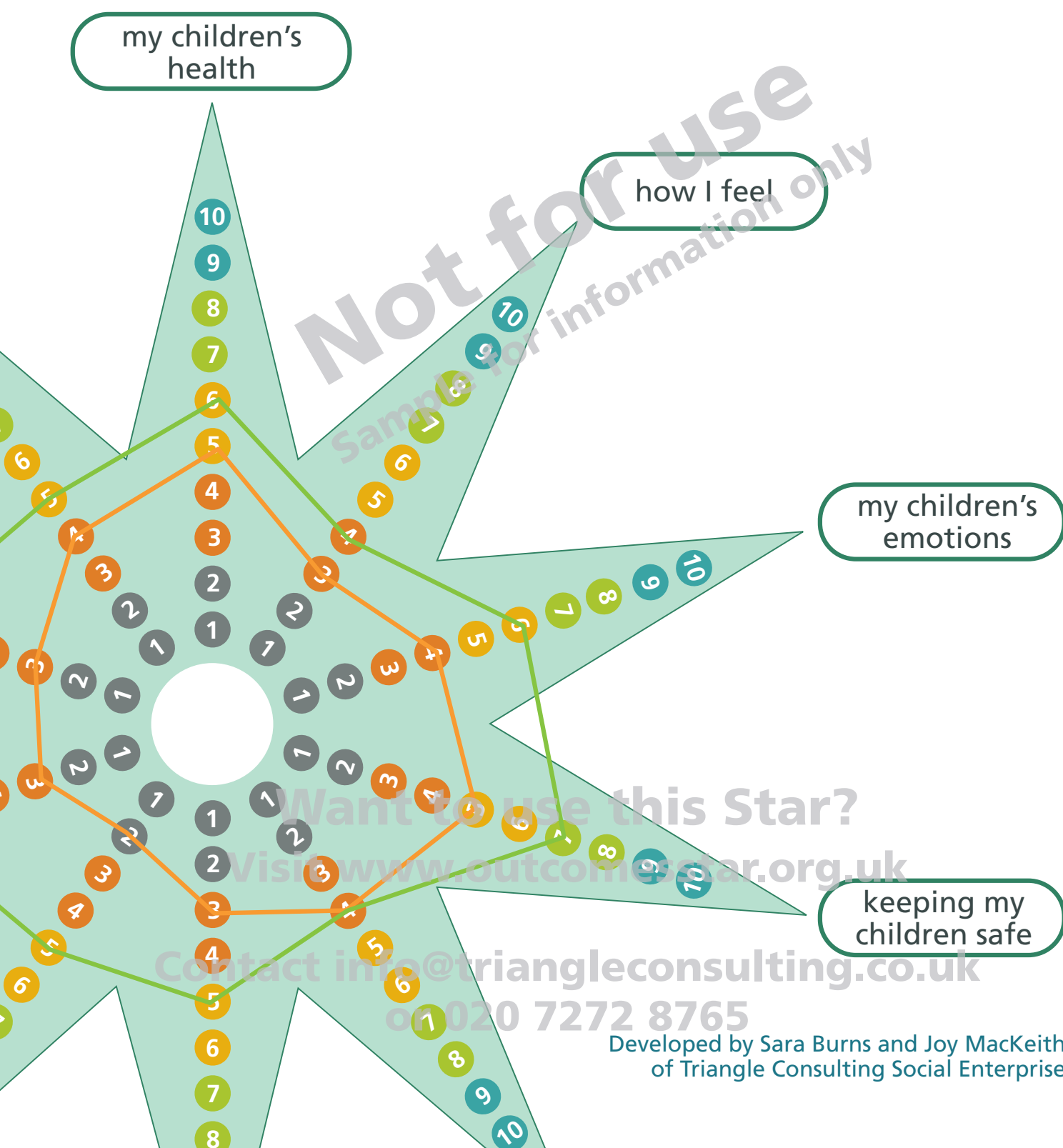


# Family Star Plus™

An Outcomes Star for parents



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Contact [info@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@triangleconsulting.co.uk)

on 020 7272 8765

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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 and Guidance for Workers and some have visual and other resources. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk).

## Acknowledgements

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# 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 parents have their own issues or circumstances to deal with that 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. My children's health
2. How I feel
3. My children's emotions
4. Keeping my children safe
5. Friends and community
6. My children's learning
7. My children's behaviour
8. Our family routine
9. Home and money
10. Work.

## The Journey of Change

Change doesn't happen in one go – it's a journey, and it can help to understand the steps along the way. Everyone makes changes in their own way but the pattern is often similar. The Family Star Plus is built on a five-stage Journey of Change:

**1-2 Stuck**

**3-4 Accepting help**

**5-6 Trying**

**7-8 Finding what works**

**9-10 Managing well**

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## How does it work?

To complete the Star, look at each of the ten scales one by one and talk them over with your keyworker or support worker. Together you can agree where you are in each area, then mark the number on the Star Chart and connect the points to create a snapshot of how things are for you and your family at the moment. The completed shape will give you a clear picture of the areas that are working well and ones that are causing difficulties.

This will help you and your worker to agree on what areas to work on together, the actions you want to take and any support you need. You and the worker will come back to the Star at regular intervals. This will help you 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 a number of things can affect your progress but are beyond your control, such as difficulties with housing, high costs of living, suitable work not being available or not having access to health care or other services you need. Using the Star can help show where things are holding you back and where support can help.

## Families come in all shapes and sizes

You may have a young baby or teenage children. You may have several children at different stages of development. You may have children with special needs. There may just be one parent in your family or there may be two, or perhaps a grandparent or someone else is a main carer. The scales work for all these different situations – just focus on where you are having the most difficulty and would most like support.

Maybe only one or some of your children are causing concerns while the others are doing well, or maybe you find some children easier to parent than others. Throughout the Star, discuss and record issues relating to those children where there are difficulties or concerns or where you need support.

All the scales refer to “you”. If you want to complete one Star for both parents or to include other carers, “you” means both or all of you. However, in most cases it is useful for each parent or carer to have their own Star, as your views or needs may be different.

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# The Journey of Change

## Stuck (1-2)

At the beginning of the journey you are struggling with parenting one or more of your children, or other people are concerned – perhaps about your children's behaviour, health, development or learning. However, you don't have the help you need or are not engaging with it, so things are **stuck**. Maybe you are worried but don't know what to do. Maybe your own needs or other things are taking your attention so you can't think about your children's needs. Maybe you feel criticised or find it hard to trust the people offering help, and don't want others involved. By 2 you occasionally say that things are not working or need to change, but you still don't have the help you need or are not yet ready to engage with it, so things are still **stuck**.

## Accepting help (3-4)

As with the first stage, you are struggling with parenting – perhaps your children have difficulties with their behaviour, health, development or learning or you are in difficult circumstances or struggling with issues of your own – but at this stage you are **accepting help**. Perhaps you accept help because you want things to improve but don't know what to do. Perhaps you feel you have to go along with the help offered even though you don't think it will make a difference or it isn't right for you. At 3 you go along with support some of the time. By 4 this is more consistent, but workers are likely to be taking the lead as you don't yet really believe that you can make a difference.

## Trying (5-6)

At this stage you start **trying** ways to address your children's needs and to improve things for them. You recognise that it is up to you and believe you can make a difference, with suggestions and support from others where that helps. Sometimes this goes well but often it doesn't and your children may resist the changes, so things may seem worse for a while. This can be a difficult place to be, so parents often get discouraged at this stage and need lots of support. By 6 you are able to stick to new ways of doing things for longer but haven't yet found what works for you and your family.

## Finding what works (7-8)

At this stage you are learning from experience and your children are benefiting as you **find what works** – and what doesn't – for you and your family. Perhaps more of your own needs are met, so you are better able to address your children's needs, and you are thinking about how to make things work for the whole family. However, there are some things that are not working so well or where you need professional support. By 8, you have mostly found what works and have support to stay on track and keep learning. For some parents with children with additional needs, it may not be appropriate to manage without support, so this would be the top of the journey.

## Managing well (9-10)

At this stage your children are doing well in your care without support from a service. You put them first when necessary but you also have the support you need from family, friends or communities. You find ways to meet your own needs so that you cope with the ups and downs of family life most of the time. You are able to keep up the improvements and changes you have made, reflect on what you have learned and respond to the changing needs of your children as they grow, without professional input. At 9 you need occasional support from a service and by 10 you are **managing well** – we all need support as a parent but this comes from friends, family and others rather than from the service.

# 1 My children's health

Doctors, dentists, healthy lifestyle, early development, managing any health conditions

## Key points

- This scale is about how you look after your children's health, not about how healthy they are, so you can reach 10 even if they have a long-term health condition
- From 5 you start taking more responsibility for your family's health
- By 8 you are looking after your children's health well, with support

## 9 - 10 Managing well

I look after my children's health well

## 7 - 8 Finding what works

I'm finding ways to look after my children's health better but there are a few issues

## 5 - 6 Trying

I know I need to look after my children's health better and am trying to do this, but it's hard

## 3 - 4 Accepting help

People are concerned about the way I look after my children's health. I'm accepting help with this

## 1 - 2 Stuck

People are concerned about the way I look after my children's health. I don't have the help I need

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# 1 My children's health (detail)

This scale is about how you look after your children's health. It covers taking them to doctors, dentists or opticians as needed and managing any illnesses or long-term health conditions. It also covers giving them a healthy start in life and a healthy enough lifestyle, with enough healthy food, exercise and sleep. For older children, this includes helping them take responsibility for their own health.

## 9 - 10 Managing well

### I look after my children's health well

- You look after your children when they are unwell, including treating minor problems at home. If they have a disability or health condition, you manage it well and help them to manage it too
- Your children mostly have enough healthy food, exercise and sleep
- If you have a baby you are giving them a healthy start in life. You encourage older children to take responsibility for their health, including sexual health
- Choose 9 if it helps to have occasional support in this area. Choose 10 if you look after your children's health well enough without support from a service

## 7 - 8 Finding what works

### I'm finding ways to look after my children's health better but there are a few issues

- You are learning ways to look after your children when they are unwell or to manage a disability or health condition
- You are finding ways to introduce healthy food or exercise or to improve their sleep. You may be finding it works best if you do these things too
- If you have a baby, you are learning how to give them the best start in life. You teach older children to take care of their health, including sexual health
- Choose 7 if there is more that needs to change. Choose 8 if your children mostly have what they need to be healthy, with ongoing support to stay on track

## 5 - 6 Trying

### I know I need to look after my children's health better and am trying to do this, but it's hard

- You are starting to believe you can make a difference to your children's health
- You are trying ways to care for their health, such as taking them to the doctor and dentist, but struggle to follow advice. If they are ill you try to look after them
- Perhaps you are trying out changes such as healthier food or ways to improve sleep, but there are often setbacks
- 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

### People are concerned about the way I look after my children's health. I'm accepting help with this

- As for 1-2, you struggle to look after your children's health, but you recognise this and go along with some support
- Perhaps you are getting advice on affordable healthy meals, improving your children's sleep or managing any health conditions
- Choose 3 if you sometimes allow others to help. Choose 4 if you go along with help more consistently

## 1 - 2 Stuck

### People are concerned about the way I look after my children's health. I don't have the help I need

- Your children don't see a doctor or dentist except in emergencies
- They 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 they don't get what they need for healthy development
- Choose 1 if you don't have the help you need or are not ready to engage with it. Choose 2 if you occasionally say you struggle to look after your children's health but are not yet engaging with help

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## 2 How I feel

Your physical, emotional and mental health, dealing with difficulties, not drinking or using drugs to cope

### Key points

- By 8 you don't use alcohol or drugs to cope, there is no domestic abuse and you manage any health issues you have, with support
- At 10 you can maintain this without support or don't have any health issues

### 9 - 10 Managing well

I feel fine and manage my well-being and mental health well enough

### 7 - 8 Finding what works

I'm finding ways to improve my well-being and mental health but there are a few issues

### 5 - 6 Trying

I know I need to improve my well-being and mental health and am trying, but it's hard

### 3 - 4 Accepting help

I often feel pretty bad or have problems that may affect my family but I'm accepting help with this

### 1 - 2 Stuck

I often feel pretty bad or have problems that may also affect my family. I don't have the help I need

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## 2 How I feel (detail)

This scale is about you – how you feel most of the time and how you cope with difficulties. It covers your physical, emotional or mental health, for example feeling ill, exhausted, stressed, low or anxious, drinking a lot or using drugs to cope. It also covers the physical or emotional impact on you of any family conflict, violence or abuse, or harassment. If your own needs are met, it's easier for you to meet your children's needs.

### 9 - 10 Managing well

#### **I feel fine and manage my well-being and mental health**

- Your emotional well-being is good and you mostly manage the difficulties in life and the stresses of parenting, with support from family and friends
- If you have a physical or mental health issue, you are managing your symptoms. You don't use alcohol or drugs to cope
- Choose 9 if it helps to have occasional support in this area. Choose 10 if you look after your emotional and mental health well enough without support from a service

### 7 - 8 Finding what works

#### **I'm finding ways to improve my well-being and mental health but there are a few issues**

- You are finding ways to look after your well-being, reduce stress and feel OK
- If you have a physical or mental health issue or used alcohol or drugs to cope, you are finding ways to manage this, perhaps with support from an appropriate service
- If you were experiencing family conflict, violence, abuse or harassment, this has mostly been addressed. By 8 there is no violence or other abuse at home
- Choose 7 if there is more that needs to change. Choose 8 if you mostly feel OK and manage your emotional or mental health well enough, with ongoing support to stay on track

### 5 - 6 Trying

#### **I know I need to improve my well-being and mental health and am trying, but it's hard**

- You are starting to believe you can feel better
- You are trying ways to lift your mood or stabilise your emotions and may be trying to avoid unhelpful ways of coping, but there are often setbacks
- You may be getting treatment for your physical or mental health, or trying to address issues that affect your emotional well-being, including any violence or other abuse
- 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

#### **I often feel pretty bad or have problems that may affect my family but I'm accepting help with this**

- As for 1-2, you are struggling with how you feel, but you recognise this and go along with some support
- You are getting help to start addressing issues such as physical or mental health problems, relying on alcohol or drugs to cope, violence or abuse
- Choose 3 if you sometimes allow others to help. Choose 4 if you go along with help more consistently

### 1 - 2 Stuck

#### **I often feel pretty bad or have problems that may also affect my family. I don't have the help I need**

- One or more of the following is the case:
  - You are struggling emotionally. Perhaps you are feeling depressed, anxious or hopeless
  - You have a physical or mental health problem that is not being treated or managed appropriately
  - You are drinking too much or using drugs to cope or in ways that risk your health
  - Your well-being is impacted by family conflict, violence, abuse or harassment
- Choose 1 if you don't have the help you need or are not ready to engage with it. Choose 2 if you occasionally say you struggle with how you feel, but are not yet engaging with help

# 3 My children's emotions

Helping your children grow up happy and resilient; connection, warmth and support

## Key points

- Supporting your children emotionally is different for each child and can be harder if they have additional needs or struggle with friendships or school
- Things may be difficult but you have support from 3
- By 8 you support your children to grow up emotionally healthy and resilient, with support

## 9 - 10 Managing well

I support my children emotionally and help them to deal with ups and downs

## 7 - 8 Finding what works

I'm finding ways to help my children emotionally but there are a few issues

## 5 - 6 Trying

I know I need to support my children emotionally and am trying, but it's hard

## 3 - 4 Accepting help

I find it hard to support my children emotionally but I'm accepting help with this

## 1 - 2 Stuck

I find it hard to support my children emotionally. I don't have the help I need

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# 3 My children's emotions (detail)

This scale is about helping your children grow up feeling happy, confident and able to deal with life's ups and downs. This may include listening to them and giving them attention and encouragement. It covers feeling connected to them and expressing your love for them in ways that are right for your family. It also includes helping them learn to deal with difficulties for themselves.

## 9 - 10 Managing well

### I support my children emotionally and help them to deal with ups and downs

- You give your children enough attention, positive feedback and encouragement, and express your love for them
- You support them to deal with difficulties, so they grow up more resilient
- You are close and allow them to be separate from you when they need to be
- You understand what each child needs emotionally
- Choose 9 if it helps to have occasional support in this area. Choose 10 if your children have what they need to be emotionally healthy without support from a service

## 7 - 8 Finding what works

### I'm finding ways to help my children emotionally but there are a few issues

- You are learning how to give your children the attention, positive feedback and encouragement they need
- You may be learning to listen more, offer more support or let them find their way with difficulties for themselves, depending on their needs
- You may be learning what each child needs emotionally
- 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, with ongoing support to stay on track

## 5 - 6 Trying

### I know I need to support my children emotionally and am trying, but it's hard

- You are starting to believe you can give your children the emotional support they need
- You are trying to give your children attention, positive feedback and encouragement, but they may experience you as inconsistent and there are often setbacks
- If your relationship has been too distant or too close, you are trying to change this
- 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

### I find it hard to support my children emotionally but I'm accepting help with this

- As for 1-2, you are struggling to connect with your children or to help them with difficult feelings or emotions, but you recognise this and go along with some support
- Perhaps you are getting advice on what children need to grow up emotionally resilient and healthy, able to get on with others and deal with life's up and downs
- Choose 3 if you sometimes allow others to help. Choose 4 if you go along with help more consistently

## 1 - 2 Stuck

### I find it hard to support my children emotionally. I don't have the help I need

- You are not able to give your children the attention, encouragement or emotional support they need. Perhaps you did not have your own emotional needs met when you were a child
- You may feel unable to connect with or empathise with them or to express the love you feel. You may feel angry or resentful towards them, or depend on them to meet your own emotional needs
- Choose 1 if you don't have the help you need or are not ready to engage with it. Choose 2 if you occasionally say you struggle to meet your children's emotional needs, but are not yet engaging with help

# 4 Keeping my children safe

Protecting your children, avoiding accidents, bullying, violence or other abuse at home, safety online

## Key points

- By 4 any immediate safety issues are being addressed
- By 8 your children are safe in your care, with support
- Being safe means there is no domestic abuse in the family, your children are well supervised, and older children avoid inappropriate risks

## 9 - 10 Managing well

My children are safe in my care

## 7 - 8 Finding what works

I'm finding what works to keep my children safe but there are a few issues

## 5 - 6 Trying

I know I need to keep my children safe and am trying, but it's hard

## 3 - 4 Accepting help

People are concerned that my children may not be safe enough but I'm accepting help with this

## 1 - 2 Stuck

People are concerned that my children may not be safe enough. I don't have the help I need

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