

At Tusla, we want to provide the best possible service. It is important that we get feedback so we can improve the way we work with children and families. If you think we are doing a good job please tell your social worker. On the otherhand, if you think we could do things to improve our work, talk to your social worker or their manager.

Social Worker's Name & Tel No:

Team Leader's Name & Tel No:

If they are not able to help, you can contact Tusla Feedback and Complaints team:

Email: tellus@tusla.ie

Phone: **01 7718500**

(Call 9am to 5pm Monday - Friday)

Text **086 014 2775**.

Danger Statements

If the outcome of the assessment finds there are serious worries about your child's safety, we will write them down and call them Danger Statements.

How we will use Safety Goals

To eliminate this danger we write down Safety Goals. These are the goals that need to be reached to make sure that your child is safe and well at all times.

The people around you can help (Safety Network)

This network is a group of people in your life that are important to you and your child (like grandparents, aunts, uncles, close friends). All safety goals need to identify a safety network. This network of family and friends will work with you and Tusla to provide support to your family after the situation has improved and we are no longer working with your family.

How the safety Plan helps

A **safety plan** includes all the things that will happen every day. It will show everyone how the child will be safe in the future even if the danger is present.

We will write the safety plan together with you, your social worker and your safety network. The plan will include the danger statement, the safety goal and a number of steps with a time frame (timeline).

Everyone will meet regularly to see how the plan is going until everyone is happy the safety goals have been reached and the case can be closed.

Your rights

As a parent you have the right to:

- be heard;
- be kept informed and involved;
- take part in the thinking and planning to address the concerns;
- seek legal advice;
- ask for explanations and receive them;
- be supported;
- access your child's records;
- have access to an interpreter if you require one;
- have your religious and cultural background taken into account.

TUSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Information for Parents about Social Work

signs
OF
safety®

Who are Tusla and what do we do?

Tusla is the Child and Family Agency in Ireland and our job is to work with children, young people and families to make sure they are safe and well cared for.

Our social workers work with families when someone raises a concern about the welfare, or safety of a child or when there are concerns a child has been abused or neglected.

How can Tusla help you?

You or someone else within or outside your family has raised a concern about **your child**. On receiving the concern Tusla will have assessed the situation and will have spoken with that person and collected as much information as possible. They will also have checked if your child is already known to Tusla Child Protection and Welfare services or other Tusla services.

We respond to all concerns in line with **Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children**.

What happens when a concern has been reported?

Depending on the result of the assessment the social worker will put a plan in place to support you and your child. In some cases that means helping you get some extra support for your family.

If the outcome of the assessment indicates that the child has been harmed physically or sexually or their physical and emotional care has been neglected, your social worker will support you and your child with a Child Protection Safety Plan. If we think a child has been abused, Tusla is obliged to inform An Garda Síochána.

What is Signs of Safety?

Tusla has introduced a new way of working with families when concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing are brought to its attention. It is called **Signs of Safety**.

Signs of Safety means Tusla works together with families and other professionals to help protect the child.

The Signs of Safety approach involves everyone relevant to the child taking part in the discussion about how best they can work together to meet the needs of your child. We will speak with with:

- your child;
- carers;
- family members;
- friends;
- professionals like public health nurses, social workers, teachers, doctors, An Garda Síochána

Signs of Safety helps everyone, including the child, to think of ways to keep the child safe, healthy and settled, wherever they are living. It makes sure your views and the views of your child are part of the discussion to

find the best solution. We want everyone involved to have the same understanding of the situation, so we can all understand the strengths and the worries for your child.

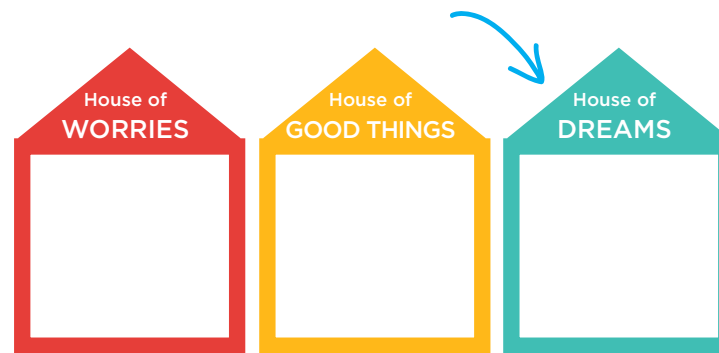
Talking to children

Talking to children is at the heart of Signs of Safety. It is important that children, as well as adults, have an opportunity to talk about:

- what they are worried about;
- what makes them happy; and
- what they would like to see happen in their family and community to keep them safe.

Words and pictures are used to communicate with your child about what has happened and what will keep them safe in a way they will understand.

The Signs of Safety approach uses a tool called **My Three Houses** to talk to children and ask them their views:



What questions will the social worker ask?

During the Signs of Safety assessment, we will ask you, your child and your wider family and anyone else who cares for your child, four questions:

What are we worried about?

What has happened to make us worried and what is the impact on the child, including things that may be happening in the family's life that make the problem(s) harder to deal with.

What is working well?

Things that are already happening to keep the child safe and protected from harm/abuse and meet their needs.

What needs to happen?

What the family and professionals need to see to be satisfied the child is safe enough. These are turned into goals and a plan.

Scaling

0 ————— 10
Child is being harmed ————— Child is safe

