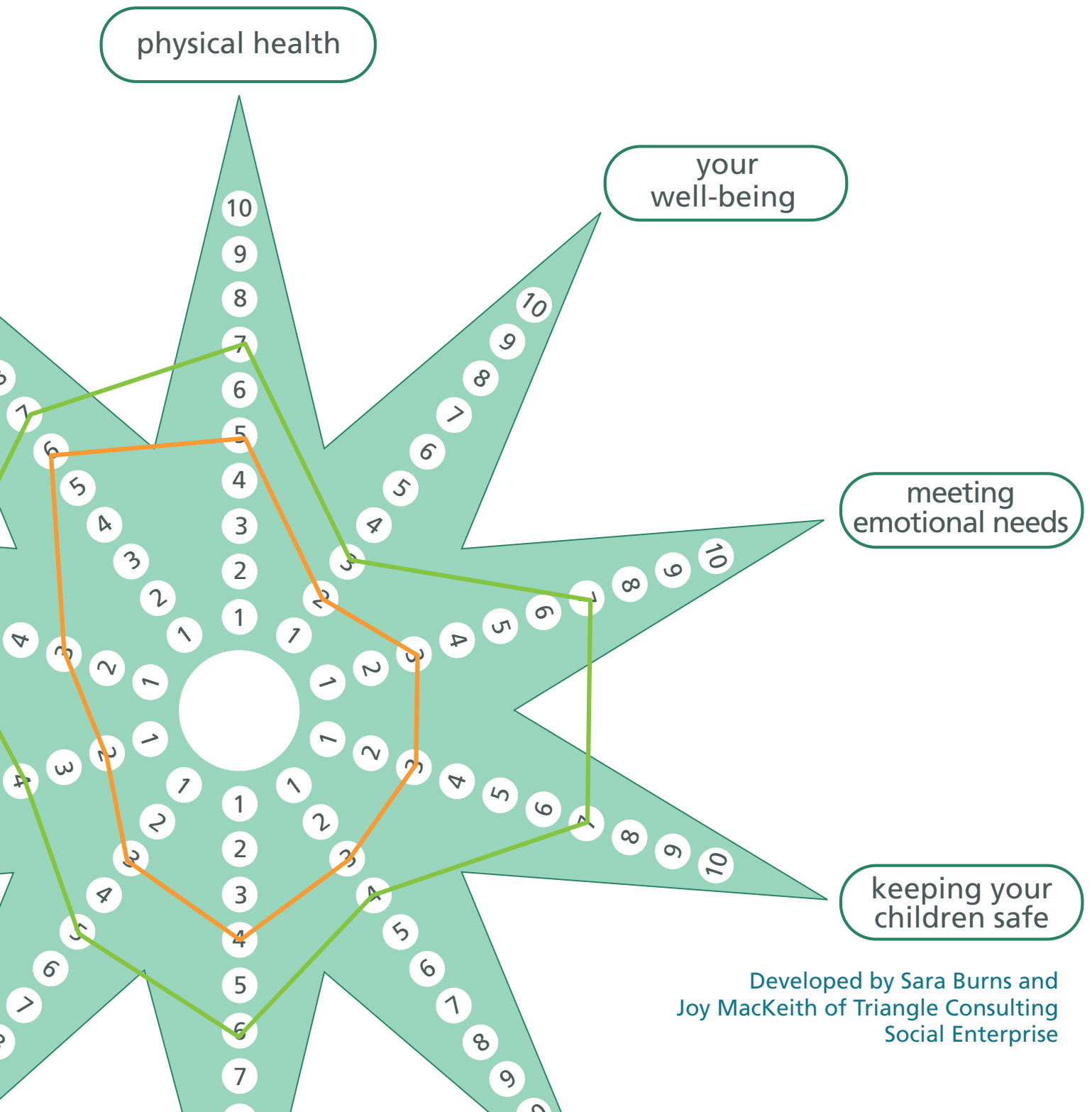




Family Star Plus™

An Outcomes Star for parents



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Please contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk to enquire about buying a licence and training.

Licences are also available for those wishing to translate the document into other languages.

The Outcomes Star™

This Star is part of a family of Outcomes Star tools. Each tool includes a Star Chart, User Guide or Quiz and guidance on implementation and some have visual and other resources. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

Acknowledgements

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- Hampshire local authority parenting services and Family Action for piloting and feedback
- Family Action for input into the second edition of the Family Star and the Family Star Plus.

Introduction to the Family Star Plus™

Raising a family is one of the most challenging things any of us will ever do.

Children need love, attention, patience, meals, clothes, guidance and boundaries – often all before 8.30 in the morning! Sometimes as parents we have our own issues to deal with, or circumstances such as disability, moving to a new area or family conflict can make the challenges even greater. It's not surprising that many of us sometimes find it hard to cope. The Family Star Plus helps us by focusing on ten areas of life:

1. Physical health
2. Your well-being
3. Meeting emotional needs
4. Keeping your children safe
5. Social networks
6. Education and learning
7. Boundaries and behaviour
8. Family routine
9. Home and money
10. Progress to work.

The Journey of Change

For each core area there is a ten-point scale that measures your relationship with any difficulties you are experiencing in this area and where you are on the steps towards addressing these difficulties. These scales are underpinned by a Journey of Change comprising five stages, described on the next two pages.

Using the Star™

Look at each of the ten scales one by one and talk them over with your keyworker. Together you can agree where you are in each area then complete the Star Chart to create a picture of how things are for you and your family now. You and your keyworker will come back to the Star at regular intervals. This will help identify the support you need and build a picture of your progress.

It's not just down to you

The Family Star Plus focuses primarily on the things that you and your worker can do to support your family. However, it is important to recognise that there may be conditions which affect you and your family but are beyond your control. These may include poor housing, lack of work opportunities or not having access to benefits, health or other services you need. Using the Star may help you identify those external factors as well as the things you can change.

The Journey of Change

Steps to effective parenting

Stuck (1-2)

Others are concerned about one or more of your children – perhaps about their behaviour, health or development – but you aren't acknowledging problems or doing anything to change the situation. Perhaps your own needs or other things are taking your attention so you can't meet your children's needs. Maybe you are really worried but don't know what to do. Maybe you don't want others involved or feel criticised or afraid to talk about problems. At 2 you have moments of acknowledging difficulty or concern and briefly open up to someone about it, but you do not accept help so things are still stuck.

Accepting help (3-4)

Your children have problems with their behaviour, development or school attendance and at this stage you go along with help when things are organised for you. Perhaps you feel helpless, angry or that you have to co-operate, but this stage is a positive place to be because you are engaged and change is possible. At 3 sometimes you go along with support and sometimes you don't. You take a step forward to 4 when you go along with support more consistently but the initiative is from workers at this stage.

Trying (5-6)

You recognise that it is up to you to improve things for your children and to start to take more responsibility. You take the initiative to try new ways to address your children's needs and deal with problems. Sometimes this goes well but often it doesn't and your children resist the changes so things may seem worse for a while. This is a difficult place to be and it is easy to give up so you may need lots of support. At 5 you may feel tentative and give up quickly. At 6 you stick to new ways of doing things for longer.

Finding what works (7-8)

You are learning from experience what works and what doesn't work with your children and they are benefiting from this. More of your own needs are met so you are more able to give to your children and you are thinking about the whole family and how to make things work for everyone. However, there are some things that are not working so well or where you need professional support. By 8, you are parenting well enough but you still need ongoing support and could slip back if this is withdrawn too soon.

Effective parenting (9-10)

Your children can do well in your care and so you do not need the support of a specialist service. You put your children first when necessary but you also find ways to meet your own needs so you can be a good-enough parent and cope with the ups and downs of family life most of the time. Although for most parents this will not be the end of the journey, you are able to reflect on what you have learnt and continue to improve your parenting and learn new skills as your children get older, without professional input. At 9 you need occasional support and at 10 you are parenting well enough without support from a service.

The Journey of Change

Key points

- At 1 and 2 there are significant concerns about your children. People may be doing things to help and from 3 you go along with their support
- At 5 there is an internal shift towards taking responsibility
- By 8 you meet your children's needs well enough, with support
- By 10 you can learn and improve without support from a specialist family support service

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My children can do well in my care and I don't need support from a service

7 - 8 Finding what works

I am finding ways of meeting my children's needs but still need support

5 - 6 Trying

I try to do things to meet my children's needs but it's hard

3 - 4 Accepting help

I am concerned about my children and go along with some support

1 - 2 Stuck

Other people are concerned about my children but I don't want to talk about it

1 Physical health

Doctor, dentist, healthy lifestyle, early development, managing any disabilities

Key points

- By 4 things are not getting worse and you mostly attend appointments
- From 5 you are taking more responsibility for your family's health
- By 8 your children have what they need to be healthy and any health problems are being addressed, with support

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My children have a healthy lifestyle and receive any medical treatment they need

7 - 8 Finding what works

I am finding ways of building a healthy lifestyle for my children

5 - 6 Trying

I try to do things to make sure my children are healthy but it's hard

3 - 4 Accepting help

I know I need to do more to look after my children's health

1 - 2 Stuck

People say I am neglecting my children's health. I don't want to talk about it

1 Physical health (detail)

This scale is about how well you are looking after your children's physical health. It is about doctors, dentists and treatment when they have health problems, plus things that build good health, such as enough healthy food, regular exercise and sleep. For babies it covers breastfeeding where possible and positive weaning for a healthy start in life. For older children, it is about helping them take responsibility for their own health.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My children have a healthy lifestyle and receive any medical treatment they need

- You look after your children's health, including treating minor problems at home
- You and your children mostly have enough healthy food, sleep and exercise
- You encourage older children to take responsibility for their health, including sexual health. If you have a baby you are giving it a healthy start in life. If any of your children has a disability or health condition, you keep them as healthy as possible
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support to look after your children's health. Choose 10 if you look after your children's health well enough without support

7 - 8 Finding what works

I am finding ways of building a healthy lifestyle for my children

- You are finding ways to introduce healthy food, exercise or bedtime routines. You may be finding it works best if you do these things, too
- If you have a baby, you are learning how to give it the best start in life. You are teaching older children to take care of their health, including sexual health
- You look after your children when they are unwell and if any of your children has a disability or health condition, you are learning ways of managing it
- Choose 7 if there is still more that needs to change. Choose 8 if your children have what they need to be healthy but you need support to maintain this

5 - 6 Trying

I try to do things to make sure my children are healthy but it's hard

- You take your children for some routine checks but don't always follow advice. If they are ill you do something about it but are not always sure it's the right thing
- You may be trying to introduce more healthy food and exercise or ensure healthy development but it often doesn't last long
- Choose 5 if you have just started trying new things for yourself or give up easily. Choose 6 if you have been doing this for a while or can keep it up a bit longer

3 - 4 Accepting help

I know I need to do more to look after my children's health

- The problems at this stage are similar to 1-2. Your children's lifestyle is not healthy but you recognise there are issues and go along with some support
- Choose 3 if you occasionally allow others to help. Choose 4 if you go along with help more consistently but still rely on others to take the initiative

1 - 2 Stuck

People say I am neglecting my children's health. I don't want to talk about it

- You don't take your children to the doctor or dentist, except in emergencies
- Your children don't eat healthy food, have too little exercise or sleep, and may be obese, under-nourished or at risk of health problems later. If you have a baby you don't know what is needed for healthy development. If you have teenagers, they may be taking risks with their health. You may also be neglecting your own health
- Choose 1 if you don't see this as a problem. Choose 2 if you have moments of concern over your children's health but don't accept support so there is no change

2 Your well-being

How you feel, your mental health, how you deal with problems

Key points

- By 4 you are consistently accepting support
- By 8 you are not taking drugs or drinking problematically, there is no domestic abuse and you manage any mental health issues well enough, with support
- At 10 you can maintain this without support or you never had any emotional or mental health issues

9 - 10 Effective parenting

I feel fine and manage my emotional and mental health well

7 - 8 Finding what works

I'm learning to manage my emotional and mental well-being, with support

5 - 6 Trying

I am trying ways to feel better or deal with mental health or other issues

3 - 4 Accepting help

I am going along with help to feel better or to deal with problems that may affect my family

1 - 2 Stuck

I often feel pretty bad or there are problems that may affect my family but I don't want to talk about it

2 Your well-being (detail)

This scale is about you – how you feel and how you cope with difficulties. If you feel very stressed, aren't coping, are depressed, anxious or have problems with drugs or alcohol, domestic abuse or mental health, this will affect your family, whether now or later on. And it's hard on you. This scale will help us discuss what is happening so we know how we can help.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

I feel fine and manage my emotional and mental health well

- Your emotional well-being is good and you mostly manage the inevitable difficulties in life and stresses of parenting, with support from family and friends
- If you have a mental health issue, you are managing your symptoms. You do not use illegal drugs or misuse alcohol and there is no domestic abuse in the family
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support in this area. Choose 10 if you feel fine and don't need support with this

7 - 8 Finding what works

I'm learning to manage my emotional and mental well-being, with support

- You have made progress with issues that were affecting your well-being. You use strategies to manage stress and feel OK but it can be hard so you need support
- If you have a mental health issue or a drug or alcohol problem, you are managing it well, with support from an appropriate service
- If you have experienced domestic abuse in the past, you have changed the situation and by 8 are no longer exposed to the abuse
- Choose 7 if there is still more that needs to change. Choose 8 if you have found what works but need support to maintain it

5 - 6 Trying

I am trying ways to feel better or deal with mental health or other issues

- You are trying to address any problems, for instance getting help for depression, tackling alcohol or drug misuse or getting out of an abusive situation
- You may be doing things to lift your mood or stabilise your emotions and be avoiding unhelpful ways of coping. You are taking any medication as prescribed
- Choose 5 if it is early days. Choose 6 if you have been trying for a while but are not yet finding what works

3 - 4 Accepting help

I am going along with help to feel better or to deal with problems that may affect my family

- You have similar issues to 1-2, but you acknowledge that there is a problem
- If you have depression or other mental health issues, a drug or alcohol problem, or you are experiencing domestic abuse, you are accepting help
- Choose 3 if sometimes you allow others to help but sometimes you don't. Choose 4 if this is more consistent but you don't take the initiative to improve things yourself

1 - 2 Stuck

I often feel pretty bad or there are problems that may affect my family but I don't want to talk about it

- One or more of the following are the case:
 - You are feeling depressed, self-critical, anxious or hopeless to the extent that it affects your family
 - You are experiencing domestic abuse
 - You are drinking problematically or using drugs
 - You have a mental health problem that is not being treated appropriately
- Choose 1 if you can't face thinking about these problems. Choose 2 if you have moments of concern or of acknowledging problems, but you do not accept support

3 Meeting emotional needs

Helping your children grow up happy and resilient; connection and love

Key points

- By 4 you are consistently accepting support
- By 8 you are able to meet your children's emotional needs well enough, with support
- By 10 your children have what they need from you to grow up emotionally healthy and resilient and you don't need support in this area

9 - 10 Effective parenting

I respond well enough to my children and don't need support in this area

7 - 8 Finding what works

I am mostly meeting my children's emotional needs but there are a few problems

5 - 6 Trying

I am trying to support my children emotionally but it's difficult

3 - 4 Accepting help

I know I don't give my children the emotional support they need but I accept support to change that

1 - 2 Stuck

If my children have problems, it's not my fault. We don't want help

3 Meeting emotional needs (detail)

This scale is about meeting your children's emotional needs, including the connection and relationship that you have with them. It is about giving your children the attention, positive feedback and encouragement that they need, being able to express your love for them and ensuring they can grow up positive and able to deal with life's inevitable ups and downs.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

I respond well enough to my children and don't need support in this area

- You give your children enough attention and encouragement, and express your love for them, though its form may depend on your own family culture
- You can support them to deal with difficulties, so they grow up more resilient
- You feel close but allow them to be separate from you when they need to be
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support in this area. Choose 10 if your children have what they need to be emotionally healthy and you don't need support

7 - 8 Finding what works

I am mostly meeting my children's emotional needs but there are a few problems

- You are mostly able to respond well to your children's emotional needs, but not always. You have learnt some new approaches and are noticing a positive impact on your children when you use them
- You are learning how to give your children the attention, positive feedback and encouragement they need to grow up more resilient, as well as how to let them experience difficulties for themselves and support them when things go wrong
- Choose 7 if there is more that needs to change. Choose 8 if your children mostly have what they need to grow up emotionally healthy but you still need support

5 - 6 Trying

I am trying to support my children emotionally but it's difficult

- You try to give your children attention but you find it hard to keep up. Your children may experience you as inconsistent and are not yet seeing the benefits
- You may find it hard to allow them to learn how to deal with problems themselves but are trying to do this so they can be more resilient
- If your relationship has been distant or over-close, you are trying to change this
- Choose 5 if it is early days. Choose 6 if you have been trying for a while but are not yet finding what works

3 - 4 Accepting help

I know I don't give my children the emotional support they need but I am accepting support to change that

- You have similar issues to 1-2, but you acknowledge that there is a problem and accept some support
- Choose 3 if sometimes you allow others to help but sometimes you don't. Choose 4 if this is more consistent but you don't take the initiative to improve things yourself

1 - 2 Stuck

If my children have problems, it's not my fault. We don't want help

- You do not give your children the attention, positive feedback or encouragement they need and this may be damaging their self-esteem
- You may feel resentful or angry towards them and/or unable to express the love you feel or empathise with them. You may feel distant from them or you may be so close that you depend on them a lot to meet your emotional needs
- Choose 1 if you can't face thinking about this. Choose 2 if you have moments of concern or of acknowledging problems but you do not accept support

4 Keeping your children safe

Protecting your children, avoiding accidents, bullying and abuse

Key points

- At 1-3 professionals may need to trigger child protection actions, depending on the severity of the issues
- By 4 any immediate safety issues are being addressed
- By 8 there is no domestic abuse in your family, and your children are adequately supervised and safe, with support

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My children are safe in my care

7 - 8 Finding what works

My children and I are mostly safe but there are a few issues

5 - 6 Trying

I am changing things so that I can protect my children and myself

3 - 4 Accepting help

My children are not safe enough. I go along with some support in this area

1 - 2 Stuck

People say my children are not safe. I wish they would stop interfering

4 Keeping your children safe (detail)

This scale is about appropriate supervision, ensuring your home is safe, internet safety, and protecting your children from accidents and risks. It is also about protecting yourself and your children from bullying, racial harassment and domestic abuse.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My children are safe in my care

- You are safe, your home is safe, and the people who visit are safe for your children
- You teach your children about all safety issues appropriate to their age, including accidents, bullying and crime, drugs, alcohol, sexual health and internet risks
- If you have older children you know enough of what they are doing, their peer group is mostly safe, and they are not causing any risks to your younger children
- You think ahead and act straight away if you see a risk to your children's safety
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support to keep your children safe. Choose 10 if your children are safe and you don't need outside help to keep them that way

7 - 8 Finding what works

My children and I are mostly safe but there are a few issues

- You put strategies in place to keep your children safe both at home and outside
- If there have been safety issues such as domestic abuse or inappropriate visitors, this has now stopped
- You talk to your children about safety issues appropriate to their age, including accidents, bullying and crime, drugs, alcohol, sexual health and internet risks
- Choose 7 if there is still more that needs to change. Choose 8 if your children are safe in your care but you still need some help with managing the situation

5 - 6 Trying

I am changing things so that I can protect my children and myself

- Perhaps you are trying to spend more time at home, check that younger children are safe with older children, find new childcare or set rules about when children can go out and where they can go
- You are trying to change your own behaviour if this was affecting your children's safety
- If there has been domestic abuse, bullying or racial harassment, you are making changes. If your children have been abused you are getting help for them
- Choose 5 if you have just started trying to make changes. Choose 6 if you have been trying for a while but have not yet found what works and need support to keep going

3 - 4 Accepting help

My children are not safe enough. I go along with some support in this area

- A crisis, accident or social worker has made you aware that your children are not safe in any of the ways described under 1-2, or you have realised for yourself. It may feel awful to acknowledge this but you now accept help so things can change
- You may feel unsafe as well due to bullying, racial harassment, domestic abuse or other crime
- Choose 3 if you occasionally allow others to help. Choose 4 if you accept help more consistently so there are no immediate risks but you don't take the initiative

1 - 2 Stuck

People say my children are not safe. I wish they would stop interfering

- Your children are not safe for one or more of these reasons:
 - They are left unsupervised and at risk of accidents
 - They are getting in trouble with crime or drugs or are victims of crime
 - They are victims of, or at risk of, physical, sexual or emotional abuse
 - They are victims, or perpetrators, of bullying or racial harassment
 - Your behaviour, older siblings or people who visit put them at risk
 - They or their close friends often put themselves in risky situations
- Choose 1 if you can't face thinking about this. Choose 2 if you have moments of concern or of acknowledging your children are not safe but don't accept support

5 Social networks

Family, friends, social life, community

Key points

- From 5 you are increasingly finding ways to improve positive social contact and support
- 10 will look different for different people, but your children are mixing with others so they are able to develop social skills and you have support from family, friends and community

9 - 10 Effective parenting

I have the social contact I need and want, and my children spend time with other children and are developing social skills

7 - 8 Finding what works

My family has social contact and connections but we need support in this area

5 - 6 Trying

We are getting to know people or seeing more of friends or family

3 - 4 Accepting help

We are isolated. I'm accepting support so we can start to feel more at home here

1 - 2 Stuck

We are isolated. I don't want to talk about it

5 Social networks (detail)

This scale is about you as a parent having the people, social contact and support you need and want, and your children being able to make positive friendships and develop social skills through spending time with other children. It is also about feeling settled and happy where you live and having access to places of religious worship or other facilities important to you and your family.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

I have the social contact I need and want, and my children spend time with other children and are developing social skills

- Your children spend time with peers and friends and have or are developing appropriate social skills and positive appropriate friendships for their age
- Friends, neighbours or wider family meet your needs for support and company
- You are reasonably settled living where you are and have access to places of worship or other community services or facilities that are important to you
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support in this area. Choose 10 if you and your children have the social contact you want without support from a service

7 - 8 Finding what works

My family has social contact and connections but we need support in this area

- Your children have positive friendships and spend time with other children
- You have friends, neighbours or wider family you spend time with and maybe people you can call on for support, favours and childcare. You may have joined in some local activities and met new people but don't yet feel confident with them
- You have addressed any harassment or bullying issues but still need support
- Choose 7 if there is more that needs to improve. Choose 8 if you and your family have good-enough social networks but you still need support in this area

5 - 6 Trying

We are getting to know people or seeing more of friends or family

- You are trying to connect with people locally and/or to see more of family or friends further away, and finding out about local facilities that matter to you
- You are thinking about your children's social networks – whether they have positive friendships and opportunities to develop social skills
- If there are harassment or bullying issues you are trying to sort these out, with help
- Choose 5 if you give up easily. Choose 6 if you feel more confident and motivated. Getting to know people may be hard so you may need extra support

3 - 4 Accepting help

We are isolated. I'm accepting support so we can start to feel more at home here

- The situation is the same as 1-2 but you acknowledge that you and/or your children are isolated or mixing with people who have a negative influence on you
- Choose 3 if you accept help sometimes but often you don't. Choose 4 if you accept help more consistently but you still don't try to sort this out for yourself

1 - 2 Stuck

We are isolated. I don't want to talk about it

- You have little helpful support from family or friends and your children don't spend time with friends or positive peer groups to develop their social skills
- Perhaps you are a long way away from family and/or friends, no one around speaks your first language or you have been threatened or feel that your family is not welcome because of drugs, domestic abuse, disability or complaints about you; or
- The people you are mixing with are a negative influence on the family – perhaps because they drink, are involved in crime or behave inappropriately
- Choose 1 if you can't face thinking about this. Choose 2 if you have moments of concern or of acknowledging problems but don't accept help

6 Education and learning

School, homework, learning through play, early development

Key points

- From 1 to 4 any efforts to turn around problems with school or learning come from outside the family
- From 5 you are increasingly motivated and addressing this for yourself
- By 8 your children have good attendance at school or training and/or are supported to develop and achieve their potential

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My children are learning well and developing positive aspirations for the future

7 - 8 Finding what works

Some things are working well but there are still problems to address

5 - 6 Trying

There are problems with learning and aspiration but I am trying to sort them out

3 - 4 Accepting help

I am concerned that my children are missing out and I'm accepting support to do something about this

1 - 2 Stuck

I'm not thinking about my children's learning or aspirations

6 Education and learning (detail)

This scale is about supporting your children's learning and aspirations. For school-age children this means at least 85% attendance, but targets may vary. For babies and younger children, it is about developing co-ordination, stimulating activities, messy play, positive risk-taking and helping them start school well. For older children, it is about supporting aspiration and ensuring they are engaged in work or learning.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My children are learning well and developing positive aspirations for the future

- Your children are reaching their potential. Their school attendance is good and you attend main school events and celebrate their achievements
- You prioritise learning, play, reading, early development and other stimulation for your baby or young children. Older children have support with college, training or work, and encouragement to take responsibility and make positive choices
- Your children have positive role models
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support. Choose 10 if your children are learning well and you don't need support in this area

7 - 8 Finding what works

Some things are working well but there are still problems to address

- Your children are attending school regularly and/or have opportunities to learn, play and develop but there are still problems in some areas
- If your children have left school/college, you are encouraging them in getting or holding down training or employment and in developing aspirations for the future
- Choose 7 if there is still more that needs to change. Choose 8 if your children are able to learn well but you need support to maintain this

5 - 6 Trying

There are problems with learning and aspiration but I am trying to sort them out

- You are trying to make a difference to your children's education or early development but they are missing out on learning opportunities
- You are trying new things with your children, for instance praise, playing or reading together, or sanctions for missing school, but you find it hard
- If your children are leaving or have left school/college, you are trying to help them make positive choices but it's hard
- Choose 5 if you give up easily. Choose 6 if you have been doing this for a while but haven't yet found what works to support your children effectively

3 - 4 Accepting help

I am concerned that my children are missing out and I'm accepting support to do something about this

- You are concerned that your children are not regularly taking part in school, training or stimulating activities, or are achieving well below their potential
- Choose 3 if you occasionally accept help with this. Choose 4 if you accept help more consistently but you don't take the initiative to support your children yourself

1 - 2 Stuck

I'm not thinking about my children's learning or aspirations

- Your children aren't regularly attending school, training, work or suitable alternative education and you don't acknowledge this as a problem. You aren't giving pre-school children stimulating things to do, playing with them, helping them develop co-ordination or taking them to places that help their development
- Your children are behind other children of a similar age in their development. Maybe you are negative about school or don't know how to support them
- Choose 1 if you don't see this as a problem. Choose 2 if you have moments of acknowledging problems about your children's learning but don't accept help

7 Boundaries and behaviour

Difficult, criminal and anti-social behaviour, maintaining appropriate boundaries

Key points

- From 4 you are consistently accepting help so any anti-social, risky or illegal behaviour is not getting worse
- By 6 any problematic behaviour is reducing
- By 8 your family is not regularly involved in crime or anti-social behaviour or taking inappropriate risks and you provide appropriate boundaries for your children, with support

9 - 10 Effective parenting

I am able to maintain effective boundaries and deal effectively with any problems

7 - 8 Finding what works

I set appropriate boundaries and have some skills to help my children keep within them but there are some difficult areas

5 - 6 Trying

I am learning about appropriate boundaries and how to maintain them

3 - 4 Accepting help

My children's behaviour is a problem – I need help to deal with them

1 - 2 Stuck

I don't feel there is a problem with boundaries or behaviour though I know others are concerned

7 Boundaries and behaviour (detail)

This scale is about giving your children clear boundaries so that they understand what is expected of them and the consequences of negative behaviour. It is about being a positive role model through your own behaviour, and dealing with difficulties constructively. If your children are still babies or very young and you do not need support with boundaries, place yourself at 10.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

I am able to maintain effective boundaries and deal effectively with any problems

- You have firm, fair boundaries within the family that work most of the time. You adapt these as your children grow up, anticipate problems and find ways around them
- You are consistent and mostly feel able to deal with difficult behaviour
- You are not involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour. Perhaps your children sometimes make bad choices but you can deal with this effectively
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support. Choose 10 if you are able to maintain effective boundaries without support or only have babies or very young children

7 - 8 Finding what works

I set appropriate boundaries and have some skills to help my children keep within them but there are some difficult areas

- You are mostly able to manage but there are some problems. If there is another parent/carer, you are working out how to give your children a consistent message
- Choose 7 if there are still some problem areas. Choose 8 if you have appropriate boundaries in place, are not involved in any anti-social or criminal behaviour, and deal effectively with any incidences involving your children, with support

5 - 6 Trying

I am learning about appropriate boundaries and how to maintain them

- Your children's behaviour causes difficulties but you are learning new ways of dealing with this, maybe through a parenting course. You may be setting clearer boundaries, loosening ones that are too strict, or talking and listening to your children more
- You are trying to set a good example to your children, for example by being considerate to neighbours or teachers or by moderating aggressive behaviour
- Your children may resist the changes so their behaviour may seem worse for a while
- Choose 5 if you have just started doing things differently. Choose 6 if you have been trying for a while and are hopeful things will get better

3 - 4 Accepting help

My children's behaviour is a problem – I need help to deal with them

- Your children's behaviour causes difficulties or your family is in trouble with the law and you know this can't go on. You may be afraid to tackle bad behaviour because of how they will react, or don't know how to change your own behaviour
- Choose 3 if you are sometimes open to help. Choose 4 if you consistently accept help but are not yet taking the initiative to improve things for yourself

1 - 2 Stuck

I don't feel there is a problem with boundaries or behaviour though I know others are concerned

- Your children's behaviour and/or yours causes difficulties, your family is in trouble with the law, or others have raised concerns about your children's behaviour
- Your children may feel there are no rules or that the rules are too strict or unfair
- They may be copying some difficult behaviour from the way you behave at times
- Choose 1 if you feel there isn't a problem with your children's behaviour. Choose 2 if you have moments of acknowledging problems but don't accept help

8 Family routine

Bedtime, getting up, mealtimes, basic care, doing things together

Key points

- By 4 you consistently accept support so things are not getting worse
- From 5 you are increasingly learning for yourself how to establish a supportive family routine
- By 8 your home is clean and organised enough to support a positive family routine and your children mostly have regular meals, enough clean clothes and a regular weekday bedtime/getting-up time

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My family has a positive routine that supports us all

7 - 8 Finding what works

My family has a positive routine but there are a few difficult areas

5 - 6 Trying

I am trying to create a positive routine for my family

3 - 4 Accepting help

My children need a better family routine but I don't know how to make that happen

1 - 2 Stuck

We don't have a family routine and our home is chaotic. I don't see that as a problem

8 Family routine (detail)

This scale is about a supportive weekday routine so your family can all get to school, nursery or work on time and your children have regular meals, suitable clothes and are clean enough. This includes making sure your home is clean and organised enough, and encouraging teenagers to take responsibility for their routines. It is also about doing some things together, such as eating meals, watching TV, going to the park or other activities.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

My family has a positive routine that supports us all

- Your children have regular meals, get up at a regular time and get to where they need to be during the day. They are clean enough, have suitable clothes and get enough sleep. The house is clean and organised enough, with food in the kitchen
- Exactly how you achieve this will depend on your culture. The important thing is that your children's basic needs are met and that you do some things together
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support with your family routine. Choose 10 if you are able to maintain a positive routine well enough without support

7 - 8 Finding what works

My family has a positive routine but there are a few difficult areas

- There are some problems but the family has a clear sense of routine. Your children eat at least one meal at a regular time each day, wash enough and get up at a regular time on weekdays. Your home is mostly clean and organised enough
- You manage to do some things together as a family most weeks
- Choose 7 if there are still some problem areas. Choose 8 if your children's basic needs are met but you need support to maintain a positive family routine

5 - 6 Trying

I am trying to create a positive routine for my family

- You are trying to put supportive routines in place, such as sticking to regular meal- or bedtimes, getting your home more organised or doing things together as a family
- Your children may rebel against the changes so things feel worse for a while
- Choose 5 if you quickly slip back to old ways. Choose 6 if you stick longer with new approaches but have not yet found what works to establish a positive routine

3 - 4 Accepting help

My children need a better family routine but I don't know how to make that happen

- As 1-2 but you recognise that the current situation is not working for your children. You probably have someone giving you advice on how to change things, but you may be feeling criticised and might not want to do things their way
- Choose 3 if you occasionally accept help. Choose 4 if you accept help more consistently but you are not yet taking the initiative yourself

1 - 2 Stuck

We don't have a family routine and our home is chaotic. I don't see that as a problem

- Either there is no family routine or the current one is having a negative effect on your children. They don't have a regular bedtime or meals or get to where they need to be on time, or don't wash enough or have clean, suitable clothes to wear
- Your home is not clean enough and is too chaotic to support a positive family routine. There may be no food in the kitchen, for example, or you are relying on older children to look after younger children without appropriate support
- Choose 1 if you don't see this as a problem. Choose 2 if you have moments of acknowledging problems about the lack of routine but don't accept help

9 Home and money

Paying bills and rent, a secure and adequate home

Key points

- By 4 there is no immediate or severe risk of homelessness and your family mostly has heating, light and enough food
- From 5 you are starting to take responsibility and action for yourself
- Being at 8 or above means you have secure accommodation and an income and are covering the basics well enough

9 - 10 Effective parenting

Our home is secure and adequate for our needs and we manage on our income

7 - 8 Finding what works

Our home is secure and adequate for our needs and we usually have money for food and basics but there are a few problems

5 - 6 Trying

I am trying to sort out our housing and finances but it's hard

3 - 4 Accepting help

We don't have a stable, adequate home and/or enough money – I want to change this but I don't know how

1 - 2 Stuck

We don't have a stable, adequate home and/or enough money to buy food and other basics – there's nothing I can do about it

9 Home and money (detail)

This scale is about providing your children with the security of a stable home that is adequate for your needs and managing the finances you need to care for them. It covers whether you are able to manage financially and pay your bills regularly, including your mortgage or rent, without any risk of losing your home. It is also about how you spend the money you have so that you provide for your family's basic needs.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

Our home is secure and adequate for our needs and we manage on our income

- Your home is adequate for your needs and there is no risk of eviction
- You are managing your money and make positive choices about how you spend it so you can pay your bills, cover the basics, and maybe even save a little
- You are making regular repayments on any debts so they are not increasing
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support. Choose 10 if your home is secure and adequate and you manage on your income without support from a service

7 - 8 Finding what works

Our home is secure and adequate for our needs and we usually have money for food and basics but there are a few problems

- Your home is adequate for your needs and there is no risk of eviction, with support. However, you still run into problems with money
- You are getting the benefits you are entitled to and, if you have debts, you are making enough repayments to prevent threats or court action
- Choose 7 if there are still some problems. Choose 8 if your home is secure and you mostly manage on what you have but need support to maintain this

5 - 6 Trying

I am trying to sort out our housing and finances but it's hard

- If your housing is not adequate, you are making an effort to improve the situation. If you are waiting to be rehoused, you are trying to manage better
- If you don't have enough money for basics, you are sorting out benefits and/or taking more responsibility for managing your money
- Choose 5 if you have just started taking action for yourself or give up easily. Choose 6 if you stick to things for longer but have not yet found what works

3 - 4 Accepting help

We don't have a stable, adequate home and/or enough money – I want to change this but I don't know how

- Your situation is the same as 1-2 but you acknowledge this is bad for your family. Maybe a crisis or a concerned professional has helped you realise this
- Choose 3 if sometimes you accept support but sometimes you don't. Choose 4 if you usually accept help but don't take the initiative to sort things out for yourself

1 - 2 Stuck

We don't have a stable, adequate home and/or enough money to buy food and other basics – there's nothing I can do about it

- One or more of these apply to your family:
 - Your home is temporary or inadequate for your needs
 - Your home is overcrowded, has severe damp or lacks basic facilities such as a cooker or heating
 - There is a significant risk you will be evicted
 - You don't have money to buy food and other basics. Maybe you are spending your money on alcohol or drugs instead
 - Someone is withholding money from you. Maybe you are a victim of financial abuse
- Choose 1 if you never want to talk about these problems. Choose 2 if you have moments of acknowledging the problems but don't accept help

10 Progress to work

Stability at home, work skills, work training, job hunting

Key points

- At 1–4 you cannot see a way out of living entirely on out-of-work benefits but by 4 you consistently accept support
- From 5 you can see other options and are increasingly trying ways to move towards a working future
- By 8 you are ready to work and may be volunteering, have occasional jobs or be in a back-to-work programme

9 - 10 Effective parenting

At least one parent in my family is now in regular work, if appropriate

7 - 8 Finding what works

I am mostly ready and able to work but I still need support in this area

5 - 6 Trying

I am changing things so that I can move off out-of-work benefits and find a job in the future but it's hard

3 - 4 Accepting help

I would like to get work but I don't know where to start

1 - 2 Stuck

I have no chance of getting into work and I don't see this as a problem

10 Progress to work (detail)

This scale is about you as a parent preparing to work and reducing your family's reliance on out-of-work benefits. This includes getting organised, learning new skills and persevering with training, volunteering, work experience and job hunting until you find the right work for you. If you are a single parent on long-term disability or equivalent benefits, have very young children or are unable to move towards work for other reasons, you are at 10.

9 - 10 Effective parenting

At least one parent in my family is now in regular work, if appropriate

- You, and/or your partner, are in regular work and your family no longer relies so heavily on out-of-work benefits
- You are able to meet the expectations of your employer and your workplace
- You are developing clear goals about your working future
- Choose 9 if you need occasional support. Choose 10 if at least one parent is in work and you do not need support, or if you are a single parent on long-term disability or equivalent benefits, have very young children or cannot move towards work for other reasons

7 - 8 Finding what works

I am mostly ready and able to work but I still need support in this area

- You have a realistic idea of the work you would like and are trying to find a job. You are developing skills to help you achieve this and/or making your home life more conducive to work, but need support from a service
- You may have taken on short-term or occasional work already but do not yet hold down a regular job
- Choose 7 if there are still some problem areas that need to change. Choose 8 if you are ready for work but just need support in finding a job

5 - 6 Trying

I am changing things so that I can move off out-of-work benefits and find a job in the future but it's hard

- You are starting to believe that you can find and hold down a job that works for you
- You are trying to overcome barriers to finding work. For example, you may be trying to get up earlier, make your home life more supportive or learn new skills
- You are developing ideas of the work you could do and starting to move towards it. You may have joined a back-to-work scheme or started volunteering or work training
- Choose 5 if you have only just started believing you can work and haven't acted on it yet. Choose 6 if you are becoming proactive in making it a reality

3 - 4 Accepting help

I would like to get work but I don't know where to start

- You are thinking about the possibility of working but the barriers seem huge
- You are uncertain about what you want but are exploring how to move forward with the help of a service
- Choose 3 if you sometimes accept help but sometimes you miss appointments. Choose 4 if you accept help more consistently and mostly turn up for appointments but don't take the initiative to improve things for yourself

1 - 2 Stuck

I have no chance of getting into work and I don't see this as a problem

- You don't feel you have any chance of getting into work, now or in the future
- You are resigned to your family living on out-of-work benefits and don't see change as possible
- You don't see the point of looking at options for the future
- Choose 1 if you don't acknowledge this as a problem. Choose 2 if you have fleeting moments of thinking about change but don't accept help

Working with more than one parent

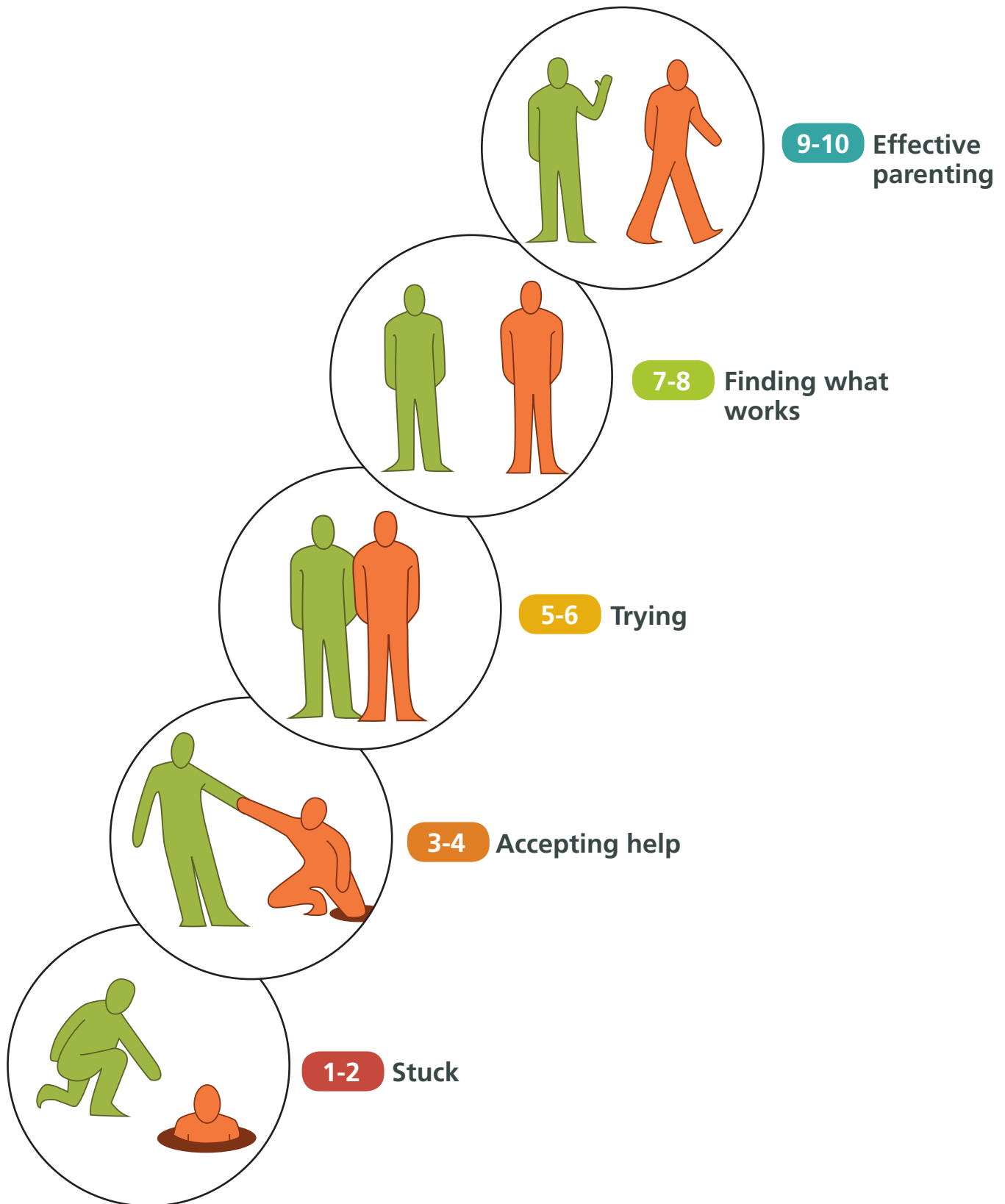
All the scales refer to “you”. If you are a two-parent family, “you” means both parents. If one of you has difficulties in one of the Star areas, choose the number for that parent so that this feeds into the support or action plan, even if the other parent is dealing well with that area. Alternatively, you can choose to mark the number for both parents separately but make sure it is the lower figure that is used for the action plan and for reporting.

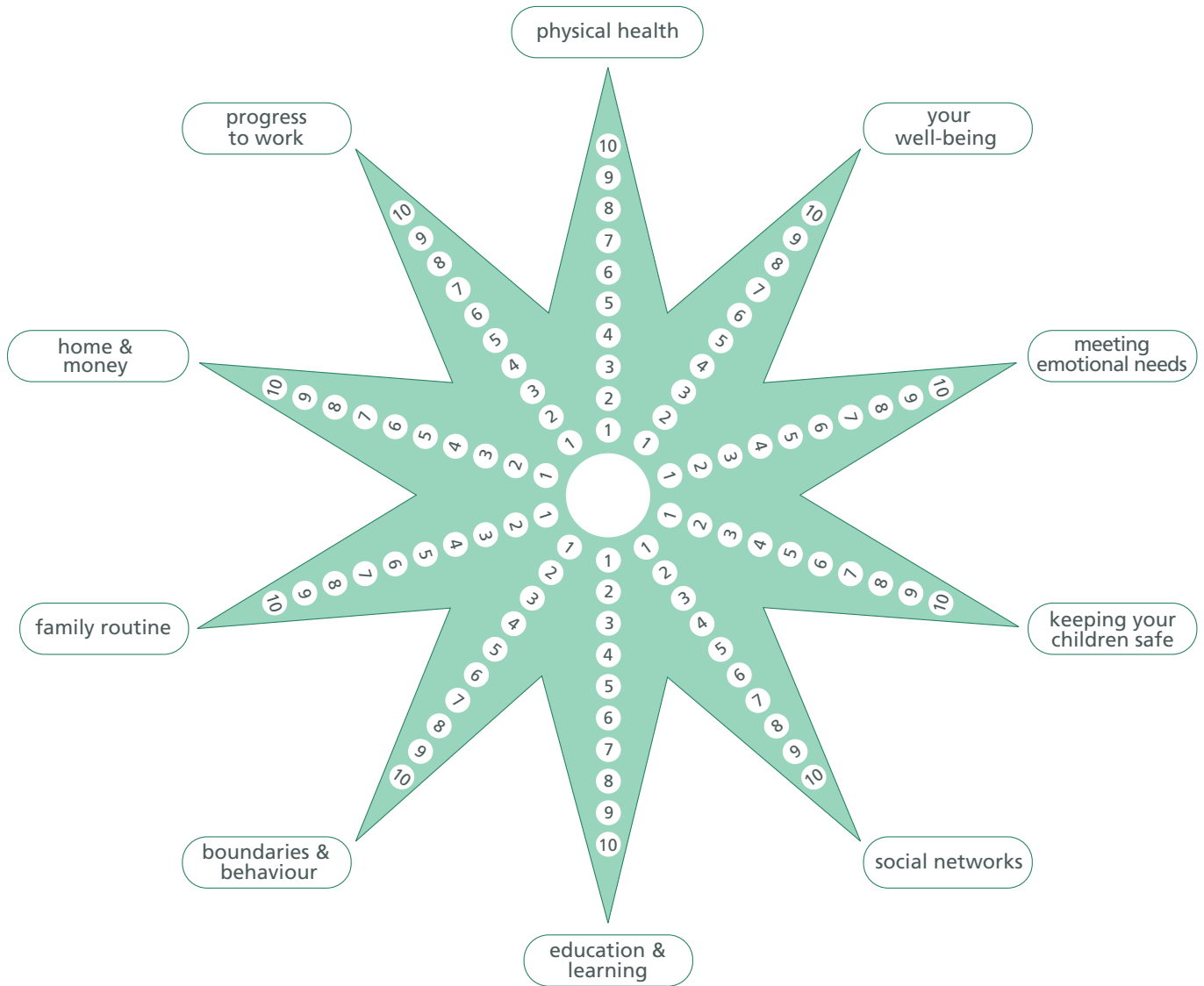
If you are involving other family members, such as a grandparent, “you” can refer to the whole family where there is agreement. If there are differences of view you can record these on the Star. However, it is important to use the lower numbers for the action plan and reports.

Maybe you have several children and only one or some of them are causing any concerns – the others are doing well – or you find some children easier to parent than others. Throughout the Star, discuss and record where you are in relation to the children you find difficult, or where there are concerns or you need support.

Workers should read the Family Star Organisation Guide for further guidance on completing the Family Star with parents.

The Journey of Change





The Family Star Plus™ is a version of the Outcomes Star™, a suite of tools developed by Triangle for supporting and measuring change when working with people.

This Star is one of a growing family

See our website for:

- Versions tailored to different people, settings and sectors
- The evidence base that supports the Star
- Testimonials and case studies from Star users

www.outcomesstar.org.uk

How to use the Outcomes Star

- Sign up for Star licences including the option to use our Star Online web app
- Ensure all members of staff attend Star training and explore specialist courses
- Access Star materials, other tools and ongoing support from Triangle

Go to www.staronline.org.uk for a free 30-day demo