Outcomes Star™

# Teen Star™

## The Outcomes Star for teenagers

> " People really open up and sometimes it leads to whole new conversations

> " Service users really enjoyed the interaction – and there were statistical results!

> " I could feed back to my head office some really impressive results

> ...as made the ...port plans more ...ginative and more ...ividual

> " The Outcomes Star is an invaluable tool for our sector

> " Support is more systematic and structured

> ...e to ...l, even ... is ...needed

> " We have incorporated it into assessment and three monthly reviews

> " It helps identify training needs for staff and volunteers

> ...or

> " We can now assist clients better - we love the Star!

> " Some people can't understand written reports, but can understand this

> " The Star is collaborative, rather than something that is done to people

> " It enables a clear direction for collaborating with a client

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> ...olistic approach ...l direction to the ...port

> " The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and in some cases life changing

Developed by Sara Burns and Joy MacKeith of Triangle Consulting Social Enterprise

**The Outcomes Star™**
This Star is part of a family of Outcomes Star tools. Each tool includes a Star Chart, User Guide or Quiz and guidance on implementation and some have visual and other resources. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see **www.outcomesstar.org.uk**.

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# Contents

# Introduction

The Outcomes Star is a family of tools for supporting and measuring change when working with vulnerable people.

All versions of the Outcomes Star consist of a number of outcomes scales arranged in the shape of a Star. All are underpinned by the assumption that positive growth is a possible and realistic goal for all clients and are designed to support as well as measure this growth by focusing on people's potential rather than their problems.

The Outcomes Star is based on an explicit model of the process by which people make changes in areas of their life that are not working for them. The Star measures the relationship the client has with any difficulties they are experiencing by identifying where they are on their journey with each of those issues.

The Teen Star consists of:

1. The Teen Star Chart, with notes and a suggested action plan format

2. An optional quiz for completion by teenagers as one way to arrive at Star readings. This quiz also provides workers with scale descriptions for each area

3. This Organisation Guide which consists of two parts – the first provides guidance for managers on implementing the Star within their service or organisation and the second gives keyworkers guidance on using the Teen Star.

In addition, all versions of the Star are available online. Information on this and further resources including fuller guidance on implementing and using the Star can be found at **www.outcomesstar.org.uk**.
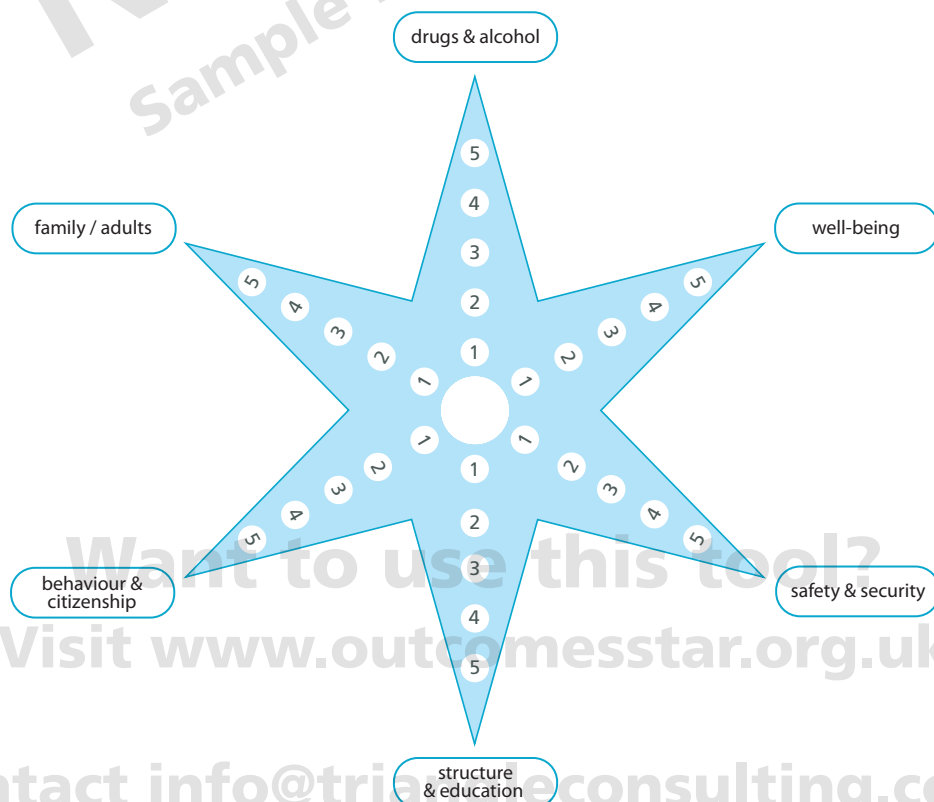


**Figure 1: The Teen Star**

# Part 1: Implementing the Teen Star™ in your service or organisation

Our experience of supporting organisations to use the Star, and other outcomes measurement tools, is that implementing it effectively and achieving the full benefits of using it can take some time. It requires ongoing attention and a commitment to follow the process through and address issues and blocks as they arise. For this reason it is important that you don't expect instant results but that the managers see the implementation of the Star as a process and expect to give it ongoing attention.

There are eight steps to introducing the Star in your organisation:

1. Review your reasons for introducing the Star to your service

2. Check that the Star is suitable for your service

3. Try it out

4. Integrate the Star into your systems and paperwork

5. Training or workshops for staff

6. Ensure the Star is used consistently and well

7. Analyse and interpret the data

8. Share and act on the data

## 1 Review your reasons for introducing the Star™ to your service

Research on implementation of the Star has shown that it usually works best when an organisation is implementing it because they feel it will be helpful to clients and/or enable the service to learn what works. If you are introducing the Star to meet commissioner requirements, explore first how it can also help your service. You might find it helpful to look at the Outcomes Star website – **www.outcomesstar.org.uk** – to find out more about the benefits of using the Star and what different clients, workers and managers have said about it.

## 2 Check that the Star™ suitable for your service

The Star is suitable if you answer yes to three key questions:

- Do you aim to help people make progress in all or most of the areas covered by this tool?

- Does the Journey of Change describe the journey your clients take?

- Do you have one-to-one assessment and review processes into which you can incorporate the Star?

# 3 Try it out

Encourage at least some workers to try the Star with a number of teenagers to test how it works in practice, explore practical issues of how to use it in your service and enable you to address any problems before it is rolled out. Where it goes well, this demonstrates to others that it is a positive and accessible tool.

# 4 Integrate the Star™ into your systems and paperwork

The Star works best as an integral part of assessment, review and action planning. It is important that the Star is fully incorporated into this process so that it does not duplicate other discussions or paperwork, such as needs assessments. We do not recommend that the Star is used in parallel with other outcomes tools.

### When to use the Star™

It is up to your organisation to set a policy specifying when service users should complete the Star and how that fits with other processes. This policy will depend on the length and intensity of a service. For most types of service we recommend:

- A first reading at the point of developing the first action or support plan, and ideally within the first two to three sessions

- Using the Star every four to six weeks as a general rule, linked to reviewing support or action plans

- On exit from the service.

It is not usually appropriate to complete the Star at a first meeting or an assessment to decide whether someone should use the service. This is often too soon and teenagers may not be ready to disclose enough information to give an accurate first reading. However, there is a balance between getting to know the teenager and the need to record an accurate start point before much change happens. If the teenager does not want to or is not able to engage in sessions or with the Star in their first two to three sessions, you can opt for a worker-only initial reading to provide a baseline.

### Can it replace paperwork?

The Star is not intended to increase the amount of paperwork an organisation requires clients and workers to complete. Services may find that the Star Chart and Star Action Plan can fully or partially replace their existing needs assessment and/or action or support plans. If your organisation decides to continue to use an existing action plan format it is not necessary to complete the Star Action Plan as well.

### How will the information be recorded and summarised?

It is advisable to keep a copy of each Star reading and Star notes on the teenager's file. Teenagers may also want their own copy. It is also necessary to enter the Star readings onto some kind of database so that the information can be summarised and analysed for a whole project or group of projects. We recommend that you use the Star Online for this.

# 5 Training or workshops for staff

The Star is as good as the workers who use it, so it is vital that all members of staff using the Star complete training with Triangle or a licensed Star trainer.

It is important to make clear how the Star fits with other initiatives and training that staff have received. For example, if your organisation uses Motivational Interviewing, it will help workers if you can integrate the Star with this approach. Effective use of the Star requires that those using it are skilled in working with service users. Introducing the Star may be an opportunity to review the training needs of your staff in this area and address any outstanding concerns.

# 6 Ensure the Star™ is used consistently and well

Quality can be checked and encouraged in three main ways:

- Incorporating the Star into staff supervision

- Routine auditing of client files

- Discussion in team meetings.

Organisations who have used the Star successfully report that these practices help to keep the Star live and support consistency in its use.

# 7 Analyse and interpret the data

Star data can be used for routine monitoring of the service and periodic research into service effectiveness. The key Star data across a service is:

- The average start point for teenagers when they first come to the service in each of the six areas, and the overall average of the readings

- The percentage of teenagers who make positive progress, stay stable or slip back on each of the scales between review periods and the percentage whose overall average reading has increased, stayed the same or decreased

- The average amount of progress made by those teenagers who have moved forward on each scale.

This analysis can also be used to compare the progress of different types of client, for instance the progress of young men compared to women, those with specific needs or those engaged in particular activities.

This data provides a rich source of information, including whether people come to your service with an appropriate level of need and the progress they make. This could highlight areas of success and/or areas of concern for further exploration. You can compare average outcomes with projects within your organisation and, if using the Star Online, with the national average for similar types of service and client group.

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All of this is food for reflection and exploration, rather than judge and jury on what is good or bad about your service.

The tables and completed Star below and on the next page show data from a pilot of the Teen star:

## Table 1: Average Start, review and change

|  | **First** | **Review** | **Average change (outcome)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Drugs and alcohol | 2.3 | 3.5 | 1.2 |
| Well-being | 2.5 | 3.3 | 0.8 |
| Safety and security | 2.6 | 3.8 | 1.2 |
| Structure and education | 2.5 | 3.5 | 1.0 |
| Behaviour and citizenship | 3.0 | 3.5 | 0.5 |
| Family and other key adults | 3.2 | 3.9 | 0.7 |
| **Overall average** | **2.7** | **3.6** | **0.9** |

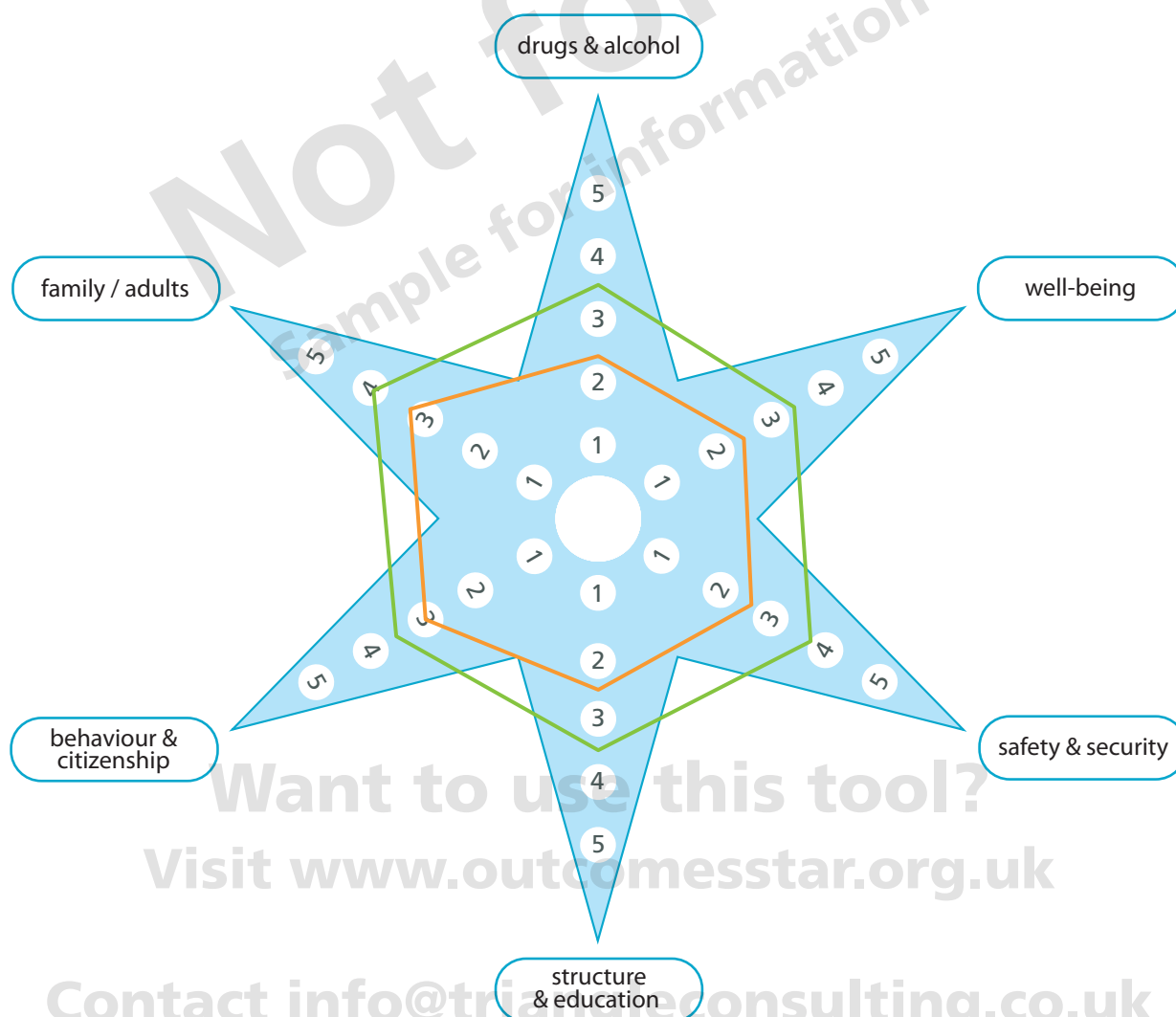This information can be presented visually on a Star Chart for the service.



**Figure 2: Data from table 1 presented visually, showing outcomes for the service**

## Table 2: Percentage of clients showing change

This table shows the proportion of service users in the pilot who made positive progress, stabilised or whose readings went downhill, in each of the six Star areas.

| | Positive change | Negative change | No change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Drugs and alcohol | 64% | 18% | 18% |
| Well-being | 46% | 18% | 36% |
| Safety and security | 73% | 18% | 9% |
| Structure and education | 55% | 9% | 36% |
| Behaviour and citizenship | 36% | 9% | 55% |
| Family and other key adults | 46% | 18% | 36% |

In addition, 73% made progress in terms of their total Star readings across all six areas and 27% slipped back. For half of those slipping back, this was a result of more accurate readings at review as the teenager disclosed more information, not a real negative change.

## 8 Share and act on the data

All versions of the Outcomes Star, including the Teen Star, are designed to be used as part of an ongoing process of outcome measurement, learning and service improvement. This means it is vital that once you have analysed your data you share it with others and make changes in the light of it. Key audiences for your data include: your management team, board or management committee, workers and commissioners.

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# Part 2: Using the Teen Star™ with teenagers

The Star is designed to be used as an integral part of your work with teenagers. It is meant to be a positive, helpful process, stimulating and focusing discussion and providing a useful basis for agreeing actions to be taken. Before you start, make sure you know how the Star is being used in your organisation, including when and how often it is completed and what happens to the Star Chart and the data. Then, the following brief guidance is designed to help you use the Teen Star well so that it is a positive and motivating experience for both you and your client.

1. Understand the Journey of Change before you start

2. Explain the Star and Journey of Change to your clients

3. Use the Star resources to cover each of the six Star areas

4. Use the process of agreeing where a teenager is on each scale

5. Use the completed Star Chart as the basis for an action plan

6. Revisit the Star at reviews

7. Complete a final Star when teenagers leave the service

## 1 Understand the Journey of Change before you start

It is important to familiarise yourself with the Teen Star and Quiz before using it. In particular, you need a good understanding of the underlying Journey of Change to confidently and meaningfully use the Star with teenagers. The following are helpful:

- Complete Star training from Triangle or a licensed Star trainer

- Try out the Star a few times by bringing to mind teenagers you know reasonably well and working out where you would place them on each scale using the summary Journey of Change and the quiz

- Read through the more detailed description of the Journey of Change on the next page and see if you can relate it to the process you have seen teenagers go through

- Remember, not all teenagers will start at 1 and not all will reach 5

- The Journey of Change has many similarities with the Cycle of Change[1] and if you are familiar with this model you may find the links helpful.

[1]Prochaska, J.O., DiClemente, C.C. (1982) "Transtheoretical Therapy: Towards a more integrative model of change" Psychotherapy: Therapy, Research and Practice, Vol. 19 pp 276-88. This also has five stages: Pre-contemplation (equates to 1 on Teen Star journey), Contemplation (equates to 2), Preparation (start of 3), Action (4) and Maintenance (5)