## Turning questions into conversations: EARS Process

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|  | WORRIES | STRENGTHS | GOALS |
| Elicit  **First question** | What are we worried about?  What harm has happened to any child in the care of these adults?  What is the danger to this child if left in the care of this mother?  What would make this situation more complicated? | What’s working well here?  What are the best attributes of this mum’s / dad’s parenting?  What would the child say are the best times she has with her dad?  When has the mum fought off the depression and be able to focus on the child? | What needs to happen?  What do you need to see to be satisfied the child is safe enough we can close the case?  What would mum say would show everyone the child could come home?  Where would the teenager say he wants his life to be at 18?  What do we need to do to create a relationship where we can talk about difficult issues? |
| Amplify  **Behavioural detail: what would you see?** | When has harm happened?  How often and how bad?  How did the incident effect the child? What language can we use to say that so the mum and child can easily understand?  How long has this abuse been happening?  Give me the first, worst and most recent examples of the abuse? | When has that good thing happened? How often?  How did the mum fight off the depression? How else? How else?  How does the neighbour help?  How is the parenting programme making things better for the child?  What did the dad do to make those contacts visits really enjoyable for his kids? | Describe the details of the behaviour you would want to see that would tell you that this child is safe?  How many people do you think should be involved in this safety plan?  What is the father’s willingness/capacity to do this?  Is this plan written in a way the child understands it?  How will the mental health services involvement make this plan work? |
| Reflect  **Meaning** | Which of the danger statements do you think is most important (or easiest) to deal with first?  Which danger would worry the parents most?  Of all the complicating factors which do you think is most important to deal with? | Which of the strengths are most useful in terms of getting this problem dealt with?  Which aspects of their parenting/family life would mum/dad be most proud of? | Where do you rate the child’s safety with this mother on 0 to 10 scale?  Is this a plan that the parents believe in? What confidence on a 0 to 10 scale would they say they have in it keeping the child safe? |
| Start over | Are there any other worries that we have missed? | Are there any other good things happening in this family that we have missed? | Are there any other important things that we have missed in the plan? |