

## Information for Parents about Norfolk Child and Family Social Workers

When someone has a worry about the safety or wellbeing of a child or children in a family, they make raise a concern with the Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CADS). When agencies agree there is a worry, a social worker is asked to undertake a statutory assessment.

Families often feel worried about a social worker becoming involved in their life or afraid that their child or children will be taken away. These worries are natural but social workers want what families want; for children to be well looked after within their own home. Social workers are there to help families achieve this for themselves. Social workers can only place children in care if there is evidence that they are being significantly harmed or they have been abandoned by their parent, and a Judge in a Court decides that an Order needs to be made for them to live with someone else; hopefully a family member but if not, a foster carer or adoptive parent.

Your social worker is there to help and support you and your family make things better for your child. They will help you understand what people are worried about. They will ask you questions about what is working well for you as well as any worries you have. They will also speak with your child to make sure they understand what life is like for them. They will want to build a safe and trusting relationship with you and your child and any wider family you want to involve.

You may hear the words ‘**Signs of Safety**’. This is the approach that all Norfolk Child and Family Social Workers use. Using this approach helps everyone involved with your child or young person – including the child/young person themselves – to think about ways to keep safe, healthy and settled.

### Talking to children

Talking to your children is at the heart of **Signs of Safety**. It is important that children, as well as adults, have an opportunity to talk about what they are worried about, what makes them happy, and what they would like to see happen in their family and community to keep them safe. The **Signs of Safety** approach uses a tool called ‘The Three Houses’ to talk to children and ask them their views:



