

Network Booklet

This booklet will explain what we mean by a network, what networks are for and how a Social Worker will work with you and your network. In Cumbria we like to involve networks as we know these people are around for you and your family to help and can prevent professionals needing to be involved if it isn't necessary.

What is a network?

Networks are a group of people who you have any form of relationship with. These people can be your family, friends, work colleagues, neighbours, anyone who is important to you and your family.

Some of the network members may live close by whereas others may live far away. Network members can help in various ways like visiting, texting or speaking over the phone, helping with childcare, or helping with practical things like shopping and transport.

Networks will know how the children and family are doing, and also what they will do if they are worried about the children.

Why is a network important?

The people in your support network will be around to share the good times and help you through the difficult times.

People in the network support the parent or carer to make sure the child is happy, healthy and safe at home.

The network will be around to help when professionals are no longer involved or not able to. They can help in difficult times to prevent the need for professional involvement in the future.

What to expect?

The worker will ask everyone in the household, adults, and children particular questions to help you decide:

- Who you want to include in your network and why?
- Who you do not want in your network and why?
- Who you think your child/ren would want/do not want in the network and why?
- Who your child/ren say they want/do not want in the network and why?

What your network will need to know?

The worker will talk to you about information the network members need to know:

- What the worries are for the child/ren? (Harm/Worries/Danger)
- The good aspects of how the child/ren are looked after (Strengths/Safety)
- How the network has kept the child/ren safe in the past?
- What the Social Worker needs to see happening to be no longer worried

The most important thing is that your family have people around you that are important to you and your children. Also that these people can help you with a plan that deals with any worries, and helps the child/ren to feel happy, safe and settled.

Making a Safety Plan

A worker will ask lots of questions to guide you and your Network in making a Safety Plan. Sometimes these questions will be hard to think about. The workers are here to help the family and Network with this.

There might be several Safety planning conversations. Each conversation will look at a worry or danger and agree on rules about who will do what to make sure the children and young people are safe when things are difficult at home.

Who would I want in the network?

Who would my child/ren want in the network?

Children / young people – Who would you want in the network?