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**To:** Coventry Health and Wellbeing Board

**Date:** 6 February 2017

**From:** David Peplow, Independent Chair of Coventry Safeguarding Children Board and Lizzie Edwards, Safeguarding Boards Combined Business Manager

**Title:** Signs of Safety

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. To update the Health and Wellbeing Board on progress in relation to using the Signs of Safety practice model in Coventry
- 1.2. To request endorsement of the practice model from the Health and Wellbeing Board

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to:
  - 2.1.1. Note the information on the Signs of Safety practice model in this report
  - 2.1.2. Consider the request to formally endorse this practice model

## 3. Information/Background

- 3.1. The Signs of Safety approach to child protection casework was developed through the 1990s in Western Australia. It is now used in the USA, Canada, the UK, Sweden, The Netherlands, New Zealand and Japan.
- 3.2. The approach focuses on building partnerships to effectively safeguard children and young people. The model is strengths-based and safety-focused, and works on a collaborative basis. A format for undertaking comprehensive risk assessment- assessing both danger and strengths/safety- is incorporated within the one-page Signs of Safety assessment protocol.
- 3.3. Research studies have found that using Signs of Safety:
  - 3.3.1. Increases worker morale
  - 3.3.2. Increases practitioner clarity and decision-making
  - 3.3.3. Improves and focuses relationships between practitioners and families
  - 3.3.4. Improves collaboration between child protection and other professionals
  - 3.3.5. Reduces rates of child removal
  - 3.3.6. Reduces the duration cases are open to the agency
- 3.4. More information about Signs of Safety can be found at: <http://www.signsofsafety.net/>
- 3.5. Coventry Safeguarding Children Board formally endorsed the model of practice for multi-agency use on 26 January 2017. A workforce development plan will now be agreed.

## 4. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 4.1. It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board formally endorse the Signs of Safety model of practice.

## Report Author(s)

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## Appendices