

Developing practice to ensure the voice of the child is heard

Child's Name:

Date:



Integral to evidence informed practice is the view of the child. Warwickshire is child friendly and respecting the child's voice is one of our five fundamental values. Informed by the Children Act 1989 and the UN convention on the Rights of the child (UNCRC) **every child has the right to be heard**. Listening and taking into account the voice of the child through meaningful engagement, negotiation and interactions leads to more successful outcomes.

Essential to gain the child voice is

- Building a strong **relationship** with trust, and transparency
- Informing children of the importance of **their right** to have a voice
- **Recording** effectively to reflect on the child's hopes, wishes and feelings
- The child understands the impact of their voice to shape the pathway

In this document we are supporting the lead professional to consider how to engage the child in a meaningful way to explore their views and consider their wishes. The approach should be based and focused on the individual needs and developmental stage of the child as well as their age.

Never assume the child knows everything about the situation and be mindful of how you share information with the child that could negatively impact them.

Offer the child an explanation of the Early Help processes and why it is important to gain their voice. Because each child is unique the methods used to engage with them should be creative and based around their individuality.

Talking

Talk with the child about their likes and dislikes.

Consider the location and who is with the child to allow them to talk freely and feel comfortable.

If the child is younger support them through using Makaton, signs and symbols to express information about themselves and their life. Start off talking about their favourite food or story then be more directive about 'where do you live, who lives there, could we draw a happy day, a sad day, who is special.

Where a child is unable to express their view directly then the lead professional can consider seeking an advocate. A person with a relationship with the child that can share in the meeting a 'message' from them.

Further guidance and support is available on the NSPCC website including the Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines.

There are no factors including age, understanding or level of need that should be a barrier to capturing the views of a child or young person as part of an assessment.

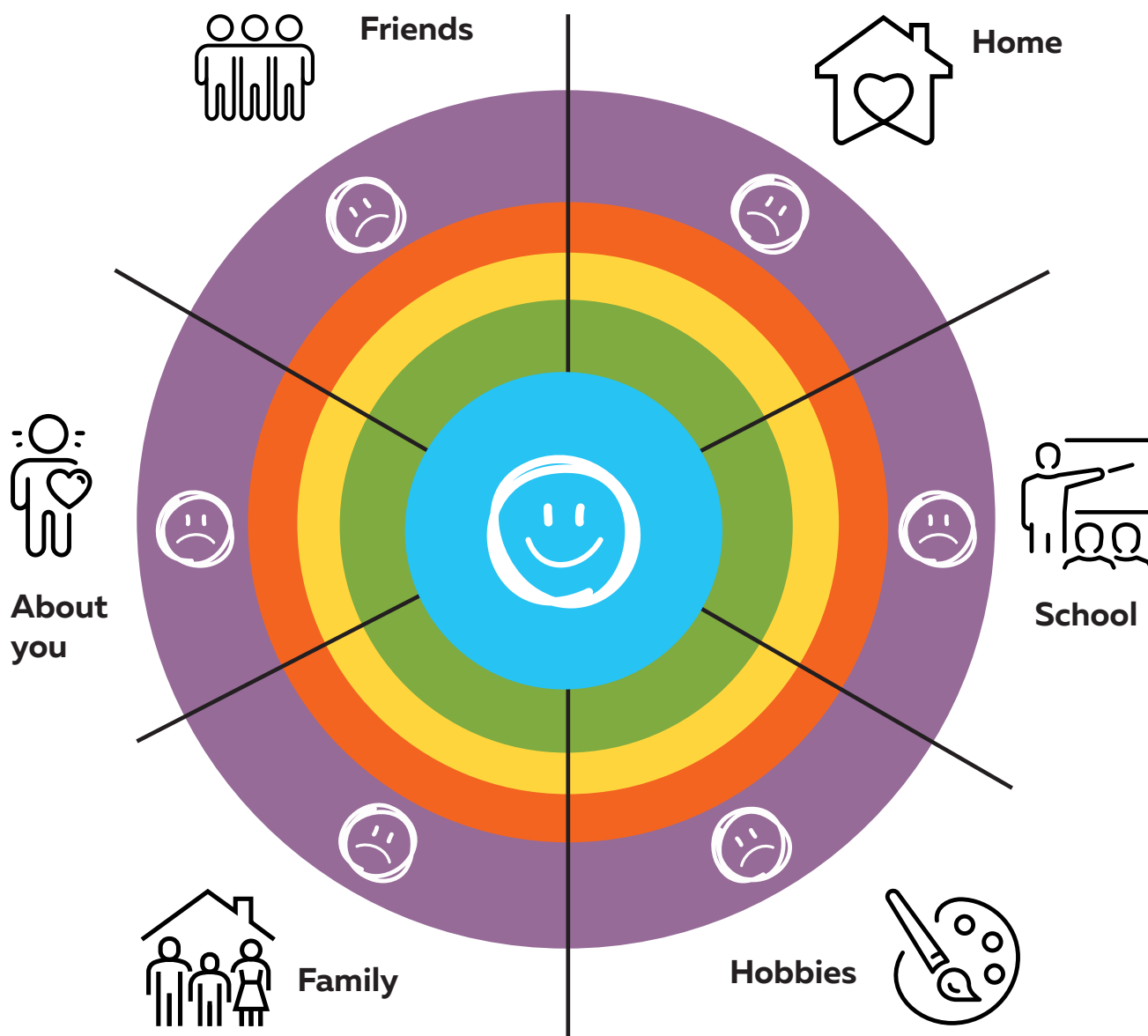
Every child is unique and will chose to offer their voice when ready and able. The tool in this document is to support practitioners to complete the pathway to change with the child's voice.

Start by sitting with the child exploring their interests and offer them a suitable place to express themselves freely.

Once comfortable ask the child to point or mark on this document their view of each of the areas on the diagrams. Talk through each area and make notes to support you in sharing the child's voice in the pathway.

Content and happy, things are going well.	Some days you feel low but ok. You would like some support to think about things more.	Things feel tricky, some days it is all you can think about, and you are losing interest in things you enjoy.	It is becoming more difficult to feel ok and you are worried more than happy. You might get angry, frustrated or be sad.	Things are overwhelming, you struggle to see a way forward and worry about being safe
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Child friendly triage tool



Thinking about everything we've talked about, on a scale of 0-10, where 10 is being as happy as you could be ... Where are you now?



0

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10