

Guidance for practitioners and managers

New editions of the Family Star Plus™ and Family Star™: What you need to know

In April 2023, Triangle is publishing new and improved editions of the Family Star Plus and Family Star, following a two-year review process and extensive feedback. This document explains the key changes and what you need to know about moving to the new editions.

1 Why did we create new editions of the Family Star Plus™ and Family Star™?

Triangle is committed to ensuring that the Outcomes Stars stay relevant and continue to support best practice. We keep them under review, seeking feedback and developing new editions as needed.

The Family Star was developed in 2010. The Family Star Plus was developed and published in 2013, with added emphasis on parents as well as their children. The original Family Star was slightly updated at the same time, creating edition 2. Since then, much has changed – in the sector, in the level and type of need experienced by clients accessing services, as well as economic pressures and housing challenges. Triangle has also learned a lot about use of language and accessibility, including being more trauma-informed and even more client-centred. The new editions of the Family Star Plus and Family Star were developed in response to these changes and to the feedback received during our consultation with those using these Stars.

For more details about the development and review process for these Stars please see the Development Summary that accompanies this guidance document.

2 What has changed in the new editions?

The main improvements are:

- The top of the Journey of Change has been renamed
- The language is clearer and more trauma-informed
- There are more client-centred names for the outcome areas
- There are small changes to the content of some scales.

a) The top of the Journey of Change has been renamed

Stage 5 is now called 'Managing well' – although the meaning remains the same, this replaces 'Effective parenting' as it is clearer and less likely to be misunderstood.

b) The language is clearer and more trauma-informed

- More trauma-informed and client-centred language is used throughout. For example, making it more explicit that things may be 'stuck' at the first stage because people don't have the support they need, or the service isn't delivered in a way that works for them.

- More recognition of external factors that may be beyond the person’s control, making it more explicit that they may be doing the best they can but still be struggling.
- The new editions more clearly identify 8 as the point at which the outcomes are achieved – parents are managing well, and children can thrive with ongoing support. For some parents, this may be a more appropriate end point on the scale than 10 as their needs or those of their children mean it is not appropriate for your service to withdraw.

c) More client-centred names for the outcome areas

In both the Family Star Plus and Family Star, most of the outcome area names have changed, as shown in the tables below.

d) Small changes to the content of some scales

There are changes in what is referred to in some outcome areas, which are worth being aware of as you begin using the new edition but should not affect the Star readings that are produced, for the reasons explained in the tables below.

Explaining the changes to the outcome areas for Family Star Plus™

Table 1: Outcome areas where either nothing has changed or only the name has changed:

Old outcome area – Family Star Plus	New outcome area – Family Star Plus (2nd Edition)
Physical health	My children’s health
Meeting emotional needs	My children’s emotions
Keeping your children safe	Keeping my children safe
Social networks	Friends and community
Family routine	Our family routine
Home and money	Home and money

Table 2: Outcome areas where the name and content has changed:

Old outcome area (Family Star Plus)	New outcome area (Family Star Plus: 2nd Edition)	More information about the changes
Your well-being	How I feel	<p>The new edition includes more explicit references to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interaction between physical health and well-being (managing conditions or feeling ill) • Drugs not being used to cope in a way that risks the person’s health and well-being • The impact of family conflict and harassment. <p>As these factors are intrinsic to well-being, they will have always impacted on readings in this scale, meaning we believe the data across editions will be comparable.</p>
Education and learning	My children’s learning	<p>The new edition sets out a broader view, referencing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children engaging with school, as well as good attendance • Children meeting their own potential, rather than meeting specific milestones that may have not been appropriate for all. <p>We believe these changes reflect how practitioners use the tool already and should not affect data across editions.</p>

Boundaries and behaviour	My children's behaviour	The new edition has a less explicit reference to parents being involved in antisocial or criminal behaviour. It has a more strengths-based focus on parents being good role models. The scale will still capture the impact of any criminal behaviour and so should not affect data across editions.
Progress to work	Work	The new edition provides more clarity on the behaviour expected at stages 5 and 6. This should help ensure data recorded with the new edition is more consistent to the Journey of Change, whilst not having a significant impact on comparability with previously collected data.

Explaining the changes to the outcome areas for Family Star™

Table 1: Outcome areas where either nothing has changed or only the name has changed:

Old outcome area – Family Star	New outcome area – Family Star 2.2
Physical health	My children's health
Keeping your children safe	Keeping my children safe
Social networks	Friends and community
Family routine	Our family routine
Home and money	Home and money

Table 2: Outcome areas where the name and content has changed:

Old outcome area (Family Star)	New outcome area (Family Star 2.2)	More information about the changes
Emotional well-being	Emotional well-being	<p>The new edition includes more explicit references to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interaction between physical health and well-being (managing conditions or feeling ill) • Drugs not being used to cope in a way that risks the person's health and well-being • The impact of family conflict and harassment. <p>As these factors are intrinsic to well-being, they will have always impacted on readings in this scale, meaning we believe the data across editions will be comparable.</p>
Education and learning	My children's learning	<p>The new edition includes a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children engaging with school, as well as good attendance • Children meeting their own potential, rather than meeting specific milestones that may have not been appropriate for all. <p>These changes mirror how practitioners use the tool in practice already and should not affect data across editions.</p>
Boundaries and behaviour	My children's behaviour	<p>The new edition has a less explicit reference to parents being involved in antisocial or criminal behaviour. It has a more strengths-based focus on parents being good role models.</p> <p>The scale will still capture the impact of any criminal behaviour and so should not affect data across editions.</p>

NB. The guidance and resources for reporting Family Star data against the SHANARRI indicators in Scotland have also been updated to reflect these changes.

3 What do these changes mean for me?

The new editions are a significant improvement and have been very well received. The changes support acceptability, implementation, and good practice.

Using the Star Online: the new editions will replace the previous ones on the Star Online. This means that:

- Data gathered from the different editions of the same Star version will be combined in the dashboard reports. You will notice that the reports update to use the new outcome area names.
- Completed Star PDFs for Stars submitted before the new edition is added will remain based on the previous edition.
- New Stars started, in progress Stars, Action Plans and the Service User Summary will update to the new edition.

Data and reporting: the outcomes data gathered using the old and new editions is comparable, meaning that we do not expect readings to be affected.

Downloading new resources: we will notify you when the new editions have been added to the Star Online. Please ensure that you log onto the Star Online and download the new User Guides and Star Charts to replace the existing resources that you may have saved internally or are using in your own system.

Briefing or training practitioners: you can use this document to brief practitioners on the changes between the old and new editions and may also wish to look at our Development Summary for more detail. Training in the new editions will be available from April 2023. There is no obligation for those who are already trained to have refresher training, however this would be an ideal moment to do this.

Explaining the changes to service users: it might be useful to explain that the updates are in response to feedback from parents, guardians and carers; that the language has been made clearer and more engaging but the Star still works in the same way.

For any questions or for further support, please contact us on the details below.



The social enterprise behind the Star

Triangle Consulting Social Enterprise is an innovative, mission-led organisation that exists to help people reach their highest potential and live meaningful and fulfilling lives, often in the context of social disadvantage, trauma, disability or illness.

We do this by creating and supporting the Outcomes Star and other tools to unlock the potential of both individuals and the workers and organisations who support them. We believe that by balancing clear thinking, human connection and action – using the head, heart and hands – we can make a real difference in the world.

Find out more

T: +44 (0)20 7272 8765

E: info@triangleconsulting.co.uk

W: www.outcomesstar.org.uk

If you are not in the UK, contact the licensed Outcomes Star service provider in your country. Contact details can be found on the Outcomes Star website.

