



Using the Youth Star™ with young people

The Youth Star is intended to engage young people, stimulate and focus discussion and provide a helpful basis for action plans and goal setting. At the same time, it provides projects and organisations with information about a young person's progress. It consists of:

- The Youth Star Chart and Action Plan
- The Youth Star Quiz (two formats to choose from)
- An Organisation Guide
- This Guidance for Workers.

Make sure that you have received training in using the Youth Star, are familiar with the resources and know when and how it is used in your project. It is vital that workers understand and regularly refer to the Journey of Change so that they use the Youth Star consistently and produce reliable information for the project to analyse.

Introduce the Youth Star to young people in groups or one to one. Use the summary Journey of Change to present the stages step by step and draw out examples relevant to the young people or apply it to changes a well-known role model has made in their lives. Explain that 5 is the top of the Star scales but not the end of their journey – they will be on the right track at this point but will continue to improve and grow. Possible phrases are:

“We are here to help you make the most of opportunities, enjoy learning and feel confident so that you can be your own person, able to do what interests you.”

“The Star is a way of tracking your journey and discovering your strengths and needs. There are no right or wrong answers.”

Complete the Youth Star one to one wherever possible. It is flexible so, depending on the needs and abilities of each young person, the process is as follows.

For each outcome area in turn, ask open questions or use the Youth Star Quiz as a basis for discussion. Paraphrase and unpack the words in the Quiz, and draw examples relevant to the young person, as needed.

- Young people at 3 or above should take the lead in placing themselves on the scales; those mainly at 1-2 may be unrealistic and need more direction
- If someone appears to be between two points, choose where they are most of the time or opt for the lower point so that growth is possible
- Encourage young people to mark their scale points on the Star Chart then join them up to create a shape.

Discuss each area to encourage self-reflection and remember that the Star is a collaborative tool. Differences of opinion are helpful starters for discussion. Ask young people why they have chosen a particular number, challenge them or remind them of their achievements as needed. Discuss any discrepancies between their behaviour and their views, paving the way for a meaningful discussion. Where you cannot agree, record both perceptions on the Star, labelling which reading is which.