

# The Next Chapter



**Risk Outside The Home Pathway:**  
A template for developing a local  
guidance document



**This project is part of the Contextual Safeguarding programme's 'The Next Chapter' project. The Contextual Safeguarding research programme is based at Durham University.**

**For more information about the research and to find resources from this project please visit: [www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk)**

# Introduction

## Describe:

- The approach that Children's Services are taking to extra-familial harm in general and how this relates to wider practice frameworks used in the service such as restorative approaches, Contextual Safeguarding etc.
- Why approaches focused on parental capacity may be insufficient for addressing extra-familial harm, and the particular system gap for children at risk of significant harm
- Purpose of a ROTH pilot and how design is informed by both local practice frameworks and national learning
- Purpose of this guidance document and any documents to be read alongside

# Definitions and thresholds

## Provide definitions for:

- Harm
- Significance
- ROTH or extra-familial harm
- Significant ROTH or extra-familial harm

## Provide threshold for ROTH pathway in relation to:

- Extra-familial nature of the harm
- Significance of extra-familial harm
- Whether this will be applied in cases where EFH is the sole or principal harm
- Whether the harm in question is attributable to (in)action of caregivers

# ROTH Pathway

## A section that outlines the ROTH Pathway

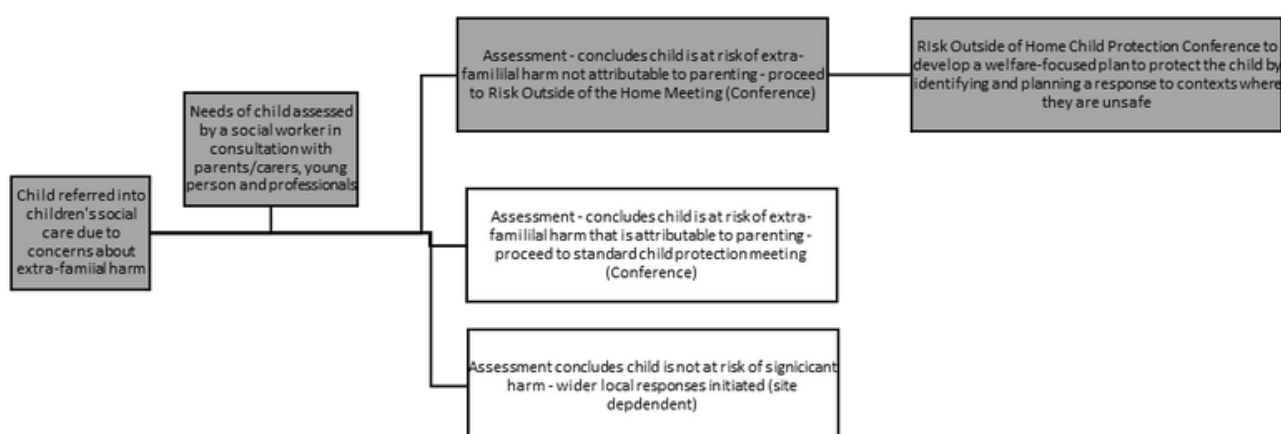
Decide whether this document will describe how to apply ROTH principles across children's services pathway (if so need to explain application for early help, child in need and children in care), or whether initially it will only apply to how the service responds to young people at risk of significant extra-familial harm.

Describe how a ROTH pathway will apply various levels of need – and explain the use of conferencing as relevant.

Insert a flow-chart if helpful (see examples below) – one for all levels of need (if relevant) and/or one solely for young people at risk of significant extra-familial harm.

## Approach to Assessment

- Explain approach to assessment on a ROTH pathway – anything that is different about it. Include explanation of 'Context Weighting'
- Explain the relationship to strategy discussions; when they take place on a ROTH pathway and how they inform approaches to assessment



**Example 1 A composite flowchart produced using the results of our project**



**Example 2: A flowchart shared by Southampton Children & Learning Services**

# Approach to the ROTH conference

## Purpose:

Describe the purpose of the ROTH conference and its structure

## Chair:

Outline who they are, their role, and approach to chairing the conference

## Social worker:

Outline who they are, their role, and approach to assessment

## Partners:

Include the young person, parents/carers, and professional agencies. Who they might be, their role during conference, and engagement with the chair and social worker prior

# Activities prior to a ROTH conference

## Expectations in relation to:

- Engagement of young people and parents/carers
- Paperwork and partnership reporting (and how this differs from ICPC):

For example, a report from a partner agency might include information about a context and the role of professional agencies in that context, rather than information about the young person and their family. This section would also detail the deadlines for providing written reports and who will have sight of them ahead of conferences.

- Information for social work assessment:

What the social worker will include in their assessment, what they will need from partners to build their assessment and how they will use 'context weighting' to reach an initial conclusion about where the ROTH should focus.

- Invitations:

How invitations will be sent, by whom, to whom and by when.

- Practicalities:

Where will conferences be held (in person, online or hybrid) and how will notes be recorded. If in person how will the room be arranged, and how will people arrive (for example any pre-meetings between young people, parents/carers and chairs).

# Activities during a ROTH

## Explain:

1. How the chair will detail the ambition for the meeting: overall goal and values that underpin it: option to include wording that will be used by the chair to welcome everyone and set the scene
2. The meeting structure and how it links to a plan: for example:

## **ROTH Conference Structure**

- What/Who is the risk to you and where are you at risk?
- What/Who helps you to feel safe and where are you safe?
- What do we need to know more about?
- What do we need to do more about?

## **ROTH Plan :**

- What would safe look like in the places or situations where you are at risk?
- What specific outcomes would help us realise that goal?
- What intervention/ support is to be offered to the young person, family, or contexts to meet those outcomes?
- What agency/team is responsible for delivering that intervention/support?
- When will this be achieved?

## 3. The proposed conference agenda

## 4. The approach to information-sharing

- Emphasise a young person and/or parent/carer will speak first followed by professional partners
- Outline what is being shared (i.e., contextual information about both safety and risk) and with you (clear on confidentiality)
- How will the information shared be recorded, including points of disagreement

## 5. The approach to planning

- Revisit structure of plan and what it needs to achieve
- The role of chair, young people, parents/carers, and professional partners in developing the plan
- Approach to recording any points of disagreement or where required resources/interventions are not available

## 6. The approach to decision-making

- Outline:
  - What is being decided: nature of the harm (physical, sexual, emotional), it's significance, and whether it is outside of the home
  - Any additional local approaches to reaching those decisions i.e. scaling
  - Order of decision-making, young person, parents/carers and then wider professional network
  - Approach to dissent



## Activities after a ROTH

- Outline the processes that follow the various potential decisions in terms of planning and review
- Detail on the planning process for ROTH specifically, who oversees the plan, frequency of review etc.
- Hyperlink/refer to other planning processes already established for other outcomes

## Additional considerations

You may wish to provide some explanation of additional matters you are considering, these will vary by area, but may include how you will approach:

- Siblings of young people on a ROTH pathway who themselves are not at risk of EFH, or not at risk of EFH which is significant
- The approach to children at risk of EFH who are already in care
- Young people who are also open to youth justice services, in terms of coordinating plans and support
- How ROTH principles may be applied in the ICPC process for young people at risk of significant harm both within and beyond the family home
- Reviewing, auditing, and amending the ROTH process to improve it in the future