**PRACTICE TIPS – SMART PLANNING - January 2019**

This document has been put together to assist SW in the daily WHAT and HOW of their work in terms of SMART planning

This Document is in draft form, as the views and comments of practitioners is being sought prior to document finalisation.

These Documents will be reviewed in Feb 2019 and finalised in March 2019.

These documents set out some ideas for SG to consider in terms of Guidance for practitioners which will -

* standardise practice, - consistency and quality
* develop learning culture on what works and why
* Develop the ability to look at impact – better understanding of the childs experience
* Provide an evidence-based tool
* Enable decision making to be more timely
* Children’s outcomes to be more specific in terms of their experiences

WHAT IS SMART.? – SMART is an acronym for -

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| **SPECIFIC** | Specificity enables clarity and accountability  What is the goal trying to be achieved.? – well defined goals avoid parents stating they never knew.  What steps are needed to achieve this?  Who is going to do what?  When and how? |
| **MEASURABLE** | Measuring and evaluating change is a critical component within plans. It enables services to be effective.  Outcomes are clearly evident  It demonstrates longevity of change and allows us to not fall into the trap of over optimism |
| **ACHIEVABLE** | Plans are made to meet a goal/ objective  Plans are successful when parents own the plan and agree that the identified goal is important to them and their child  Achievement is possible through repetition and perseverance. Supports and services may need to be in place.  Regular reviews enable accomplishments to be identified, thus enhancing the positives and strengths within the family. |
| **REALISTIC** | Plans do not set people up to fail, they need to be realistic and within the family’s scope to control. – a family may not be able to move, but they are able to keep a clean and safe home  Realistic plans enable assessments to reflect upon parental motivation and capacity for change. |
| **TIMELY** | Timeliness is central to good planning.  Timescales need to reflect the child’s needs and welfare  Children left in situations where change is not timely increases harm to welfare, safety and development  Timeliness avoids drift and delay in planning for children’s futures  Timescales set - out clear expectations of the trajectory, journey of what and how, and what will happen if this is not achieved.  Clear timescales can help to highlight where disguised compliance is present – agreement but no action. |

Why

Plans need to be meaningful to the Child/ Young Person. They need to be tailored to specific needs in order that good outcomes can be achieved for the child. Generic plans do not promote positive outcomes.

The components of a SMART plan support and reinforce each other - this makes the plan more meaningful with a clear trajectory in sight.

Transparency regarding our involvement and worries must underpin any plan, this sets the scene for openness and a desire to work together.

Clarity enables focus, focus enables motivation and movement. Families feel positive about themselves as they achieve each step of the plan. This feel good factor motivates them to continue with the plan, strengthening their resilience and knowledge in terms of what they are doing and why it is necessary. Knowledge brings power, and power enables a family to make change and take control of their situation.

Plans set out expectations for everyone involved. This provides a clear framework of accountability and responsibility, reinforcing this is a shared experience of working towards one common goal.

SMART plans –

* clarify the goal/ objective
* Provide a framework for transparency and honesty
* Promote focused and agreed action
* Encourage parental ownership and participation
* Prevent drift and delay
* Place the child and their needs at the centre of the plan

Must

All children open to Children’s Services must have a plan -

* Child protection – Signs of Safety
* Child in need – Signs of Wellbeing
* Looked after – Signs of Success
* Pathway – Signs of Success

Plans must be made in collaboration with families and young people

Plans must include partner agencies

Plans must have a clear purpose with identified Goals and Objectives

Plans must be reviewed regularly to ensure they are fit for purpose