



Child and Family Support System

# Common Elements Module: Preparing for Change

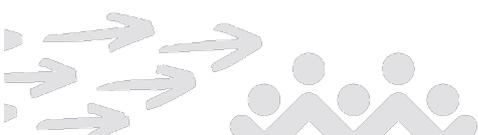
## Practice Guide: Building Motivation for Change





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“The Aboriginal Cultural Lenses of Practice” Artist Sasha Houthuysen

## Acknowledgment of Country

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners and occupants of lands and waters of this country, whose practices and dreaming are still living through Elder’s past, present and emerging.

Further, we acknowledge that the spiritual, social, cultural, and economic practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples come from connection and maintained of lands, waters, values, heritage beliefs, languages and lore which are of ongoing importance. From the past, in the present, into the future, forever.

We acknowledge the impact of historical policies that were harmful and have contributed to intergenerational trauma. This includes policies and practices of colonisation that have had a profound impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s connection to country, culture, and one another.

We aim to continue to apply a cultural lens when we work together to promote a cultural evidence base that centres around self-determination, choice, and a healing approach, through Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing. All while valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as strong, resilient people, and decision makers in their own lives.

## About this document

The South Australian government is committed to creating a cohesive Child and Family Support System (CFSS).

One in three children born in South Australia (SA) are reported to the Department for Child Protection by age 10. Most of those children's families have multiple and complex needs.

Children and young people who are removed from their families and placed in care experience trauma that can continue to impact on their health and wellbeing throughout their lives and across generations. For Aboriginal families and communities, the intergenerational trauma from Stolen Generations and children being forcefully taken from their communities and culture both adds and gives context to the complexities.

The CFSS is committed to ensuring Aboriginal children remain front, centre and highly visible in our work with families and communities. The CFSS commits to understanding and valuing Aboriginal Cultural strengths, enabling self-determination and being honest about the truth of our shared histories, the hurts, the strengths, and the healing. It is only by doing these actions and being true and active allies will we see change.

The "Roadmap for Reforming the Child and Family Support System (CFSS) 2021–2023" outlines the steps that the South Australian government (Department of Human Services) is taking to strengthen the CFSS workforce to intervene early, build positive relationships with families, improve family wellbeing, and avert the need for greater engagement with the child protection system.

The *Common Elements* is one strategy adopted to enhance the CFSS workforce. The *Common Elements*, once bedded into the CFSS workforce, will build greater consistency for families engaging in the CFSS, adds to the pre-existing skills amongst CFSS staff, enhance evidence-based practice and enable access to quality clinical supervision and mentoring.

The *Common Elements* are evidence-informed (the 'common elements' of programs / interventions known to be effective, and / or supported by evidence from multiple sources) and designed to be used flexibly in response to families' needs.

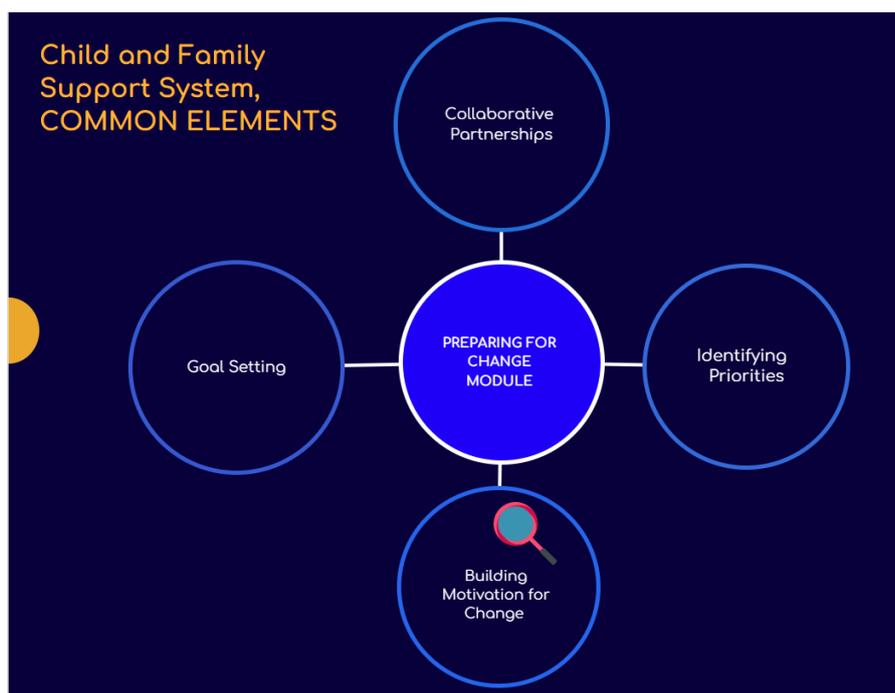
The *Common Elements* approach is being implemented by DHS in partnership with the Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI). CEI is a global, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to using the best evidence in practice and policy to improve the lives of children, families, and communities facing adversity. Refer to the '*Common Elements: Background and Introduction - Explaining the Common Elements*' document for more information.

Each practice guide is comprised of an overview of the practice and its purpose, cultural considerations, key capabilities, practice strategies, outcomes, and practice points. It should be a practitioner's go-to resource, in addition to training and coaching in delivering these practices with fidelity.

The information in this publication can be provided in an alternative format on request. Please email [EIRD@sa.gov.au](mailto:EIRD@sa.gov.au)

Authorised and published by the Government of South Australia. © State of South Australia, Australia, Department for Human Services (June 2021). In this document, 'Aboriginal' respectfully refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, acknowledging that we work in the context of Aboriginal lands and community.

## Overview



*Motivation for Change* is intrinsic, which means that it comes from within a person rather than anybody else. It is the practitioner's job to listen out for the individual's intrinsic motivation for change and encourage them to think further about the possibility of change.

This includes supporting individuals to weigh up the options for change and explore their reasons for change while respecting and allowing them to make their own decisions regarding change. These conversations are conducted using the *OARS* skills (see Practice Guide: *OARS* for more information).

*Building Motivation for Change* is a practice within the *Preparing for Change* module focused on harnessing and building an individual's own motivation for change. This guide can be used with parents, carers and kinship relations and young people from approximately 12 years of age (as developmentally appropriate).

## Purpose

It is normal for individuals to feel ambivalent about changing their behaviour, habits, or attitudes. By using the skills and strategies described in this practice guide, practitioners can help individuals make informed choices about desired behavioural change. Practitioners do this by harnessing and building the individual's internal motivation to engage in behaviour change.

This guide is to be used when individuals are ambivalent about change and express this through 'sustain talk' or 'change talk' (see below). This type of talk presents an opportunity for the practitioner to help an individual explore their motivation for change at a time which is most relevant for them (as they are naturally thinking about different possibilities). This skill is about identifying these subtle opportunities as they present.

This could be ambivalence about the need to change (e.g., by saying "I don't need tips on how to care for my child" but then a few minutes later saying "I know I need to supervise him better"), or their ability to change (e.g., "I know it's not good for him, he's little, but it's too cold to smoke outside and I've never been able to quit before"). This means that in an environment where individuals feel safe to express their thoughts and feelings,



practitioners will hear both motivations to change and motivations not to change. Sometimes this will be in the same sentence (e.g., *“I know I shouldn’t throw things at him, but he never listens”*) or in separate conversations at different times.

## **Allyship Accountability**

### **Aboriginal Cultural Lens Application**

A cultural lens is the consideration and application of how we perceive our environment based on knowledge, values, attitudes, and the traditions of the group with which we most identify. Applying an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural lens means stepping back and considering one’s own identity, values and how one’s own background and experiences influences these perspectives. When this is understood it creates space to layer additional knowledge, understandings, skills, be embracing of true histories, culture, and Aboriginal ways of ‘knowing, being and doing’. This is also known as allyship accountability.

When working with Aboriginal families it is important for practitioners to be aware that many families, particularly at the early stages of working with a practitioner, may be reluctant or fearful about talking with service providers let alone sharing their ideas about change. This can be for many reasons including previous negative experiences with services, misalignment of parenting practices and the simple fact it is hard to change pathways usually developed in response to trauma.

For Aboriginal families, practitioners must consider additional fears that can skew motivation for change directly related to the traumatic impacts of colonisation, dispossession of land, loss of culture, Stolen Generations, and racism, all of which may affect willingness to engage with services and government departments. This historical and intergenerational context needs to be seen and understood; however, this should not negate the need to change unsafe situations or behaviours that negatively impact on children.

For all individuals, but especially when working with Aboriginal families, it is vital to establish a culturally safe, strong collaborative relationship and meaningful engagement with families before working towards building motivation for change.

Reframing requires a strong collaborative partnership because the practitioner is suggesting that the individual consider and implement a different perspective to one that may have always been held for generations. Additionally, addressing the pros and cons of change and talking about small goals require families to trust practitioners enough to share key information and insights about change.

Undertaking Cultural Consultation can also support practitioners understanding of family’s stories and what motivation for change can look like from an individual, family and community perspective.



## Applying a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Lens

When working with families from CALD communities' practitioners are advised to seek out more information to create a culturally safe and supportive environment. Liaison with community leaders and or culturally specific support services is encouraged.

Trauma in the CALD community is diverse and unique to the lived experiences and migratory journeys of individuals and families and may include intergenerational trauma. Trauma is often associated with pre migration experiences including human rights abuses.

Post migration these experiences of trauma are often made worse by other challenges, including settlement issues, racial and religious discrimination as well as the multiple losses experienced, loss of country, culture, and family.

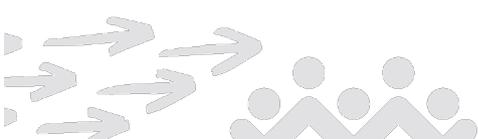
Clear and effective communication is key to successful outcomes for families. If English is not a person's first language, then it is vital to seek out translation and interpreting services to ensure language barriers do not compromise service provision.

## Key Capabilities

### Enabling Attitudes

When using *Building Motivation for Change*, it is important for practitioners to adopt the following attitudes or stance towards the individual:

- The practitioner believes that individuals have the capacity to make good decisions regarding their own change.
- The practitioner believes that individuals want the best for their children and families.
- The practitioner believes ambivalence is a normal part of change.
- The practitioner is genuinely curious about the individual's point of view regarding change.



## Practitioner Behaviours

The *OARS skills (Open-ended statements, Affirmations, Reflections, and Summaries)* are the backbone skills for motivational interviewing and can be used to help individuals explore motivation for change. *OARS* skills assist practitioners to build motivation that comes from *within* individuals for change. *OARS* are used to harness and enhance an individual's own motivation for a specific change by focusing on 'change talk' (Miller and Rollnick, 2013). For a more detailed guide to using *OARS*, please refer to the *OARS Practice Guide*.

**Change talk** refers to any statements the individual makes which indicate that they are considering or thinking about change. *OARS* are used to highlight this kind of talk in a conversation while sidelining any motivation not to change, which is referred to as 'sustain talk.'

**Sustain talk** refers to any statements the individual makes which indicate their reasons for not changing or keeping things as they are.

The *OARS* skills are used to emphasise, focus on, or explore the individual's own motivation to change when a practitioner observes change talk.

For example: The individual has been listing the good and bad things about getting their child to school on time. When the practitioner responds, they make sure to acknowledge that there is motivation not to change (sustain talk) and picks up on and emphasises the aspects that indicate change (change talk).

There is often a mix of both change talk and sustain talk within a conversation. When a practitioner hears change talk, it is their job to help the individual elaborate on this further while sidelining any sustain talk.

*"Sounds like there's a lot going on. Let me check to see I've taken it all in. On one side, you are worried that changing the morning routine is a hassle and will just create arguments (summarising important sustain talk). Also, you really want Jake going to school, you feel strongly about this.*

*You're worried about him missing so much of the year. It's also helpful because then you know where he is during the day. You know that he sometimes gets up to things like shoplifting with other boys when he's not at school. But most of all, you don't want him dropping out of year 10 like you did (summarising and placing greater emphasis on change talk)."*

Encouraging and supporting the individual to think through the pros and cons of changing a behaviour is one way to facilitate informed decision-making about change. Practitioners can provide this support by helping individuals explore the benefits of change and remaining the same and show individuals how their decisions about change can be based on their own priorities, preferences, hopes, and values.

<b>Behaviours for practitioners to work towards when Building Motivation for Change</b> 	<b>Behaviours for practitioners to avoid when Building Motivation for Change</b> 
<p>If an individual presents argument for not changing, the practitioner, at no stage, makes arguments against the individuals claim. Avoid statements like “Yes, but ...”</p> <p>The practitioner uses open-ended questions, reflections, affirmations, and summaries to highlight the individuals change talk.</p> <p>The practitioner only reflects talk about not changing (sustain talk) when the individual feels strongly about it and works to understand core triggers behind this.</p> <p>The practitioner seldom offers information or advice. When they do, the practitioner explicitly highlights this as a suggestion for the individual to consider whether to take it on board.</p> <p>The practitioner believes and clearly communicates to the individual that decisions about behaviour change reside with them.</p>	<p>The practitioner provides the argument for change (explicit or otherwise) on behalf of the individual.</p> <p>The practitioner often gives information or advice without explicitly highlighting it as a suggestion for the individual to consider or take on board.</p> <p>The practitioner highlights the individuals talk about not changing (sustain talk).</p> <p>The practitioner does not believe that the individual can change.</p>

## Examples of Sustain and Change Talk

**Sustain talk** is an expression of the individuals desire for keeping things the way they are or reasons to avoid change. **Change talk** is an expression of a tendency towards change. They could be an expression of the individual's intention or desire to change, of their ability to change and/or understand the benefits of change. These expressions can provide a useful indication of where the individual sits in their journey towards change at that moment in time. They may be preparing for change or are ready to start implementing the changes in their life.

Below is a table describing some examples of sustain and change talk, according to these stages.

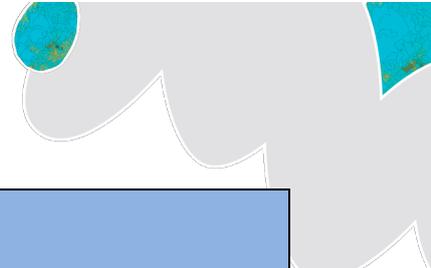
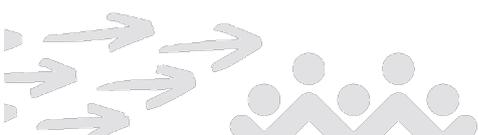
		Motivation to change (change talk)	Motivation not to change (sustain talk)
Preparatory 'change talk'	Desire (I want to change)	<i>"I want some help to deal with my family problems"</i>	<i>"It's nobody else's business what happens in my family ..."</i>
	Ability (I can change)	<i>"I think I can call the school to make an appointment"</i>	<i>"I just get too busy dealing with other things and don't go to the appointment, I can't help it"</i>
	Reason (It's important to change)	<i>"It will be better for Tabitha if I sort the issues out"</i>	<i>"It doesn't affect Tabitha so who cares"</i>
	Need (I should change)	<i>"If I don't do anything Tabitha will end up the same"</i>	<i>"It was the same for me when I was a kid, and I had to learn to deal with it"</i>
Implementing 'change talk'	Commit (I will make changes)	<i>"I will organise a meeting with the school"</i>	<i>"After the way they spoke to me last time, I'm not going up there again"</i>
	Activation (I am prepared and willing to change)	<i>"I'm willing to go and speak to the school about it"</i>	<i>"I don't want to go up there, I'm not ready"</i>
	Taking steps (I am taking specific steps to change)	<i>"I've emailed the school for an appointment"</i>	<i>"I haven't done anything ..."</i>

## Practice Strategies

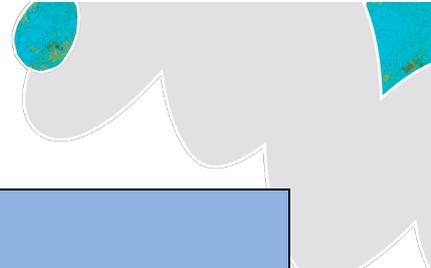
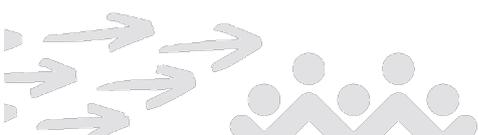
This section provides step by step guidance on how to use *Building Motivation for Change* in practice.

Steps	Skills/Strategies
<p>Explore values using <i>OARS</i> (see <i>Practice Guide: OARS</i>)</p>	<p>Many people aren't used to talking about their values, but everyone has things that are deeply important to them. Values are found in areas of life that are important to us such as family, friends, work, culture, or spirituality. Values can be seen as a reflection of our ideal behaviour and our hopes and aspirations for ourselves. At times our values can be at odds with our current behaviour which can cause 'cognitive dissonance'.</p> <p>To build the motivation to change, practitioners support individuals to realise this 'discrepancy' between their values and their behaviour. This occurs through conversations that assist individuals to uncover and explore their values, allowing them space to observe and reflect upon their own discrepancy.</p> <p>[Note: It is important that practitioners take care in identifying which adults in the family might be important to include in discussions about values. This is particularly true if other people in the family have different values to each other.]</p> <p><b>Ask about values directly:</b> As people don't often talk about values, provide a rationale for the discussion first.</p> <div data-bbox="507 1160 1422 1480" style="background-color: #e1eef6; padding: 10px;"> <p>Practitioner:</p> <p><i>"It's important that we work on things that matter the most to you."</i></p> <p>or</p> <p><i>"Before we go any further, I want to get a better sense of what you see as the most important things about being a parent."</i></p> </div> <p><b>Infer values from the individual's behaviour:</b> A person's values can become apparent from the way they are talking or behaving. Practitioners may be able to point out a pattern of behaviour and see whether the individual can verbalise why they act in this way.</p> <div data-bbox="507 1675 1422 1830" style="background-color: #e1eef6; padding: 10px;"> <p>Practitioner: <i>"You haven't cancelled a single visit with your alcohol counsellor. You are clearly committed to addressing your issues with drinking."</i></p> </div>

Steps	Skills/Strategies
	<p>Based on the conversation, the practitioner might offer an interpretation of what the individual has described as a 'value' and determine whether they can relate to that description.</p> <p><i>Practitioner: "I get a sense that being present with your kids rather than sitting out the back drinking beer is important to you. Am I right?"</i></p> <p>Affirmations, reflections, and summaries that infer values in a collaborative way are important here (see Practice Guide: <a href="#">OARS</a>).</p> <p>[Note: A cultural lens should be taken in inferring values around kinship as Aboriginal families have a collective modelling and understanding of parenting. There may be other powerful values related to respecting Elders that play into discussions about what is important and needed.]</p> <p>In most cases, after bringing values to the surface, individuals are quite capable of noticing the discrepancy of how they want things to be, compared to their current behaviour. However, there are a few skills that may help individuals recognise the discrepancy. Importantly, these are most effective when they come from someone that they trust. If the practitioner notices discord (see discord section later in this document) this might indicate that the individual perceives the practitioner is making suggestions that they should change. This is counter to the important notion that change comes from within.</p> <p><b>Continue inferring an individual's identified values in relation to behaviour:</b></p> <p>By labelling values and reminding individuals of the link between their values and behaviours, practitioners are providing complex reflections and affirmations. For example, a practitioner could affirm the individual's recent improvement in engagement with drug counselling with the identified value of 'being a good dad.'</p> <p><i>Practitioner: "You got yourself to see the counsellor three weeks in a row. As well as the benefits of the counselling, I wonder if it's linked to the chat we had the other day about being a good dad?"</i></p>

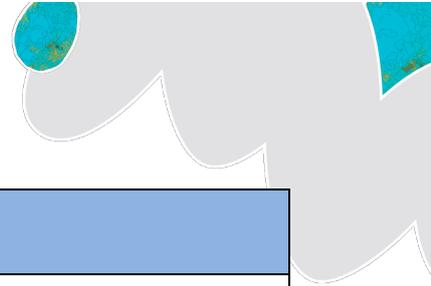
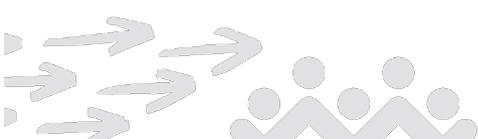


Steps	Skills/Strategies
	<p><b>Link an individual's values to a behaviour that is unhelpful:</b></p> <p>It can also be used to help individuals find alternatives to unhelpful behaviours. For example, a practitioner who has discussed with an individual that they often yell or get defensive, particularly during meetings with statutory services, might help them connect that behaviour with their desire to protect their kids.</p> <p>The practitioner might be able to support the individual to explore whether this desire is linked to their value of being '<i>a good parent</i>' and then explore what that means to them. The simple link between their outburst and being '<i>a good parent</i>' might help the individual increase intrinsic motivation to regulate their emotions in meetings.</p>
<p>Respond to change and sustain talk</p>	<p>In general, when sustain talk is less important to the individual, practitioners should reflect, affirm, and summarise change talk only. Sustain talk is only included in reflections, affirmations, and summaries when it is important to individuals, and must therefore be acknowledged. Listed below are examples of when sustain talk should be included because they are a genuinely important part of the conversation.</p> <p>[Note: When using <b>OARS</b> to respond to change talk, particular attention should be placed on asking open-ended questions about children and young people (e.g., "How does [child or young person] feel about this?")</p> <p><b>Double-sided reflections</b></p> <p>When individuals are ambivalent about change and a practitioner notices both sustain talk and change talk, they can provide a reflection of both mindsets by presenting a <i>double-sided reflection</i>.</p> <div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Individual: <i>"I know I should get some more help at home but even getting out of bed ...I just can't be bothered, you know?"</i></p> <p>Practitioner: <i>"On one hand it feels like the toughest job in the world, getting stuff done around the house, and on the other hand you know that if you can take the pressure off a bit by making a start you might feel better about your home life."</i></p> </div> <p>These reflections allow the practitioner to acknowledge the individual's discomfort or reluctance but also highlight the opportunity and motivation to move forward.</p>

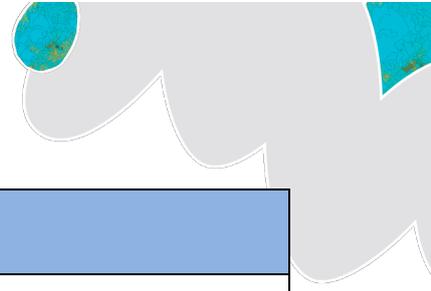
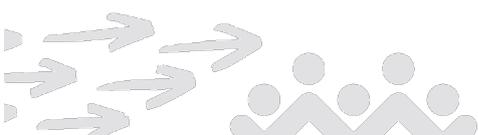


Steps	Skills/Strategies
	<p><b>Providing information (elicit, provide, elicit)</b></p> <p>When a practitioner notices both sustain and change talk, it can be helpful to provide information that extends the change talk.</p> <p>Sometimes individuals need additional information to make an informed decision about change (e.g., information about the recommended alcohol use for their demographic or the steps involved in a particular evidence-based parenting strategy).</p> <p>However, information can often come across as a directive from practitioners for the individuals to change, which does not harness their intrinsic motivation.</p> <p>Therefore, the Elicit-Provide-Elicit skill (also called ask-offer-ask) can be useful to provide information as a suggestion in response to the change talk that the individual can consider (Miller and Rollnick, 2013; Hohman, 2015).</p> <p>The practitioner does this by ‘sandwiching’ the information between questions that seek the individual’s ideas and input, making it clear that the decision to adopt a change or take on information rests with them.</p> <div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Elicit</p> <p>Practitioner [holding a picture book that explains parent mental illness to children]: <i>“Have you used any books or other materials to explain your mental illness to Lily?”</i></p> <p>Provide</p> <p>Practitioner: <i>“Children like Lily are often quite keen to understand what might be happening. It helps them make sense of things. Would it be okay if we looked through this one together?”</i></p> <p>Practitioner explains the rationale for introducing child-focused educational materials and uses <b>OARS</b> to show the book to the individual.</p> <p>Elicit</p> <p>Practitioner: <i>“What are your thoughts on reading a book like this to Lily?”</i></p> </div> <p>The practitioner does not have to use informational materials when using this skill. Elicit-Provide-Elicit can also be used to introduce their own observations, perspective, or knowledge as a suggestion that the individuals may like to consider.</p>

Steps	Skills/Strategies
<p>Responding to sustain talk in the absence of change talk</p>	<p>Sometimes individuals may be particularly focused on sustain talk. Although this will naturally come and go, for a practitioner supporting change, it can be tricky to respond in a way that does not reinforce sustain talk but avoids discord (see discord section) because it risks conveying to the individual that the practitioner does not understand and appreciate their perspective. The following techniques can be used in response to statements of sustain talk only.</p> <p><b>Reframing</b></p> <p>Reframing suggests another way of thinking about a situation. It is an important skill that is most effective when used in collaboration with the individuals where the practitioner introduces a different perspective with which to view the situation rather than challenging the individual's perception.</p> <p>Reframing with reflections</p> <p>Individual: <i>"I don't think I'd be able to do that."</i>  Practitioner: <i>"Getting there would be hard work."</i></p> <p>Reframing with affirmations</p> <p>Individual: <i>"I just feel like I'm a big disappointment, a bad mother."</i>  Practitioner: <i>"You've managed to get through a lot Kathy and continue to think about what is best for your son. What you do takes a lot of strength."</i></p> <p>Individual: <i>"Child protection are on my back about this, they're always making things difficult."</i>  Practitioner: <i>"They sound worried about you and Xavier."</i></p> <p><b>Supporting autonomy</b></p> <p>Where the individuals sustain talk indicates a reluctance to talk about behaviour change, it can be useful to reinforce the message that they have a choice over their participation in and focus of the conversation.</p> <p>Individual: <i>"What's the point of bringing this up? I'll never be able to do it!"</i>  Practitioner: <i>"It's up to you whether we talk about this today"</i></p>



Steps	Skills/Strategies
Responding to discord	<p>As with change itself, discussions about change are difficult especially when trying to shift entrenched behaviours. Discord occurs when the conversation between practitioner and the individual becomes difficult enough that either party starts to <b>defend</b> themselves or others (<i>"It's not that bad"; "She didn't mean it like that"</i>), attribute <b>blame</b> (<i>"It wasn't my idea", "You're the one who made me go to that meeting"</i>), <b>shift</b> the subject or <b>interrupt</b> in the conversation. If discord occurs, a practitioner can use the following skills to get back on track with conversations about change.</p> <p><b>Provide simple reflections, focused on emotions</b> (see Practice Guide: <a href="#">OARS</a>).</p> <p><i>"You're unhappy with my questions."</i>  <i>"Your frustrated with the whole thing, with me ..."</i>  <i>"You're unhappy about me asking questions about this today."</i></p> <p><b>Support autonomy</b></p> <p><i>"I would never tell you how to think, Levi. Any changes here are up to you."</i></p> <p><b>Reframe</b></p> <p><i>Individual: "So you've come here to judge me!"</i>  <i>Practitioner: "Sounds like today's not a good day to talk about this."</i></p> <p><b>Affirmations</b></p> <p>Affirm strengths despite discord (see Practice Guide: <a href="#">OARS</a>).</p> <p><i>Individual: "I don't need help from people like you!"</i>  <i>Practitioner: "You're the kind of person that get things done, once you put your mind to it."</i></p> <p><b>Shift focus</b></p> <p>This skill is about guiding the conversation away from a 'sore spot' onto a different focus of the conversation.</p> <p><i>Individual: "You're saying it's my fault!"</i>  <i>Practitioner: "I'm not interested in blame Penny, I'm just interested in how you'd like things to be different"</i></p>



Steps	Skills/Strategies
<p>Assess the pros and cons of change</p>	<p>This technique is used to encourage change talk and help individuals weigh up their own arguments for change.</p> <p><b>Pros of staying the same</b></p> <p>Support the individual to identify and describe the immediate and long-term benefits of staying the same.</p> <p>To promote reflection, ask questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“What feels good or is helpful for you about using meth?”</i></li> <li>• <i>“How does using meth help you cope with problems? “</i></li> <li>• <i>“How does using meth help you do what you need to do? “</i></li> </ul> <p>Ask the individual to provide relative rankings of these pros on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = least important, 10 = most important).</p> <p><b>Cons of staying the same</b></p> <p>Ask the individual to identify and describe the immediate and long-term negative consequences of staying the same.</p> <p>To promote reflection, ask questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“What feels bad or is unhelpful for you about using meth?”</i></li> <li>• <i>“What problems does meth use cause for you?”</i></li> <li>• <i>“How does using meth stop you doing what you need to do?”</i></li> </ul> <p>Be sure to help the individual considers the cons of staying the same from the perspective of others in the family.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practitioner: <i>“How does using meth affect your family/child/ For example, what messages does it send to others in your family?”</i></li> </ul> <p>Ask the individual to provide relative rankings of these cons of staying the same on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = least important, 10 = most important).</p> <p>Provide a summary of how the individual has ranked the consequences. After summarising, ask the individual to provide their assessment:</p> <p>Practitioner: <i>“What are your thoughts on this?”</i></p>

Steps	Skills/Strategies
	<p>If the individual is interested, the practitioner turns the conversation towards the pros of changing. If the individual feels there are strong reasons against staying the same, with an open-ended question enquire whether they'd like to explore the possible pros of changing.</p> <p>Practitioner: <i>"I wonder if you've thought about the good things about making that change?"</i></p> <p>Repeat the above process in relation to the pros of changing their behaviour. Be ready to reflect, affirm and summarise change talk.</p>
<p>After elaborating on change talk, help individuals identify a small goal</p>	<p>The act of setting a goal, even if it is small (e.g., reading some information) can be motivating. A good indicator that the individual is ready to set a small goal is when the practitioner notices that their change talk has started to shift from <i>preparatory</i> change talk towards <i>implementing</i> change talk (see section above).</p> <p>If the individual has not started talking about a small goal, it may be helpful to suggest the conversation shift towards talking about a goal. Simple open-ended questions are best.</p> <p>Practitioner: <i>"It sounds like you're committed to making changes, have you thought about the next steps?"</i></p> <p>This may also be the time for a more detailed discussion about goal setting (see Practice Guide: <a href="#">Goal Setting</a>).</p>

# Outcomes

## Practice level outcomes

- Individuals can make informed decisions about their own changes.
- The individual has explored options and has considered change.
- Individuals have autonomy, choice in decision-making and their voice is being heard.
- The practitioner can identify and understand the individual's internal motivation for change.
- The practitioner is confident using strategies that guide the individual to overcome barriers to change.
- The practitioner maintains engagement regardless of level of ambivalence.

## Practice Points

Be aware that ambivalence regarding change is normal. When encountered:

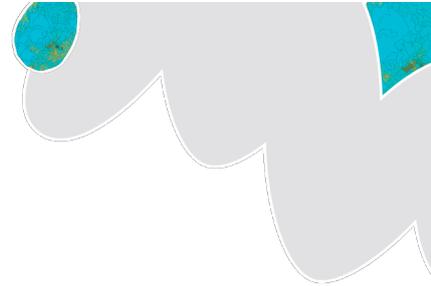
- Use **OARS**, empathise with the individual and their reasons for ambivalence
- Minimise advice-giving, persuasion, and confrontation which are likely to increase talk about not changing.

An 'all-or-nothing' end goal (e.g., total abstinence) may not be appropriate or feasible. If this is named or raised, encourage small behaviour change that has the potential to improve the current situation (e.g., reduction of harm or risk related to the behaviour).

If the individual has difficulty thinking of negative consequences, provide prompts. For example: *"Some other parents say that drinking can make it hard for them to look after the children properly and think clearly to make decisions. What are your thoughts about that?"*

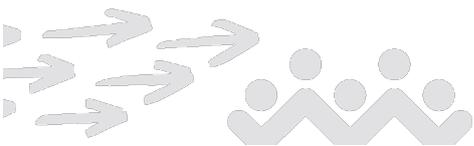
In a practitioner's role supporting families, they may need to report risk and safety concerns. Even when appropriate, practitioner use of authority can often impact upon the individual's sense of autonomy. If this is the case, practitioners may see change talk reduce and sustain talk increase. In these times it is important to focus on engagement.

Use **OARS** skills to ensure the individual knows that the practitioner understands and empathises with their point of view until reaching a point where they start to hear change talk again. Remember, both change talk and sustain talk naturally go up and down and this is not necessarily an indication of when an Individual might take the first steps towards change.

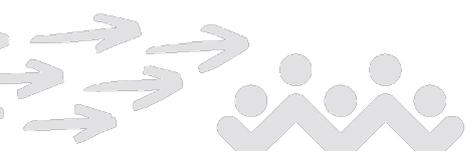


## Reflective questions for practitioners

- Consider a family you worked with in the past who have exhibited motivation to change....
- What was their key motivator for change? Was this something that aligned with concerns outlined in the Child and Family Support System (CFSS) – Pathways Service referral? Or something that the family self-identified as a concern to them?
- Was this a family led decision making process? If so, was this a contributor to success?
- How did the family engage in the process? Or was this an individual response?
- Were the children given a voice? Was this helpful?
- How did you respond to the family's 'change' talk? Did you need to respond to 'sustain' talk?
- What worked well for this family? And if given the chance what would you do differently?



## Notes





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