



# Development of the Youth Star™ (2nd Edition)

The Outcomes Star for youth work



# Introduction

The Youth Star is a version of the Outcomes Star for young people (primarily those aged 11-18) attending youth clubs or being helped by youth workers.

The Outcomes Star is a suite of over 30 collaborative, person-centred tools for both supporting and measuring change when working with people, including versions for young people, families and people with learning disabilities. Because of this dual role, the Outcomes Star brings together measurement and service delivery and can provide a shared language and framework across departments.

All versions of the Outcomes Star have five- or ten-point scales arranged in a star shape. Each scale has detailed descriptors setting out the attitudes, behaviour and situation typical at each point. Underpinning these scales is a 'Journey of Change' describing five steps towards the end goal that both the service and service user are trying to achieve. In the case of the Youth Star the end goal is "Enjoying and achieving", defined as 'getting on well and enjoying and taking pride in what you are doing'. At this stage the young person is on track towards a positive future, has resilience to cope when things go wrong and knows how to continue improving and how to get support if needed.

This document describes the process of arriving at the second edition of the Youth Star, which drew on learning from consultation and engagement with the debates in this area. The main focus of the new edition was to develop detailed scale descriptions, but there were also structural changes to the outcome areas and an increased acknowledgment of external factors.

Triangle will continue to support clients who would prefer to continue using a previous edition.

- The Youth Star (second edition) has the following resources, which are more comprehensive than those available for the first edition:
- The Youth Star Chart, Notes and Action Plan
  - The Youth Star User Guide, with accessible and detailed scales for each of the six outcome areas and a detailed description of the Journey of Change
  - Short illustrated scales doc ('quiz')
  - Guidance for Workers
  - Flashcards for use with service users if needed
  - A web application for online completion and reporting at [www.staronline.org.uk](http://www.staronline.org.uk).

Background and further information about the Outcomes Star suite of tools can be found at [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk).

# How the Youth Star was developed

## Creating the first edition

The prototype of the Outcomes Star was developed by Triangle in 2003 with St Mungo's, a London-based charity providing a wide range of services to homeless people. The development received funding from the London Housing Foundation (LHF), with the aim of benefitting the homelessness sector in London. Triangle facilitated focus groups with more than 80 staff in diverse services for vulnerable homeless adults who identified their intended outcomes, together with the journey that service users travelled towards achieving them. St Mungo's piloted this prototype. Triangle then adapted this early Star for use in other homelessness services in London and it was piloted in a number of other organisations. The first edition of the Outcomes Star was then published online, incorporating feedback from the pilot and was published in 2006.

In 2011, Groundwork UK approached Triangle to collaborate in developing a version of the Outcomes Star to use in their Positive Futures programme, focused on supporting young people in challenging circumstances through community projects. Groundwork UK focused mainly on environmental and community projects and had already collaborated with Triangle to develop the Community Star for community engagement in local, green projects.

Staff and young people in several Groundwork trusts contributed to the development of the first edition of the Youth Star: Greater Nottingham, Hertfordshire, Lancashire West and Wigan, Leicester and Leicestershire, London, Manchester, Salford, Stockport, Tameside and Trafford, North East, Northamptonshire, Oldham and Rochdale, South West, Thames Valley, Wakefield and West Midlands. These trusts tested the Youth Star with over 150 young people over a three-month period, in one-to-one work and group sessions as well as in diverse contexts including environmental projects, sports projects and media work.

- Feedback on the pilot version of the Youth Star was provided by 18 youth workers and 34 young people, showing:
- 72% of the youth workers said that completing the Youth Star helped them have a useful discussion with young people
  - 67% said that it helped young people see where they needed to make progress
  - 71% of the young people were happy with how long it took to complete the Youth Star.

Revisions were made to create the final version of the first edition, which was published in 2012. Since then, over 100 services have entered Youth Star data onto the Star Online system for over 19,500 service users.

Further details about the development of the first edition can be found in the Youth Star Organisation Guide and psychometric validation of the Youth Star can be seen in the 'Psychometric factsheet' for this version of the Star.

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## The second edition

The first edition of the Youth Star was published without detailed scale descriptions, so a key aim of developing a new edition was to develop these detailed scales to support training, consistency and clarity. Further, Triangle has gathered feedback about the Youth Star and also about how the youth sector has changed and evolved. This also pointed to a need to review this Star to make it as good a fit as possible for youth work today.

The consultation process informing the development of the second edition included a workshop with Redditch Youth and Community Enterprise, Community Young Solutions, Woodrush Youth and Community Centre, Worcestershire, Pershore Riverside Youth Centre, and Street Games. Earlier discussions were held with Lancashire Youth Service and later with Emeline Stievenartin, who provided feedback on the use of the Youth Star within Unis-cité (a French government initiative encouraging young people to volunteer).

The feedback on the first edition was broadly positive and it was well liked by both practitioners and young people. However, it was clear that a number of changes were needed to the language used and the content of the outcome areas. In particular, it was suggested that the wording should be softened (e.g. revising the name of the first Journey of Change stage from “Not interested”), that external barriers and facilitators should be explicitly acknowledged and that updates were needed in light of the increase in social media use since the first edition was published in 2012.

Following the consultation, the detailed scales were drafted, and a number of changes were made to create the second edition:

### First Journey of Change stage

- The first Journey of Change stage (previously called “Not interested” was renamed “Stuck” (but meaning the same and rest of the Journey of Change remained the same).

### Making a difference

- This area still emphasises helping others, group activities and teamwork but following feedback, it was widened to include individual interests (e.g sports, arts, music) and renamed “Interests and activities”. This means that it is likely that more service users will reach higher Journey of Change stages in this area when using the second edition.

### Hopes and dreams

- In the second edition this area includes building confidence and aspiration and setting clear goals. It was revised to explicitly recognise that there can be a lack of available opportunities and that young people may feel hopeless about their future if there are “a lot of difficult things going on for you or you don’t have people who encourage you to aim higher”.

### Well-being

- This area was renamed “Health and well-being” and was expanded to cover both a healthy lifestyle and emotional health, including managing physical or mental health conditions. This means that service users who are not looking after their health may have lower readings in this area when using the second edition compared to using the first edition.
- This area was also revised to acknowledge that family /friends may not support living healthily.
- It no longer includes peer pressure (now covered by “Choices and behaviour”) or “trying to be me” which young people found difficult to understand (partially covered under “Communicating”).

### Education and work

- This area now emphasises getting the most out of school/work rather than just achievement.
- It was also widened to include training, apprenticeships or internships as well as education/work.
- In the second edition this area recognises that extra support may be needed from the school or workplace.

### Communicating

- This area now includes communicating via social media.

### Choices and behaviour

- This area now gives greater emphasis to staying out of trouble rather than foregoing alcohol, drugs or sex. It was also extended to include staying safe online, peer pressure (formerly in “Well-being”) and respect and consideration.

### The second edition was published in 2021.

If you are moving from the first edition of the Youth Star to this one there are different implementation and data reporting options described in our guidance document: ‘Moving to the Youth Star 2nd Edition’. You can also contact Triangle ([info@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@triangleconsulting.co.uk)) for support on how to manage this process.