

Resilience and Vulnerability Tool

This is a tool to support analysis and decision making for children.

Resilience and vulnerability are internal characteristics which are shaped by nature and nurture factors, along with the child's character and how they perceive and respond to situations.

Adversity and protective factors come from outside, in the behaviour of adults, the resources available in the community and the ability of the child and family to make use of these.

Combining these areas create a balanced picture of the child and their family and the environment they live in, and how they interact with each other.

This tool is for use by all practitioners working with children and their families. The *Resilience and Vulnerability Tool* will support analysis and decision making, without replacing professional judgement. This tool has been developed to assist practitioners in determining the right course of action. It supports practitioners to focus upon the impact of identified factors upon the child.

The *Resilience and Vulnerability Tool* is intended to support consistent professional decision making based on evidence. If at any time practitioners have information that leads them to believe that a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, they should take action according to the **safeguarding partnership board procedures**.

Guidance for Completion

The *Resilience and Vulnerability Tool* can be completed in a number of ways including:

- By an individual practitioner to inform their agency decision making
- As a multi-agency group within a meeting, e.g. the *Child In Need Meeting, Core Group or Team around the Child*
- In direct work carried out with the family

The tool helps to inform the assessment and planning, supporting good analysis by providing a structured approach to obtaining the necessary information and considering relevant factors. It supports professional judgement and requires reflective discussion.

In the analysis you should consider what this means for the child and should explore the needs of the child and their family. Use your results to first get a general understanding of the child's position e.g. resilient child + high adversity, resilient child + protective environment, vulnerable child + protective environment or vulnerable child + high adversity. You can then consider how protective factors and resilience can be strengthened, problems reduced and vulnerability addressed.

However, a simple 'score' will not tell the whole story, so you will need to look carefully at the specific answers to questions to consider what the greatest needs are and what action is going to be most effective and achievable. The needs and actions can be added to the *Child and Family Assessment and Child and Family Plan*. Action may not be needed against every indicator and the help has to be proportionate to the issues identified.

Are there small achievements that can be made? Small improvements can build self-esteem and often lead to greater change in the long run. When considering needs and actions, it is important to take into account the views of the child and also those of the family. Finally, use this information to develop a *Child and Family Plan* with the child and their family. In some circumstances, especially in complex cases, it may be useful to revisit the matrix when reviewing the child's progress against their plan.

The use of this tool should help to structure and add value to what practitioners already do. You should use a separate form for each individual child in the family. In working with any child, you should be mindful of specific needs arising from race, language, culture, religion, disability or sexual orientation. Consider specific characteristics that may make a child more vulnerable.

The *Resilience and Vulnerability Tool* should be used alongside the *Continuum of Children's Needs* to ensure the right services are involved and appropriate action is taken if you believe a child is at risk of harm or has been harmed. **See Section D for more information and the template.**