohol use is not impacting the child at the top of the Journey of Change while the new edition specifies that drugs are no longer being used to cope.                               | It is likely that practitioners would focus on problematic drug use that impacts the child when completing both editions.   |
|                             |                                 | Edition 2 mentioned domestic abuse, but the new edition also includes <b>family conflict</b> .  | It is likely that family conflict would have influenced well-being readings in edition 2.   |
| Keeping your children safe  | <b>Keeping my children safe</b> | No content differences  |   |
| Social networks             | <b>Friends and community</b>    | No content differences  |   |
| Education and learning      | <b>My children's learning</b>   | Edition 2 referred to good school attendance, while the new edition focuses on children <b>engaging with school</b> .   | In practice engaging with school is likely to include good attendance.  |
|                             |                                 | Edition 2 referred to children being behind in their development, while the new edition focuses on children <b>meeting their potential</b> .  | In practice, practitioners are likely to have focused on children with learning difficulties developing as well as possible when using edition 2.   |
| Boundaries and behaviour    | <b>My children's behaviour</b>  | Edition 2 referred to parents not being in trouble with the law, while the new edition is more general in specifying that parents are <b>good role models</b> and do not contribute to problems with the child's behaviour. | It is likely the practitioners will consider criminal behaviour if relevant when using the new edition. Such involvement would detract from parents being good role models.                               |
| Family routine              | <b>Our family routine</b>       | No content differences  |   |
| <b>Home and money</b>       |                                 | No content differences  |   |

NB. The guidance and resources for reporting Family Star data against the SHANARRI indicators in Scotland have also been updated to reflect these changes.

### 3 What do these changes mean for me?

The new editions are a significant improvement and have been very well received. The changes support acceptability, implementation, and good practice.

**Briefing or training practitioners:** you can use this document to brief practitioners on the changes between the old and the new editions and may also wish to look at our Development summary for more detail. Training in the new editions will be available from April 2023. There is no obligation for those who are already trained to have refresher training, however this would be an ideal moment to do this.

**Downloading new resources:** we will notify you when the new editions have been added to the Star Online. Please ensure that you log onto the Star Online and download the new User Guides and Star Charts to replace the existing resources that you may have saved internally or are using in your own system. This will ensure that practitioners use the new editions going forward.

**Data and reporting:** the outcomes data gathered using the old and new editions is comparable, meaning that we do not expect readings to be affected.

**Using the Star Online:** The new editions will replace the previous ones on the Star Online. This means that:

- Data gathered from the different editions of the same Star version will be combined in the dashboard reports. You will notice that the reports update to use the new Outcome Area names.
- Completed Star PDFs for Stars submitted before the new edition is added, will remain based on the previous edition.
- New Stars started, In progress Stars, Action Plans and the Service User Summary will update to the new edition.

For more information, please see our website [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk) contact us on +44(0)207 272 8765 or [info@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@triangleconsulting.co.uk) or speak to your Triangle Implementation Lead, Regional Co-ordinator or other contact person.



#### The social enterprise behind the Star

Triangle Consulting Social Enterprise is an innovative, mission-led organisation that exists to help people reach their highest potential and live meaningful and fulfilling lives, often in the context of social disadvantage, trauma, disability or illness.

We do this by creating and supporting the Outcomes Star and other tools to unlock the potential of both individuals and the workers and organisations who support them. We believe that by balancing clear thinking, human connection and action – using the head, heart and hands – we can make a real difference in the world.

#### Find out more

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