



The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) guidance in **Every Child Matters: Change for Children** recommends that:

“All Local Authorities will have a core of practitioners trained in all relevant agencies by March 2008”.

All those working with children and young people need to know what **CAF** is, when it should be used and who, in their field of work, is the most appropriate person to complete a common assessment. This may be someone in your agency who has been trained, or you can contact your CAF Co-ordinator who will provide you with support and advice.

The CAF Co-ordinators are:

Jeff Barnard (Redditch and Bromsgrove)
email: jbarnard@worcestershire.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 556168

Sarah McMorrow (Wyre Forest, Hagley, Tenbury and Droitwich)
email: smcmorrow@worcestershire.gov.uk
Tel: 01562 757867

Peter Holland (Evesham, Pershore, Malvern, Martley and Worcester)
email: pjholland@worcestershire.gov.uk

What does this really mean for me?

- That you will need to adhere to the inter-agency agreed protocols for sharing information.
- That you can use the **Common Assessment Framework** when carrying out an assessment of a child or young person's needs.
- That you can use a common assessment as supporting evidence when requesting a service.

Visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp to view the procedures for the **Common Assessment Framework, Lead Professional and Information Sharing**.

For further information and training availability contact:

Kay Harris on 01905 766082

Or email cafraining@worcestershire.gov.uk

Common Assessment Framework

A Guide for those working with children and young people in voluntary and community groups

Children and young people can have different needs, which require different levels of response. These can change at different times in their lives, or at different times during agencies / services contact with them. Support and / or intervention may be provided on either a single or multi-agency basis to address the identified needs. The model **Promoting Children and Young People's Well-being in Worcestershire** on the next page shows Worcestershire's approach to this.

What is the Common Assessment Framework?

The **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)** for children and young people is a standardised approach to conducting an assessment of a child's additional needs. It is a new process for all those who work with babies, children and young people and their families to understand and share information on a child who may have additional needs where more than one agency is involved.

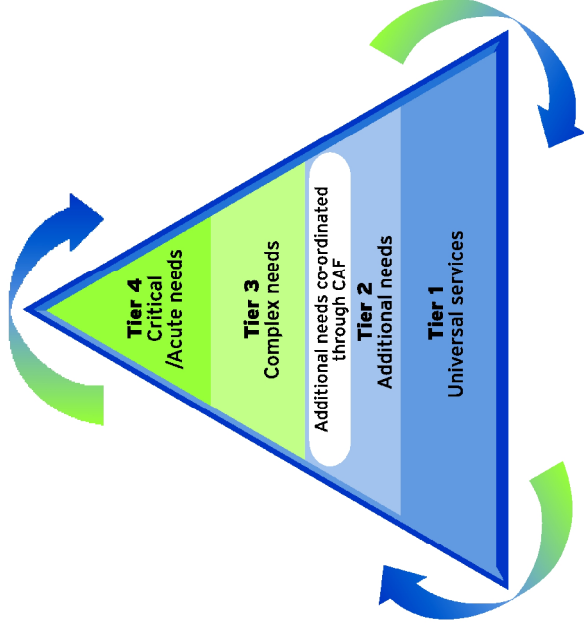
- **CAF** is a key part of delivering frontline services that are integrated and focused around the needs of children and young people. It can be used by practitioners across Worcestershire providing services for children. The **CAF** has been designed to help workers assess needs at an early stage and then work with families, and other agencies, to meet them.
- The **CAF** is **NOT** for when you are concerned that a child may have been harmed or may be at risk of harm.

If you are concerned that a child or young person may have been harmed or may be at risk of harm you must follow your organisation's child protection procedures immediately.

Promoting Children & Young People's Well-being in Worcestershire

Outline of needs in each tier:

<p>Tier 4</p> <p>A child's health & development has been impaired. They have already suffered significant harm and have critical /acute needs.</p>
<p>Tier 3</p> <p>Children & young people with complex needs to the extent that their health and development will be impaired without intervention.</p>
<p>Tier 2</p> <p>A child's health & development may be adversely affected by their circumstances. They will need additional support without which, they would be at risk of not reaching their full potential.</p>
<p>Tier 1</p> <p>Needs can be met through universal services with no additional support</p>



Examples of Services at each tier*:

<p>Tier 4</p> <p>e.g. Specialised residential & hospital placements, secure accommodation, child protection, looked after children.</p>
<p>Tier 3</p> <p>e.g. Children's integrated area services, YOS, Specialist CAMHS, Aftercare 16+ Services, substance misuse teams.</p>
<p>Tier 2</p> <p>e.g. Targeted Health Services, targeted housing support, sexual health services, counselling services, community support groups, targeted youth services, children's centres.</p>
<p>Tier 1</p> <p>e.g. Schools, health visitors, school nurses, local authority leisure services, nursery provision, youth services.</p>

If you are concerned that a child or young person may have suffered significant harm or may be at risk of significant harm, you must immediately follow the Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures for Safeguarding Children.

If in doubt, consult with your line manager or area CAF Co-ordinator
* N.B Some services are available at all tiers of need

A **Common Assessment** can be completed by any of the practitioners working with the child / young person / family and involve other agencies who can provide information.

The **Common Assessment** can only take place with the consent of the young person, parent or legal guardian.

The **Common Assessment** enables:

- the use of a coordinated support meeting where the family and workers can get together to produce practical action plans to address the child or young person's needs.
- a lead professional to monitor the progress of the action plan to meet the needs of the child or young person
- the use of a common language across agencies.
- the sharing of the common assessment of needs across agencies.
- workers to know whether a common assessment has already been started or completed.

What are the benefits?

The child / young person will benefit by:

- not having to repeat information to workers
- getting the range of services they need more quickly

The worker will benefit by:

- not having to do so many assessments
- being able to intervene earlier to improve the outcomes for children and young people.

What will it mean for VCS workers?

The **Common Assessment Framework** is now 'live' across Worcestershire. All those people working with children and young people should know about the **CAF** and Awareness Training is being provided by CAF trainers.

Over time, the common assessment may replace other assessments and will be built into practice.