

What does research tell us about the benefits of using Signs of Safety?

Voice of the parents and families

“It was so striking and the most she’d ever participated in a meeting” (NSPCC England Report)

- 82% of parents felt listened to and understood,
- 73% said that their worker does what they say they will do,
- 85% said that their worker was clear about their concerns and about what needs to happen to stop them being concerned,
- 79% agreed with what their worker was concerned about,
- 79% said that their worker involved them in making plans to tackle the concerns,
- 76% agreed with the plans made to tackle the concerns,
- 81% thought that their worker cared that the family solved their problems, and
- 73% said that their worker had spent time with their child(ren) and listened to what they had to say about the problems and what should happen to solve them.

Munro, E., Turnell, A., and Murphy, T. (2016) You Can't Grow Roses in Concrete, Signs of Safety English Innovations Project. Available at <http://munroturnellmurphy.com/eip-report/>

Voice of the practitioners

“If you have an honest open dialogue, things can be different”.

- Signs of Safety helps to create partnerships and good working relationships with parents
- Using Signs of Safety means that action and change is more likely to happen
- Signs of Safety helps to identify risk
- The Assessment and Planning Form and the Three Columns were thought to be effective analytical tools
- Stops global labelling and helps the practitioner be more specific about issues
- Signs of Safety was thought to be compatible with the CAF

Bunn, A. (2013). Signs of Safety in England, an NSPCC commissioned report on the Signs of Safety model in child protection, London, NSPCC. Available at www.nspcc.org.uk

DfE (talking about the English Innovations Project 10 pilot study)

“Overall, the balance of the SoS innovation was on the side of successful implementation, although aspects of the project could have run more smoothly”

“There is evidence that, over time, the partnership between social workers and families was strengthened, and that safety planning was more rigorously implemented.

“There is evidence that, over time, the partnership between social workers and families was strengthened, and that safety planning was more rigorously implemented.

“The skills and confidence of social workers in using SoS improved and that they believed it made a difference to their practice and to the lives of families.”

“While it is not possible to establish causality with SoS, the cumulative impact of the significant differences that were apparent including

- ↓ lower rates of assessment
- ↓ shorter duration of assessments
- ↓ lower number of ICPCs;
- ↓ shorter duration from the start of s47 enquiries to ICPC, and
- ↓ lower rates of children on child protection plans

could be taken as broadly indicative of positive change.”



Baginsky, M., Moriarty, J., Manthorpe, J., Beecham, J. & Hickman, B. (2017) Evaluation of Signs of Safety in 10 pilots, London: Department for Education.

Ofsted report ...

“The change in the whole service approach, using the new casework model [Signs of Safety], is positive and has resulted in a rapidly improving focus in recorded planning.” – Suffolk County Council

“The SoS approach has made a significant difference to how well social workers work with children.” – Brent Council

“The Signs Of Safety model is fully embedded in the Assessment and Impact teams and is being further embedded across all social work teams. This has led to an improved focus on children, young people and families and raised the quality of social work assessments and of direct work with families.” – North Yorkshire County Council

“When informed by the SoS approach there is sharper analysis and a strong focus on the wishes and feelings of children.” – Brent Council