

# Therapeutic Life Story Work International

## Measurement tool - notes

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The purpose of the TLSW measurement tool is:

- to design a tool that would measure the effectiveness of TLSW as an intervention specifically as opposed to the whole package of support around a child.
- to keep the method as simple and straightforward as possible, without having a cumbersome and lengthy clinical measure. Increasing the likelihood of it being utilised by the practitioner and others involved – with little direction needed and by not having a bulky document or complex programme to follow.
- to not provide a resulting action plan or solutions (these can be stand-alone to the measure).
- to design a model that has been proven to work rather than re-inventing something from scratch i.e., based on the Shanarri wheel.

### The Adult Version

It is suggested that the TLSW measurement tool is carried out before the direct work sessions take place and then on completion of all sessions. In addition, it may be beneficial to carry out at an agreed mid-way point.

The people who should carry out the measure are: -

- parent/carer/involved keyworker (if not in a family setting).
- teacher/other key educational representative.
- any other key person who has a quality relationship with the child/young person.

### The Young Person Version

For the child / young person to complete their version at the beginning and at the end of the TLSW intervention, either before sessions start or as one of the initial sessions.

## The 7 Areas

<b>Adult version</b>	<b>Young Person Version</b>
Achieving and learning	School
Attachment to primary carer	The family that I live with now
Physical health and development	How healthy I am
Emotional intelligence	My feelings
How included the child is	My friends and the things that I do
Identity	What I know about the story of my life
Ability to concentrate and be physically settled	How easy it is for me to be settled and to concentrate

### **Achieving & Learning**

This represents achieving in general terms, but also with an emphasis on learning within educational settings. With our knowledge that children who have experienced trauma often have a level of pre-occupation due to unresolved questions and feelings about their early experiences, we know that this pre-occupation can significantly get in the way of being able to concentrate in lessons and therefore in achieving academically. We would hope to reduce this level through the TLSW process, thereby looking for a more positive and optimistic school experience where a child is achieving their potential.

### **Attachment to primary carer**

As a key factor of TLSW is the tripartite approach, enabling the child and their primary carer to have a deeper understanding of each other and ultimately with an aim to strengthen the placement - this a specific measure. It is similar to 'safe' and 'nurtured' in some other tools, and it is ultimately what we, as practitioners, want for both the child and their carer or parent and so it should be a direct measure of success of the intervention.

### **Physical health & development**

This is to measure overall the child's physical health including sleeping habits, personal hygiene, eating, dental care etc.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

To represent the areas of feelings, responsibility, empathy and emotional development and wellbeing.

A definition of emotional intelligence being the ability to identify and manage your own emotions and the emotions of others. To include 3 skills: identify own and others' emotions, ability to harness emotions and apply them to tasks like problem solving and the ability to regulate your own emotions and have the ability to cheer up/calm down another person.

## **How included the child is**

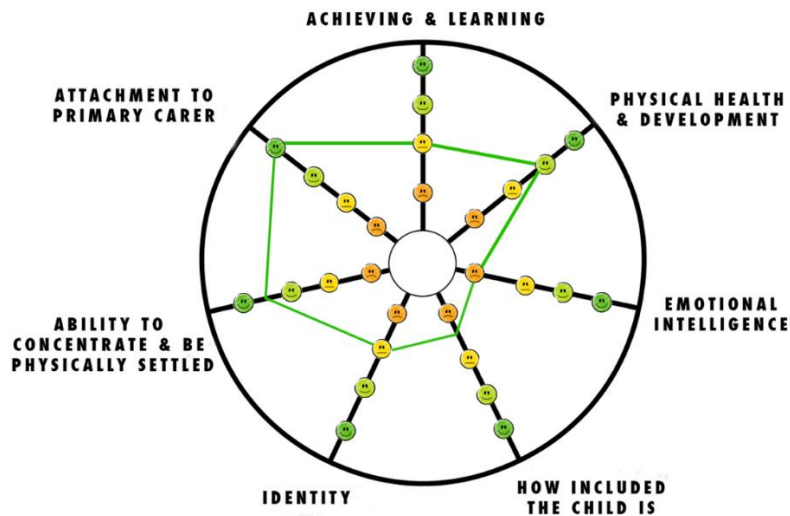
It is important for all children to be accepted for who they are and to feel included both within their family unit and the wider community. This is also intended to represent the child/young person's relationships with their peers and so their degree of acceptance by others. We would want to see them involved in activities and clubs.

## **Identity**

Although this may seem an obvious area, it's inclusion demonstrates one of the main differences between TLSW and that of more generic life story work, as we will be measuring whether the child both knows and (most importantly) understands their story. This is particularly relevant to children and young people who are asking questions and where this is one of the reasons for carrying TLSW out. The wallpaper used for sessions will capture and help demonstrate the child's understanding. We would want to see a decrease in magical thinking as the child/young person has more answers and information that fill in the gaps of their knowledge. This area is about measuring how much a child has integrated their past experiences in to their present and having a healthy sense of who they are and where they have been. This is the core of TLSW.

## **Ability to concentrate and be physically settled**

A significant number of children/young people that we work alongside for TLSW find it difficult to concentrate and stay still when we are holding TLSW sessions. For some, this will continue due to the uniqueness of them as a young person. For others, there is a significant reduction in being uncontained/energetic/fidgety once they learn more about their story and people in their story. They become more settled and comfortable as there are less unknowns, and importantly, their thoughts and feelings about their story have been witnessed by their parent or care giver and the TLSW practitioner.



KEY:



No worries



Some worries



Worries



Very worried/Many worries

As every one of us is unique, we would never achieve a description for the areas that accurately described every child. So, the measure is of the description that fits the child/young person most closely. It is common for there to be a face that mostly feels right but with 'bits' of another one also.

It is important to note that the 4 markers for each area are on a sliding scale and that it may feel more accurate to make a measure half-way between 2 faces. This is completely fine as the important point is the comparison from when the measure was first taken and when the TLSW has been completed.

In addition to the wheel, the measurement tool sheet asks for a recording of:

- the reasons that now is a good time to do TLSW and
- the child/young person specific outcomes that are hoped for

As a TLSW practitioner there needs to be consideration that some children/young people may never measure a green smiley face. This tool is intended to measure the effectiveness of TLSW on the life of a child/young person and not how 'normal' they are.