

Strengthening families | Protecting children  
**Framework for Practice**

# The Family Roadmap

*A process to elicit the views and ideas of family members, in preparation for detailed collaborative planning*

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This resource material was written by and is copyrighted by Sonja Parker. For further information, please contact Sonja Parker at [sonja.parker@iinet.net.au](mailto:sonja.parker@iinet.net.au) or [www.spconsultancy.com.au](http://www.spconsultancy.com.au)

Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs  
Locked Bag 3405  
Brisbane Qld 4001  
[www.cyjma.qld.gov.au](http://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au)

# Table of contents

- Introduction to the Family Roadmap ..... 4**
- Connecting the Roadmap and CAP framework..... 5**
- When can you use the family roadmap process?..... 6**
- Who can the family roadmap be used with? ..... 6**
- Sharing the views of professionals ..... 7**
- Preparing to create a family roadmap ..... 8**
- Materials..... 8**
- Creating the family roadmap..... 9**
  - Step 1: Life at its Best..... 9
  - Step 2: Life at its worst..... 11
  - Step 3: Adding to “Life at its best” ..... 13
  - Step 4: Scaling Question ..... 14
  - Step 5: The journey so far..... 15
  - Step 6: The journey ahead ..... 16
  - Step 7: Showing everyone these good things are happening..... 18
  - Step 8: Watching out for roadblocks..... 19
- Final overview of the entire roadmap..... 21**
- Process Considerations ..... 22**
- Connections between the Roadmap and the Framework..... 23**
- From the Family Roadmap to the Action Plan ..... 24**
- Conclusion..... 25**
- References..... 26**

# Introduction to the Family Roadmap

Developing meaningful and sustainable plans for children at risk of abuse or maltreatment is a complex and challenging process, which requires child protection professionals to bring their own assessment to the table while remaining open to the views and ideas of family members. Given that it is the family and their network who will be responsible for putting the plan into action on a day-to-day basis, any plan that is developed must be developed collaboratively with family members and their network.

For the family and their network to be meaningfully involved in creating a safety plan or action planning within the case plan process, they must first be involved in a rigorous and balanced assessment that focuses on what is happening in the family and what needs to happen in the future to ensure the safety, belonging and wellbeing of the children. The more that family members and their network are involved in the assessment process, the more likely it is that the family will have a sense of ownership of the plan and that the detailed plan will be achievable and make a real difference for the children and the family.

The Family Roadmap process is a strength-based, participatory and collaborative child protection process that has been designed to elicit the views and ideas of family members (and their safety and support network) in preparation for the family's participation in comprehensive action planning. This process creates a platform of shared understanding that supports professionals and families to work together to develop effective plans.

The family roadmap process is a visual process that takes place on a wall, on a large table or on the floor and can be developed with one person, a couple or a whole group (family and their network, for example). What is important is that everyone who is involved in the process can see what is being recorded in the 'roadmap', so that they have the greatest possible opportunity to participate in the process. This high level of participation is the other key characteristic of the process, as family members and network members are actively involved in creating the roadmap.

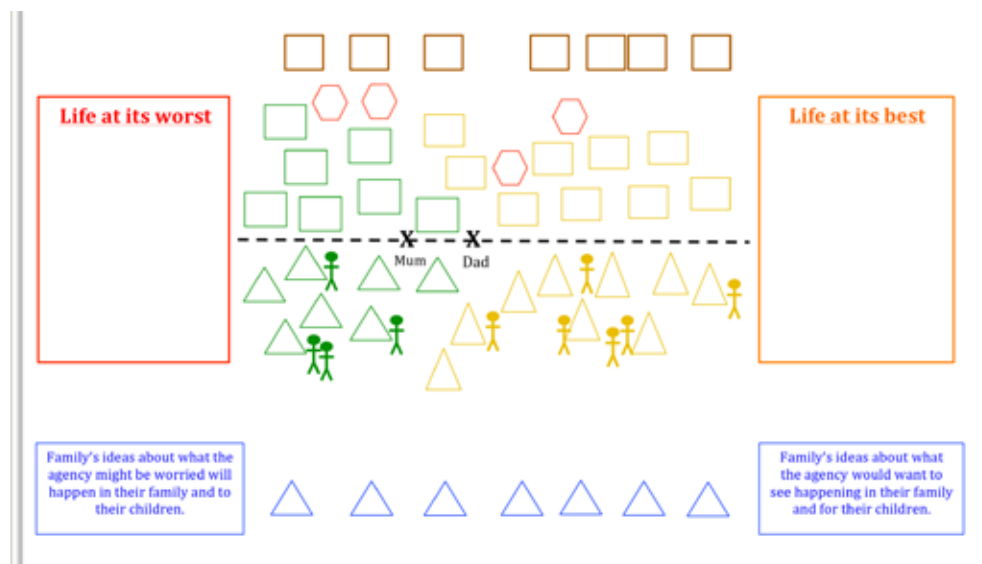
The family roadmap process creates a visual narrative of the journey the family has already taken, and wants to take in the future, to provide safety, belonging and wellbeing for their children. The roadmap describes the family's journey from when things were at their worst for the family (which may have been in the past or may be where they are at in the present) to a future vision of how things would be in their family and for their children if life was at its best. The roadmap process begins by recording a rich description of both these times ('life at its best' and 'life at its worst'). These two descriptions are placed a distance apart on the wall (or floor/table) and a scale is created between the two positions.



The family roadmap process is divided into a number of steps, which can all be completed in one session or can be worked through over a number of sessions. Within each step, the participants are invited to write each piece of information that has been identified on a piece of paper and to stick it on the roadmap (or the facilitator can write it on the wall).

The steps in the family roadmap process elicit the following information:

- 'Life at its best' and 'life at its worst', as described on the previous page.
- Where each family member views the family as being right now (on the scale between 'life at its best' and 'life at its worst').
- What the family are already doing that has them this far along the scale (toward 'life at its best').
- What or who has helped the family to achieve these things (including what Child Safety or other professionals have done that has helped the family to achieve these things).
- What obstacles or road blocks the family have had to overcome to achieve these things and be this far along the road.
- What each family member thinks would be different in the family if they were one step further along the road toward 'life at its best'.
- Continuing to identify what would be different until each family member has worked out all the steps along the road to 'life at its best'.
- What or who could help them to achieve these things (including what Child Safety or other professionals could do to help them achieve these things).
- What roadblocks or obstacles they anticipate they could encounter and what they could do/what support they might need to overcome these obstacles.
- For each section of the roadmap (what is already happening and what needs to happen), the final stage involves asking the family to think about how Child Safety know or could know that these things are happening (demonstrating safety)



## Connecting the Roadmap and CAP framework

The Family Roadmap and the Collaborative Assessment and Planning (CAP) framework are both tools that can be used to undertake a collaborative assessment and planning process. The difference is that the Family Roadmap process focuses explicitly on eliciting the views of family members and so the language is deliberately family-centred (eg. "life at its worst" rather than worry statements, "life at its best" rather than goal statements). The views of family members that are elicited by the family roadmap process can then be integrated into the CAP framework and a section on how to do this is included at the end of this booklet.

## When can you use the family roadmap process?

The family roadmap process can be used when you want to hear a family member's (or network member's) assessment of what is happening in the family and their ideas on what needs to happen for the children to be safe in the future. While the family roadmap process is by no means the only process that you can use to have these critical assessment and planning conversations, it can often be effective in eliciting more information because of the visual, collaborative and participatory nature of the process.

This might mean that you are using the family roadmap process:

- Soon after you have begun working with a family, as a means of eliciting the views of family members and as a precursor to sharing the professionals' views in more detail.
- If you have been working with a family for a while and the parents/family members are finding it difficult to share their views and to hear the views of professionals.
- At the point that parents have begun to involve a safety and support network. The family roadmap process can assist the parents in sharing their views and ideas with the network, and begin the process of eliciting the views and ideas of the network.
- As a preparatory step for detailed collaborative planning with the family and network.

### Using the roadmap in situations of domestic and family violence

There will be some circumstances, for example where there has been violence and coercive patterns of behaviour by a parent, when the family roadmap process will need to be carefully managed so that individual family members are able to share their views without placing themselves at risk of further violence or control. This may mean, for example, that in a situation where there are allegations or knowledge of violence by the father towards the mother, that you hold individual sessions with each of the parents and plan carefully with the mother about how to share her views with the father, the network and other professionals in ways that will not put her in a vulnerable or dangerous position. This is an opportunity to hear about and support the mother in her efforts to keep her children safe. It is also fair to tell her that she cannot control his behaviour and that the responsibility to stop the violence sits clearly with the father. It will be helpful and reassuring to her to discuss how you are going to speak to the father about his responsibilities as a parent in your planning with him. Similarly, if you decide to use the family roadmap process with a young person (as an alternative to the Three Houses process, for example), you will need to ensure that the young person's views are shared in ways that uphold their ongoing safety.

## Who can the family roadmap be used with?

The family roadmap process can be used to elicit the views of all the significant people in a child or young person's life, including the child or young person themselves, the mother, the father, other significant family members (such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, etc) and friends, significant community members and other professionals. The family roadmap can be used to elicit the views of people individually (through the creation of an individual family roadmap) or in group contexts (bringing together the family members' and network members' views in a combined roadmap), or a combination of the above. The decision about whether you create individual family roadmaps or develop combined roadmaps (for example, with a couple or with the whole family) will be determined by the family dynamics as well as the extent to which other family members/network people are already involved in the assessment and planning process.

As mentioned in the previous section, if domestic and family violence is occurring within the family, then it will be important to elicit the views of the family members who are experiencing violence in safe circumstances (for example, individually or with a support person) and to carefully manage how these views are shared, particularly with the person who is responsible for the violence. At the end of the process of creating a family roadmap with a vulnerable parent or young person, you can ask them to think about:

- Who else needs to see the ideas that they have expressed in their roadmap?
- What needs to happen for this to be managed in a safe way?
- Who else is significant in the child or young person's life and might have ideas that can be elicited and added to the family roadmap?

It is also important to create a family roadmap with the person who is responsible for the violence, both to be clear that the responsibility for changing this behaviour rests with the perpetrator, as well as providing an opportunity for that person to think through their behaviour, the impact it is having on their children (either directly and/or through impacting the other parent's capacity to parent), how they want things to be in the future, and their ideas about how to create that future for their children and their family. The respectful and curious solution-focused approach that is central to the family roadmap process will often create space for offenders or perpetrators to explore the meaning and impact of their behaviour and to begin to move beyond superficial or defensive responses to begin envisaging the possibility of change.

In situations where there are not issues of violence and control, it may still be important to initially create a roadmap just with the parents (either individually or together) and/or with the young person, so that they feel able to think through and express their views without the pressure of having other people involved in the process.

Once someone has created their roadmap, then the next step involves sharing their roadmap and inviting/incorporating the views of significant others. This can be accomplished in a family meeting or facilitated family group meeting, which all of the significant people can be invited to attend.

## Sharing the views of professionals

An important question in understanding the family roadmap process is the question of when and how the views of Child Safety or other professionals are shared. In answering this question, it's important to think about the purpose of this process. The family roadmap process has been created with the intention of eliciting the views of family members, and so any sharing of professionals' views that happens before or during this process needs to happen in a manner that communicates and maintains a spirit of curiosity and partnership.

Family members are usually most willing and best able to participate in child protection assessment and planning processes if child protection workers take time to listen to the family's views and let family members know that their views and ideas will inform assessment and planning decisions. If professional views are shared in too much detail and as absolute positions before hearing the parents'/family members'/network members' views, this can tend to constrain or shut down the ideas and views offered by the parents and significant others.

Putting this principle into action within the family roadmap process means that this process is entirely focused on exploring and recording the views of the family member (or network member). All of the steps, and the questions used within each step, are designed to elicit the family member's views and ideas.

As you read through the family roadmap process, you will notice that the following questioning sequence is used within each step:

- Firstly, the family member/s are asked for their views.
- Secondly, the family member/s are asked for their perception of the professional views.

This prioritising of the family's view within this process in no way diminishes the importance of the views of Child Safety (or other professionals) or minimises the importance of sharing the professional views with family members. Both of those steps are critical steps in the process of building future safety, belonging and wellbeing. However the family roadmap process is focused on putting professional views aside for long enough to be able to listen well to the views and ideas offered by family members.

Once family members have had the opportunity to express their views and their perception of the views held by Child Safety (or other professionals), it is often easier for parents to then hear the (sometimes) difficult or challenging views held by child protection professionals.

## Preparing to create a family roadmap

To use the family roadmap process effectively, you will need to be really familiar with the process (although don't hesitate to have your notes beside you and to be transparent about the fact that you are just learning this process).

Before using the family roadmap process to elicit the family's views, it is important that you have clarified your own views by analysing the case information that you currently have (for example, through using the CAP framework). The more that you have worked through your own assessment and thinking about future safety (based on the information that you currently have), the more clearly you will be able to listen to the family's ideas and ensure that you ask questions that cover all of the identified worries for the children.

At a minimum, you need to be clear about:

- Your views (or the agency's views) on what you are worried might happen to the children in the future (worry statements).
- Your views (or the agency's views) on what changes you would need to see the family put into place to be confident that the children will be safe in the future (goal statements).

## Materials

This process works best when it is created on a wall, on the floor or at a minimum, on a very large sheet of paper (which can be put on a table). The family's ideas are added on small bits of paper or are written onto the large paper using different coloured pens.

You will need:

- A large wall or floor space (or a large piece of paper – table size).
- Two A3 pieces of paper (for the "Life at its best" and "Life at its worst" elements).
- Lots of smaller pieces of paper (eg. half A4). It helps to have different colours that you can use for each section (eg. green for what's going well, yellow for ideas for the future, blue for Child Safety's involvement and red for roadblocks/obstacles).
- Blu tack or sticky tape to stick everything on the wall.
- Some way of taking a photograph of the completed (or interim) family roadmap.

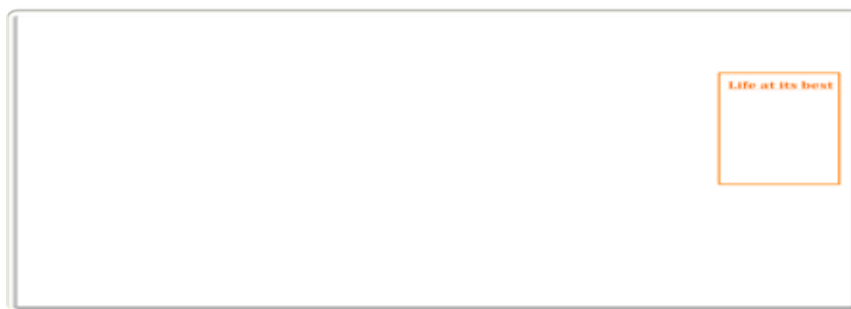


# Creating the family roadmap

This next section of the booklet describes the family roadmap process in detail, with suggested questioning that can be used within each part of the process. The questions are written as if the family roadmap is being created with a parent, but as mentioned above, the process can be used with either young people or adults, and with all the significant people involved in a child's life.

## Step 1: Life at its Best

The family roadmap process begins by asking the family to describe what would be happening in their family and for their children when life was at its best for them. This information is written on a large sheet of paper that has been stuck on the right hand side of a blank wall or floor space (or right hand side of a large piece of paper). Creating the family roadmap starts with this visioning process to identify the family member's positive vision for the future and to create energy and hope to work toward these positive changes.



To elicit the family member's vision of 'life at its best', start by asking a preferred future question. For example, if creating a roadmap with a father or mother, you could ask a question such as:

*Let me ask you a question. Imagine that it is six months down the track and you have managed to work through all the challenges or difficulties that you might be facing at the moment and life is at its best for your family and for your children. If life was at its best for your family, what would be happening? What would I see you both doing if things were at their best?*

As the parent begins to answer this question, record their answers on the 'Life at its best' page or section. Asking this initial preferred future question will usually just elicit a little information, so you will need to use a lot of appreciative inquiry questions or follow up detail questions to elicit a rich description or vision of 'life at its best'. Follow up questions can include:

- *What else would be happening? What else?*
- *What else would you be doing if life was at its best for your family and your children?*
- *What would the children notice was happening when life was at its best?*
- *What would \_\_\_\_ (other significant people) notice was happening?*

Sometimes people find it hard to imagine the future or to vision a possible future. If this is the case, you can ask the same questions but focused on when things have been at their best in the past. For example:

*Let's talk about the past for a moment. When things have been at their best in your family in the past, what was happening then? What else was happening? What else? What were you doing when things were at their best? What were other people doing? What was life like for your children when things were at their best in your family?*

The more detailed this vision of family life at its best, the easier it will be for the family member to think about what needs to happen to create more of this life, so you will need to ask lots of follow up questions to elicit details:

- *Who (will be doing that)?*
- *What (Tell me some more about what you would be doing? What would other people be doing?)*
- *Where (would this be happening)?*
- *When (might this happen)?*
- *How might this impact on the kids? What difference do you think it will make for them?*

Continue asking "What else would be happening in your family and for your kids when life was at its best?" and other follow up questions, until you have a rich and detailed description of the family member's vision of life at its best for their family.

## Views of Child Safety

The final stage in this first part of the family roadmap process involves asking the family to think about the views of Child Safety (or other professionals). Asking the family to think about what Child Safety would want to see family life looking like when things were at their best is an important preparatory step to later being able to present the views of Child Safety. To invite families to think about the views of Child Safety, you can use questions such as:

- *Of those things you have described, which of those do you think Child Safety would also want to see happening in your family?*
- *What do you think Child Safety would see as the most important?*
- *Is there anything else that you think Child Safety would want to see happening in your family?*
- *Is there any of this (what the family think Child Safety would want) that you would like to add to your picture of 'life at its best'?*

Record the family member's ideas about Child Safety's views on a piece of paper underneath the "Life at its best" page. Throughout the family roadmap process, the person's perception of Child Safety's views is recorded at the bottom of the roadmap and in a separate colour.

## Step 2: Life at its worst

Having described family life at its best, then ask the family member to talk about what life would be like, or has been like, at its worst in their family. The acknowledgement and exploration of life at its best will usually make it easier for families to then talk about the more difficult and challenging aspects of their lives (life at its worst). The family member's description of 'life at its worst' is recorded on a piece of paper on the left hand side of the wall.



To begin exploring the family member's views on 'life at its worst', you can ask a question such as:

*We've talked about what life is like or would be like at its best in your family, but things are not always at their best and every family has difficult times. So if life was at its worst for your family, what would that look like? What would be happening in your family and for your children if life was at its worst?*

Again, you will probably need to use follow up questions to elicit a full description of 'life at its worst'. Some examples of useful follow up questions include:

- *What sort of things would be happening in your family if life was at its worst?*
- *What else would be happening if life was at its worst?*
- *What sort of things would you be doing if life was at its worst?*
- *What would the children notice was happening if life was at its worst?*
- *What would \_\_\_\_ (other people) notice was happening if life was at its worst?*

If the person is not able to relate to future-focused questions (thinking about what life would be like if things were at their worst), you can ask the same questions but focused on times in the past when things have been at their worst. For example:

*Could you think for a moment about times in the past when things have not been going as well as they are now. What were things like when they were at their most difficult and when things were at their worst for your family and your children?*

As the family start to describe what life would be like, or has been like, at its worst, you may need to use further questions to elicit the necessary detail. The more detailed this description of family life at its worst, the easier it will be for the family to come up with ideas for how to address these challenges and problems. Detail questions you can use include:

- *Who (would be doing that)?*
- *What (tell me more about what would be happening/ what you would be doing?)*
- *Where (might this be happening)?*
- *When (might this happen)?*
- *How might this impact on the kids?*

Continue asking “What else was/would be happening in your family and for your kids if/when life was at its worst?”, using follow up and detail questions until you have a detailed description of what is happening in the family when life is at its worst.

Particularly in situations of power, control and violence, you will need to ensure that the questions you use to explore someone’s views locate the responsibility for the violent behaviour with the perpetrator. This means asking questions to identify specific details about the person’s pattern of behaviour and impact on the children (including impact on the other parent’s ability to care for the children). As you are exploring these issues, it may be that people try to minimise issues or to shift responsibility for their behaviour on to someone else. Rather than trying to argue the point with someone, which may lead to defensiveness and a shut-down of the conversation, continue to use a questioning approach to bring the responsibility for their behaviour back to that person. For example:

- *You said that when things are at their worst, that your partner isn’t doing what she needs to do and isn’t being a good wife or mother. In that situation, help me to understand the worst of that for the kids. What do you do in that situation? How does that affect your kids? What does your partner do? And how does that affect your kids?*
- *So if I was a fly on the wall at that time, what would I see happening? What would I see you doing? What would I see your partner doing? What would I see your kids doing?*

Remaining open and curious and respectful, while also trying to hold someone accountable for their behaviour and not colluding in an attempt to shift responsibility, is a skilful exercise. One way of avoiding a situation where someone starts to feel backed into a corner or like you are trying to catch them out is to explicitly name this up, for example:

*I’d like to explore this further with you, but I’m not asking questions to try to catch you out or to blame or shame you. What I’m trying to do is to understand what happens at these difficult times and to help you think through what happens when things are at their worst, so that you are able to be as clear as possible about the changes that you are able to make to turn things around for your kids and your family.*

#### An important note

As the family member starts to talk about the details of life at its worst in their family, they may describe some pretty difficult and challenging circumstances. It’s really important that you don’t get caught up in “evidence gathering” at this point and that the family member feels able to talk without being judged or in danger of having this information used against them. The focus here is on understanding and describing the problems as clearly as possible so that these problems and challenges can be addressed. If information is disclosed during the process that has you worried about the children’s immediate safety, you will need to take action to ensure the children’s safety, but using the family roadmap process to explore the parent or family member’s ideas about future safety will create a greater opportunity to work collaboratively with them to build immediate and future safety for the children.

## Views of Child Safety

The final stage in this first part of the process involves asking the person to consider the views of Child Safety (or other professionals) on what “life at its worst” could look like:

- *Looking at what you have described, which of these do you think Child Safety would also be worried about?*
- *What do you think Child Safety would see as the most worrying?*
- *Is there anything you haven’t talked about yet, that you think Child Safety might also be worried about?*

### Step 3: Adding to “Life at its best”

In the description of what life would be like at its worst in their family (and the person’s ideas on Child Safety’s views about this), the family member may describe issues or worries that they have not addressed in their vision of life at its best. The third step involves making sure that “Life at its best” covers all of the issues or worries that have been raised when talking about “Life at its worst”.

One way to do this is to compare the two descriptions and ask the family member to check that each point described in “Life at its worst” have been covered in “Life at its best”.

*Okay, so you have described what life would be like at its best in your family and for your children, and what life could be like at its worst (pointing to each of these on the wall, the board or on the table as you are talking). Can we just make sure that your description of “Life at its best” has covered how you would like life to be to address all of the worries or difficulties that you have identified in “Life at its worst”?*

Then work through each of the issues described in “Life at its worst” and ask the family to check if this has been covered in the description of “Life at its best”. For example:

- *One thing you said in your “Life at its worst” was that you would be using drugs again and spending money on drugs rather than on food for the kids, and that the kids would be hungry and pretty sad and worried. Can we look at what you’ve got in your “Life at its best” and see if you have talked about what you want to have happening instead of that?*
- *One thing you said in “Life at its worst” was that you would be losing it with your partner and hitting her and yelling at her and that the kids would be pretty frightened by all of that. Can we look at what you’ve got in your “Life at its best” and see if you have talked about how you want to handle things and what you would be doing so that these things don’t happen.*

If the issue has not been addressed, or has not been addressed fully, use a questioning approach to explore what might need to be added to “life at its best”. Questions can include:

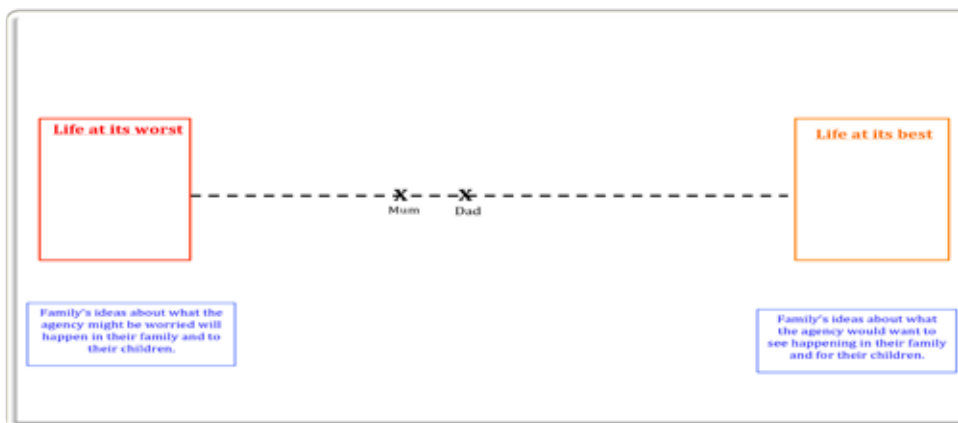
- *So instead of hitting Sue and yelling at her and having the children frightened by seeing and hearing and learning about that happening to their mum, if life was at its best for your family, how would you be handling those times when you could lose it, so that it was safe for Sue and safe for the kids?*

Use the same process to make sure that all of the issues that the family member said they thought Child Safety might be worried about have been covered in their description of what they think Child Safety would want to see happening in their family.

## Step 4: Scaling Question

The fourth step involves asking the family member to say where they think things are right now in their family, on a scale from life at its worst to life at its best. This question asks the person to articulate their assessment of where things are in the family and for their children right now, although we are not using formal assessment language with the family.

*Okay, we've talked about your thoughts on what life in your family would look like at its best and at its worst. Imagine there is a road between "life at its best" and "life at its worst". If "life at its best" is your destination and "life at its worst" is what you want to leave behind you, where would you say things are right now for your family and for your children, on this road between life at its worst and life at its best? Can you put yourself at that place on the road?*



If you are creating a family roadmap with a couple or family group, it is common for parents or family members to be anxious about scaling in different positions. It can be helpful to reassure people that it is okay for them to have different views about where things are in the family right now, by saying something like:

*People will often have very different views about where things are in the family. One person might be at a 3 and another person at an 8, and that is fairly common. What is important is that you have the opportunity to say where you think things are and then later in this process, I'm going to ask you about what you think needs to happen for you to move further along the road towards life at its best.*

Sometimes, parents, children and family members will scale at a 10 ('life at its best'). This usually happens if people do not trust that they can be honest or are anxious about the consequences of scaling lower. Rather than trying to argue or to dispute someone's stated view, their scaling position is used in the next stages of the family roadmap process to open up conversation about what is happening that has them this far along the road and what needs to happen to move them further along the road (towards life at its best). You can also ask the parents to assess where things were at their lowest point (for example, during the last year) and then ask them what they are doing now that has them higher and what has helped them to make these changes.

You can also use the scaling question to help parents/family members reflect on other people's views about what is happening in the family, including the views of the children, significant family members and Child Safety, by asking a question such as:

*Okay, we've talked about where you are on that road. If the children were here (or were old enough to talk), where do you think they would say things are right now? What about \_\_\_\_\_ (a significant person)? Where would they say things are? And based on what Child Safety know about your family at the moment, where do you think Child Safety would scale things?*

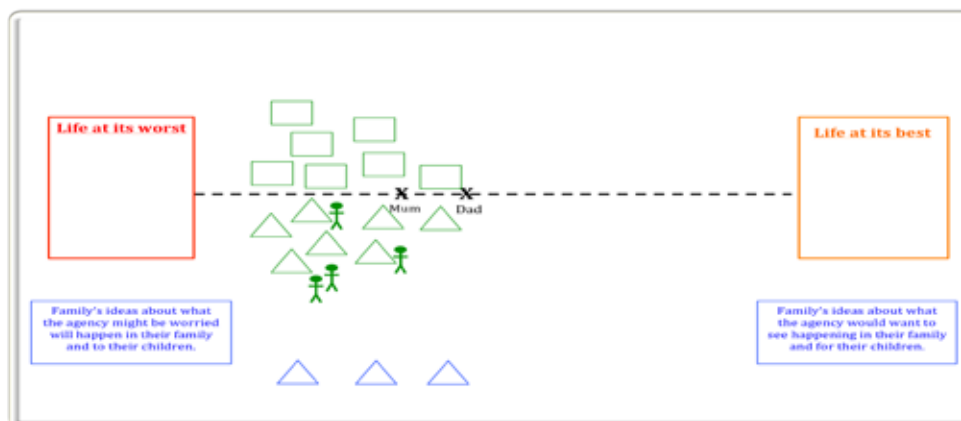
## Step 5: The journey so far

### What's already going well?

The fifth step in the family roadmap process involves asking the family member to identify what they are already doing and what is already happening in their family that has brought them this far along the road toward "life at its best". Questions you can use to elicit this information include:

- *When you think about where you have scaled yourself, what's already going well in your family or for your children that has you this far along the road? What part of your "life at its best" is already happening in your family? Could you write that down and put it on the roadmap?*
- *What else are you already doing? What else? Could you write down all the things that are already happening and put them on the roadmap to show your journey so far?"*
- *What would the children/others say you are already doing that has you this far along the road?*

To record this information, you can either write the items on the roadmap, or invite the family member or members to write the items on small pieces of paper and to stick these on the roadmap. The 'what's already going well' information (represented by the green boxes in the picture below) is placed above the scaling line, in between "life at its worst" and their scaling position.



### What's helped them to achieve this?

Once all of the things that are already going well have been identified and put on the roadmap, the process then focuses on identifying what or who has helped the family to achieve these things and what or who will help them to keep doing these things. These supports or resources are also recorded on bits of paper and these are put up on the wall underneath the scaling line (represented by the green triangles or green people in the picture above).



Questions you can use to elicit this information include:

- *What or who has helped you and your family to achieve these things and what will help you keep doing these things?*
- *Who could support you or help you keep doing these things? What can they do to support you?*

To help connect the identified resources/supports with the relevant ‘what is going well’, use lines to link the two or if you are using small pieces of paper, place the paper directly underneath the relevant achievement, or if there are lots of bits of paper, use a numbering system to connect them.

### Support from Child Safety

The final stage in this part of the process involves asking the family member to think about what Child Safety may have done that has helped them to achieve what they have already achieved and/or what Child Safety could do to support them in continuing to do these things. These ideas are recorded on the bottom line (represented by the blue triangles above).

You could introduce this idea by saying something like:

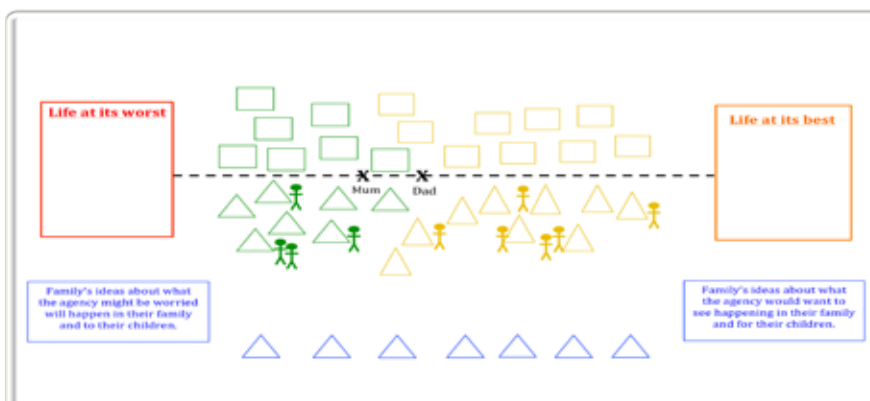
- *I know it might sound like a crazy idea, but is there anything that Child Safety have done that has helped you to achieve these positive things, even if it's just been helpful in small ways?*
- *Is there anything that Child Safety could do in the future that might help you to keep these positive things happening?*

## Step 6: The journey ahead

### Thinking about the future

The sixth step invites the parents/family members to think through the steps on the journey from where they are now, to where they want to be (the future they want for their family and their kids). This part of the process involves the family identifying what would be happening in their family and for their children, and what else they would be doing as parents, as they journey further along the road toward their ‘life at its best’ destination.

As for the previous steps in the process, the parents/family members write their ideas down on pieces of paper and then stick these on the roadmap. These pieces of paper (represented by the yellow boxes in the picture below) are placed above the scaling line, in between their scaling position and “life at its best”.





Questions you can use to elicit information in this part of the process include:

- *So let's now focus on you moving further along the road toward "life at its best" for your family. Imagine if I came back next week to talk with you and you told me that you were a little further along the road, say one step further along (point to where this would be on the roadmap). What would be happening in your family and for your children and what would you be doing, if your family were one step further along on the road to your destination? Can we write that down and put it on the roadmap?*
- *What else would be happening in your family and what else would you be doing if you were one step further along?*
- *What if you were a second step further along? What would be happening if you were two steps further along from where you are now?*
- *As you keep looking forward, let's identify what would be happening in your family and what you would be doing as parents as you move further along the road and then all the way toward "life at its best" for your family.*

This step in the family roadmap process may take some time, as family members are thinking through and talking through what they would be doing differently and what would be different in their lives as they journey closer and closer toward their goals (what they have envisaged as 'life at its best'). It's important to let this part of the process take as long as it needs and to use reflective questioning to encourage the family to sit back, have a look at what they have identified so far as the steps on their family roadmap journey, and to think about whether there is anything else that they would like to add. Some questions you might like to use include:

- *As you look at all of those things you have now put on your roadmap to move further along the road to 'life at its best', is there anything else you want to add?*
- *Looking at what you have described as 'life at its best' for your family and all the steps you have identified on your journey toward 'life at its best', is there anything else that you need to add to your roadmap? Is there anything else you would be doing along the way that will help you get to your goal of 'life at its best' for your family?*
- *Are there any other steps that you think other people would want to add – the children? Other significant people (name them)? Child Safety?*

### **What will help them to achieve this?**

Once the family have identified each of the steps toward 'life at its best', the family roadmap process then identifies what or who will help the family to achieve these things. For each of the identified steps along the road, ask the family to think about what or who will help them to achieve this. These supports or resources are recorded on the roadmap underneath the scaling line (represented by the yellow triangles or people on the picture on the previous page).

Questions you can use include:

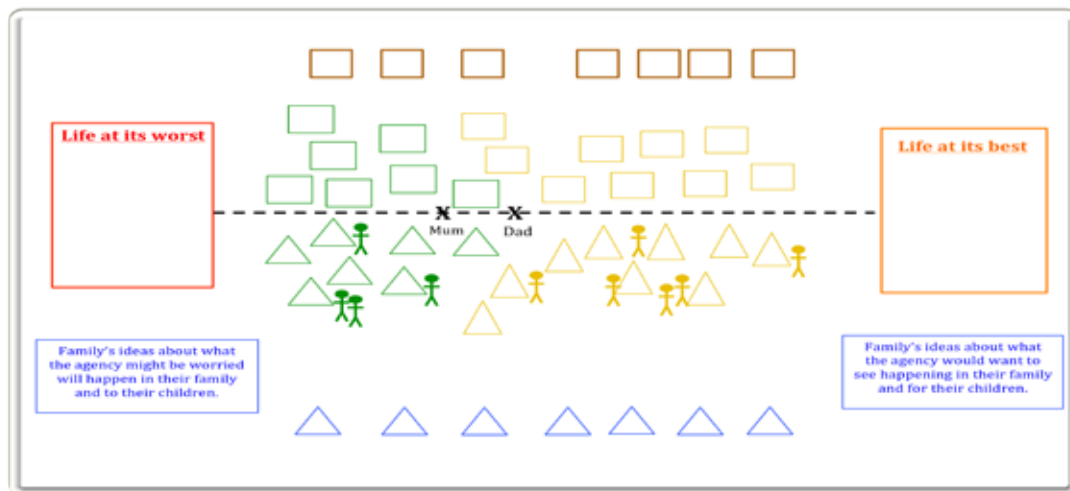
- *What will help you to achieve each of these steps and to keep these things happening?*
- *Who could help you to achieve these things?*
- *Who could support you to keep doing these things? What can they do to support you?*

## Support from Child Safety

The final stage in this part of the process involves asking the family member to think about what Child Safety could do to support them in achieving and continuing to do these things. The family member's ideas about this are recorded in the colour used to represent Child Safety and placed on the bottom line (represented by the blue triangles in the picture on the previous page).

### *Step 7: Showing everyone these good things are happening*

The seventh step in the roadmap process invites family members to think about how others (particularly Child Safety and other professionals) will know that these positive things are happening and that the family are putting these positive changes into action. This step introduces the importance of safety being demonstrated, so that Child Safety and others can be confident that these positive changes are happening and that the children are being cared for safely.



All safety and action planning needs to include comprehensive details about how the plan will be monitored, and this is usually one of the aspects of collaborative planning that family members find most difficult. Introducing the importance of changes being demonstrated during the family roadmap process will make it easier for the family and network to understand and participate in developing the monitoring component of the collaborative plan. You can introduce the idea of monitoring by saying something like:

*You've identified a lot of things that you are already doing and that you want to be doing in the future to create the kind of family life you want, where your children are safe and you are being the parent you want to be. While achieving this for your children is the most important outcome, it's also important that Child Safety (and other people) know that you are doing these things so that they can be confident that your children are safe and they can then close your case and let you get on with being a family. So can we talk now about how Child Safety (and others) will know that these important things are happening?"*

These ideas (represented by the brown boxes in the picture below) are placed at the top of the roadmap on the "showing everyone that it's happening" line.

## Things that are already going well

Start on the left hand side of the roadmap and work through each of the things that are already going well.

- *Let's start with the good things that you are already doing. Who has noticed that this is happening in your family? How do they know that you are doing this? Let's write that down and put it up the top of the roadmap.*
- *Who else has noticed? How do they know?*
- *Who else would you like to know that this is happening? How could you show them? How could they know in the future that this is still happening and still going well?*
- *How could you show Child Safety that these things are happening?*

Continue until you have worked through all of the identified things that are already going well and the ideas about monitoring have been added to the top line of the roadmap.

## Future actions

- *Now let's look at the plans you have for the future. Let's start with the first step. If you were doing this, who would be the first person to notice that this was happening? How would they notice? Let's write that down and put it up the top of the roadmap.*
- *How could you show Child Safety that these things are happening?*

Continue until you have worked through all of the identified future actions.

## Step 8: Watching out for roadblocks

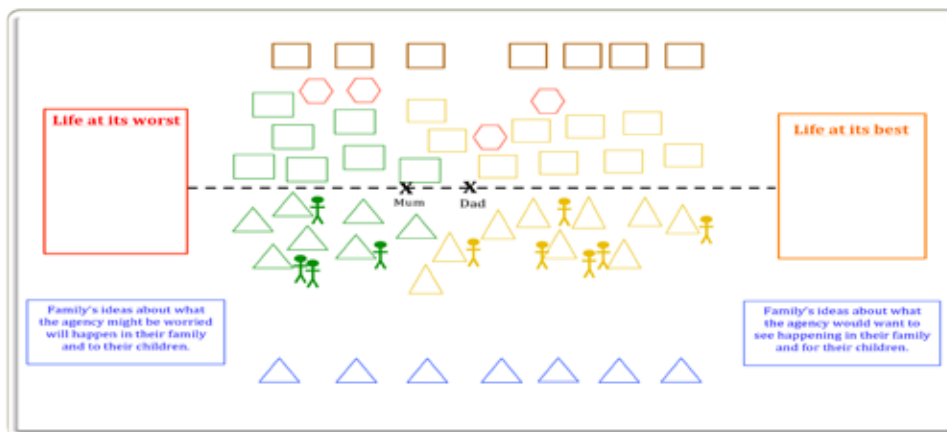
The eighth step in the roadmap process invites the parent/family member to think about possible roadblocks or obstacles they might encounter in the future, that might get in the way of them reaching their goal of 'life at its best' and creating the future they want for their family.

This part of the process involves identifying:

- The obstacles or roadblocks they have already dealt with and how they dealt with those.
- Possible future roadblocks.
- What they could do to avoid or deal with these roadblocks, and
- Who might be helpful to them in the future in dealing with these roadblocks.

You can introduce the idea of roadblocks by saying something like:

*I think you've done a fantastic job of creating a roadmap to help you think about the future you want for your family and your children and how to journey toward that. Before we finish, let's just do a bit of trouble-shooting and think about any roadblocks or obstacles that might get in your way and how you could deal with those.*



## Roadblocks they have already dealt with

- *Let's start off by looking at roadblocks or obstacles that you have already dealt with or are dealing with now. When you look at your roadmap and think about how far you have come, what roadblocks or obstacles have you already had to deal with?*
- *Let's write those roadblocks down and add them to the roadmap in the place they best fit into your journey so far.*
- *What other roadblocks or obstacles have you already dealt with?*

The roadblocks are added above the scaling line, in the area between "life at its worst" and their scaling position, alongside the particular step that the roadblock relates to.

## Roadblocks they might face in the future

- *So now as you think about moving forward and achieving all of these things that you have identified, what roadblocks or obstacles might get in your way and make it difficult for you to move forward? Can we add that to your roadmap?*
- *What other roadblocks or obstacles might you run into?*
- *What roadblocks do you think your children (and other significant people) might suggest could get in the way?*
- *What roadblocks do you think Child Safety might suggest or be worried about?*

## Dealing with the roadblocks

With each of the identified roadblocks, the focus is now on identifying how the family have dealt with the roadblocks in the past and what might help them to deal with any future roadblocks. Ideas for dealing with roadblocks are recorded under the scaling line as one of the strengths/resources. Position these additional strengths/resources directly underneath each of the roadblocks so that everyone can see what strength/resource relates to each roadblock.

Questions you can use to explore how to deal with roadblocks include:

- *With each of the roadblocks that you have dealt with in the past, what or who helped you to deal with this or to navigate around those? Can we write that down and add it to the roadmap?*
- *What could you do to deal with or avoid each of the possible future roadblocks? Let's write that down and add it to the roadmap.*
- *Who could help you to deal with or avoid that roadblock? What could they do that would be helpful?*

### **Support from Child Safety**

- *What could Child Safety do to help you to deal with or avoid the possible future roadblocks?*
- *What else could Child Safety do that would be helpful?*

Record these ideas in the colour used to represent Child Safety and place them on the bottom line.

## **Final overview of the entire roadmap**

Whether the family roadmap has been completed over one session or a number of sessions, take time at the end of the process to invite the family member to look over their roadmap and to check whether there is anything else that they want to add to their family roadmap.

The completion of the process is also a useful time to remind them of the purpose of the family roadmap process and the importance of the views of family members and network members being central to the assessment process and then to the collaborative planning process.

The next step is to then explore with the family member the question of who needs to see the important information contained within the roadmap and then to consider how they would like to proceed with sharing their views: sharing their views with other family members, with relevant professionals or network members and having other people's views (including the views of Child Safety) shared with them.

If there are safety concerns in sharing their information, this will need to be explored as part of the process of thinking through how their information will be shared.

## Process Considerations

1. The amount of time it takes to create a family roadmap will depend on the circumstances for each individual family, but it can take as long as 2 – 3 hours, particularly if you are creating a roadmap with more than one person. You may need to create the roadmap over a number of sessions. Some individuals or families will want to complete it in one session and if this is the case, make sure that you have a break or a number of breaks, and that there are things in place to help everyone relax and stay focused, like water, tea, coffee, snacks, etc. If you are creating the family roadmap over a number of sessions, try to finish each session at the end of a step, rather than finishing in the middle of a step.
2. When the roadmap has been completed or if you are doing it over a number of sessions, make sure that whoever was involved has an immediate record of what has been created. You can take photographs of the roadmap and make sure that everyone gets a copy of the photo (via email) or suggest that the family members also take a photograph.
3. If you are working in the family member's home, explore whether the roadmap can stay up on the wall between sessions as this will enable them (and others if appropriate) to continue adding ideas between sessions. If the roadmap needs to be taken down between sessions, leave time at the beginning of the next session to put it all back up on the wall (the photos can help with this).
4. It is also useful to have a typed copy of the content contained within the family roadmap. If you are lucky, you might have an admin person who can help with this (and who is good at laying out documents in word or a desktop publishing program) or you might need to record each of the elements in a list form. Make sure everyone involved gets a copy of the typed version.
5. As discussed earlier in the document, it is important for the views of all the significant people in the child's life to be included in the assessment and planning process. This might mean that one family roadmap is created collaboratively with a family during a family meeting or FGM process to elicit everyone's views, or if there are safety concerns such as domestic and family violence, you might need to create individual roadmaps with significant family members and involve other people's views over time (see pp. 3-4). Even if there are no issues of power and control, it might still be necessary to initially create individual roadmaps with the parents or young people so that they are able to think through and express their views without the pressure of having other people involved in the process.
6. After you have created a family roadmap with family members to elicit their views (either individually or collaboratively), the next step is to share the views of others (including Child Safety). One way you can do this is by sharing other's views that have been recorded within the CAP framework and then working through how the family member's views that are expressed within the family roadmap can be added to the Assessment and Planning framework. The connections between the family roadmap process and the CAP framework are outlined below. Alternatively, you can work through how other's views that have been expressed in the CAP framework can be added to their roadmap to create a combined roadmap. This combined roadmap or combined CAP framework then provides you and the family with the foundation for developing a detailed and collaborative action plan.

## Connections between the Roadmap and the Framework

The family roadmap and the CAP framework are both assessment and planning frameworks and are essentially gathering the same information. It is the way that the information is elicited and recorded that is different. You can use either process to elicit the views of family members, depending on which process you think will work best for that particular individual or family. Once people’s views have been elicited and recorded (using either process), they can then be combined either within one roadmap or one CAP framework. The table below shows the connections between the two processes.

Family Roadmap Elements	CAP Framework Elements
“Life at its best”.	Goal Statements
“Life at its worst”.	Worry Statements (may also contain information about Harm and Complicating Factors).
Scaling position.	Scaling position.
What they are already doing to achieve goals (the journey so far).	Protection & Belonging (if they are actions that have kept the children safe or have protected them from the dangers).
What and who has helped achieve this.	Strengths/resources and possible network members.
What they want to do in the future to achieve the goals (the journey ahead).	Action Steps
What/who could help them achieve this.	If the resource/person is already in their life, then a strength; if they are not involved, then an ‘Action Step’ for the future.
What Child Safety could do to support them.	Action Steps.
Roadblocks/obstacles.	Complicating Factors.
What/who has helped them overcome this or could help them overcome this roadblock in the future.	Strengths/Action Steps.
Showing that it’s happening.	Next Steps.

The beginning of the family roadmap process can be used to develop the worry statements and goal statements collaboratively with the family, or if this has already happened, the collaborative worry statements and goal statements can be used in place of ‘life at its best’ and ‘life at its worst’ at each end of the family roadmap.



# From the Family Roadmap to the Action Plan

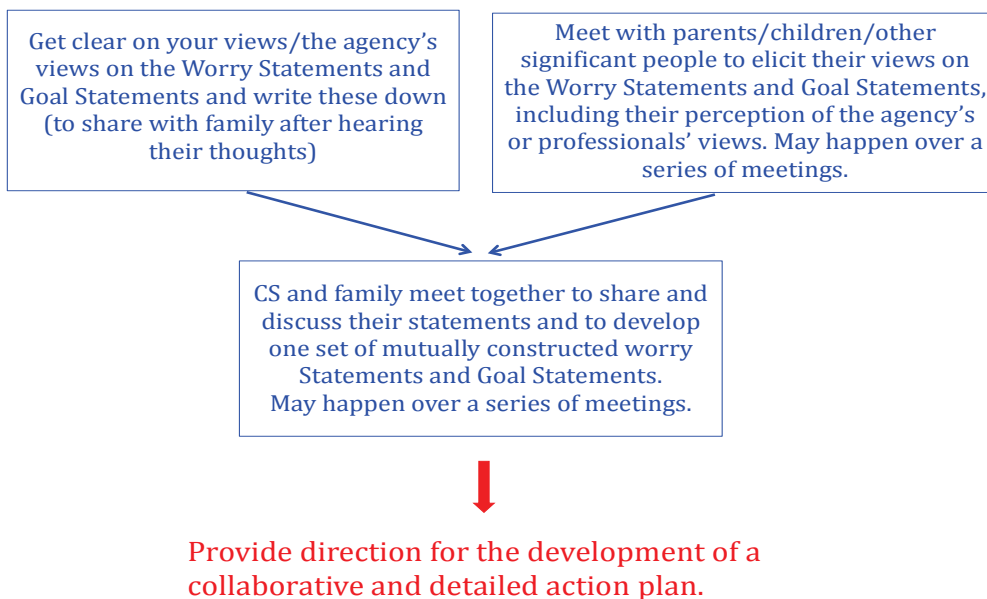
This section of the booklet explores how the family roadmap process, and the information that it elicits, connects with the creation of a collaborative and detailed safety plan and action planning within a case plan.

## Directions for action planning

Essential to the creation of a detailed safety plan or action plan is the identification of the future dangers to the children (worry statements) and the goal statements (what everyone would need to see happening within the family to be confident that the children will be safe in the future). It is these worry statements and goal statements that provide direction for action planning. Families need to have participated in the development of the worry statements and goal statements if they are to meaningfully participate in creating a plan that addresses these worries and meets these goal statements.

The family's ideas about 'life at its worst' and 'life at its best' are the family's views on the worry statements and goal statements. Once the family's views have been identified, the family's views and the views of Child Safety and other professionals can then be shared and discussed to develop one set of mutually-constructed worry statements and goal statements (see image below).

### Process to Develop Mutually-Constructed Worry Statements and Goal Statements



For a more detailed discussion of a suggested process for working with families to create mutually-constructed worry statements and goal statements, please refer to Collaborative Assessment and Planning Framework resource booklet.



## Adding to the family roadmap

If anything has been added to the goal statements in the process of creating mutually-constructed worry statements and goal statements (i.e. Child Safety has worries that were not addressed by the parents' 'life at its best' or goal statements, and so additional goal statements have been identified), then the family roadmap process can be revisited to explore the family's ideas of:

- What they are already doing that might help to achieve this additional goal or goals?
- What they need to be doing in the future to achieve these goal/s?
- Who/what has or could help them to achieve this?

## Details for action planning

The ideas that the family (and network members) have expressed within the family roadmap provide the skeleton for action planning:

- The things that the family have identified they are already doing that is helping to achieve safety, belonging and wellbeing for the children (to the left of their scaling position) are included in the plan as things that are already working and that everyone wants the family to continue doing in the future.
- The things that the family have identified that they want to be doing in the future are included in the plan as rules that everyone wants the family to be following in the future.
- The details from the roadmap about who will be involved to help the family achieve these things (network people), and what they will do to help, are also included in the plan.
- The details from step 7 of how Child Safety (and others) will know these things are happening (how the plan will be monitored) are included in the plan.
- The ideas about how the family have dealt with any past roadblocks and how they will deal with any future roadblocks are also included in the plan.

Depending on how much detail is contained in the family roadmap, the necessary details for each of the rules/guidelines will need to be worked out during the planning meetings (see further information below for further planning resources that can help you with this). These detailed rules/guidelines are then written as clear statements in language that the children can understand.

As the family, network and professionals then work together over time to put the plan into action and to monitor and review the plan, the family roadmap can then be used as a working document to continue to scale everyone's views on progress toward the goal statements (life at its best), to reflect on what is happening that has people this far along the road and to identify what needs to happen next for the family to continue moving closer to the destination of enough safety, belonging and wellbeing for the children.

## Conclusion

As outlined in this booklet, the family roadmap process is a solution-focused, strengths-based and family-centred process designed to help workers and parents and family members work together more effectively in talking about the family's current situation and mapping a way forward to future safety, belonging and wellbeing for the children. The family roadmap process can be used any time you want to hear more from a particular family member or members about what is happening in the family and their ideas on what needs to happen in the future for the children to be safe.

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