**Young Person’s Child Protection Conference Process**

These child protection conferences will run in line with Together for Children’s Child Protection Procedures. In recent years it has become more evident that young people can often be at greater risk of harm due to risks outside of their family home. Also learning from learning reviews has highlighted how parents can often feel alienated by traditional child protection approaches when risks are outside of their control.

In situations when we have assessed that the risk to the young person is outside of their home then we would aim to hold a Young Person’s Child Protection Conference. The young person would be fully encouraged to work with the Conference Chair in deciding how their conference is held and who is best to attend to help make decisions with the young person.

**What do we mean by a Young Person?**

Together for Children (TFC) defines a Young Person as someone who has had their 11th birthday but is under the age of 18.

**What is a Conference Chair?**

The Conference Chair works with the young person, their mam, dad and family along with professionals like teachers, police, health visitors and school nurses who all have an important role to play in their life to keep the young person safe. The Conference Chair’s job is to make sure that the young person’s voice is heard and they will keep in touch with all the professionals. Everyone will meet 3-months after the first meeting to listen to what has been achieved to keep the young person safe, happy and to check that everyone on their plan is doing what they need to be doing to achieve this. If we are still worried, we would meet in another 6-months to see what we and those people important to the young person could do differently to build more safety around them. Timescales can be brought forward based on the individual needs of the young person, however cannot exceed the above statutory timescales.

**What is a Young Person’s Child Protection Plan?**

A young person’s child protection plan is a plan that is developed by the young person. It will outline what the young person is worried about, what makes them feel safe and the people who are important to them. When a young person’s child protection plan is put in place and we believe that there are also safeguarding concerns then the young person’s child protection plan will compliment the child protection plan.

In the young person’s child protection plan they will be the lead in the information that is put into the plan. Prior to any young person’s child protection conference the allocated social worker / lead person will work with the young person in helping them develop their own plan.

**What should we do if there is a sibling group?**

In the event of a young person’s conference being requested and siblings are at risk of significant harm, this would indicate that the pathway needs to be the standard child protection pathway.

**When should a Young Person’s Child Protection Plan be put in place?**

A young person’s child protection plan is relevant for all young people aged 11 and above, where assessments have concluded that there are risks to the young person but these risks are outside of the family home. Child protection thresholds would still be applied and the governing SSCP procedures would be followed in conjunction with the young person’s child protection plan.

The young person’s child protection plan will require the multi-agency work with the family but would aim to engage the young person, parent or carers in developing safety and aligns itself with our Signs of Safety model of practice.

**Young people’s child protection plans should not be used:**

* When we are concerned that there are risks of significant harm as a result of parents not acting appropriately to seek to ensure their own child’s safety and wellbeing
* Where parental behaviour itself is seen as a risk to the young person, for example exposure to domestic abuse, substance misuse or parental mental health
* When a child is under the age of 11 or where their needs would impede upon the usefulness of the plan for the young person

**How should a Young Person’s Child Protection Plan be put in place?**

A young person’s child protection plan would follow the same route as the current child protection procedures and would be agreed within a child protection conference if threshold for child protection was agreed. The contents of the young person’s child protection plan would be documented and directed by the young person with their lead person. During the young person’s child protection conference the young person’s conference chair will share the plan so that all participants have an understanding of the young person’s child protection plan.

Where appropriate the young person’s child protection plan will inform the main child protection plan document, and these documents will co-exist alongside each other. Outside of the child protection conference arena the young person’s child protection plan should be revisited by the lead person prior to core groups so that this information can be used to inform the overarching child protection plan for the young person.

Ideally this would be achieved with the young person attending core groups and their views being central to the core groups and the assessment of risk.

**What will a** **Young Person’s Child Protection Conference look like?**

Children’s Services will:

* Follow the child protection pathway
* Complete Section 47 investigation
* Advise the Children’s Independent Reviewing Team at the point of undertaking a strategy that there may be a need for a Young Person’s Child Protection Conference
* Confirm with CIRT that there is a need for a child protection conference by no later than day-9 and that risks are outside of the family home therefore young person’s child protection conference pathway to be followed

Children’s Independent Reviewing Team (CIRT) will:

* Appoint a conference chair at the time of notification regarding young person’s strategy
* Provide a provisional date for the young person’s child protection conference
* Contact the young person’s social worker (between days 1-9) to ask if there are any identified risks with regards to arranging a visit to pre-meet the young person
* Undertake a pre-meeting visit with the young person between days 10-14, to introduce themselves, start relationship building and agree structure regarding the young person’s child protection conference. During the visit conference chairs to use the conference participation tool
* Provide the young person and core group members with a hard copy of the conference outcomes and the young person’s child protection plan, if this is what has been agreed.

**Reviewing a Young Person’s Child Protection Plan**

A young person’s child protection plan should be reviewed at intervals that respond to the individual young person’s needs. Following the initial conference, the first review should not be more than 3-calendar months and then 6-months after this.

**How can a Young Person’s Child Protection Plan end?**

A young person’s child protection plan would follow the same reviewing process as if they were subject to a child protection plan and therefore the ending of a young person’s child protection plan should only take place via the following:

* A young person turns 18-years of age and therefore SSCP procedures no longer apply
* In the event of the young person dying
* Multi-agency young person’s conference agrees that risk has reduced and therefore there is no longer a need for a young person’s child protection plan

**Case responsibility**

In all cases where a young person’s child protection plan has been assessed as meeting SSCP thresholds regarding risk of significant harm, a TFC social worker will remain the lead professional. This will mean that they will continue to coordinate core groups, work directly with the young person and their family and keep accurate recordings on Liquid Logic regarding the young person and their family.

SSCP procedures clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of the lead social worker. They will ensure that all documents are updated accordingly.

**Definition of Lead Person**

A Lead Person can be anyone that the young person identifies themselves as having a strong positive relationship with, someone they can contact and talk to when they feel worried or scared. The lead person is different to that of the lead professional and their role should not be seen as an additional responsibility but more of an acknowledgement of the wishes and feelings of the young person. The lead person could be a friend, family member or professional who is involved in the young person’s life, identified by the young person. They need to be able to commit to working with the young person, their family and the professional network involved with them to support the creation of safety for the young person.

The lead person will have primary responsibility for supporting the young person in keeping their young person’s child protection plan up to date and sharing any changes with the core group and social worker.

The social worker will be the person responsible for inputting and amending any changes to the young person’s child protection plan in Liquid Logic. The young person and the lead person however are responsible for sharing the changes with the social worker to enable updating to be completed.

**We want you to participate in your young person’s conference**

**How can you participate in your conference?**

**As a young person you have been invited to take part in your young person’s conference**

**Young person’s conferences take place when we are worried that there are risks for your safety outside of the family home and therefore we come together to look at what the risks are and how we can help you and your family keep you safe.**

**We know it may be difficult to tell us exactly what it is you want to say in your conference. Before the date of your conference we will arrange to see you to tell you about who we are. We will look at how we can manage your conference for you, as we want you to tell us what life is like for you. We want to know things that are going well whilst also hearing about the things that you are worried about.**

**Attending the conference**

**We aim to support all young people in attending their own young person’s conference. The conference can take place after school to help you attend. It will involve your parents and people who are important to you. It will also involve other people who are employed to help keep you safe, such as your teacher, social worker and school nurse. We will aim to hold your young person’s conference at times that supports you and your important people in being able to attend. The main person for us to have there is YOU as hearing what life is like for you is one of the most important parts of the conference.**

**We know that sometimes young people may not wish to speak but still wish to come to hear what other people are saying about them and that’s fine too.**

**Attend your meeting with an Advocate**

**You can attend your conference in person or if you choose not to attend then we can look at other ways of hearing about life for you. Within Together for Children we use advocacy services, who are adults who help to tell us about young people’s views at times when you may not feel that you can.**

**You don’t want to attend your meeting, but you want your advocate to attend for you**

**You will never be forced to attend your conference but will always have the option to share your views, this can be done by you expressing your views via writing on paper, phone, email or text, and someone who you choose to speak can share these views for you. When your Conference Chairperson visits you before the date of your conference they will talk in more detail about all of the different options we have to help us to hear your voice.**

**You don’t want to attend your meeting and don’t want any views shared or want to contribute**

**We would hope that all young people have a say in their conference but there are times when you just don’t want to have a say or don’t want to take part. Just know that the option to have your views are always on offer.**

**We can hold your conference in different ways**

**We can do it face to face**

**Or**

**We can do it virtually by Microsoft teams, the people who come will need to have Microsoft teams and an email address to be invited**

**Or**

**We can do it by what we call hybrid – half and half: some can attend physically and some virtually.**

**Your Menu: tell us what you want**

 **Tick for Yes**

**I would like my conference face to face**

**I would like my conference virtually (via Teams)**

**I would like my conference to be half and half (hybrid)**

**I would like to attend my conference**

**I would like to attend my conference with an advocate**

**I would like to attend my conference and just listen**

**I don’t want to attend my conference, share any views, or contribute**