



Development Report

Victim of Crime Star™

The Outcomes Star for people needing support to overcome the impact of crime

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Please contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk to enquire about buying a licence and training.

Licences may be available for those wishing to translate this report into other languages.

The Outcomes Star™

This Star is part of a family of Outcomes Star tools. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the development of the Outcomes Star over its long evolution and we would like to thank all the clients, workers, managers, funders, academics and commissioners who have generously given their time and expertise.

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We would particularly like to thank Thames Valley Partnership & The Office of Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner, the collaborators for the development of this version of the Star.

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Introduction

The Outcomes Star™ tools

The Outcomes Stars are a suite of person-centred tools for supporting and measuring change when working with people. They are both keywork and outcomes tools, supporting effective interventions and giving management data on progress towards the end outcome. Because of this dual role, they bring together measurement and service delivery and can provide a shared language and framework across operations and data management for departments and between commissioners and service providers.

All versions of the Outcomes Star have five- or ten-point scales arranged in a star shape. Each point on each scale has detailed descriptors setting out attitudes, behaviour and sometimes skills or circumstances typical of that point on the scale. Underpinning these scales is a model of change (the Journey of Change) describing the steps towards the end goal that both the service and service user are trying to achieve.

The Outcomes Star tools are different to other approaches to assessment and outcomes measurement¹. They are designed to empower service users within a collaborative process of assessment and measurement that supports a positive conversation and is integrated with support work, rather than being a separate activity. The Star is closely aligned to person-centred, strengths-based, co-production and trauma-informed approaches and can support people and organisations to put those values into practice:

- **Person-centred:** The Star encourages and enables workers to listen to the perspective and priorities of service users and to work with them collaboratively. It helps engage service users to develop realistic action plans based on where they are on the Journey of Change.
- **Strengths-based:** The Star is holistic and enables people to focus on aspects of life that are going well rather than have an assessment focused entirely on areas of difficulty. The scales focus on what service users can change, rather than the severity of their problems or circumstances.

¹ The Outcomes Stars share the core principles of Participatory Action Research (O'Brien, 2001; Carr & Kemmis, 1986) – empowerment, collaboration and integration – extending these beyond research into assessment and outcome measurement. Participatory Action Research seeks to empower the subjects of research, collaborate with them and integrate research into practical action to improve people's lives. The Outcomes Stars seek to empower service users within a collaborative process of assessment and measurement that is integrated with support work rather than being a separate activity.

- Co-production: the collaborative approach to completion means that the service user and worker produce the assessment and measurement together and build a shared perspective as a basis for action. This is in contrast to expert assessment or self-report approaches in which the two perspectives remain separate.
- Trauma informed: the collaborative nature of the Star helps to give the service user control, which has been shown to be important in building a sense of safety for people who have experienced trauma. The focus of the tool is primarily on how things are now, rather than past experiences that might trigger someone's trauma and put them outside their safe "window of tolerance". In addition, the guidance for use emphasises the importance of building of a trusting relationship and a shared perspective as an essential foundation to moving forward.

For a fuller description of the values and approach underpinning the Outcomes Stars suite of tools, see MacKeith (2011).

Background and further information about the Outcomes Stars suite of tools can be found at www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

The Victim of Crime Star™

The Victim of Crime Star is for use with people who may benefit from support with the practical or emotional impact of a crime or as they navigate the criminal justice or legal system.

The Victim of Crime Star includes the following resources:

- The Victim of Crime Star Chart, Notes and Action Plan
- The Victim of Crime Star User Guide, with both brief visual scales and detailed scale descriptions
- Short illustrated Scales and Flashcards for use with victims of crime
- Guidance for Workers
- A web application for online completion and analysis at www.staronline.org.uk

This Development Report provides a detailed description of the process of developing the Victim of Crime Star.

Development process for the Victim of Crime Star™

Methodology

The methodology for developing all versions of the Outcomes Star is based on Action Research (O'Brien, 2001) and the Existential Phenomenological research method (McCall, 1983). Action Research is a collaborative process of identifying issues, trying out solutions and assessing what works. This phenomenological method places a strong emphasis on understanding the subjective experience of the person or people being researched and the meaning of the experience for them.

The development process comprises four main stages:

Stage 1: Exploring the scope and need for the tool

Stage 2: Creating the pilot version of the new Star in consultation with the working group

Stage 3: The pilot

Stage 4: Finalising the tool

Below we describe how this process was applied to create the Victim of Crime Star.

Stage 1. Exploring the scope and need for the tool

Thames Valley Partnership and the Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner approached Triangle to develop a new version of the Outcomes Star that would support victims of crime who need support through the criminal justice or legal system or with the practical and/or emotional repercussions of the crime.

Triangle then carried out a scoping process, involving:

- An exploratory literature review
- Mapping the existing service landscape to identify the likely audience and usefulness of the proposed version
- Checking prior interest and enquiries from other services for a similar or the same version.

As with any new version of the Star, this phase also included scoping the capacity for both the collaborators and Triangle to undertake the development within the budget and timescale needed. Based on this, Triangle's conclusion was to proceed with a version of the Star specifically for victims of crime, designed to encourage best practice across the sector.

Stage 2: Creating the pilot version of the new Star in consultation with the expert working group

An expert working group was formed to collaborate in the development of the new Star, comprising of directors, managers, caseworkers and counsellors working in specialist victim support services including those providing restorative justice services and counselling for trauma survivors.

This expert group played a central role throughout the development process, providing in-depth knowledge of the issues faced by service users, the intended outcomes of service delivery and the process of change towards those outcomes. The working group's input was organised around three workshops. The first two contributed to the creation of the pilot version of the tool, and the third and final workshop reviewed the results of the pilot and contributed to refining the tool to create a final version (see Stage 4).

Workshop 1 (July 2018): A one-day workshop was held to identify intended outcomes and processes of change in work supporting victims of crime. The workshop included a series of focus groups to provide insight into workers' experiences and to understand the outcomes they aim to help service users achieve.

The key questions explored in Workshop 1 were:

- What are the main areas in which services and service users are seeking to create change? *These areas become the points of the Star*
- What is the desired outcome of the change process? *This becomes the end point on the Journey of Change that underpins all the scales*
- What model of change describes the steps that service users take on the journey towards that end point? *This is described in a series of steps – the Journey of Change – showing a clearly discernible, qualitative difference between each step of the journey.*

A range of techniques was used to draw out participants' subjective experience and knowledge including:

- Using the "outcome triangle" tool to identify the overall aim of services, the specific outcomes they are trying to achieve and the activities they carry out to achieve these changes
- Bringing to mind an individual who has undergone a substantial change and identifying the key steps in their process of change
- Hearing feedback about suggested outcome areas and discussing how they would work in different situations and with different service users.

Triangle compiled all the material gathered from the working group at Workshop 1 and reviewed it to allow meaning and common strands to emerge. On the basis of this, combined with the literature review carried out in Stage 1, a provisional model of change and outcome areas for the Victim of Crime Star were developed. These were then used as an outline or “skeleton”, from which the first draft of the Victim of Crime Star was created.

Once the first draft was completed there was an iterative process of sharing, listening, refining and sharing again to hone the outcome areas, Journey of Change and descriptions of the steps towards change in each outcome area until they resonated with the service user group and workers participating in the development process. The process included checking that the first draft took into account key themes that emerged from the literature review and a second workshop with the expert working group.

Workshop 2 (February 2019): A one-day workshop was held to present the first draft of the Victim of Crime Star to the expert working group and to hear feedback to inform the pilot version of the Star. On the basis of this feedback and the other activities listed above, the early draft was refined to create a pilot version of the Victim of Crime Star with the Journey of Change and outcome areas listed below:

The pilot Victim of Crime Star Journey of Change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Coping well and moving on 4. Finding what works 3. Starting to deal with it 2. Taking it in 1. Stuck
The pilot Victim of Crime Star Outcome Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safety at home 2. Emotional well-being 3. Money and responsibilities 4. Social life and community 5. Looking after yourself 6. Close relationships 7. Thinking and beliefs 8. Navigating the legal process

Stage 3: The pilot

Triangle trained over 60 workers from the collaborating organisations to use the Victim of Crime Star. These workers then piloted the Star with 127 of their service users over a five-month pilot period. Of these, 66 were reviewed twice, so had two Star readings.

Service users and workers were asked to complete brief feedback forms on their experience of using the Star and to submit the Star data to Triangle for analysis of the psychometric properties of the pilot Star.

Summary of analysis of service user feedback forms

Triangle received 28 completed questionnaires from service users who had used the Victim of Crime Star during the pilot period, of which 93% said that the Victim of Crime Star provided a) a good summary of their life and b) highlighted their support needs.

Summary of analysis of worker feedback forms

Triangle received 15 feedback forms from workers completing the Star with service users, of which 12 (80%) said that using the Star helped them to get a better overall picture of a) service users' situations and b) their support needs. Ten out of 15 workers (67%) felt that the Victim of Crime Star helped open up better conversations.

Psychometric analyses of the pilot Star data

Analyses of the Star data from the 127 initial Star readings and 66 second Star readings showed the following:

Distribution: First Star readings were normally distributed across the Journey of Change stages for all areas apart from "Navigating the legal process", where readings were moderately skewed to the bottom stages (so not restricting responsiveness).

Internal consistency: Cronbach's alpha was .77 – above the threshold of .70, suggesting good internal consistency.

Responsiveness: Effect sizes were medium–large for four outcome areas and large for the remaining four, with statistically significant change ($p < .001$) for all outcome areas indicating good responsiveness to change. At least 60% of service users moved forward or stayed at the top of the Journey of Change in each outcome area.

See the Appendix for more detail on service user and worker feedback and the findings from the Star data.

Further research into the psychometric properties of the final published version of the Victim of Crime Star was initiated following publication. For the latest information on this, please contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk.

Stage 4: Finalising the new Star

After the end of the pilot in June 2019, Workshop 3 was held to draw together the learning from the pilot.

Workshop 3 (July 2019): The third and final meeting of the expert working group gathered in-depth feedback on the process of using the tool from a wide range of people in different contexts. It also focused on the detail of the tool itself – the areas covered, Journey of Change, scale descriptions and range of materials.

The working group was asked some specific questions about the Victim of Crime Star and the responses are briefly summarised below.

What worked in the pilot Victim of Crime Star?

The attendees who had used the Star during the pilot felt it worked well with complex cases, with people badly affected by the crime and with those who had been exploited.

It was felt that the Star was a useful tool for opening up better conversations including about action planning and progress, and that it complemented existing processes well:

“Our outcomes monitoring before was more tick-boxy. This is much more victim-focused”

“The Star fits with conversations with clients – therefore it is not duplication, and fits with recovery process”

“Did open up discussion/interesting conversations”

“Client can see progress – empowering”

What didn't work in the pilot Victim of Crime Star?

Some difficulties were reported when attempting to use the Victim of Crime Star with people who only needed support for attending court or who had severe mental health issues or learning disabilities.

Staff reported that some service users don't want to, or are not ready to discuss the impact on their lives in a holistic way, and that some areas were not relevant to all victims of crime:

"Some areas not relevant to crime experienced"

"Some clients don't want to share holistically"

"Client wants to talk about their priorities not overview"

"Couldn't do Star on first visit with some clients – not ready for it (in tears)"

"With some crimes such as rape, the client may not be in the right place to do the Star"

There were also some difficulties with having the time and opportunity to complete the Star:

"Don't see the same client again – not consistent, can't do second reading"

"Detail of descriptions – very time-consuming"

The title of the pilot version – "The Victim Star" was also seen as problematic:

"Don't like label victim – don't like name"

"Meetings conducted in cafes and had to cover up title"

"Crossed out title – distressing to clients"

There was also in-depth feedback on the specific outcome areas.

Changes made to finalise the Star based on learning from the pilot

On the basis of the worker and service user questionnaires, psychometric analyses and Workshop 3 feedback, a number of changes were made to the pilot version of the Victim of Crime Star to create the final version. The main changes are summarised below:

- The title was changed to "The Victim of Crime Star"
- In the Journey of Change, **coping well and moving on** was changed to **coping well**, as moving on is not always possible
- The name of the "Money and responsibilities" scale was changed to "Your responsibilities" and the scale focuses more widely on practical responsibilities, including parenting (for example, getting children ready for school)

- The name of the “Social life and community” scale was changed to “Out and about” to better reflect the content of the scale – it is not just about social life but about being outside and includes fears about going out and fears of being around people, communities and environments. It may also include fears of meeting the perpetrator while out and about
- The “Looking after yourself” scale was renamed “Physical health and wellbeing” to go alongside “Emotional well-being”
- The “Close relationships” scale was renamed “Support network and relationships” and was broadened to include people’s support network outside of professional services. This can include family and friends but may come from other sources of support such as a survivors’ group
- In the “Navigating the legal process” scale, changes were made to give less emphasis to having your voice heard within the process as this is not always realistic
- Changes were made throughout to make meaning clearer, to soften language where necessary, and to make each stage completely distinct. The scales were also reordered.

The final Victim of Crime Star Journey of Change	5. Coping well 4. Finding what works 3. Starting to deal with it 2. Taking it in 1. Stuck
The final Victim of Crime Star Outcome Areas	1. Safety at home 2. Your responsibilities 3. Out and about 4. Physical health and well-being 5. Emotional well-being 6. Support network and relationships 7. Thinking and beliefs 8. Navigating the legal process

Completion

Once these changes had been made, the draft final version of the Star went through final checks:

1. The expert working group was invited to review and comment on the final draft

2. It was reviewed again by Triangle to ensure clarity of descriptions and distinctions between each stage of each scale
3. It was edited and proofed before being typeset

The Victim of Crime Star was published on the Star Online in December 2019.

References

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986) *Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research*. London: Falmer Press.

MacKeith, J. (2011). The development of the Outcomes Star: A participatory approach to assessment and outcome measurement. *Housing, Care and Support*, 14(3), 98-106.

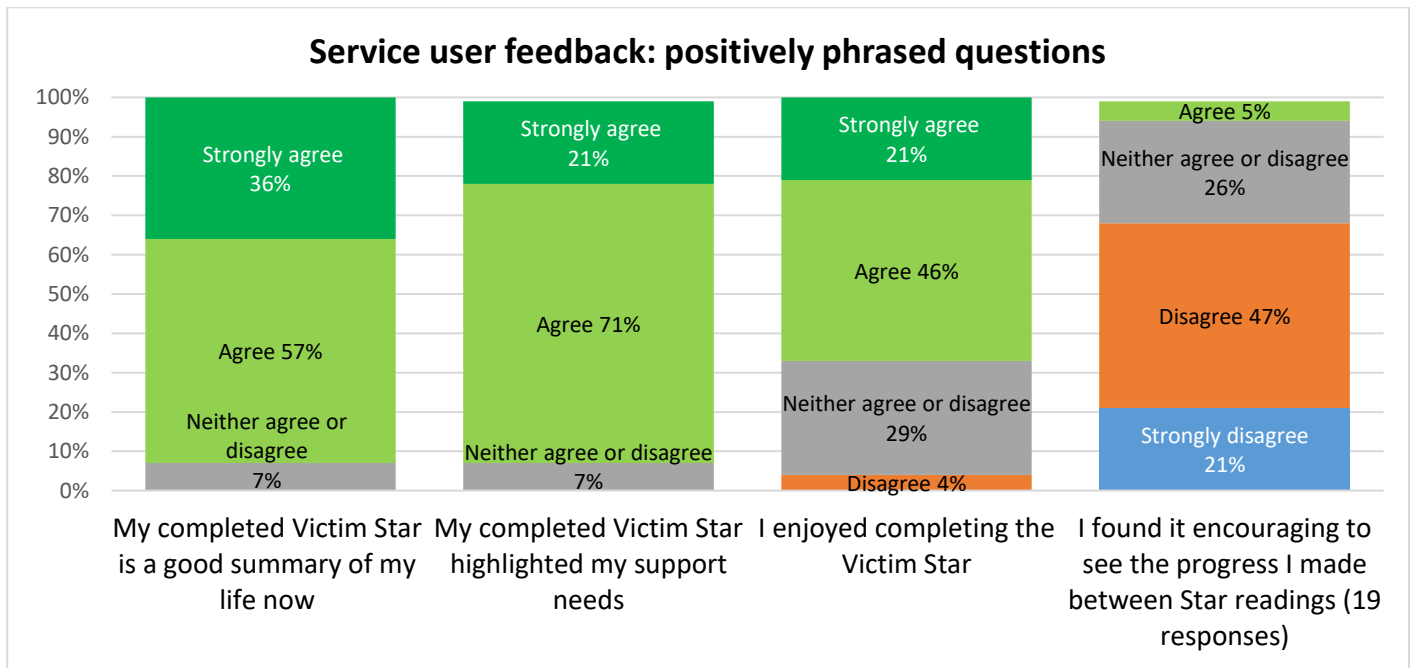
McCall, R. (1983) *Phenomenological Psychology*, Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.

O'Brien, R. (2001). An overview of the methodological approach of Action Research. In Roberto Richardson (ed.) *Theory and Practice of Action Research*, Joao Pessoa, Brazil: Universidade Federal da Paraiba (English version).

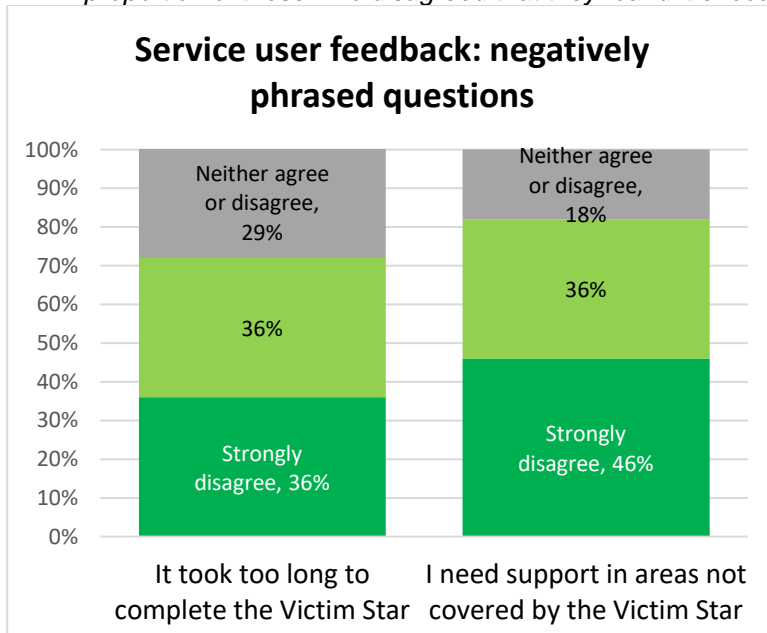
Appendix

Worker and service user feedback following the Victim of Crime Star™ pilot

Feedback from 28 service users



NB. A proportion of those who disagreed that they found it encouraging to see progress had only completed one reading



Open-ended responses

The positive feedback centred around the usefulness of the Victim of Crime Star as a tool for reflection on the impact of the crime on different life areas as well as on the progress service users made. For example:

“It's a good visual for me to see how well I'm doing and stops you worrying because you can see physically how you've progressed”

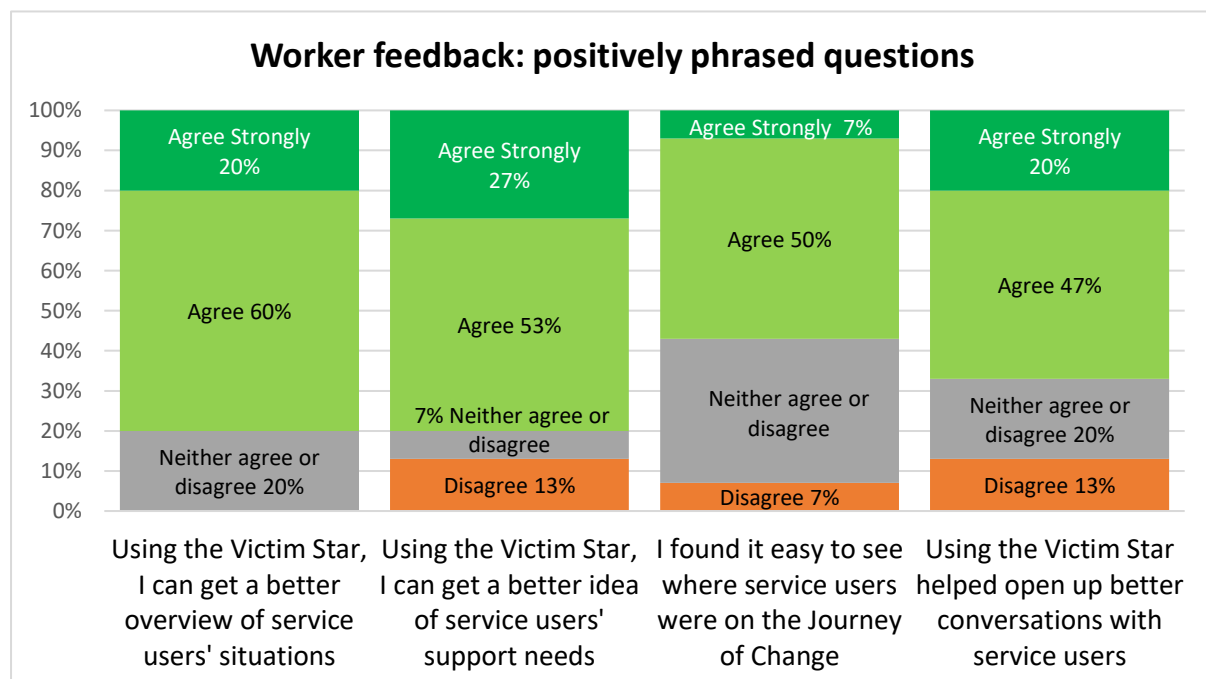
“I like how it can open up conversations about certain things”

“I found it worked well to shape my support”

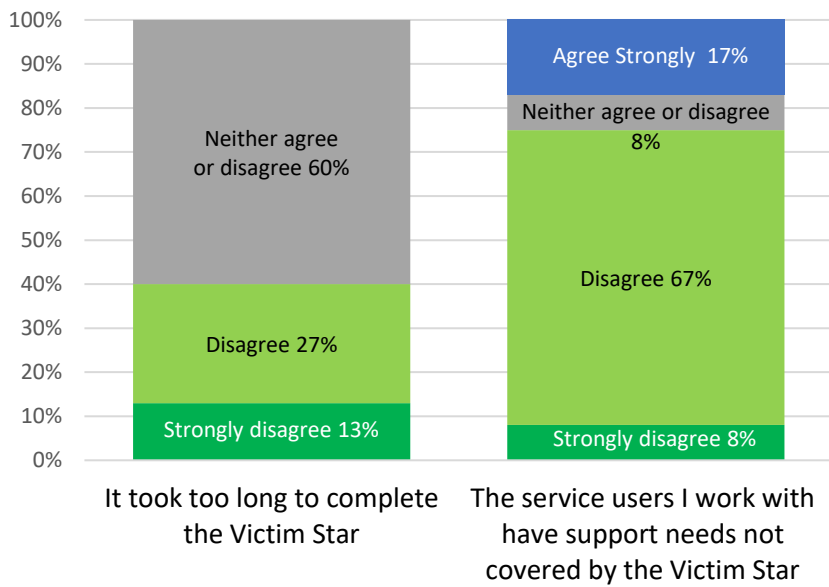
“I liked the scoring to help reflect myself”

“The whole thing has helped greatly”

Feedback from 15 workers



Worker feedback: negatively phrased questions



Open-ended responses

There were a number of positive comments that the Victim of Crime Star provided a good reflection of where clients were, where things had improved and the actions needed. For example:

“By just looking at the Star you can see what support is required and what is going well. It is a good tool to review the client's needs”

“It opens conversations and with prompts made the client think more about the different things affecting her”

“It helped to focus discussions with service users and enabled them to identify their own positives and negatives. Many service users found this helpful”.

“The visual aspect of seeing the Star image with numbers – they quickly showed progression or decline”.

Some problems were also identified:

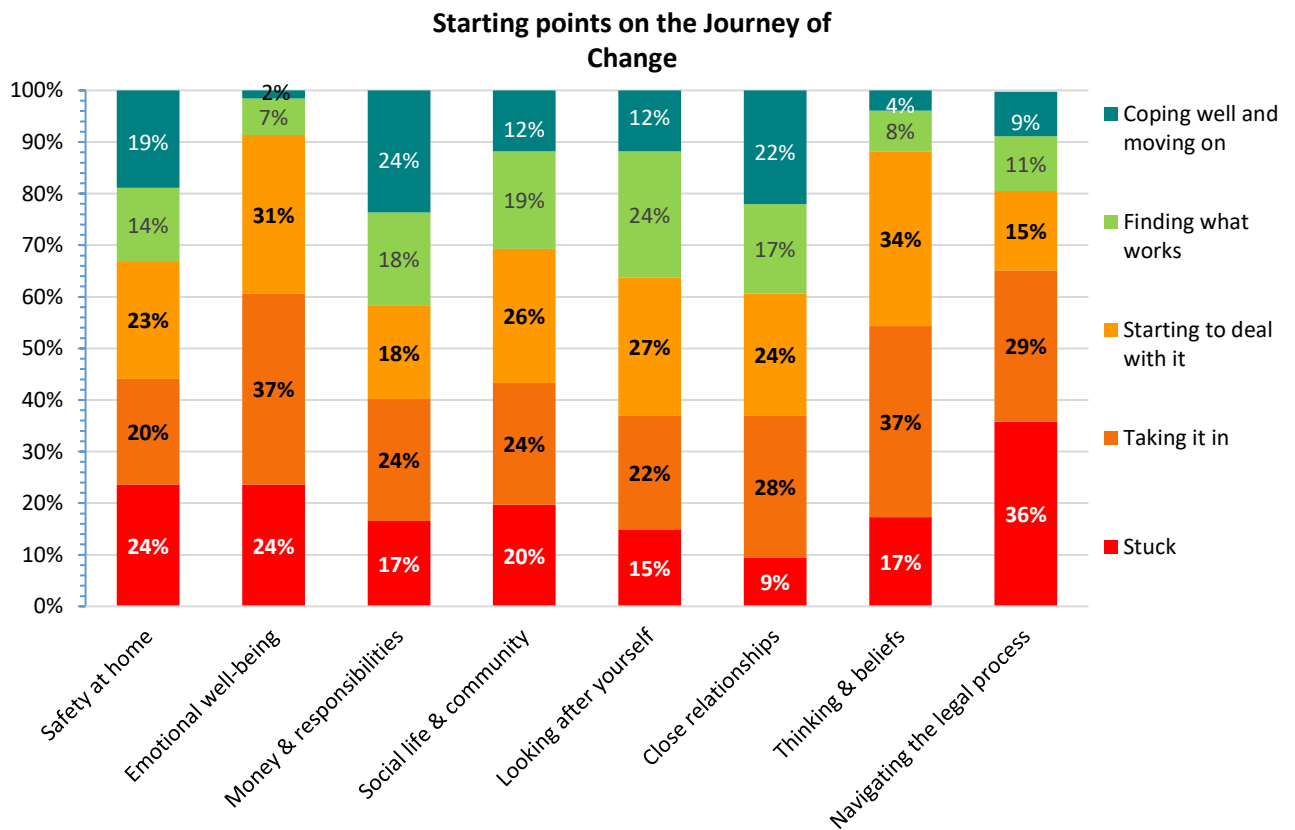
It was felt that the “Money and responsibilities” area in the pilot Star covered too much:

“Putting children and money in the same area doesn't work as they may have a completely different score”

The end point of “Coping well and moving on” did not fit well where there has never been an issue with that particular area.

Details of the psychometric analyses of the pilot Victim of Crime Star™

The distribution of initial Star readings across the Journey of Change stages during the pilot of the Victim of Crime Star™



	Skewness statistic	Result
Safety at home	.18	Approximately symmetric
Emotional well-being	.41	Approximately symmetric
Money & responsibilities	.00	Approximately symmetric
Social life & community	.16	Approximately symmetric
Looking after yourself	-.03	Approximately symmetric
Close relationships	.07	Approximately symmetric
Thinking & beliefs	.48	Approximately symmetric
Navigating the legal process	.78	Moderately skewed (many Stuck)

Factor structure and internal consistency

A unidimensional factor structure was found, with one factor explaining 54% of the variance.

Cronbach's alpha was .77, above the threshold of .70, suggesting good internal consistency.

Responsiveness

	First Star median	Final Star median	Z***	Effect size r ¹	size
Safety at home	3.00	4.00	-6.10***	.54	large
Emotional well-being	2.00	4.00	-6.40***	.56	large
Money & responsibilities	3.00	4.00	-4.87***	.43	med-large
Social life & community	3.00	3.50	-6.16***	.54	large
Looking after yourself	3.00	4.00	-5.48***	.48	med-large
Close relationships	3.00	4.00	-4.81***	.42	med-large
Thinking & beliefs	2.00	3.50	-5.49***	.48	med-large
Navigating the legal process	2.00	4.00	-6.31***	.55	large

***All effect sizes were statistically significant ($p < .001$)

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