

Signs of Safety Implementation Framework

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The implementation framework follows from the Signs of Safety theories of change that interlink the theories for practice with organisational implementation. Explicating this linkage is crucial since practitioners' ability to deliver quality, timely Signs of Safety services is always dependent on the level of support and alignment their agency provides around the practice.

Implementation of the Signs of Safety involves a process of organisational transformation. This is because all implementing organisations have entrenched, extensive and interconnected policies, processes and systems, built up over a long time, strongly influencing the organisational culture, and underpinning practice. Only some of these policies, processes and systems will enable the shift in practice that the Signs of Safety involves while others will impede the practice. Aligning the organisation so that all these arrangements enable the practice inevitably involves organisational change on multiple fronts. The twin tracking problem of the agency and its staff being caught for an extended time between the 'old' and 'new' policies, processes, systems and cultures that underpin practice, must also be managed.

The implementation framework illustrates the centrality of the practice approach as the foundation for organisational transformation. The framework is encompassed in a continuous learning and development cycle, as the alignments that enable the practice are implemented, together with measurements that are meaningful to the day-to-day work and the outcomes sought. These in turn drive learning focused on the practice which informs leadership which needs to be exercised in ways congruent with how workers are expected to practice. The implementation activities then are focused into the categories of learning, leadership, organisational alignment and meaningful measures.



The core implementation activities are as follows:

LEARNING

- Basic training for all staff including leadership positions
- Advanced training for practice leaders (team and service managers and practice consultants)
- Practice leaders learning and development trajectory
- Leadership learning and development trajectory
- Workplace based learning with practice leaders leading staff informed by their learning and development trajectory
- Key learning methods of group supervision, learning cases and appreciative inquiry
- Targeted training for key aspects of practice and specialist staff groups

LEADERSHIP

- Clear and focused commitment to the practice and the implementation
- Strong and visible and demonstrably engaged with practice
- Modelling Signs of Safety – managing and leading in the same way that staff are expected to work with families
- Fostering a safe organisation – building confidence that workers will be supported through anxiety, contention and crises
- Building a culture of appreciative inquiry – deliberately examining practice and organisational strategies that are effective and how to extend them
- Distributed leadership – building responsibility “from the front counter to the chief executive”

ORGANISATIONAL ALIGNMENT

- A steering committee, an implementation plan and a policy or ‘charter’ registering the organisational commitment to implementation
- Policies, forms and case management processes to match the practice methodology and that are streamlined
- Plans and targeted development for application of the practice to key areas of service and across the continuum of service from early help to looked after children
- Strong staff capacity at the commencement of assessment and planning with families and children
- Partner engagement through formal collaborative arrangements, targeted practice learning, aligned referral and reporting forms, and shared day-to-day practice
- National and international engagement – sharing resources and learning opportunities across jurisdictions and collaborating in research

MEANINGFUL MEASURES

- Quality assurance (QA) system – to align with Signs of Safety results logic and fidelity
 - Case audit reflecting practice results logic – collaborative with staff
 - Signs of Safety dashboard monitoring application of the methodology
 - Family feedback on practice and staff feedback on organizational implementation, culture and leadership
 - Case trends and outcomes monitored with a streamlined set of KPIs
- Information and communications technology (ICT) that records case management, with forms revised and adapted to match the practice, and enabling quality assurance Signs of Safety dashboard and case trends and outcomes monitoring.

• The implementation framework is underpinned by **learning and development trajectories** for all staff including, senior leadership, service management, corporate policy and QA, practice leaders and front line workers. The trajectories involve defined programmes of activities specifying the learning content (in relation both to practice and leadership), the learning methods, with explicit linkages through action learning cycles, between the feedback provided through quality assurance processes and the development of practice knowledge and skills, leadership behaviours and focuses, and aligning the processes of the organisation.

Signs of Safety implementation is envisaged as an initial two-year process and trajectory, following a substantial preparation phase for planning, preliminary casework and the first tranche of training for key staff. This preparatory work and the two-year initial phase is in turn envisaged within the context of a five-year commitment with continuing focused implementation activity tailored specifically to the organisational context and needs.