

Using the Change Star™

The Change Star is designed for use with men who are participating in a behaviour change programme or other service for perpetrators of domestic abuse – men who use violence against female partners. The overall aim of the Change Star is to keep women and children safe, so the emphasis is on how men can become safer for their partners and children to be around. The Star focuses on accountability, attitudes, communication and behaviour as well as the well-being of the men in the programme.

The Change Star resources consist of:

- The Change Star Chart, Notes and Action Plan
- The Change Star User Guide, with brief visual scales and detailed scale descriptions
- A short Scales document for use with men
- An illustrated summary of the Journey of Change
- This Guidance for Workers
- The Star Online web application at www.staronline.org.uk

The Star supports training of staff and them being able to have the conversations we want them to be having.

Manager,
UnitingCare
Queensland

The Change Star was developed by Triangle Consulting Social Enterprise in collaboration with UnitingCare Queensland in Australia. The process involved workers, managers and associated academics and professionals. Additional testing in the UK was carried out by the Stefanou Foundation in their “For Baby’s Sake” programme.

The Change Star is designed to be completed one to one. It is intended to be a therapeutic tool as well as helping services to capture information on outcomes for the men participating. Completing the Change Star is intended to be a helpful, engaging and empowering process for the men that focuses discussion and provides a useful, shared basis for an action or support plan. It is a flexible tool that relies on the skills of the facilitators using it; the aim is to have a genuine interaction and complete it collaboratively.

Before using the Change Star, all workers need training.

Background and further information about the Outcomes Star suite of tools can be found at www.outcomesstar.org.uk

**Contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk
or 020 7272 8765**

Before you use the Change Star™

Make sure that you have received training in using Change Star and that you are familiar with the materials and know when and how they are used in your service. It is vital that you understand and use the Journey of Change underlying the scales – **stuck**, **engaging**, **acknowledging**, **learning new ways** and **being respectful**. This will ensure consistent and reliable information as a basis for support planning and for use by your service. You also need to be familiar with all the scale descriptions so you can unpack and rephrase them as needed.

How to introduce the Change Star™

Before you introduce the Star for the first time:

- Devise a short script to introduce the Star in a way that feels natural to you and clear for those you are working with
- If you meet with the men you support in groups, it can be useful and save time to explain the Star to the group before starting one-to-one work within individual sessions
- Consider giving men who are interested a copy of the short Scales or even the User Guide to read before the session. Although the User Guide is quite detailed and relies on someone being comfortable with reading, the whole document is worded in accessible language, so it can be shared.

When introducing the Star:

- Explain that a man may start anywhere on the journey, can move both up and down on the scale and that 5 is the top of the Star scales but not the end of the journey
- Be clear that this is about establishing where they are as a basis for enabling them to make positive changes and receive any support they need
- Let the service user decide which scale to start with or choose one that may be easier to discuss.

Some suggested phrases for introducing the Star include:

"The Change Star is a way of finding out about you, your strengths and the areas where you need support and then tracking the changes you make."

"The Star tells us how things are now and what needs to change, and it helps you and me plan the next steps together."

Want to use this Star?
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How to complete the Change Star™

Complete the Star collaboratively with men where possible. The aim is to engage them in meaningful discussion, to listen and to encourage them to think about where they are, rather than to complete the Star as quickly as possible.

Use the scale descriptors as a basis for discussion or have an open discussion about the area and invite the man to say where he thinks he is on the Journey of Change and why. The short Scales and the brief visual scales in the User Guide are designed to be used directly with men in your service. The detailed scales are intended primarily as a resource for workers but are written to be accessible, so feel free to refer to specific points for clarification with men you work with. Avoid reading them out in their entirety because of their length.

If you don't agree, encourage discussion – this can help you learn about where someone believes they are and help them reflect on their situation and perhaps to see it in new ways. Those at 4 or 5 in most of the Change Star areas are most likely to recognise where they are on the scales. You may need to challenge men who are not yet at the **acknowledging** stage.

If you can't reach agreement, record both views on the Star, labelling which is your opinion and which is theirs, using the Star Notes to record points from your discussion. Use your professional judgement to decide when further discussion is not helpful.

Consider doing a worker-only reading, potentially through discussion between you as the programme facilitator or other worker, your service manager and/or the women's advocate or other worker supporting the man's partner (where appropriate). This is particularly important for men who are not yet **acknowledging** or taking responsibility. Comparing this worker-only reading with the one done collaboratively may be a helpful indicator of their awareness and therefore risk.

Consider a reading from the woman's perspective; one option is to ask those supporting the women partners of men in the programme to complete the Change Star from their perspective. This can give additional information to workers and the service and may be a helpful process for the woman. In most cases it will not be appropriate to share this Star with the man concerned due to the risk of this causing conflict, so this should only be done when completely safe to do so.

Always use the scales, whether completing the Star as a worker-only tool or with men in the service. The detailed scales are designed to reduce subjectivity, otherwise one person's 2 could be another person's 4 and the completed Star won't be a useful basis for completing the action plan and your service won't be able to treat collated Star data as reliable for reporting purposes.

When you have completed all of the scales, join the points to create a shape. Mark each reading on the Star Chart and join the points. Encourage service users to do this and to create the shape.

This is really valuable information that we would never had before – for us and for them.

**Worker,
UnitingCare
Queensland**

Not for reuse
Sample for information only

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How to use the completed Star as the basis for a support plan

Look at the shape of the completed Star together and prompt men to reflect on it as a basis for what to do next. Ask questions such as:

- Is the shape of the Star an accurate picture of how things are for you now?
- What does it tell you about what is and is not going well?
- What are the strengths that you bring to the areas that are going well? How might you apply those strengths in other areas of your life?
- What is it most important to address first?

Once you have chosen the areas to be included in the support plan, further motivational questions for each area include:

- Where on the journey do you want to get to and by when?
- What needs to be done to bring about this change?
- Who is responsible for these actions? When can they be completed?

Complete the Change Star Action Plan or use your service's action plan. The Journey of Change provides valuable pointers for how to work with service users, as well as achievable, realistic actions for the stage they are at:

The Star gets us talking. These are very valuable conversations.

**Worker,
UnitingCare
Queensland**

It's good to see change at the end – at the end men are more able to say that they are only at 4 due to greater honesty and more insight.

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