



Youth Justice Out of Court Disposal Screening template and guidance

Version 3.3

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For more information about other versions, training and access to the toolkit and guidance supporting this tool please email: roberta@vlinder.co.uk

INTRODUCTION:

Approaching adolescence can be a time of imbalance, taking risks, becoming independent and growing into adulthood. It can be a time of testing limits, experimenting with new things, working out friendships as well as making the most of opportunities, building an identity, having fun and learning.

Sometimes young people get involved in unsafe behaviour – including the misuse of drugs or alcohol, breaking the law, harming themselves or others. This can be for many different reasons. Most young people grow out of the behaviour and will have strengths within them or people around them that help them stay safe, avoid getting into trouble and move on to achieve.

This tool is designed to help us talk about all of these things and map out what we are worried about, what is going well and what needs to happen by using an analogy of adolescence and ‘youth risk’ like someone balancing on a tightrope.

- Sometimes a past ‘muddy path’ or uneven ground can make things more wobbly – what are the past negative and harmful experiences that have occurred?
- A strong foundation of positive experiences can help make things more stable – what has helped the young person in the past to stay safe and/or not hurt others?
- There may be a number of steps up to the tightrope that represent current worries, pressures and triggers - and lets us know how high (or dangerous) things are.
- Having a strong safety net (that is not too tight or too loose) will be protective during this time and make it easier to be supported to take the steps needed.
- When thinking about how high the tightrope is it’s important to think about might happen in the future (what might ‘falling off’ look like) - who will be hurt? what is most likely to happen? What is the risk to the young person and to others?
- Each person will have skills and attributes to help them grow up well. These are the internal strengths to ‘stay balanced’ – making good choices and positive outlook.
- In order to take the steps to be back down to ‘safe ground’ think about what motivates them to ‘stay up’ or ‘move on’ – and this will be different for everyone
- What is the future goal for desistance, safety and wellbeing, safety of others? Would would ‘safe ground’ look like?
- What steps do they need to take down to get to safe ground – and what support?
- What needs to happen if things change?

A robust assessment needs to consider all of these factors together

PLEASE READ:

The **tight rope**[®] is an analogy-based assessment aid to discuss and map out all the areas involved in assessing strengths, risks and needs (internal and external, past and current) for an individual and/or family to move forward toward positive change.

For Out of Court Disposals the form is designed as two pages. The first page is to record the referral details, sources of information, diversity considerations and offence details. This page includes a summary of the worker’s judgement in regard to likelihood of reoffending, safety and wellbeing, risk of serious harm to others (using information gathered and recorded on the Tightrope). This page includes the final decision for disposal.

The second page is the Tightrope to record information from the young person, family members and partner agency workers (and your own observations). There are two sets of scales on this page from 0 to 10. The bottom scale has 0 being the place of worries / harm and 10 being the place of achieving goals / safety. The scale on the rope has 0 being unmotivated / not willing to take steps for change and 10 being highly motivated to take steps. Engage the young person as openly as possible with this information to support a joint plan for the future. **The right hand side of the Tightrope is the plan.** It is important that the steps for the young person and referrals are recorded on this side, including any victim safety measures.

Practitioners need to work with the young person to identify their strengths and needs – and ensure the young person knows what support is available and how to access this. Practitioners using this template are asked to do so only if they are confident and skilled in undertaking assessments and engaging young people (and parents/ carers) in discussions about risk and resilience.

The Out of Court Disposal prompt sheet has youth justice focused prompts but the full toolkit is available with 8 sets of evidence led prompt cards and manual, for those involved in offending, substance misuse or self-harm. For more information about these packs or training or to send feedback please contact: roberta@vlinder.co.uk

Falling off -
Worrying
behaviour / dangers



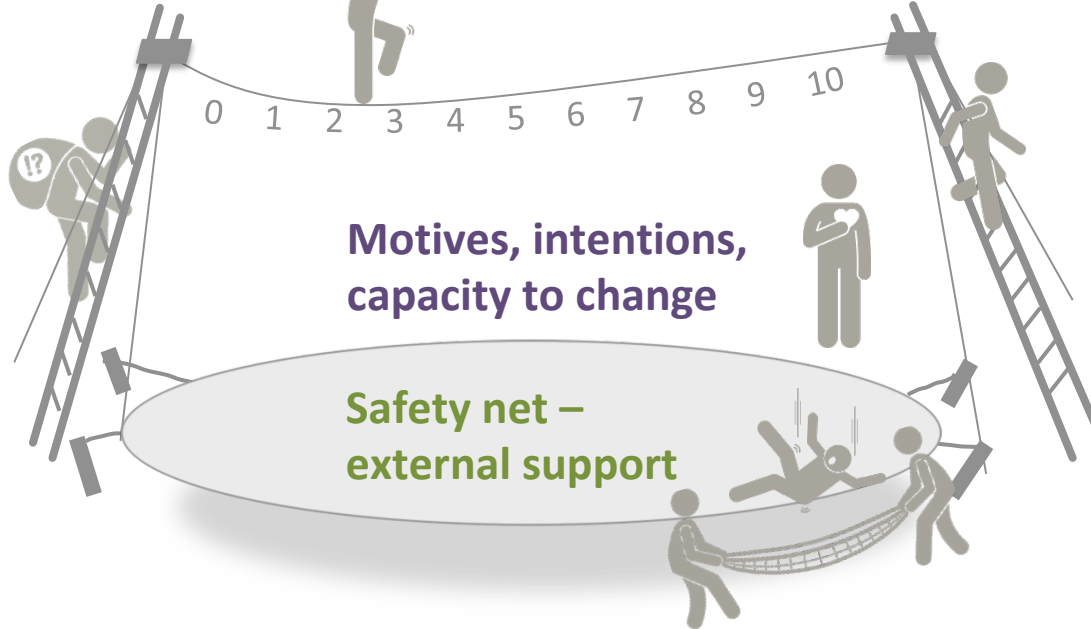
Balancing
– Internal strengths



Forecasting -
Contingency
planning



Steps up -
Current
worries
making
Tightrope
higher



Steps planned /
actions needed

What can others do
to support the plan?

Past worries
making path
muddy



Foundations for change /
past success



Goals –
What does safe
ground look like?



Prompt sheet

Worries?

What might 'falling off' look like?

If nothing changes, what may happen? – What might they do?

e.g. offending, violence, self harm, substance misuse or other?

What might others do that is harmful?

Who may get hurt? How likely?

What is the impact? How serious?



Current worries making Tightrope higher?

Current risks and concerns

Child – attitude, beliefs, plans, thoughts of self harm or violence? Lifestyle, substance misuse, diet/sleep problems, physical or mental diagnosis? Literacy, language or education needs?

Family – current neglect, DV, offending, mental health, instability? Debt / stress?

Friendships / Networks – attitude / beliefs? Exploitation / gang risks?

School – opportunities for bullying / harm / neglect? Risk of exclusion?

Neighbourhood concerns? Unsafe?

Past worries making path muddy?

Significant events / adverse experience

Child – what has been done to them (abuse/neglect)? What seen? What have they done (hurt others, sexual behaviour, self-harm, fire setting, animal cruelty)

Family – violence, abuse or turmoil, unstable, bereavement, substance misuse

Peers – exploitation / harm from or to?

School – exclusions or incidents of harm

Neighbourhood – locations of incidents

Working well?

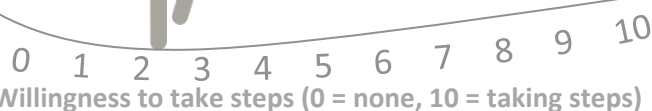
Strengths to stay balanced?

How do you cope with stress / worries?

Child - Understand impact of behaviour, positive attitude, positive outlook, able to manage, useful skills, problem solving, flexible, trusting, caring, sense of humour, sociable, self esteem

How important is it to take steps?

How confident are you to do this?



What is the level of motivation to take steps down?

Who and what are most important / valued?

What 'goods' have been achieved from offending / other behaviour (pleasure/life/belonging/escape etc)?

What will help motivate change and to take steps?

Who and what is the safety net?

Current protective strengths / who call on for help?

Family – support, care, monitoring, boundaries

Peers – positive influence, availability, confidant

School – awareness, culture, monitoring, support

Neighbourhood – safe spaces, positive professional relationships

Foundations for change / past success

Significant events / positive experiences

Personal – certificates / awards, when had support or asked for help, times when used positive strategies (opportunity to offend but didn't), struggles overcome

Home life – stable, consistent care, family received help / supported child? Positive changes in home life.

School – support / successful interventions.

Previous positive activities / friendships / sports

Needs to happen?

Contingency planning

What might be in the future that we need to think about, plan for or be aware of?

What needs to happen if things get worse (or better)?



Steps planned / need to take

What is the smallest first step able to take towards goals? What would need to happen for the scale to move just 0.1 point up from number on scale below?

- Attend sessions to address barriers to achieving goals?
- Overcome personal barriers?
- Access extra support?

What can others do to support plan?

Actions / referrals to address priority concerns

Victim safety measures

Who monitor, support, challenge?



What does safe ground look like?

What would you or others need to see that would mean the problem is sorted? What would '10' look like?

If you make changes, how would your life be different from what it is today? What would a 'good life' look like?



(0 = still in place of worries, 10 = safe, well and not offending)

Young person's details

Full name of child:

DOB : Age:

Ethnicity:

Is an interpreter needed? Y/N Language:

Attended with:

Contact numbers:

Offending

Previous YJ involvement? Y/N

Brief details:

Current offence:

Date of offence:

YP view of offence:

Victim views (any contact issues?):

Restorative justice viable and to be delivered? Y/N

Sources of informationSocial care: Y/N Previous / current CIN/CP/LAC?Copy of plan received? Y/N

Education:

EHCP / SEN: Y/N Copy of EHCP received? Y/N

Police reports / information:

Liaison and Diversion:

Family support services:

Substance Misuse services:

Other:

Assessment of Likelihood of Reoffending, Safety and Wellbeing concerns, Risk of Serious Harm to othersLikelihood of Reoffending: Low/Medium/High

Priority concern:

Safety and Wellbeing Concerns: Low / Medium / High / Very High

Priority concern:

Risk of Serious Harm to others: Low / Medium / High / Very High

Priority concern:

Diversity considerations

(age/maturity, ethnicity, SLCN, mental health, service history etc):

Screening appt. date: _____

Date completed: _____

OCD Clinic date: _____

Outcome date: _____

Outcome decision and Rationale:

Worries?

What might 'falling off' look like?

Working well?

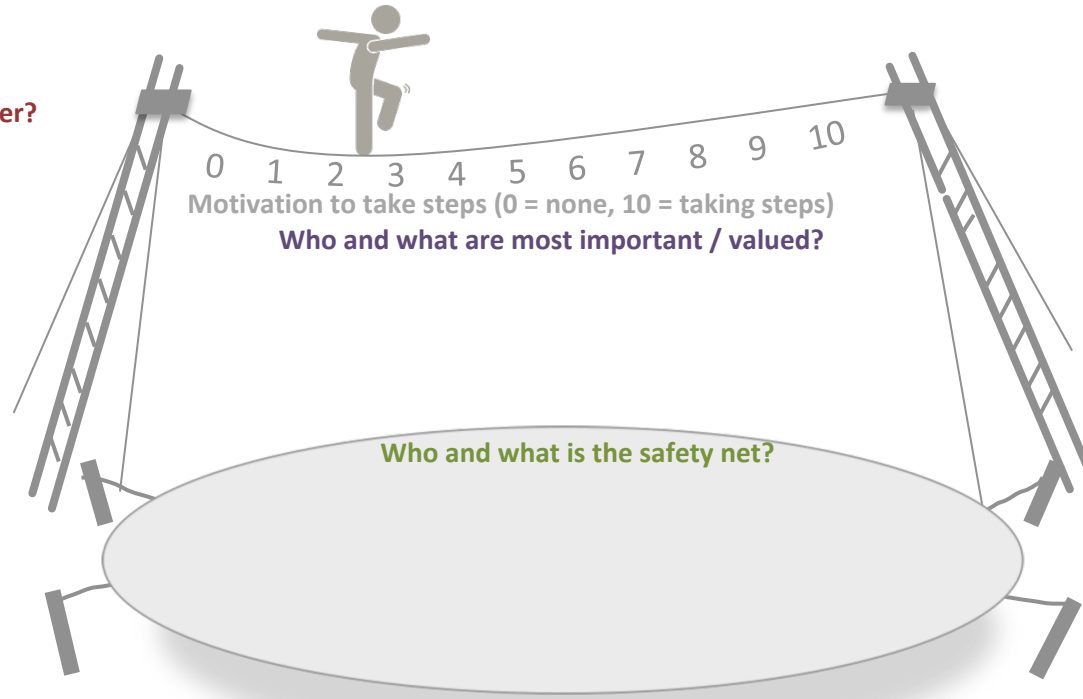
Strengths to stay balanced?

Needs to happen?

Contingency planning

Current worries making Tightrope higher?

Steps planned / need to take



Past worries making path muddy?

What can others do to support plan?

What does safe ground look like?