

## Briefing: Choosing which Outcomes Star™ to use

### Guidance to make sure the tool and the version you choose is right for your service

This briefing is designed to support people considering the Outcomes Star for their service. Triangle are also here to help you through this process – if you have any questions, would like any advice on how the Star can work best for your service, or if you have found the version that is right for you and want to get started, please contact us on [info@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@triangleconsulting.co.uk) or **+44(0)207 272 8765**. More information can also be found on our website [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk). If you are not based in the UK, please contact the licensed service provider in your country – contact details can be found on our website.

### 1 Is the Outcomes Star right for you?

The Star can be an effective tool for many services, but it isn't right for everyone. It is designed to be used as an integral part of the support provided by a service, so it is important that it fits with your approach and remit. **Look at this checklist to see if the Outcomes Star is right for you.**

QUESTION	WHY IT MATTERS
<b>Do you offer 'keywork' – one to one conversations and support planning with service users?</b>	The Star is designed to be used collaboratively by practitioners and service users as a framework for reflective conversations and action planning, capturing data agreed by both practitioner and service user. <b>If services do not offer a form of one-to-one keywork, the Star cannot be used effectively.</b> For example, the Star is not suitable for information and advice services and will only work in some group work settings where one-to-one time is also provided.
<b>Do you work with service users over time – for more than 6 weeks?</b>	The Star measures the change that takes place for a service user in several areas of their life. <b>If services work on very short timescales or without a level of intensity to the support offered, sustainable change is unlikely to occur and the data gathered by the Star will be less meaningful.</b>
<b>Do you work in a holistic way, addressing multiple areas of a person's life?</b>	The Stars cover between 5 to 10 broad areas of a person's life, and the service should be aiming to achieve changes in all or most of the areas covered by a Star. <b>If services only focus on one or two aspects of a person's life, the Star is unlikely to be able to be used effectively.</b>

If you answered no above, the Star may not be the right tool for you – get in touch and we can advise on next steps.

If you answered yes, the next step is to work out which specific version(s) are right for you. It is also worth being aware of four key points about what the Star is and isn't:

1. Stars do not measure the severity of problems. They measure someone's engagement with the problem. You may need other measurement tools or other tools alongside the Star – for example, risk assessments
2. Stars are not designed to be performance management tools – individual change is complex and Star data should always be used alongside other information
3. Outcomes Stars are trademarked, licensed tools and organisations must have licences and training to use them

4. The Star can be implemented in different ways – creating an implementation plan for your organisation will help you to get the most out of your investment in the tool, and Triangle can help licensed Star users do this with free advice and support.

## 2 Which version of the Outcomes Star is right for you?

There are over 50 published versions of the Outcomes Star to choose from, each tailored to a specific service user group or sector. For a full list of published Stars and Stars in development, please visit our [website](#).

**We recommend that if you consider moving to any new version of the Star at any time, you get in touch with Triangle to discuss the nature of the new Star and what you might need to know before introducing it in your service.**

For some services it will be obvious which Star to use, and for others there will be a choice to be made. Identifying the right Star is based on:

1. The needs of the people being supported – the areas of life that are important to your client group
2. What it is that your service helps people to achieve – the intended outcomes
3. The type of service you provide, especially the amount of one-to-one time you have with people

### Using multiple versions of the Star

As all Outcomes Stars are holistic tools, as a rule only one version of the Star should be used with someone at any one time. (There are some Stars that can work alongside each other– talk to Triangle for more information.)

For organisations with a variety of services or serving a variety of people, a variety of Stars may be needed (for example, Family Star Plus for parents and My Star for children complement each other well and we can run training covering both Stars at the same time.) **Star licences and Core Star training give workers access to all the published versions of the Star at no extra cost.**

**List of all Stars by sector (see separate list for family and children's settings)**

Sector/ service type/ client group	Appropriate version of the Outcomes Star
Addiction	Drug & Alcohol Star Gambling Recovery Star Teen Star (for young people)
Adult social care	Independent Living Star Life Star (LD) Spectrum Star (ASD)
Armed Forces Community	Independence Star
Carers	Carers Star
Children and Families	Multiple Stars – Family Star (Relationships), Family Star (Early Years), Family Star Plus (Parenting), My Star, Music Therapy Star, New Mum Star, Parent and Baby Star, Planning Star, Support Stars (Young People), Support Star (Parents), Little Star
Community involvement/integration	Community Star
Criminal justice	Justice Star (for people in the criminal justice system) Victim of Crime Star Youth Star (youth work aimed at prevention)
Domestic abuse	Empowerment Star (for women victims) Change Star (for male perpetrators)
Employment	Work Star Pathway Star (for people facing more significant barriers to work) Youth Star (youth work with NEETs)
End of life	Preparation Star
Gambling related harm	Gambling Recovery Star
Health	Well-being Star (long-term health conditions) ADHD Star (adult ADHD) Support Stars (for children and young people facing cancer)
Homelessness	Home Star Tenancy Star (prevention of loss of tenancy) Young Person's Star
Housing	Tenancy Star
Refugees and asylum seekers	Integration Star (refugees) Planning Star (unaccompanied asylum-seeking children)
Learning disabilities	Life Star
Mental health	Mental Health Recovery Star 4 <sup>th</sup> Edition (adults) My Mind Star (young people) Recovery Star Secure (for people in secure settings)
Natural disasters	Disaster Recovery Star
Older people	Independent Living Star Older Person's Star (and shortened version for day services)
Schools	Shooting Star (school pupils) Attention Star (for attention related issues e.g. ADHD) My Mind Star (for mental health issues)

	Student Star (schools for students with special needs)
Social prescribing	Well-being Star
Substance misuse	Drug & Alcohol Star
Victims of crime	Victim of Crime Star
Visual impairment	VIP Star
Young people	Multiple Stars – Planning Star, My Star, My Mind, Shooting Star, Sexual Health Star, Student Star, Support Star (Young People), Teen Star, Young Person's Star, Youth Star

### **If you work with adults with a range of needs, focus on the intended outcome**

If you work with people who may have a combination of mental health issues, autism, social isolation, mild learning disabilities and/or other needs, you can choose from a number of Stars, depending on the intended outcome of your service. Below are some examples.

If your overall aim is:

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| • Improving people's health and well-being   | Well-being Star         |
| • Enabling people to live in their own homes | Independent Living Star |
| • Getting people closer to work-ready        | Pathway Star            |
| • Getting people off the streets             | Home Star               |
| • Avoiding eviction                          | Tenancy Star            |
| • Community integration                      | Community Star          |

### **Be clear whether self-reliance is a realistic aim, or if your clients will always need a service**

For most versions of the Star, the end-point of the Journey of Change is self-reliance – an absolute end point where the person no longer needs a specialist service. However, a number of versions including the Home Star, Independent Living Star, Life Star, Well-being Star and Carers Star all have a relative endpoint of maximising independence, choice and well-being, often with ongoing support.

### **If your work is relatively light touch, choose a lighter-touch Star or the most accessible Star resources**

Many Star versions have 6-8 outcome areas on a 1-5 scale. These include the Well-being Star, Carers Star, Tenancy Star and versions for children and young people. Increasingly, all versions have accessible resources including flashcards and brief, visual scales. These may be quicker and simpler to use and are designed for service contexts where there is limited one-to-one time with people for assessment, support planning and review (such as support for carers and vulnerable tenants).

For example, a project using gardening, peer support groups or other activities to support people with mental health issues would be recommended the Well-being Star, not the Recovery Star.

### **Working in family and children's settings**

There is now a substantial suite of Stars for services supporting families and children. The following table lists them, with a summary of the needs they are designed to meet and how to choose between them.

Star training equips workers to use any version of the Outcomes Star without requiring additional training. However, we recommend additional training or briefing when starting to use different versions, particularly if the underlying Journey of Change is different.

Star version	About this Star
<b>Family Star Plus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommended for most work with parents, particularly more intensive interventions</li> <li>In the UK this includes Targeted or Specialist Early Help with families eg “Level 2” or above)<sup>1</sup></li> <li>Provides evidence within key areas of the UK Supporting Families initiative – employability, anti-social behaviour, school attendance</li> </ul>
<b>Family Star (Early Years)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For families with babies and/or children under 5</li> <li>For less intensive, briefer interventions/keyworking e.g., drop-in support or groups in children’s centres where there is also some one-to-one support</li> </ul>
<b>Family Star</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most services are now better served by either the Family Star Plus or Family Star (Early Years)</li> <li>Still recommended for services in Scotland, as it is a good fit with the Scottish government GIRFEC framework (Getting It Right For Every Child) and specific resources are available to link the Star and Scottish government framework</li> </ul>
<b>Home Star</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2022 version is better suited for women and children and those experiencing complex and ongoing housing and other needs</li> <li>A dual-end point for those with ongoing needs</li> </ul>
<b>My Star</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For use with children – collaborative completion works best from 7 years+ and best fit is 7- 14 years, depending on the child, but can be used for children of any age</li> <li>Suitable for children in families identified as vulnerable, children’s homes, foster care or in need of support for other reasons, including bereavement or behaviour issues</li> <li>Works well alongside Family Stars to capture the child’s voice and needs and to see how changes made by parents are enabling their children to thrive</li> </ul>
<b>New Mum Star</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primarily designed for young, first-time mums but is suitable for any mum in need of holistic, parenting support during pregnancy and early motherhood</li> </ul>
<b>Parent and Baby Star</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perinatal mental health and well-being - for parents in need of extra support with their mental wellbeing during pregnancy and the first year after birth</li> <li>Suitable for use with mothers and fathers</li> </ul>
<b>Family Star (Relationships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For services focusing on resolving conflict between parents, including mediation and counselling services, or by family support workers in situations where inter-parental conflict is the key issue needing to be addressed</li> <li>Holistic, so to be used instead of another Family Star version</li> </ul>
<b>Support Star (Parent)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For use with parents of children facing serious illness, such as cancer</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Four levels of need for children’s services – definitions may vary. Level 1: No identified additional needs = universal services. Level 2: Low risk to vulnerable, child’s needs are not clear, not known or not being met; the threshold for completing an assessment = universal services and/or targeted services. Level 3: Complex needs likely to require longer term intervention from statutory and/or specialist services; the threshold for a child in need and social care intervention. Level 4: Acute needs, requiring statutory intensive support; the threshold for child protection.

## Working with children and young people

Star version	About this Star
<b>Young Person's Star</b>	For young care leavers, those leaving young offender institutes, homeless young people or young people with housing needs. This is effectively a young person's version of the Outcomes Star for Homelessness
<b>My Mind Star</b>	For use with young people who are experiencing poor mental health, including stress, anxiety, anger or self-harm, or for those with a diagnosed mental health condition
<b>Youth Star</b>	For community-based youth work, including youth clubs and activity-based programmes, universal and for young people at risk of disengaging from education, involvement in the criminal justice system or NEET young people early in their journey to work
<b>Teen Star</b>	For young people in substance misuse services and/or addressing risk behaviours
<b>Shooting Star</b>	For school students, to capture more holistic outcomes and give a focused emphasis to outcomes beyond academic achievement. Ideal for students in Years 10/11, it was developed for secondary schools and later tested successfully for primary schools
<b>Student Star</b>	For young people with additional needs in specialist schools, colleges or supported work and learning environments. It is suitable for students with a range of needs including autism, learning disabilities or behavioural needs
<b>Attention Star</b>	For children and young people aged 5-18 who have difficulty paying attention, learning and/or with their behaviour at school or in other situations. They may or may not have a diagnosis of ADHD
<b>Planning Star</b>	For unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people (UASC). This Star can be used across a range of ages as many UASC are supported into their 20s
<b>Sexual Health Star</b>	For work with young people specifically around sexual health. A holistic tool looking at relationships, attitudes to risk-taking and confidence, as well as attitudes to contraception and sexually transmitted infections. Some sexual health services consider the Youth Star is a better fit for their work
<b>Support Star (Young Person)</b>	For young people facing cancer or other serious illness. The Support Star (Parent) is a version designed for parents of children facing serious illness
<b>Music Therapy Star</b>	For children aged 2-11 in music therapy. The tool is completed by the therapist, parent/carer and possibly referrer
<b>Little Star</b>	For children with cerebral palsy or other motor impairments who are receiving Conductive Education and/or other therapies. This tool is completed by the therapist and/or the parent/carer

### 3 What if there isn't a version that is right for me?

The first step is to get in touch with Triangle to discuss your needs. You could try testing out the closest version or versions with a small group of workers and clients – get in touch with Triangle for help with doing this.

If there isn't a version of the Star that is right for you, you may want to consider collaborating with Triangle to develop one for your sector. It is worth noting that collaborating on Star development takes a considerable commitment and investment of time, expertise and money, but can provide a variety of benefits for your organisation and sector. Contact us or visit our website for more information.

Outcomes Stars are sector-wide, trademarked and evidence-based tools. Each version is the result of extensive research, development, testing and refinement, informed by sector thinking and developed with commissioners, managers, workers and service users. **Please do not attempt to tailor the Stars yourself** – it is harder than it looks, will damage the integrity of the tool and be a breach of copyright and trademark legislation.